

## JERGOVIĆ, Miljenko



**Miljenko Jergović**, born in 1969 in Sarajevo, is a poet, story teller, essayist and journalist. He graduated in literature from the Faculty of Philosophy. He has published the following collections of poetry: *Warsaw Observatory*, 1988, *Anybody Learning Japanese in this Town Tonight?*, 1990, *Himmel Commando*, 1992, *Across the Ice-bound Bridge*, 1997. He is the author of two collections of short stories, *Sarajevan Marlboro*, 1994, translated into several languages, and *Karivani*, 1995.

**Miljenko Jergović**, pjesnik, pripovjedač, esejist i publicist, rođen je 1969. godine u Sarajevu, gdje je diplomirao studij književnosti na Filozofskom fakultetu. Dosad je objavio knjige pjesama: *Opservatorija Varšava*, 1988, *Uči li noćas netko u ovom gradu japanski*, 1990, *Himmel Komando*, 1992, *Preko zaleđenog mosta*, 1997, te knjige pripovjedaka *Sarajevski Marlboro*, 1994 (prevedena na više jezika) i *Karivani*, 1995.

## MILJENKO JERGOVIĆ

### American Dream

Never shall I wade  
Through the boiling asphalt of arizona  
Never shall I be the driver  
Of a large american truck  
Travelling the world which doesn't know  
The trifles of everday hatreds  
Bloody jealous blows  
I would like to have a transcontinental truck  
with sixteen valves  
Large as the elisabethan era louvre and athena  
In the smell of petrol I would like  
To feel the rock'n'roll of the boiling american july  
Without slaughtered partisans  
Without everday communisms  
Without the shitty pants of balkan patriotism  
Its nationalistic genius

### The Bombing of a Town

In the shadow of twilight I'm reading a book  
I see less and less, but I mustn't  
Put on the light  
If I do put it on  
Everything will change  
In the order of things in the room  
In the order of things in myself  
Souls in the plastic water can  
Turn inwards

And darken slowly and painfully  
While from far away the engines  
of supersonic seagulls are heard

## Himmel Commando

In the square albanians light candles  
To the memory of their dead

A hundred for one  
The whole square is aflame

Every half hour in low-swooping flight  
The planes put them out

Still there remains a flamelet  
There were so many dead

Indifferently we watch from the side  
To see what will disappear first  
People with matches  
Or fuel in the planes

## The Street of Fallen Boys

One story for adults says that children  
fall painlessly  
slipping on a banana skin, on grease,  
on ice  
every january. Their bones don't snap  
Their skulls don't decorate roadside stones. Their  
muscles  
are relaxed at every fall. Children in the story  
fall the way a leaf does  
Barely touching the ground, gently sinking into snow  
Drops of their blood burn through the whiteness  
like a baby peeing in a maternity ward  
One story for adults says that children fall  
lightly

Pick scabs off their knees and peel them passionately  
until white again. Children remember nothing  
They fall with the smile of a kamikaze  
Sometimes their names are etched in red colour  
in white granite. Their fall is torn  
with a cry  
easily outsounded by the boom of TV  
Children rise easily and without shame  
Only occasionally they never rise

## Concentration Camp

In special moments you feel that it wasn't  
necessary to speak of socrates  
It was necessary to speak of swine. Generations  
whisper about his honour  
Because of him female students get epileptic fits  
While through the room in mad summer days wafts  
the smell of hemlock  
Oh to be able to sentence oneself, oh to be able to  
cut off one's own head  
In special moments it is evident – just now  
I am speaking of swine  
They don't await their death proudly  
They cry from early morning cooped up on the outskirts  
of the town  
Tears streaming down their ugly snouts  
Fear coursing through their veins, there is a war  
And time to start talking finally about swine  
The prophet punishes them with contempt, they wallow  
in the mud dreaming  
a deep clear lake, pines rustling in  
the morning, peaks of glaciers  
Maybe, scenes from childhood faraway. The swine  
are forgiven everything  
While muddy with shame they receive the last  
supper  
No-one is waiting for them in the other world

