

A BELL FOR CRISTINA – WRITING AN IMAGE OF ECHO AND CHIMERA

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A Note on Style and Structure

The text is structured in three parts, followed by endnotes:

1. Tolling, with Interference and Chimeras (The Head)
2. The Mine (The Body)
3. The Bell (The Tail)
‘Thus Continues the Night (In My Multiple Head)’: Endnotes

It adopts the idea of the making and the tolling of a bell as form and method of commentary, working with transmission and echo, fusing the ‘old bronze’ of Campo’s writing, building an echo chamber for her words, and allowing at once my ideas around ‘chimeric writing’, and the form/symbol of Chimera, to emerge from them. The text embodies the shapes of its argument while reflecting on it, conjoining theory, method, and writing practice. Formally, this approach generates a work of resonance and con-fusion of sources, complicated by writing across Italian and English.

The first section presents the tolling and resonance of Campo’s words in my writing, while the sources are concealed: no direct references are made, quotation marks are erased, and Campo’s words (as well as those of others) appear in italics to enhance a sense of proximity. This section mirrors a tolling, and appears in blocs separated by two blank lines, to denote the pause after each tolling. A number between brackets is given at the end of most blocs, pointing at corresponding material in the third section.

In the second section Campo's words appear in Italian, tolling close to their sources. References are given at the end of each quote: an initial marks the initial letter in the relevant book title, followed by page numbers.

The third section is the actual bell, bronze and void: my references to Campo's works, and to those that resonate with them in my constellation of reading, are gradually disclosed, across intermittent motions of plenitude and incompleteness. Sometimes the sources are given in full, other times they point farther at the Endnotes. Because of the sense of kinship and proximity on which this text is grounded, 'Campo' was replaced with 'Cristina'. Notes on method and on reading are presented at the beginning of this section, slowly falling into quotes which act as response to the text in the first section, in a non-hierarchical manner.

As, in writing, deriving as I do, I burn the nets of my origins.

– Robert Duncan, *The H.D. Book*

1. TOLLING, WITH INTERFERENCE AND CHIMERAS (THE HEAD)

Some time ago a book was written, of flutes and carpets, of roses in the snow and ineffable rhythms, of the geometries of spirit and the timbre of text, of the critic as echo, of poetry as attention. At the beginning, which was an ending and a middle, the writer declared that repetitions had not been deleted because the book had the form of *one speech in more tempi, with recurring themes and even the same words . . . A chamber, a room ready for a guest who is not yet seen, and might appear in the next book*. Why the book was written so, I do not know. I know that I could hear it. It told me what I always knew, and had never held so close until the time those words summoned me. (1)

Book as chamber, book as echo chamber: words heard, read, sensed, thought, by returns, falls, interferences, intermittent signals. Inside, the reader of attention catches a nexus, perceives a cadence, propagates it in resonance, and to become resonant the reader needs walls to rebound, amplify, she needs to write words hers not all hers, to become conducive material and medium. (2)

Inside the book-chamber, in the inner *telesterium*, I hear a bell: at once heavy bronze object, necessary to generate sound, and empty cavity, necessary to propagate it. *For the new bells the bronze of the old ones is always used, so one may say that each bell survives the next one, generation after generation*. Writing these pages in the form of a bell—heavy and empty at once, bronze and air—I use the material of a more ancient bell: I fuse, transform and write what came before me, found in assonance. Some of the material is not yet translated in English, so the old bronze is fused from Italian in the impetus of transmission and the raptures of reading before translation. (3)

Before translation my voices are faint. Voices, because the work of kinship and transmission can only be plural. Faint, because the substance and subjects in those voices are at times confusing, at times out of synch, full of histories and literatures so obscure or specific that they might sound empty in the ears of many. It is uncertain who

will receive, who will tune in. When you are outside certain legitimate circles of cultural anything, it is uncertain who is there, who is willing to hear. Most crucially, it must be asked what sort of amplification is needed when certain signals demand to stay faint. Caught between the necessity of transmitting faint signals, and the high possibility of not being received, I long for a type of hearing—that is reading that is writing—attuned to detect other faint voices: those who won’t ever become loud enough because if they do they get distorted, and lose texture. Better to tune in the hearing, than to force a faint signal to scream. These signals may be perceived through the practice of attention, too often disrupted by the hiss of what is easily recognised. They may appear isolated because of the non-immediacy of references they hold. Yet they stay, hover, *like the impressions left by the telling of a story*, by the playing of a record. (4)

The faint signals might sound as if speaking about nothing at all. But wait: hear in them the density of a resonance proper to their material, the material of the apparent absence they echo, swarming with inaudible conversations—the material of the time spent attending to them, mixed in a medium of silence and long times.

This silence of mine when writing before translation will never be entirely mine, and I can only perceive and finally hear *mine* as a vault to extract from. A strong sense of artifice is at play: not having one voice means having to construct it, in heightened awareness toward the workings of rhetoric, toward writing as assembling, words found and connected by kinship. These voices are mine and the mine is deep, some of it unmapped, some of it dark, some of it with precious stones, some of it with dull rock and moss and useless damp slippery surfaces. I have dwelled there for long times, sometimes I have slipped. (5)

The bell rings, words propagate, move farther than their origin, merge with other sounds, are interfered with and interrupted. The cadence of the tolling remains, the texture and material of the tolling sounds is gradually transformed.

Another form of speechlessness summons me, in front of liminal words on the edge of what can only be heard and read through *supernatural senses*. To write those words is a gesture at once concrete, and in excess of itself. To read and understand those words means

to suffer through them, to become physically involved, sometimes ill as if by contagion, exhausted. I could only attempt a *transcelation* of those words, arrows aimed at the sky, as I learned from them that transcending is a necessary condition of the tangible. In those words the body's spiritual life appears through the supernatural senses of liturgy, the carnality of ritual, the phonic weight of sacred mysteries, celebrating *the occasion of metamorphosis*. (6)

