

## Enes Kišević: Poems in Croatian and Translated in English

Enes Kišević

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Sunce,  
čije si ti ime?  
Kojoj galaksiji,  
kojoj naciji,  
kojem narodu pripadaš?  
Pa ne možeš ti tako  
po svijetu hodati:  
danas na istoku,  
sutra na zapadu.  
Ti moraš da se odlučiš  
čije si?  
Da se izjasniš  
konačno.  
Mi to moramo znati:  
u slučaju tvoje smrti  
gdje ćemo te pokopati?  
U kojoj zemlji?  
U kojem kraju?  
U kojoj četvrti?

**Belonging**

Sun, whose name is yours?  
Which Galaxy,  
Which Nation,  
Which People do you belong to?

Well, you cannot go on  
Rambling like this around the world:  
Today in the East,  
And tomorrow the West!

You have to make up your mind.

To declare yourself, finally:  
Whose are you?

We have to know it -  
In case of your death,  
Where are we to bury you?  
In which country?  
In which district?  
In which neighborhood?

**Mržnj**

Oni su toliko množili mržnju;  
da se ne okuži, bježaše zrak.  
Sjedeći u društvu  
suglasnih suglasnika MRŽNJ,  
prvi put oćutjeh kako je  
u tom neartikularanom skupu  
teško, ali viteško biti  
nezavisni samoglasnik A.  
I otkud taj sram na mojem licu?

**MRŽNJ\***

They multiplied hatred so very much -  
To avoid contamination  
Air itself flew away.  
While seated in the company  
Of consonants full of consonation  
M R Z N J  
For the first time I could see  
How difficult yet how noble it was to be  
The independent vowel A.

Što ne mogu mrziti?  
Ne znam ni sam.  
Ili što se sasvim prirodno  
u tom puku  
ponašam kao nepostojeće A.

And why on my face is there this shame?  
Why can I not hate -  
Who am I to blame?  
Or why am I so proud  
In this inarticulate crowd  
To behave like  
The silent A.

\*Mrznja means hatred in Croatian

### Žene u crnom

Dok svjetskom paradnom pistom  
prolaze šarene vojske, diplomati i manekenke  
(odjeveni po posljednjem krik mode),  
i dok zrakom struji miris krvi i parfema,  
na vama je još uvijek Antigona crnina,  
crnina Majke Marije, crnina Anne Frank,  
crnina jasenovačkih majki, blajburških majki,  
srebreničkih majki...

Vidim vas  
kako razgovarate sa silovanim ženama u Trnopolju,  
kako kozaračkoj ratnoj siročadi pružate ruke,  
stojite pognutih glava pred logorašima iz Omarske.

Vaša crnina, nažalost, svakim danom  
još crnja postaje.  
A tako bih vas, još za života,  
u slavljeničkim haljinama volio vidjeti.

Međutim,  
sila i oholost su danas  
u sjaju,  
a istina je u crnini.

No uskoro će mladi ljudi  
govoriti o vremenu  
kada na crnoj zemlji  
vaša crnina  
ljepša bješe od cvijeća.

### Women in Black

As colorful armies, diplomats and models  
Walk the red carpet of the World  
(Dressed following the latest fashion),  
And the smell of blood and perfume  
Lingers in the air,  
You are still wrapped in Antigone's black,  
In the Virgin Mary's black, Anne Frank's black,  
The black worn by the mothers of the camp of Jasenovac,  
the mothers of Bleiburg,  
The mothers of Srebrenica...

I can see you  
Talking to the raped women of Trnopolje,  
Reaching out to the war orphans of Kozara,  
Bowing your heads before the detainees of Omarska...

Alas, the black you're wearing,  
Is getting more black by the day.  
Whereas I so long to see you  
Wearing festive clothes in my lifetime.

Today, however,  
Might and Arrogance  
Shine brightly,  
While Truth is wrapped in black.

But soon, young people  
Will be talking about the time  
When your blackness  
On this black land  
Was more beautiful than flowers.

*Translator's note: Women in Black is an anti-war NGO in Serbia which was very active during the wars in the '90s and is still active today.*

### Sanski most

Ljudi grade mostove.  
Mostovi izgrađuju ljude.  
Svaki je most u svojoj biti  
dobronamjieran.  
Mostu je jedini naum  
služiti ljudima.

### The Sana Bridge

People build bridges.  
Bridges shape people.  
In its essence, every bridge  
is well-meaning.  
The only intention of a bridge  
is to serve people.