*Translated by Evald Flisar*

## MILJENKO JERGOVIĆ

### Američki san

Nikada neću gaziti  
Po vrelom asfaltu arizone  
Nikada neću biti vozač  
Velikog američkog kamiona  
Prelaziti svijetom koji ne poznaje  
Sitnice svakodnevne mržnje  
Krvave ljubomorne udare  
Htio bih imati transkontinentalni kamion  
Na šesnaest točkova  
Veliki kao elizabetanska era luvr i atena  
Htio bih u mirisu nafte  
Osjetiti rokenrol vrelog američkog srpnja  
Bez zaklanih partizana  
Bez svakodnevnih komunizama  
Bez usranih gaća balkanskog patriotizma  
Njegove narodnjačke genijalnosti

## Bombardiranje grada

U sjeni sumraka čitam knjigu  
Sve slabije vidim, ali ne smijem  
Upaliti svjetlo  
Ako upalim  
Sve će se promjeniti  
U rasporedu stvari u sobi  
U rasporedu stvari u sebi  
Duše u plastičnoj kantici sa vodom  
Okreću se unutra  
I tamne dugo i bolno  
Dok se iz daljine čuju motori  
Nadzvučnih galebova

## Himmel Comando

Na trgu albanci svojim mrtvima  
U pomen pale svijee

Sto za jednoga  
Cijeli trg gori

Svakih pola sata u brišućem letu  
Avioni ih gase

Ipak ostane plamičaka  
Koliko je bilo mrtvih

Mi ravnodušni gledamo sa strane  
Koga će prije nestati  
Ljudi sa šibicama  
Ili avionskog goriva

## Ulicom palih dječaka

Jedna odrasla priča kaže da djeca  
bezbolno padaju  
Okliznu se na koru banane, na kolomast,  
na led  
Svakoga siječnja. Njima ne pucaju kosti  
Oni lubanjama ne krune ivičnjak. Njihovi  
muskulusi  
Opušteni u svakom su padu. Djeca u priči  
Padaju kao što pada list  
Tek dodirnu tle, lagano potonu u snijeg  
Kapi njihove krvi nevino pogore bjelinu  
Kao mokraća beba u porodilištu  
Jedna odrasla priča kaže da djeca padaju  
lako  
Sa koljena čupkaju kraste, strasno ih gule  
Do nove bjeline. Djeca ne pamte ništa  
Padaju sa osmijehom kamikaze  
Njihova imena katkad su napisana crvenom  
bojom  
U bijelom granitu. Njihov je pad pocijepan  
vriskom  
Kog lako zagluši tutanj televizora  
Djeca se dižu lakonogo i bez srama  
Tek povremeno se ne dignu nikad

## Koncentracioni logor

U posebnim trenucima osjetiš da nije  
trebalo govoriti o sokratu  
Trebalo je govoriti o svinjama. O njegovoj  
časti pokoljenja šume  
Zbog njega studentice filozofije dobijaju fras  
A sobom za ludih proljetnih dana širi se  
miris kukute  
Ah samom sebi presuditi, ah samom sebi  
odsjeći glavu  
U posebnim trenucima očito je – trenutno  
govorim o svinjama  
One svoju smrt ne dočekaše gordo  
Od ranog jutra plaču u ćumezu na kraju  
mjestu  
Niz njihove ružičaste njuške teku suze  
Kroz njihove žile teče strah, rat je  
I vrijeme je konačno da progovorimo o  
svinjama  
Prorok ih kazni prezirom, u blatu se  
valjaju sanjajući  
Duboko bistro jezero, borove što šume kroz  
jutro, vrhove gločera  
Možda, prizore djetinjstva u daljini. Od  
svega se opraštaju svinje  
Dok blatnjave od srama posljednju primaju  
večeru  
Na onom svijetu ih neće dočekati nitko