

The background of the page is a painting of a building facade. The colors are warm and textured, with shades of orange, red, and white. A prominent feature is a white shuttered window on the lower right. The overall style is impressionistic and textured.

BARVE SONCA / COLOURS OF THE SUN

Keshab Sigdel

Copyright © Keshab Sigdel za pesmi v izvirniku
Copyright © Vera Pejovič in Peter Semolič za prevode
Copyright © Katja Kuštrin za prevod pesmi *Pogrešano sonce*
Copyright © Bal Bahadur Thapa za izvirnik spremnega teksta

Kataložni zapis o publikaciji (CIP) pripravili v Narodni in univerzitetni
knjižnici v Ljubljani

[COBISS.SI-ID=288512256](#)

ISBN 978-961-94142-1-7 (pdf)

KESHAB SIGDEL

BARVE SONCA / COLOURS OF THE SUN

Prevedla Vera Pejovič in Peter Semolič
Translated by Vera Pejovič and Peter Semolič

*Kulturno-umetniško društvo Poiesis
Ljubljana, januar 2017*

From a Tide to Tranquility: A Glance at Sigdel's Poems

Every poet lives in his own time. It's no surprise that Sigdel's poems reflect the time he lives. Despite his inexhaustible obsession with the exploration of nature of reality, one can observe his concern towards his country and his people in his poems. In "Shadows of War", he portrays the plight of an ordinary Nepali woman through irony. The woman keeps waiting for her husband, who has been killed and buried in the courtyard of their own house. This irony only highlights the plight of hundreds of people during the Maoist insurgency in Nepal. Likewise, Sigdel doesn't seem to be happy with the over stretched transition period Nepal is undergoing at the moment. In "Metamorphosis", the poet presents our country Nepal as "an Unreal City". Due to our ignorance, we are not aware of all the things we have and thereby fall prey to the cunning politicians' promises for those very things we already have. And we become ready "to accept our own defacement" for the sake of promised change. At another level, we can still smell the poet's preoccupation with the nature of reality. The unreal itself consists of real. It is another thing that many of us remain unaware of it and thus suffer the defacement and betrayal. Likewise, "Will Power" lays the hypocrisy of Nepali people bare. The so-called bearers of change don't want to undergo change. One certainly wonders if there is a possibility for a change! Because of our own ignorance and hypocrisy, our condition is worsening day by day.

Sigdel explores the consequences of our failures in his poems. "Opportunity" portrays the irony of life in the poor countries like Nepal, where people are denied opportunities till they are alive and flooded with opportunities at death. Since they are denied their opportunities in their own country, they live with dream of being flooded with opportunities in the developed countries at the cost of their self-annihilation. In "Buffis", Sigdel engages himself

Od razburkanosti do spokojnosti: bežen vpogled v pesmi Keshaba Sigdela

Vsak pesnik živi v svojem času. Zato ni presenetljivo, da Sigdelove pesmi odsevajo čas, v katerem živi. Kljub njegovi neutrudljivi obsedenosti z raziskovanjem narave resničnosti lahko v pesmih opazimo skrb za njegovo deželo in ljudi. V *Sencah vojne* portretira hudo stisko navadne nepalske ženske ironično. Ženska vztraja v čakanju na svojega moža, ki je bil ubit in pokopan na dvorišču lastne hiše. Ironija tako le še poudari hudo stisko stotin ljudi med maoistično vstajo v Nepal. Zdi se, da Sigdela še vedno trajajoče obdobje tranzicije v Nepal ne navdušuje. V *Metamorfozi* prikaže deželo kot »neresnično mesto«. Zaradi svoje ignorance se ne zavedamo stvari, ki jih imamo, in zato postanemo plen obljub zvijačnih politikov prav v zvezi s stvarmi, ki jih že imamo. In pripravljani smo, da »sprejmemo lastno popačenje« v zameno za obljubljene spremembe. Na drugi ravni pa lahko še vedno čutimo sled pesnikove prevzetosti z naravo resničnosti. Neresnično je sestavljeno iz resničnega. To je še nekaj, česar se mnogi izmed nas ne zavedamo in kar ima za posledico popačenje in izdajstvo. *Volja do moči* prav tako razgalja hipokrizijo nepalskega naroda. Tako imenovani nosilci sprememb se nočejo sami podvreči spremembam. In marsikdo se sprašuje, ali sploh obstaja možnost za spremembe. Zaradi naših ignorance in hipokrizije se položaj pri nas slabša iz dneva v dan.