Nositi ih na svojim leđima  
 bez obzira  
 da li ti ljudi preko mosta  
 brašno ili tenkove prevoze.  
 Svaki je most u svojoj biti  
 bezazlen.  
 On čak ne sumnja  
 ni u rijeku u kojoj se ogleda  
 i koja ga svakog časa  
 može odnijeti.  
 Most ne može ići dalje od obala,  
 a meni, koji ga prelazim,  
 ma što ljudi iza mojih leđa  
 o meni govorili,  
 i dalje valja  
 misao mosta nastavljati.  
 Jer most ide samo do obala,  
 a ljudi, poput rijeke,  
 idu preko obala.

Sana je vodeni most  
 što se na oba svijeta propinje –  
 zeleni vodeni most  
 što vidljivo s nevidljivim spaja,  
 što ušće s izvorom svojim  
 povezuje.

Ljudima je zemlja obala,  
 a Sani je obala nebo.

Most na Sani  
 vjenčani je prsten  
 od kamena i sna.  
 Na mostu je grad  
 koji ime nosi  
 po mostu i rijeci.  
 Grad se ogleda u Sani,  
 a Sana na licima Sanjana.  
 Samo građani koji su dorasli  
 imenu svojega grada,  
 dobro znaju  
 da su najčvršći i najtrajniji  
 oni mostovi  
 čiji su temelji duboko ukopani  
 u srcima ljudi.  
 Takvim mostovima  
 ni ratovi ni poplave  
 ne mogu ništa.  
 Takvim ljudima most je  
 tek njihova sjena.  
 Ljudi grade mostove.  
 Mostovi izgrađuju ljude.

Samo na izvoru  
 obala obalu  
 dodirne.

To bear them on its back  
 regardless of whether  
 they carry flour or tanks across it.  
 In its essence, every bridge  
 is harmless.  
 It doesn't even suspect  
 the river in which it is reflected  
 and which can carry it away  
 at any moment.  
 A bridge cannot reach beyond the banks  
 whereas I, who am crossing it,  
 whatever people may say  
 behind my back,  
 I still have to prolong the  
 thought of the bridge.  
 The bridge only reaches the banks,  
 but people, like the river,  
 reach beyond the banks.

The Sana is a water bridge  
 rearing up in both worlds - a green water bridge  
 connecting the visible to the invisible,  
 linking the mouth of the river  
 to its source.

For people, Land is their bank,  
 for the Sana, it is the Sky.

The bridge on the Sana  
 is a wedding ring  
 made of stone and dreams.  
 On the bridge stands a town  
 named after  
 the bridge and the river.  
 The town is reflected in the Sana,  
 and the Sana in the faces of its people.  
 Only citizens who are worthy of  
 their town's name  
 are well aware  
 that the strongest and the most durable bridges  
 are those  
 whose foundations are entrenched  
 in the people's hearts.  
 To such bridges,  
 neither wars nor floods  
 can do any harm.  
 To such people,  
 the bridge is but their shadow.  
 People build bridges.  
 Bridges shape people.

Only at the source  
 does a bank  
 touch a bank.

**Odlazak**

bratu Husejinu

Nije mi žao zemlje.  
Nije mi žao neba.  
Čak ni Une.  
Ni sunca. Ni mjeseca.  
Nije mi žao masline.  
Ni oraha. Ni mora.  
Što sam ja njima da oni za mnom pate?

Nitko od njih i ne zna da sam živio.  
Nitko od njih i ne primjećuje da me nema.  
Zar će za mnom plakati lipa  
koju sam posadio?  
Zar će za mnom naricati  
zidovi moje kuće?

Ničeg mi materijalnoga nije žao.  
Čak ni mene.  
Jedino mi je žao što će moja  
Majka za mnom plakati.  
Jedino mi je žao mojih sestara  
i moje braće.  
Jedino mi je žao moje žene i djece moje  
što im nisam stigao reći još koju riječ.  
Njima ću sigurno nedostajati.  
Njima sam još bio potreban.

No ništa u mojim rukama nije.  
Nebo zemlji uvijek najavi i kišu,  
i snijeg, i nevrijeme, i vedrinu...  
Ali smrtnik nema takvoga neba  
koje će najaviti njegov odlazak.

Svakim danom dolazimo i odlazimo.  
Bez pozdrava.  
Bez prtljage putujemo.  
Prekinuti u pola riječi,  
u pola daha.  
Sretni da nas smrt zatekne na nogama,  
da nas iznenadi usred posla,  
usred ručka s djecom.

Svakoga trenutka dolazimo i odlazimo.  
Sunce završi svoj krug,  
a mi se već u svitanje ugasimo.

Nema pravila.  
Nema reda.  
Nema iznimaka.

**Departure***To my brother Husein*

I feel no sorrow for the Earth.  
Not even for the Sky.  
Not even for the Una river.  
Nor for the Sun. Nor for the Moon.  
I feel no sorrow for the olive tree.  
Nor for the walnut. Nor for the Sea.  
Who am I for them to miss me?