Once a text was written, and in the end the writer described it as a series of quotes, bound together by little more than notes in the margin. The only aim of a text like this one is to send the reader back to its sources, she wrote. Writing takes shape as transmission, it sends the readers back to other texts, allows others to live and operate in them, to own them *as if not owning*. The writer silences her voice to allow others to resound. Writing in front of this text I struggle to hear my voice, so I impose silence on my speechlessness, search for tone in silenced words. The silence I impose on my speech to hear its tone is deepened, in the *little more* of notes in the margin, little, more, little: more. How loud the echo of those notes, in this vast hall of deepened silence. I can nearly sense, together, the asphyxia and the echo, the smothering and the hushed voicing. *Tremendum hoc mysterium*: in their immense phonic weight, those words are gestures of an ancient liturgy and unlike objects, words as gestures are never out of time. They exceed time in the ceaseless traffic of radiance and discourse, the hidden circulation that needs words, only those words, those written for you. They circulate, are never still, and the question is one of rhythm: *pneuma, prana, mana, pneuma, prana, mana, pneuma, prana, mana*. Subtle, terrible circulation until the point is reached when you move with its cadence after you've tamed it. Prana, practice: ritual is not conclusive, you must work through it, constantly, presently, rigged out in the invisible armour grown on your skin from a state of perennial prayer. Make the tone of writing like the empty plenitude of the sonic space after the bell has finished tolling: present, full, empty, silent. Or like the effect of the blade, only felt in full after it is extracted, *in the absence of*: deeper than physical therefore frightening, an attuned poet once said. (7)

In the tolling of the bell I hear Chimera, I begin to derive an idea of chimeric writing: a condition and mode that inhabits, is haunted by, and echoes its subjects, in kinship. The rose in the snow is an image

of chimera, monstrous creature made of three different parts, impossible in theory and real the moment in which it is perceived, written, read. A chimera is also the object of an unattainable yearning: writing exists in the space of such yearning. Chimeric—the term, and its *word-use*—demands a substance of thinking beyond the literal, the explanatory, into *the imaginal*: a cognitive function resonant and present which, unlike the imaginary—fantastic, unreal—pertains to a real perceptual sphere, an intermediary world between the physical and the immaterial that makes present that which is substantive, but not yet apparent. It re-awakens perception by giving it new vessels, a capacity to comprehend. (8)

It was said that chimeric writing is *groundless but not without grounds*. Its answer to ‘where?’ points at no atlas: it is composite and implausible, a manner of orientation rather than a geographical coordinate. It is *situative, not situated*: it presents where it is by being there; it does not teach dogmas but awakens thinking; it resounds other elsewhere, siting and citing, and *csiting* is the recurring act of frequenting that reanimates knowledge. (9)

Now the tolling of the bell rings toward those philosophies of knowing as self-discovery in stillness, sympathy, attunement. The procedures elsewhere known as theory of knowledge are transformed into *csiting*. (10)

It was said *if you want to know what you are, do not compare yourself to what you were, but to that which you were made of*. To know what chimeric writing writes, look at that which it was made of: the substance it worked through time, mixed in a medium of silence. I carry with me—physically, symbolically, imaginarily—bundles of echoes in mines, moods, and materials, words and voices in every text I write. Sometimes these are direct quotes, sometimes they are reminiscence, or hints of a rhythm my thoughts once danced with, and as always in memorable dances, that rhythm goes on even when the dance is over. Fluctuations, punctuations, commotions summon and echo me, even when not entirely legible or audible, my clouds of unknowing. They move inside my texts, because they moved me: to write toward them. Often my writing would not be without them, silent yet substantial grounds for my reasoning, which always exists in their vicinity. If you have encountered some of them, this text you are reading will intermittently sound vaguely familiar. If you

haven't, it will still be perceived as made of various textures: uneven and conjoined, slightly out of synch and moving nonetheless. Anomalous anachronisms are also at play, sometimes it is no longer clear who is quoting whom, who is commenting on what, what came before and what after. They do not disturb but stir, and are not to be seen as anachronistic once reasoning is not formed in term of trajectories, but placed instead in the realm of presence and resonance, and the concept of actuality is replaced by that of attention and listening with all the responsibility they carry, the words they utter. (11)

The passion for silence and stillness came late, in that moment when the apparent speechlessness became the silent medium necessary to outline and build a vessel that would hold a transformation. To transform, one must contain: chimeric writing is at once a study and a making of vessels. It may be a pelican, enhancing circularity, iteration as method, closed circuit, feeding off its own substance, a stoppered alembic for sublimation or precipitation, a *bain marie*, vessel inside vessel, meeting space of fire and water. A vessel does not ask to move away: it prompts to act in. Chimeric writing does not go anywhere else than itself, holding a sense of return and rotation. As vessel, it offers a contemplation of the limits of its substance—that necessary losing, hiding, interrupting, and reprising on which words seem to nourish, like the bird of the *Upanishad* who watches the fruit without eating it, and at once, watches its identical twin eat it. (12)

Chimeric writing does not hit the headlines: it moves and grows slowly, and becomes manifest later, as echo or premonition, its substance mixed in a medium of silence. The chimeric writer *writes little, and wishes she had written less*. Against chaptered abundance, against prolific production, it poses a *trappism of perception*, the presence of *an exigent refusal*. Such refusal reclaims literature in the hum through which writing rehearses its tone. It must be an exigent refusal: the moment you shake, you are beaten down on the terrain of colloquial ideology, flags. Stay away from flags, or you will become *like an albatross locked up in the tiny cage of an insect*. (13)

The *exigent refusal*, the *non-frivolous* manner to adopt, is that of reading attentively, writing slowly—not necessarily a canonical book. It might as well be a luminous treatise on the knots in a Persian rug

as true portraiture of the geometries of life, or the accurate response to the sounds of bells first tolling in a foundry, or to the gestures, sayings, and raptures of the Desert Fathers, or a meditation on the unassuming sources of a river in France. A collection of letters, even. Letters do not exclude poems, journals do not exclude essays, the truth of the telling is not to be located in any of these specifically, but in the undercurrents of understanding and resonance that allow disparate forms to coexist as *oeuvre*. *Meticulous, specious, inflexible*, a chimeric writer once composed all of these disparate forms as she wrote of gestures, of sayings, of raptures, of the occasion of metamorphosis as a supreme quality, in sentences like iron-tipped arrows. Of all this she wrote, moving thoughts *like sudden arpeggios soon to be withdrawn by a shy hand*. (14)

Through chimeric writing the sense of being in the words and worlds of others is at once rarefied and intensified, the research at once haunts the text and is not immediately displayed. In a simultaneous and contradictory movement, at that point in which the writer synthesises at most her subject by reducing it, *like the painters of the T'ang era in China*, to that unique profile, to that line that is its being's utterance itself, the reader hears it multiply, echo in numberless harmonies. The perception of vertiginous activity is conjoined with a sense of inevitable presence and stillness. Such concentrated tension belongs to a writing of the visible and the invisible, the audible and the inaudible, in the same manner *as the entomologist labours to express with precision the inexpressible azure of a dragonfly wing*. So chimeric writing's eloquence can hinge on a tiny particle.