V svojih pesmih Sigdel raziskuje posledice naših polomij. *Priložnost* izrisuje ironijo življenja v revni deželi, kakršna je Nepal, kjer se ljudem odrekajo priložnosti za časa življenja, češ da se jim te ponudijo šele s smrtjo. Ker se jim odrekajo priložnosti zase v svoji lastni deželi, sanjarijo, da bi jih v razvitih deželah priložnosti preplavile, cena za to pa je njihova samozatajitev. V pesmi *Buffis* se Sigdel ukvarja z aktualnim

with a current global problem: refugees. The refugees are living with this 'buffis' of getting settled in the developed countries. The tragedy is even the non-refugees are living with pleasure laced anxiety of migrating to the Western countries. It highlights a very uneven world, where people are inclined to slide to the West from the East! These poems seem to be permeated with Sigdel's humanitarianism shaped by his experiences of being a teacher as well as human rights activist.

The same humanitarianism provokes Sigdel to explore the situation of the human being in the modern world. In "The Chess Game", the poet contemplates on the loss of agency in the modern world. There are numerous forces like family, society, political parties, state and the like, which impose normative values on an individual in such a way that she loses her subjectivity and becomes "a mere dice in flesh and blood". Similarly, his poem "Uninvestigated" reminds one of Auden's "An Unknown Citizen". Like Auden's unknown citizen, the life and death of this individual are determined by the modern medical science, which reduces even life into an object of technological failure and success. It's heart-wrenching to learn that the success or meaningfulness of that individual is subservient to technological failure and success. Likewise, "Identity" delves deep into predicament of an individual in the modern society, which has turned her into numbers. If one removes all these numerical tags, she can see her "temporary identities sink into the oblivion".

Though the types of poems discussed above are razor sharp in their portrayal of plights of human beings in the poet's space, i.e. Nepal, and the world at large, the real pleasure of reading Sigdel's poetry lies in stumbling upon those poems, which raise difficult philosophical questions about art, reality, life and time. In "Poetry and the Heroine", he explores relation between art and reality.

svetovnim problemom: begunci. Begunci živijo z »buffisom«, tesnobnim pričakovanjem, ki izvira iz njihove želje po preselitvi v razvite države. Tragedija je, da celo tisti, ki niso begunci, živijo z zadovoljstvom, tesno prepasanim s tesnobo, saj želijo emigrirati na Zahod. Pesem osvetljuje zelo neenak svet, kjer so ljudje nagnjeni k odhajanju z Vzhoda na Zahod. Zdi se, da so tovrstne pesmi prežete s Sigdelovo človekoljubnostjo, kot se je oblikovala skozi njegovo delo učitelja in aktivista na področju človekovih pravic.

Prav človekoljubje je izzvalo Sigdela, da raziskuje položaj človeka v sodobnem svetu. V *Partiji šaha* pesnik poglobljeno razmišlja o izgubi zmožnosti delovanja v modernem svetu. Danes obstajajo nešteti dejavniki, kot so družina, družba, politične stranke, države in drugi, ki vsiljujejo posamezniku normativne vrednote tako, da izgubi svojo subjektivnost in postane »tudi sam figura iz mesa in krvi«. Podobna je tudi njegova pesem *Neraziskano*, ki spominja na Audnovo pesem *Neznani državljan*. Tako kot pri Audnu sta tudi tu življenje in smrt posameznika določena s strani moderne medicine, ki zvede življenje na predmet tehnološkega uspeha in poraza. Srce parajoče je spoznanje, da sta uspeh ali pomembnost lika v pesmi podrejena tehnološkemu porazu ali uspehu. Podobno se tudi v pesmi *Identiteta* poglobi v zadrego sodobnega človeka, ki je le še številka. Če se odstranijo vse številčne identitete, lahko posameznik vidi, kako njegove »začasne identitete tonejo v pozabo«.