None of them even knew I existed.  
None of them even noticed I'm gone.  
Will the linden tree that I planted  
Cry for me?  
Will the walls of my house  
Lament me?

I do not regret anything material.  
Not even myself.  
I am only sorry  
That my mother will cry for me.  
I am only sorry for my sisters  
And my brothers.  
I am only sorry for my wife and children  
And that I didn't have time to say a few more words to them.  
They will surely miss me.  
They still needed me.

But nothing is in my hands.  
The Sky always announces to the Earth—  
The coming rain, snow, storm, or clear skies...  
But a mortal has no such Sky  
That will announce his departure.

Every day we come and we go.  
Without a farewell.  
We travel without luggage.  
Interrupted in mid-sentence,  
In mid-breath.  
Happy if Death finds us on our feet,  
Surprises us in the midst of work,  
In the midst of lunch with our children.

Every moment we come and we go.  
The Sun completes its circle,  
But we, at dawn, we already fade away.

There are no rules.  
There is no order.  
There are no exceptions.



Svakoga časa dolazimo i odlazimo –  
a niti su živi svi na broju,  
niti su mrtvi svi na broju.

Ne vidimo se dok nas ima,  
a kada nas nema,  
tek tada, uistinu,  
po našem činu vidi se  
tko je od nas živ,  
a tko je mrtav.

Svakog dana  
vakoga dana dolazimo i odlazimo.  
Besmrtn je život.  
Besmrtna je smrt.  
Nijedna strana ne preteže.

Moj brat živi u mojoj pjesmi.

#### Za života

Jošku Berketu  
Za života  
naseljavaj oči prijateljima.  
Veseli srce svoje.  
Ne razmišljaj o njima,  
nego im dođi dok još možeš  
na nogama svojim stajati  
jer bit će, nažalost,  
i suviše vremena  
kada ćemo se sve više  
iz očiju u misli preseljavati -  
kada ćemo se još jedino  
mislima moći posjećivati.

#### 10 ispovijedi prirode

- Priroda ne počiva na žrtvi
- Priroda ne zagađuje ljude
- Priroda nema straha
- Priroda nema ego
- Priroda ne živi od novca
- U prirodi nema bogatih i siromašnih
- Priroda ništa ne čini za svoju dobrobit
- Rijeke se ne ulijevaju u sebe
- Šutnja prirode nije smišljena
- Priroda u svojem stvaranju nikada ne stavlja točku

#### Svjetlo u vodi

Sunce je palo po Sani.  
Sjedinilo se sa zelenom rijekom.  
Jednim licem  
sad jedno drugo gledaju:  
daju se,  
a ne posjeduju se  
jer su neovisni.

Every instant we come and we go –  
But not all the living are living,  
Nor all the dead are dead.  
No side prevails.

We are not visible while we're around,  
And it's only when we're gone  
That our deeds  
Truly show  
Who of us is alive  
And who is dead.

Every day we come and we go.  
Life is immortal.  
Death is immortal.  
No side prevails.

My brother lives in my poem.

#### While alive

To Joško Berket  
While alive  
Inhabit your eyes with friends.  
Rejoice your heart.  
Do not think of them  
But come to them  
As long as your feet can hold you.  
Because only too soon, alas,  
Will come a time  
When we will move more and more  
From our eyes to our thoughts -  
When we will only be able  
To visit each other with our thoughts.

#### Ten Confessions of Nature

- Nature does not lay on sacrifice.
- Nature does not pollute people.
- Nature has no fear.
- Nature has no Ego.
- Nature does not live from money.
- There are no rich or poor in Nature.
- Nature does nothing for its own profit.
- Rivers do not flow into themselves.
- The silence of Nature has no hidden agenda.
- Nature never puts a full stop to its creation.

#### Light in the Water

The Sun fell into the Sana.  
It merged with the green river.  
The two now  
Watch each other  
With same face:  
They give themselves away  
Without possessing each other  
Because they are independent.

Još malo  
i svatko će od njih  
osamiti se –  
ali u svojoj samoći  
neće biti tako lijepi  
kao u ovom trenutku  
kada su zajedno.

Soon  
Each of them  
Will be alone again -  
But in their loneliness  
They will not be as beautiful  
As they are now  
That they are together.

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**Razodijevanje**

Skinula je  
sve što je na sebi imala.  
Čak i nakit –  
ogrlicu,  
prstenje,  
naušnice,  
vrpcu za kosu...  
Na njoj je ostala  
samo njezina  
ljepota.

**Undressing**

She took off  
Everything she had on her.  
Even the jewelry -  
The necklace,  
The rings,  
The earrings,  
The hair ribbon...  
All that remained on her  
Was her  
Beauty.

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Translated by Svetlana Spaić