One is chimeric writing's concern, its appreciation, its refrain: *arduous and marvellous attention*, to reinvent and apply in everyday manners. To have given something extreme attention means to have suffered it, and to have suffered for it, if necessary.

It was written of the chimeric writer *as of a medieval nun who embroiders memorable chasubles, yearning for the colours of the silk more than the portrayed holy faces—as if a portrait could inspire devotion unless an all-consuming attention didn't pick out the materials with which to respond to the vision*. All-consuming attention is necessary to draw nearer those materials slowly, to attune oneself to the difficult and obscure things that lie in them, according to a rhythm that constantly returns to itself against the fatal chatter of appearance.

A chimeric writer once said to a friend that writing criticism is like *a creeper growing organically between the stones of words* that came before. Stones at times so heavy, so loaded with meaning, that they can leave the writer speechless for long stretches of time before she writes. It is the writer's block that heightens her awe of the other driving force in which her materials speak to her. *The block itself is the blockage of a breath.* To write chimerically is to unravel a conversation with a material that initially appeared to make you speechless. You must have been with stones, speechless in what felt like a Sisyphean task, and enact that shift that allows you to transform from Sisyphus into stone, become of the same substance of the texts that summon you, to become the material. Then writing begins. Not interpretation, not progression: chimeric writing *csites* a mode of being, stays exactly where it is, works with and becomes the stones, the materials it is given, finds kinship with the *Imago Mundi* it is given. (15)

Once a chimeric writer—a poet—embroidered her mode of being in a *rima*, in the presence of the absence of words, in the feeling of no longer being alive: her true form, she wrote, could only be *an image of Echo and Chimera*. A full silence: this is what another chimeric writer meant when she said *I write because I so deeply want to speak, though writing only gives me the full measure of silence.* Chimeric writing is the silent humming that joins words. Its yearning moves in the rhythms of silent conversations, toward *the durable sense of the further*, the murmur, the undercurrent which holds words together: a writer's tone, stone. (16)

The chimeric writer's words, not all hers, witness that which returns: a beat, a dance, a site, a loss, a chord. She appears to say and hear the same things so many times, over the years: pronouncements which begin with the same chord, open up in different progressions, flow back in spiralling motions to their centre, movements only possible in the presence and permanence of a being in commotion, a convulsion in stillness, the taking in of the world, that gasp that is the breathing in of aesthetic perception, a beat, a dance, a site, a loss, a chord. (17)

The chimeric writer *reads like a paleographer reads*: on five or six different levels altogether, noting the perceptions of a telling as much as the use of litote. Anything that does not lend itself to

multiple reads, she ignores. In these gestures of attention, she can tune in the buzz of transmission that emerges from books, the *great subterranean layers, the deep circulations and secret discoveries*: the mystic work of reading. (18)

Chimeric writing sounds sirens: terminal, lyrical, extreme. In its modes of readings that are modes of being, chimeric writing's words are the *consonants for the entangled vocalisations of its desire*. It is not enough to have ears for them: it is a privilege to be listening. (19)

Chimeric writing does not reduce its subjects to case studies: it attends to them as beings, deep seated in its language and in theirs, in the way they make each other rebound. The effect is profound because a transformation takes place—takes the place of a self through the resonance of others. A point then is reached where you can hear two heartbeats in one cadence. Chimeric writing *takes psychic being, takes fire*, from its subjects. Over years it transforms itself with them, in forming the writing it is. It is engaged in ongoing conversations with them, even despite writing: a humming, a recurring thinking of words that sound as if they had been written directly and only for you—which is not true, and is so real, in this type of intimate knowledge. (20)

Not aiming at exhaustive knowledge, chimeric writing is the work of the exhausted subject: exhausted by time, attention, desire. Exhausted, worn out: like the smoothed feet of those marble statues in Italian churches that have been touched so many times they've lost their initial form, only to carry the sign of devotion, the erasing mark of attention, seal of time: chimeric writing is worn out, exhausted by attention and care.

Chimeric writing is the occasion of metamorphosis in stillness, the alchemical *ratio*, circular motion showing that the goal of the work is nothing but the realisation of the very urge that propels it. Its method has a parallel in a study of language as excess, more necessary than what is deemed useful: not goal-driven action, but the *gratuitous splendour* of certain gestures, inexhaustible like the undercurrents that demand auscultation. The apparent vulnerability in its structure is in fact grounded on a core of recurring intensities, against the prolific into a deepening that sometimes is concealment.

A different form of knowing emerges. It foregrounds sensing, connecting, kinship, it embraces mishearing, and chance encounters. It was said that for the chimeric writer this is the whole point: *to transmit into the head or heart of another person the concretions that have been deposited by her present or past life in the depths of her own head or heart; to communicate something in order to make it more valuable, to let it circulate, so that once it has been cast out to others it will come back to her a little more magical, like the shields of the Northwest American Indians, which are endowed with greater and greater value the more often they have been the object of ceremonial exchanges.* (21)

Words are the occasion of a metamorphosis: you must walk through them and come out again after a process of transformation across difficult words, *impossible words such as necessity, sense, desire, beauty, limit, sacrifice, soul, void.* Don't use them lightly. Sense in them the quality of a manifestation. (22)

These accretions of words wouldn't exist if they hadn't been formulated in a specific arrangement which makes them present, while it takes you elsewhere. It is implausible, and it exists for those who hear it, for anyone who seeks it with desire. To seek with desire is *himma*, that Arabic term translated as the creative power of the heart: creative in the sense that it causes something that exists to be made manifest. (23)

Chimeric writing is grasped across long stretches of time as it moves by reverberations: *not the thing, but the resonance of the thing.* The signal may sound blurred but the order of words is necessary. Like in fables, the voice you hear in the form of a summoning is the only possible form of knowing, the form of your own hearing by which you know, and are known. (24)

Remember the moment—the stir—when you encountered your book, your poem, your cadence, your page as if given to you and you only: in silence, impassible and vertiginous, remember the sense of recognition and calling. You knew you'd known them by heart before you read them. Remember the speechlessness on encountering them, nothing to say because they were saying to you, they were saying to you what you knew already but had to be uncovered through a deepening. Remember the moment when you found a hidden quote in a book, how singular and resounding, 'this

book is speaking to me'; how confusing, maddening at first, to encounter quotes but no direct references. Later you realised you had to see them as invitations to read, and find your own—through the kinships heard in your distinctive frequency.

