

POPOVIĆ, Milorad



Milorad Popović (Lipa Cucka, near Cetinje, Montenegro, 1957) has published four collections of poetry: *Sa trga glodara* (1982), *So Jude* (1983), *Nema više kladenja* (1985), *Rad se polako zavodi* (1987), and quite a number of short stories and essays. In 1983 he was awarded the UKCG Prize for the Book of the Year. He lives in Cetinje.

Milorad Popović (Lipa Cucka kod Cetinja, 1957) objavio četiri knjige pesama: *Sa trga glodara* (1982), *So Jude* (1983), *Nema više kladenja* (1985), *Rad se polako zavodi* (1987), više kratkih priča i eseja. Dobio je 1983. godine Nagradu UKCG za najbolju knjigu godine. Živi u Cetinju.

MILORAD POPOVIĆ

The unbearable lightness of being

It isn't easy to think freely when you have a wife
it isn't easy to think freely when you have a homeland
it isn't easy to think freely when you have friends
it isn't easy to speak freely when you have a wife
it isn't easy to speak freely when you have a homeland
it isn't easy to speak freely when you have friends
it isn't easy to speak freely in squares, hospitals,
army barracks.

It isn't easy to speak freely when you have everything
it isn't easy to have everything and not say anything:
it isn't easy for anyone
except the Lord above the armies –
he has no idea at all.

Pierre Kropotkin

Don't forget Kropotkin.

Kafka

Overlooked metaphysical bird
what a flame I planted
writing with fingers instead of wax:
Rebellion, only rebellion
with spoken and written word
dagger, gun, dynamite.

Also enduring is a coarse tree
on which young souls have grown:
our souls are immobile and cling to the top
without memories to remind them of descent.
Our work is unbearable because of clarity
on our journey we don't need the usual sharpness of mind
since we don't fear not being able to return.
(What ventures our right hands undertook
without the surplus of spirit which hurries towards real God!)

Miraculously we resist Beasts and Angels
which hide in our lonesome entrance halls
silently – gently and patiently.
The real danger, provocation and abstraction
come to us from the herd, or from processions,
that is why it is necessary to destroy both.
Imperial page:
but what a revenger!

From one side of the hill

Poet, you await the time that approaches
with fear
as if awaiting hungry Montenegrin troops.
Your inherent idea is unclear
but your voice stirs up the hearts of many
who believe they have adapted to your being.
In uneasy times
renounce your personal clairvoyance
and those who will invoke miracles:
a voice stripped bare will not be recognised by anyone.
While the executioner pulls the hood over your head
perceive the presence of reality
as mere changing of one form into another
or as waking up during a summer night.

Our fear

What is worth more: friends or truth?
The large eyes of truth are often similar
to the large eyes of a woman.
Friendship requires giving way
but gravel in the river-bed needs no consolation.
The lonesome are immoderately slim
with arms wound round their backs
like branches of willow-trees
or fragile forms of earthly paradise.
He who wishes to catch large fish
must not think of the poverty of the sea
but of large fish.

Is truth more useful than friends
is truth what the nation thinks of its origin
is truthful he who has been run over because of truth
my dear Elpenore?

How history was made

It is certain that nations were created
when people began to use memory.
At the beginning leaders were blond, tall and strong:
then they got opponents – short hypocrites
who laughed at their will to be quick-witted and perfect –
thus they got close to the nation.
What could the nation do other than recognise these new leaders,
and what could they do other than recognise deceptions of their
predecessors.
Gradually the spirit of the nation was touched by more and more light –
and the name they were given began to be uttered with gratitude
while their leaders began to think of honour
and the need to gain for their sons a delusion of nobility.
That is how the times of the nation arrived –
but what will nations do
when the time of the poets comes?

An evening game

Here, I'm completely quiet:
this night is not real –
drizzle thin as flour dust
is falling on pigweed and nettles.
On the porch of the neighbour's house
I observe a children's game:
and – look, they are craftier
and more endowed with imagination
than real leaders.
Mother calls children
to a pudding and evening prayer.
The children without a word – with a surplus of energy –
wash their hands at the fountain
and disappear into the house.
My heart has softened:
all this game with fire and water –
is a deviation from death.
Everything is fine again.

