

## NICK MUSKA

### *Ohio Meltdown*

Came the first Geeks to the Firelands!  
The rejected many, traders, their squaws, slayers of red brethren,  
religious kickouts, exploiters of virgin terrain.  
Atavistic bloodpumps of the American Tradition  
sluicing their streams into Canesadooharie, Olentangy,  
Kokosing, Miami, Little Miami, Raccoon, Little Raccoon,  
Tuscarawas, and Scioto; dumping springthawed iceblood  
into Maumee; filling the main vein of the Water Father.  
All spent their drop here!

Next, the Cincinnati cultured, white winegrowers and Jews:  
Crazed Chataqua chatters mingling streams down by the Ohio.  
The riverlit eyes of whitetrash rednecks boiling up  
from poorman's Ky. and W. Va.  
Then, a century's cities' brimful with Europe's backwaters!  
Bohunks and Poles, Croats and Lats, Hunkies and Slavs  
sloshing with Hillbillies, escaped Negroes; with Mexico's,  
Puerto Rico's, and Sicily's runoff!  
Steelmills, tools and dies, tractor factories up on their backs,  
Planting the land silly with corn and with soy.

Progress! Teamwork! Baseball and football!  
Mudhens, Indians, Browns and Redlegs!  
Almost a concrete mile near Bellefontaine in 1891!  
From sandstone dust quarries to sootsky cities  
to atoms of heavy water —future generations powered  
by this richly osterized blood, glowing eerily  
in darkening grandfather night.

Ohioans! We all know what's round on both ends  
And high where it counts. Though Midwesternly flat  
Here, all melts down.