Chimeric writing desires its subjects, and desire is the impetus for knowing and the root of understanding as relation. It does not wait until the relation is proved objectively, to enter in a dialogue: the dialogue itself is the proof. There are breaks in it, too: *discontinuity that stimulates the mind toward a new effort.* (25)

Although a composite monster, chimeric writing is not afraid of beauty. (26)

I was haunted by an image at the beginning of this: an image that I can't pin down to any specific occurrence, be it in life, or art, or both. At that time of the day which in Italian is *imbrunire* and in English a chimera, in a room on top of a lighthouse, a radio transmitter on a small table. The signal is persistent, but not received. Someone stands by the radio, their face not seen. Perhaps we are never entirely ourselves until we find the image, site, sound that has been forever waiting for us, so this continues to be my search, my chimera. How and when is it coming to meet me? What signal is it? A conversation, almost nothing, *presque rien, thus continues the night in my multiple head.* One day I realised it is not an image, not a song, but a manner of arranging, chimeric. Once I am chimerically constellated, meaning comes with it. The solution is alchemical: does not aim to an end, but to an opus, the opus of a lifetime. Chimeric writing does not change its circuit, its breath, its beat a dance a site a loss a chord for every line, every word, every breath in the mine of your chimeric writing. (27)

2. THE MINE (THE BODY)

siamo, come si vede, nella forma cava SFN16

quel suo folle regalo: ‘una rosa, solo una rosa’, in pieno inverno I11

ritmi ineffabili I111

ci rivelano, gli incantevoli libri, ciò che ci sembrava di sapere da
sempre I64

le geometrie dello spirito I64

il critico è un’eco, certo I145

concava, tacita e risonante I118

non occorre immaginazione ma attenzione . . . Poesia è anch’essa
attenzione I166

un solo discorso in più tempi, come una serie di pezzi musicali
dove tornano sempre gli stessi temi e addirittura le stesse parole
LaM248

la stessa parola, ripetuta da voci diverse e disparate, in epoche
diverse e disparate SFN196

un segreto destinato all’orecchio suo e a nessun altro I169

per le campane nuove è sempre usato il bronzo delle antiche,
cosicché si può dire che ogni campana sopravviva dell’altra, di
generazione in generazione SFN206

certo, la voce del flauto è remota . . . quel suono è di continuo
travolto via, lacerato e disperso dal sibilo del percepibile I136

quei sensi soprannaturali che l’hesychia ha chiamato alla vita I216

questa concezione quasi corporea e corporale del metodo SFN152

l’occasione della metamorfosi I231

le sentenze sono dardi dalla punta di ferro I219

quel sonetto miracoloso di Gaspara Stampa I144

che si possegga come non possedendo, si sia come non essendo:
lasciando che in sé viva ed operi Altri AD29

un seguito di citazioni . . . legate fra loro da poco più che da note in
margine. . . . soprattutto nel tempo dell'orrore, il solo scopo di uno
scritto di questo genere è di rimandare il lettore alle sue univoche,
imperturbabili fonti I248

gli elementi corporei del tremendo . . . *tremendum hoc mysterium*,
con il suo immenso peso anche fonico I236

sottile, terribile circolazione (di *pneuma*, di *prana*, oserei dire
qualche volta di *mana*) I235

ricoperti da un'invisibile armatura di giaculatorie . . . lo stato di
orazione perenne SFN139

la passione della perfezione viene tardi I73

questo trappismo della perfezione I84

il segreto di quel rifiuto infinitamente esigente I85

più d'una volta abbiamo visto quest'albatro entrato, per
delicatezza, nella gabbietta del grillo I87

meticolosa, speciosa, inflessibile come tutti i veri visionari I74

una virtù polare grazie alla quale il sentimento della vita sia nello
stesso tempo rarefatto e intensificato. Cosicché, grazie a un
movimento simultaneo e contraddittorio, là dove l'artista concentra
al massimo l'oggetto riducendolo, come i pittori T'ang, a
quell'unico profilo, a quella pura linea dall'alto al basso che è, per
così dire, la pronuncia stessa dell'anima, li lettore lo senta in sé
moltiplicarsi, esaltarsi in armoniche innumerevoli I81

un poeta che ad ogni singola cosa, del visibile e dell'invisibile, prestasse l'identica misura di attenzione, così come l'entomologo s'industria a esprimere con precisione l'inesprimibile azzurro di un'ala di libellula, questi sarebbe il poeta assoluto I83

e l'eloquenza può fare perno su una particola I83

e avere accordato a qualcosa un'attenzione estrema è avere accettato di soffrirla fino alla fine, e non soltanto di soffrirla ma di soffrire per essa I169

una monaca medievale che ricami pianete memorabile, più vagheggiando i colori delle proprie sete che i santi volti effigiati– quasi che un'effigie possa ispirare venerazione se un'attenzione quasi maniaca non trascelse i materiali con i quali rispondere alla visione I77

cominciano con l'identico accordo, si aprono in progressioni diverse, rifluiscono in cerchi alla loro sorgente, ciò che è solo possibile alla totalità e permanenza di un identico spirito commosso I78

esaminare una pagina come si deve, al modo cioè di un paleografo, su cinque o sei piani insieme, da scrittore I80

l'inesprimibile come la sola presenza I26

liturgia–come poesia–è splendore gratuito spreco delicato, più necessario dell'utile SFN133

il sangue m'è affluito al cuore attraverso cinque secoli SFN192

SFN: Sotto falso nome

I: Gli imperdonabili

LaM: Lettere a Mita

AD: Appassionate distanze

3. THE BELL (THE TAIL)

(1) I wanted to write these pages for Cristina because she offered the best description I've encountered so far of how I see writing take form: a creeper growing organically in between the stones of what was written before. I wanted to transmit her ability to put together words (having arranged her stones) in a way that gave them the quality of apparitions: texts that shimmer as recurring mythical happenings, and myths have the quality of being the same and not quite so, of being grounded and slightly hovering, just like her texts. I wanted to write with her because she rarely wrote "I" and wrote in pseudonyms, yet her singular person was first and prominent in her parallel oeuvre: the letters she wrote to her friends. I wanted to write from and toward her, because so often she spoke to me as I read.