In spite of everything – lightning strikes.

Translated by Evald Flisar

MILORAD POPOVIĆ

Nepodnošljiva lakoća postojanja

Nije lako misliti slobodno kad imaš ženu
nije lako misliti slobodno kad imaš domovino
nije lako misliti slobodno kad imaš prijatelje
nije lako govoriti slobodno kad imaš ženu
nije lako govoriti slobodno kad imaš domovinu
nije lako govoriti slobodno kad imaš prijatelje
nije lako govoriti slobodno na trgovima, u bolnicama,
u kasarnama.

Nije lako govoriti slobodno kad imaš sve
nije lako imati sve i ne govoriti ništa:
nikome nije lako
osim Gospodu nad vojskama –
on je bez ijedne ideje.

Pjer Kropotkin

Ne zaboraviti Kropotkina
Kafka

Prezrena metafizička ptico
kakav sam plamen zasadio
ispisujući prstima umjesto voskom:
Pobuna, samo pobuna
izgovorenom i pisanom riječju
bodežom, puškom, dinamitom.

Postojano je i surovo drvo
na kome su izrasle mlade duše:
naše duše su nepokretne i priljubljene za vrh
bez uspomena koje podsjećaju na silaženje.
Naše djelo je neizdržljivo od jasnoće
naš put ne traži običnu oštroumnost
jer ne strahuje za povratke.
(Kakve su podvige stvarale naše desnice
bez viška duha što hita stvarnom Bogu!)
Čudom se opiremo Zvijerima i Anđelima
skrivenim u našim samotnim predsobljima
bez glasa – nježno i trpeljivo.
Stvarna opasnost, provokacija i apstrakcija
stižu nam iz čopora, ali i iz povorki
zato jedne i druge nužno je uništiti.
Carski paž:
ali kakav osvjetnik!

S jedne strane brda

Pjesniče, vrijeme koje ti se približava
očekuješ sa strahom
kao gladnu crnogorsku četu.
Tvoja urođena ideja je nejasna
ali tvoj glas uzbukava srca mnogih
što povjerovaše da su se prilagodili tvom biću.
U smutnom vremenu
odrekni se sopstvene vidovitosti
i onih što će prizivati čudesa:
ogoljeli glas niko neće prepoznati.
Dok ti dželat navlači kragnu
prisustvo stvarnosti shvati
kao mijenjanje jednih oblika u druge
ili kao buđenje u ljetnoj noći.

Naš strah

Što je dragocjenije: prijatelj ili istina?

Krupne oči istine često su slične
krupnim očima žene.

Prijateljstvu je potrebno popuštanje
ali šljunku na riječnom dnu ne treba nikakva utjeha.

Usamljenici su pretjerano vitki
sa rukama na leđima

povijenih slično granama vrbe
ili krhkim oblicima zemaljskog raja.

Ko hoće hvatati krupne ribe
ne smije razmišljati o siromaštvu mora
već o velikim ribama.

Je li korisnija istina ili prijatelji

je li istina što narod misli o svom porijeklu

je li istinoljubiv onaj što je pregažen zbog istine
drugi moj Elpenore?

Kako se stvarala istorija

Pouzdana se zna da su stvoreni narodi
kada su se ljudi počeli služiti pamćenjem.

U prvini vođe su bili plavi, visoki, snažnog tijela:

onda su dobili protivnike – niske i pritvorene
koji su ismijavali njihovu volju za hitrinom i savršenstvom –
tako su se približili narodu.

Što je ostalo narodu nego da prepozna nove vođe
a novim vođama drugo nego da prepoznaju sljepilo prethodnika.

S vremena na vrijeme više svijetla je dodirivalo duh naroda –

i ime koje su im podarili izgovarali su sa zahvalnošću

a njihove vođe počele su razmišljati o časti

i potrebi da svojim sinovima pribave privid plemenitosti.

Tako su došla vremena naroda –

ali što će raditi narodi

kada dođe vrijeme pjesnika.