

The chore of the ritual, an ordeal of
The land grips him with first
Chill of the night, his firewood
Store is full and he keeps the
Watch inspired in wakefull images
Of his blessing. The herdsman thinks
How peaceful and gracious the
Lamb looks in the firelight, the
Still wooly cheeks, the glistening
Eyes. He communicates with the
Lamb, the blessing, in the gold
Firelight. The sacrificial lamb's
Head becomes baskets of rice
Grapes for wine; the lamb's body,
Sheaths of grain, the herdsman
Cannot compass with his arms. The fan droops.
The wolf is at his throat.
His eyes survey the landscape as before his
Resting, surveying the lengthening
Rays of a red-orange dawn.