(2) I transform the substance of Cristina's words into resonance, so they can be heard. *Heard* is an anagram of *read* with the added *h* of a breath. Like in *hesychia* (ἡσυχία)—a term that occurs repeatedly in Cristina's texts in reference to the method divulged by monk Nikephoros in the 13th century, drawn from the early teachings of Evagrius Ponticus, to achieve presence through coordinated repetitions of prayer and breathing—to write these pages I have breathed in and repeated her words, countless times, aiming to hear my words emerge from hers through small variance in stillness, through resonance rather than reference. So the commentary dissolves and coagulates, cyclically: a work of radiance and return. Robert Duncan in *The H.D. Book*, utmost example of a work written inside and through the words of another writer to the point where you can hear two heartbeats in one cadence: 'I have taken psychic being, taken fire, from these works.'¹ I have taken psychic being from the works of Cristina.

In *The Mystic Fable* Michel De Certeau demonstrates that to read mystic writing as utterance-in-the-page, is a question of ascertaining what is received, heard.² For Cristina my words become *volume*: I receive, hear, amplify, and repeat them, rewrite and hum along them, diffuse them. Again with Duncan, 'deriving as I do, I burn the nets of my origins': transformation is in place, across language as patched-up material of residues and remembrance.³ Through my repeated encounters with Cristina's words, an idea of *chimeric writing* begins to emerge, in close proximity with the words it is derived from, and transformed into the material of my thinking.

(3) Following a cue from Cristina's short text *La campana*, in which it is stated that each new bell is made by fusing the bronze of an old one, following the formal backbone of *Il flauto e il tappeto*, where recurring themes and repetitions of words occur deliberately throughout as reflections of the practice of reading, following the idea of writing as transmission of existing material manifested at the end of *Sensi soprannaturali* as method, this commentary takes the form, and writes the experience of the making, the ringing of, and the listening to a bell, in a confusion of sources. Con-fusion, melting-with: I melt and transform the bronze of Cristina's prose into the material of my writing, and make it ring across reiterations, offering the sound of her prose along with the interferences inevitable in listening. A *transcelation* is proposed, embodying the impetus of transmission and the rapture of reading *before* translation. Writing about Marianne Moore, one of the 'unforgivable' ones, Cristina uses the verb 'trascegliere': not the simple 'scegliere', 'to choose', but 'trascegliere', affixing 'tra-' to emphasise the labour and attention in choosing one's materials to respond to the vision that prompts to write. The chain of words, *trascegliere*, *transcend*, *transcelate* holds this sense of choice and care: to transcend it is imperative to be present, to imagine it is necessary to give attention to what is real.⁴

Here Cristina's words become resonant material for speculations around chimeric writing as hybrid form and transmission. The text embodies the shapes of its argument while reflecting on it, conjoining theory, method, and writing practice. The first section presents the resonance of Cristina's words in my writing, while the sources are obscured: having committed them to heart I repeat them, transformed and slightly out of sync. In the second section Cristina's words reappear in Italian, tolling close to their sources. This third section is the actual bell, bronze and void, material and resonance: my references to Cristina's works, and to those which appear with them in my constellation of reading are disclosed, across intermittent motions of empty plenitude.

(4) The tolling of this text begins from silence: from my speechlessness in front of Cristina's words, that I've been reading for years and speak so close to my concerns as a writer, from the resounding silence of the lack of English translations of her texts, a silence doubled up by the realisation that her words are over-quotable, that many of the existing secondary literature around her indulges in quotation, after which I am left with *tutto e niente*, all and

nothing, to quote from a sonnet by Gaspara Stampa dear to Cristina, and crucial in the development of my thinking. All and nothing, fullness and emptiness: fullness in kinship with her words, emptiness in adding further reasoning, emptiness in front of any expectations to generate ‘content’, fullness in thinking of the transformations of the substance of her words, which my emptiness can contain as alchemical vessel. What if I removed the quotation marks, and allowed the material of her words to resound, transformed into other words, the same and slightly out of synch? What if attempted to work with Cristina’s words *as material*, placing my writing inside them, mixing and turning and kneading them, rather than celebrate them from a distance? Then Cristina’s position of reading as kinship and erasure of self, her reflections around knowledge as absorption, might be taken as a core approach and would become my poetics, my manner of proceeding inside her words, not through evaluation of content but through suggestions of resonance: ‘an image of Echo and Chimera’, as Stampa’s sonnet ends. Chimera: a composite, a monster, a yearning.

From the urgency to write my Cristina-Chimera, a transmission-transcelation of her words takes form, in the plural, *lasciando che in sé viva ed operi Altri*.⁵ I am not a translator: I write criticism, write chimeras. What to do in front of words that speak so deeply, yet are not heard by many? I can transmit them in fragments as I heard their murmurs in my mind while reading, and committed them to heart. It is not a case of registering everything, but about long-term engagement with the material of reading, and its residues. Following De Certeau there is no silence, no ineffable but the buzz of the ‘great subterranean layers, deep circulations, translations, transmissions, meetings, conversations, histories of reading’.⁶ Writing as transmission moves in the tension which Ingeborg Bachmann identified in her *Frankfurt Lectures* as necessary to bring forward a new ability to comprehend, a new spirit, a new cadence.⁷

‘The world is like the impression left by the telling of a story’
Yogavasishtha, 2, 3, 11.⁸

(5) Text that take form between technical mastery and mystery, rising out of the gaps between ‘facts’; texts formed out of reading as the exchange of a silent currency, and sometimes when you read them you feel as if a blood flow from five centuries ago rushes onto your heart. A flame burns in these texts, a flame that Maria

Zambrano called in *The Flame*, written shortly after Cristina's death, 'the living flame that consumes time and creates it and then duration ceases.'⁹

(6) *Sensi soprannaturali* (*Supernatural Senses*) is at once a subheading that appears in the section devoted to the sayings of the Desert Fathers in Elémire Zolla's anthology *I mistici*,¹⁰ to which Cristina contributed editorial input and several translations, and the title of a text she wrote for *Conoscenza Religiosa*, the fullest expression of her study of transcendence-through-body, and of 'that divine realism which surpasses any created reality' at the grounds of her poetics.¹¹ 'To be devoured, devour,'¹² she writes: writing, throughout her oeuvre, along with the practice of reading, is also a devouring and being devoured, a fully physical encounter with the text through to the highest form of understanding. See also the episode of St. Joseph eating the heart of Christ from San Graal in Robert de Boron that she translated.¹³

(7) 'Un seguito di citazioni . . . legate fra loro da poco più che da note in margine. . . . soprattutto nel tempo dell'orrore, il solo scopo di uno scritto di questo genere è di rimandare il lettore alle sue univoche, imperturbabili fonti.'¹⁴ So Cristina presented her approach to writing at the end of *Sensi soprannaturali*—deeper than the physical, therefore *frightening*, to paraphrase William Carlos Williams's words on reading her translations of his work.¹⁵

(8) Bell, Belinda, the rose in the snow, the impossible that is actual in the imaginal. Once Cristina wrote to her friend Alejandra Pizarnik that she was like Belinda in the fairy tale: she wanted the rose in the snow. She was cause of all sort of uncanny phenomena too, of short-circuits: Cristina reports of a day when, writing to her Argentine friend, a lighting bolt struck very close to the house, and shortly after, the doorbell began to ring, and nobody was at the door.¹⁶ Writing, thinking, set bells ringing. Nobody at the door, presence is manifested through sounds, through coincidences that lead nowhere but into profound connections through less legitimate channels. An image of echo and chimera.

Cristina quoted copiously, or better said: she breathed in and transformed words by others through sustained attention. Writing as an echo chamber of words which came before was at the core of her

poetics. But her presence inevitably left its mark. Like Duncan with the words of H.D., from her writers Cristina took psychic being, took fire. So did I from hers, transformed.

Writing for Cristina—I am reluctant, with Ceronetti, to call it *critical*,¹⁷ yet fiction it never was: let's call it chimeric—yearns for deep presence in every detail. She wrote to Margherita Pieracci Harwell: 'Per poter gettare tutta la luce su quello scorcio di raso bianco, bisogna che dietro, nell'ombra, sia presente tutta la stanza.'¹⁸ The short text *Les sources de la Vivonne* exemplifies this training of the senses to encounter the extraordinary in the mundane, the big in the small, the inversions of scale and depth typical of fable which drove her understanding of the world and of literature, of the world through literature. She recounts that moment in Proust's *Recherche* when the narrator and Gilberte visit the sources of the river Vivonne 'dopo una vita di chimere intorno a quelle sorgenti, e in luogo della cosa extraterrestre, cosa vede? "Una specie di lavatoio quadrato da cui montavano delle bolle." Questa frase glaciale, in cui Proust sembra voler comprimere, sopprimere come il gigante nell'ampollina il suo sogno fluviale . . .'¹⁹ The magic threshold in a text lies in making reality a tiny bit smaller than what is expected: like in fables. She herself made her self smaller, concealing herself in pseudonyms. Such erasure is not for a silencing, but makes space for the fullness of conversations with more than one, more than self.

The word 'chimera' winks at me from a page in *Les sources de la Vivonne*. It offers me a connecting link across the surface of the page, across the sounding substance of words, a formal nexus to work with, an unexpected endorsement of my work with this material. It gestures beyond meaning, toward what I can hear in its whispers, and offers a sense of thoughts interlaced, of tangency, of those key moments when a manner of understanding and connecting is revealed at once on the surface of words, and deeper beyond them. *Chimera* is the last word in Sonnet CXXIV by Gaspara Stampa, the Italian poet who in the sixteenth century wrote a cycle of *Rime* which disrupted the stylistic code of Petrarchism from an uncompromising (if torn, and speaking in 'obscure accents') position, and declared herself to be happier than the angels because, living on earth, she could experience desire and physical passion. It is at once a song of lost love, and a manifestation of the sense of being split, half-alive half-dead, feeling everything and feeling nothing, by which the

writer's true form is 'an image of Echo and Chimera'.²⁰ I encountered the sonnet as it was named in a letter by Cristina, who deemed it 'unprecedented';²¹ my yearning for chimeric writing before I knew what it was, becomes substantiated by a nod in reading. This is the point when the impetus of commentary is reversed, when the material begins to respond.

'Word-use' echoes Laura (Riding) Jackson.²²

'The imaginal' echoes Henry Corbin, reflected (though not referred to) by Cristina: 'Un libro pieno di sapienza, che riferisce press'a poco tutto quanto la Persia classica – e soprattutto la Persia mistica – hanno insegnato intorno ai fili che corrono tra cielo e terra'.²³

The Church of the Suffrage in Rome hosts in an adjacent building a collection of objects which bear the physical marks of revelations by the Souls in Purgatory, such as the five fingertips that pierced through the book of prayer of one Giuseppe Schutz, like five burning nails; Cristina wrote of these as 'a seal of fire across the centuries'.²⁴ Writing for her does that too: it burns, it cuts through. It is not random, or arbitrary: it reaches you, and you only. In a letter written to her father when she was twenty: 'Ho tante cose da dire! Quasi direi *da salvare*: . . . cose che io sola sento di aver visto e sentito fino alla sofferenza e che assolutamente non devono morire'.²⁵ Writing in order to *rescue*, to rescue things I know only I have seen, and felt, to the point of suffering; things that absolutely must not die. This is why I write, this is how I was summoned by Cristina: having suffered through her words, that absolutely must not die. Borges: 'Each time we repeat a line by Dante or Shakespeare we are, in some way, that instant when Dante or Shakespeare created that line'.²⁶ Is Cristina here, now?

(9) 'It says exactly what had been better left unsaid . . . what always had to remain unclear and groundless. . . . It's quicksand, but it doesn't quicken anything. It is groundless but not without grounds'.²⁷

'A "where" to which a geographical point is no answer . . .' 'Now, in the case of Avicennism as in the case of every other system of the world, the mode of presence assumed by the philosopher by reason of the system that he professes is what, in the last analysis, appears

as the genuinely *situative* element in that system considered in itself.²⁸

(10) ‘The possibility of this orientation once given, it likewise becomes possible to answer the question “where?” by indicating a *meaning*, a *direction*, that situates human existence. Here the answer will simultaneously *orient* the soul *in the* meaning, the *direction*, of its condition of *Stranger* and toward the necessity of an *Oriental* philosophy.’²⁹

(11) ‘. . . if you want to know what you are . . .’ echoes Evagrius Ponticus.³⁰

(12) Vessels echo James Hillman.³¹

(13) ‘I have avoided chaptered abundance, and spaced myself, to what it seemed any person, speaking out of a single identity, might need for keeping an appointment with the Subject. For I wished not to distract others with my telling from keeping their own appointment with the Subject; and to find a common measure of telling.’³²

(14) Cristina on Marianne Moore: ‘meticolosa, speciosa, inflessibile.’³³ Writing about Moore she writes about her own writing. The commentary on Moore becomes mirror. Nothing to interpret, all to see, to really see, to scrutinise with attention, utmost form and medium of imagination.

(15) In a letter to Alejandra Pizarnik, Cristina advised that to regain the ability to write one must make contact with oneself, write down a list of quotes, and the text that must bind them together shall grow among them, like a creeper among the stones.³⁴

‘. . . to begin again in the unspeaking obstruction of the stone. It is the artist’s block that heightens his awe of the other power in which his material speaks to him. The block itself is the blockage of a breath. The inspiring stone “breathes” as the artist awakens to his work.’³⁵

‘Each of us carries in himself the Image of his own world, his *Imago mundi*, and projects it into a more or less coherent universe.’³⁶

(16) 'I write because I so deeply want to speak. Though writing only gives me the full measure of silence.'³⁷

'... durable sense of the further' echoes Laura (Riding) Jackson.³⁸

(17) '... not all hers' echoes Elfriede Jelinek.³⁹

Cristina, on Gottfried Benn,⁴⁰ echoes Gottfried Benn.⁴¹

(18) Cristina on Giacomo Leopardi.⁴²

'Erudition, which is also hard-working and hidden, discovers little by little, beneath the mountains that fascinate the look, great subterranean layers, deep circulations, and secret discoveries . . . shifts are brought about, meetings prepared—a common experience is elaborated. The mystic work of history.'⁴³

(19) **Entangled Vocalisations of Desire.** For Teresa of Avila, in de Certeau's words, 'the book appears . . . as if already offering consonants for the confused vocalization of desire.'⁴⁴ I call this method of moving across texts through their whispers, echoes, and hidden connections, a listening to the page, and the resulting writing, *chimeric*. ' . . . e senta tutto e non senta niente; sì che può darsi la mia forma vera, da chi ben mira a sí vario accidente, un'immagine d'Eco e di Chimera,' Gaspara Stampa, *Rime d'amore*; 'e ti chiamo ti chiamo chimera,' Dino Campana, *La chimera*;⁴⁵ 'e ti chiamo ti chiamo chimera,' the voice of Carmelo Bene, reading Campana's *La chimera*; 'ed io ti chiamo ti chiamo ti chiamo sirena, ci sono solo. E tu suoni e risuoni e risuoni e risuoni o chimera. E perciò io ti chiamo e ti chiamo e ti chiamo chimera. E io ti chiamo e ti chiamo e ti chiamo sirena,' Amelia Rosselli;⁴⁶ ' . . . imperfect songs, songs which were only a song still to come, a movement toward the song, that enigmatic song which is powerful because of its insufficiency,' Maurice Blanchot;⁴⁷ Gerard de Nerval, *Chimeras*;⁴⁸ *Chimera*, Campana, 'campana' in Italian is 'bell', Campo, *La campana*, bell, ring, resound, all over again, Da Capo. *Da Capo*, Da Campo, the M in excess is monster, my chimera. One day Chimera was muted. The m dropped out: chi era. 'Chi era?' in Italian is 'who was she?' Me? Here begins the questioning of self through the M of muted, M of mutation, M of me-monster: manners of writing selves through

speechlessness, transformations, a restless language. So it goes, so it spins, as you continue to read, and I to write.

(20) 'I have taken psychic being, taken fire, from these works. Over years, I have confused myself with them . . . used [them] in creating the poet I am. We are concerned with the architecture of a man, but building with words, with the breath or spirit forms, morphemes in inventions of time, we build structures of air, rising one within another without displacement.'⁴⁹

(21) 'Because for a writer, this is the whole point: to transmit into the head or heart of another person the concretions that have been deposited by his present or past life in the depths of his own head or heart and that have had value only for him until then; to communicate something in order to make it more valuable, to let it circulate, so that once it has been cast out to others it will come back to him a little more magical, like the shields of the Northwestern American Indians, which are endowed with greater and greater value the more often they have been the object of ceremonial exchanges.'⁵⁰

(22) Roberto Calasso on Simone Weil.⁵¹

(23) 'This is what Mallarmé meant when he insisted so stubbornly that his poetry was composed of effects and suggestions that must act as if on a mental keyboard. Never state the thing, but the resonance of the thing.'⁵²

' . . . *himma*, an extremely complicated notion which cannot perhaps be translated by any one word . . . mediation, project, intention, desire, force of will . . . the "creative power of the heart" . . . the act of meditating, conceiving, projecting, ardently desiring . . . the force of an intention.' 'The creative operation necessarily implies the manifestation of an outward existence that is conferred upon something which already possessed a latent existence.' 'The heart creates by "causing to appear," by "preserving" something which already exists.'⁵³

(24) '*Talem eum vidi qualem capere potui*' ('I saw him as I was able to receive') 'Acts of Peter', xx-xxi, *Apocryphal New Testament*.⁵⁴

(25) . . . echoes Calasso.⁵⁵

‘The work is not a rational dissertation. It is precisely the break, the discontinuity, that stimulates the mind to a new effort: the “way through” must be opened by the mystic himself.’⁵⁶

(26) ‘*Irony*, the entirety of *Maldoror* testifies, *is the very experience of the metamorphosis sought at the heart of language.*’⁵⁷

‘But it is true, they fear / it more than death, beauty is feared / more than death, more than they fear death.’ William Carlos Williams, *Paterson*.⁵⁸

‘L’espressione “ridurre a bellezza” mi sembra così strana. Non è la bellezza ciò da cui si dovrebbe necessariamente partire? E’ un giacinto azzurro che attira col suo profumo Persefone nei regni sotterranei della conoscenza e del destino . . . Questo fanno i miti. Questo dovrebbe fare la poesia.’⁵⁹

(27) Writing of her work I take the role, and the voice, of one of those characters in folk songs who goes out for a walk one day, one day, and meets Death in a field: having witnessed deep, timeless occurrences, I adopt the voice of someone who had been there, having experienced the extraordinary in the mundane, the reduction through lessening that makes form necessary and reverberant, the occasion of a metamorphosis. Thus continues the night in my multiple head.

Luc Ferrari, *Presque rien*, No. 2, *Ainsi continue la nuit dans ma tête multiple*, 1979.

THUS CONTINUES THE NIGHT (IN MY MULTIPLE HEAD):
ENDNOTES

¹ Robert Duncan, *The H.D. Book* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2011), 439.

² Michel de Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, Vol. I and II, trans. Michael B. Smith (Chicago, IL and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992, 2015).

³ Duncan, *The H.D. Book*, 219.

⁴ Cristina Campo, ‘La Campana’, in *Sotto falso nome* (Milano: Adelphi, 1998), 205-208.

Campo, ‘Gli imperdonabili’, in *Gli imperdonabili* (Milano: Adelphi, 1987), 77.

⁵ Campo, ‘Una delle ultime gran dame di questa terra,’ in *Appassionate Distanze*, Monica Farnetti, Filippo Secchieri, and Roberto Taioli, eds. (Mantova: Tre Lune, 2006), 29.

⁶ De Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, Vol. II, 119.

⁷ Ingeborg Bachmann, *Letteratura e utopia*, trans. Vanda Perretta (Milano: Adelphi, 1993).

⁸ Roberto Calasso, *Ka* (Milano: Adelphi, 2001).

⁹ Maria Zambrano, ‘La fiamma’, in *Conoscenza religiosa*, 4, ottobre-dicembre 1977, 385, mentioned in Cristina De Stefano, *Belinda e il mostro: vita segreta di Cristina Campo* (Milano: Adelphi, 2002), 171.

¹⁰ Campo, ‘Sensi soprannaturali,’ in *I mistici dell’Occidente*, ed. Elémire Zolla, vol. I (Milano: Adelphi, 1997), 307.

¹¹ Campo, ‘Sensi soprannaturali,’ in *Gli imperdonabili*, 244.

¹² Campo, *Gli imperdonabili*, 233.

¹³ Zolla, *I mistici dell’Occidente*, 770.

¹⁴ Campo, *Gli imperdonabili*, 248.

¹⁵ Margherita Pieracci Harwell, ‘Cristina Campo maestra di lettura’, in *Per Cristina Campo*, Monica Farnetti and Giovanna Fozzer, eds. (Milano: All’insegna del pesce d’oro di Vanni Scheiwiller: 1998), 107.

¹⁶ Campo, letter to A. Pizarnik, Alejandra Pizarnik Papers, Box 9, Folder 1, Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

¹⁷ Guido Ceronetti, ‘Cristina Campo, o della perfezione,’ in *Gli imperdonabili*, 278.

¹⁸ Campo, *Lettere a Mita* (Milano: Adelphi, 1999), 288.

¹⁹ Campo, ‘Les sources de la Vivonne,’ in *Gli imperdonabili*, 45.

²⁰ Gaspara Stampa, Sonnet CXXIV, *Rime*, 1554.

²¹ Campo, ‘Lettera a Giorgio Orelli, August 1954,’ in *Il mio pensiero non vi lascia* (Milano: Adelphi, 2011), 171.

²² Laura (Riding) Jackson, *The Telling* (Manchester: Flyfield Books/Carcanet, 2005), 69.

²³ Henry Corbin, ‘Mundus Imaginalis, or, The Imaginary and the Imaginal,’ trans. Ruth Horine, *Spring* (Zurich, 1972): 1-19.

Corbin, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth: From Mazdean Iran to Shi’ite Iran*, trans. Nancy Pearson (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977).

Campo, ‘Notti’, in *Gli Imperdonabili*, 68-69.

²⁴ Campo, ‘Un sigillo di fuoco arrivato attraverso i secoli’, in *Sotto falso nome*, 106.

²⁵ Cristina De Stefano, *Belinda e il mostro: vita segreta di Cristina Campo* (Milano: Adelphi, 2002), 34.

²⁶ Borges, Jorge Luis, *Selected Non-Fictions*, ed. Eliot Weinberger, trans. Esther Allen, Suzanne Jill Levine, Eliot Weinberger (London: Penguin, 1999), 490.

²⁷ Elfriede Jelinek, *Sidelined*, Nobel Lecture, 2004, <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/2004/jelinek/lecture/> (accessed 18 October 2018).

²⁸ Henry Corbin, *Avicenna And The Visionary Recital*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 16, 3-4.

²⁹ Henry Corbin, *Avicenna And The Visionary Recital*, 16, 17.

³⁰ Evagrius Ponticus, *Aliae Sententiae*, in Zolla, 342.

³¹ James Hillman, ‘Vessels’, *Alchemical Psychology* (Putnam: Spring, 2014), 36-46.

³² Laura (Riding) Jackson, *The Telling*, 60.

³³ Campo, *Gli imperdonabili*, 74.

³⁴ Campo, letter to A. Pizarnik, Alejandra Pizarnik Papers, Box 9, Folder 1, Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

³⁵ Duncan, *The H.D. Book*, 83.

³⁶ Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 8.

³⁷ Clarice Lispector, *Água Viva*, trans. Stefan Tobler (London: Penguin, 2012) (1973) 6.

³⁸ (Riding) Jackson, *The Telling*, xv.

³⁹ Jelinek, *Her Not All Her: On/With Robert Walser*, trans. Damion Searls (London: Sylph Editions, 2012).

⁴⁰ Campo, *Gli imperdonabili*, 78.

⁴¹ Gottfried Benn, *Romanzo del fenotipo*, trans. Amelia Valtolina (Milano: Adelphi, 2009) (1989, 1991).

⁴² Campo, *Gli imperdonabili*, 80.

⁴³ De Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, Vol. I, 119.

⁴⁴ De Certeau, *The Mystic Fable*, Vol. I, 126.

⁴⁵ Dino Campana, ‘La Chimera,’ in *Canti Orfici* (Milano: Rizzoli, 1989), 105-6.

⁴⁶ Amelia Rosselli, ‘La libellula,’ in *La libellula* (Milano: SE, 1985), 27-28.

⁴⁷ Maurice Blanchot, ‘The Song of the Sirens,’ in *The Gaze of Orpheus and Other Literary Essays*, trans. Lydia Davis (New York: Station Hill, 1981), 105-113.

⁴⁸ Gérard De Nerval, *Le chimere e altri sonetti*, trans. Walter Nesti (Verona: Bonaccorso, 2005).

⁴⁹ Duncan, *The H.D. Book*, 439.

⁵⁰ Michel Leiris, *The Rule of The Game / Scratches*, trans. Lydia Davis (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 13-14.

⁵¹ Calasso, ‘L’ordalia delle parole impossibili,’ in *I quarantanove gradini* (Milano: Adelphi, 1991), 361-365.

⁵² Calasso, *Literature and the Gods*, trans. Tim Parks (London: Vintage, 2001), 116.

⁵³ Corbin, *Alone with the Alone: Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn’ Arabi*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 220, 222, 223, 226.

⁵⁴ Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 92.

⁵⁵ Calasso, *L’ardore* (Milano: Adelphi, 2016).

⁵⁶ Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, 200.

⁵⁷ Maurice Blanchot, ‘The Experience of Lautréamont,’ in *Lautréamont and Sade*, trans. Stuart and Michelle Kendall, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 145.

⁵⁸ Campo, *Gli imperdonabili*, 76.

⁵⁹ Campo, *Sotto Falso Nome*, 203.