Četudi pesmi, obravnavane do zdaj, izrisujejo z ostrino britve mizerijo ljudi v pesnikovem prostoru oziroma v Nepalju in tudi v širšem svetu, smo deležni pravega užitka ob branju Sigdelove poezije, ko naletimo na tiste pesmi, ki načnejo težka filozofska vprašanja o umetnosti, resničnosti, življenju in času. V pesmi *Poezija in junakinja* raziskuje odnos med umetnostjo in

The poet seems lost when he confronts the object of his art: the nude heroine at the public square. "Fear with the Flower" takes this reflection further. Sigdel describes what suffering a flower has to undergo while bearing new flowers. Do we want to see an artist suffer like this to embrace her creation? Of course, we do. After all, art comes out of searing agony of human soul. Not surprisingly, Sigdel, in "Wonders of a Leaf", wonders whether art is self destructive. Is the leaf romancing the caterpillar to help the latter turn into a beautiful butterfly? But won't the leaf be destroyed in this romance? Is our love/dream self destructive? Is art self destructive? One can't miss Plath's haunting lines from "Edge" here: "The woman is perfected / Her dead / Body wears a smile of accomplishment . . ." Nevertheless, it is not fair to reduce "Wonders of a Leaf" into a straightforward meaning or interpretation. This poem is banal, slippery, innocent, paradoxical, and mysterious all at the same time. Sigdel's quest for abstract phenomena like time and reality reaches climax in this poem. Still, one can observe metapoetic elements along with contemplation over nature of reality.

One can easily trace out Sigdel's obsession with reality in his poems. In "Shadow", the poet uses 'shadow' as a yardstick to examine the nature of reality. Is there something essentially real? Or is it just like the shadow that "becomes shadowless"? Likewise, "Reality", as the title suggests, reveals the complicated nature of reality, which is never black or white. It lies somewhere within the continuum of two broad ends: black and white. In the same vein, "Gratification" digs out the relativist nature of reality. The bone without marrow is useless to a human being. To a dog, the same bone becomes one of the most prized delicacies. In "Colour of the Sun", an innocent child's innocent question (What is the colour of the sun?) shoves the poet into the whirlpool of questions about the way human beings perceive reality. Since the way people perceive reality is as difficult as it is to pinpoint the

resničnostjo. Zdi se, da se pesnik izgubi, ko se sooči z objektom svoje umetnosti: z nago junakinjo sredi javnega trga. *Strah za rožo* popelje to razmišljanje še dlje. Sigdel tu opiše, kaj vse mora prestati roža, da lahko rodi nove rože. Ali si želimo videti tako trpeti umetnika, da bi lahko sprejeli njegovo stvaritev? Seveda si to želimo. Ne nazadnje umetnost prihaja iz hudega trpljenja človekove duše. Zato nas ne preseneča, da se Sigdel v pesmi *Čudeži lista* sprašuje o samouničevalni naravi umetnosti. Ali romanca lista z gosenico slednji pomaga, da se bo kasneje spremenila v čudovitega metulja? In ali ne bo list uničen v tej romanci? Ali so naše sanje/ljubezni samouničujoče? Ali je umetnost samouničujoča? Tu ne moremo mimo verza Sylvie Plath iz pesmi *Rob*: »Ženska izpopolnjuje / svojo smrt / telo nosi nasmešek izpopolnitve ...« (Sylvia Plath, Zbirka Lirika, prev. Miha Avanzo, MK, 1992) Vendar pa ni pravično, če pesem *Čudeži lista* zreduciramo na dobeseden pomen ali razlago. Ta pesem je hkrati vsakdanja, izmuzljiva, nedolžna, paradokсна in skrivnostna. Sigdelovo ukvarjanje z abstraktnimi pojavi, kot sta čas in resničnost, doseže v tej pesmi svoj vrh. Še vedno pa lahko opazimo metapoetične elemente, ki gredo z roko v roki z razmislekom o naravi resničnosti.

V Sigdelovih pesmih lahko z lahkoto zaznamo avtorjevo obsedenost z resničnostjo. V *Senci* pesnik uporabi senco kot merilo za raziskovanje narave resničnosti. Ali obstaja karkoli, kar je v bistvu resnično? Ali je vse le kot senca, ki »sama preneha metati senco«? Podobno tudi pesem *Resničnost*, kot nam pove že sam naslov, odkriva kompleksno naravo resničnosti, ki ni nikoli le črna ali bela, ampak leži vzdolž kontinuuma med dvema skrajno oddaljenima koncema: črnim in belim. Podobno tudi pesem *Podkupnina* prikazuje relativistično naravo resničnosti. Kost brez mozga je za človeka nekoristna, toda za psa je ta ista kost cenjena poslastica. V *Barvi sonca* nedolžno vprašanje nedolžnega otroka (»Kakšna barve je sonce?«) pahne pesnika

colour of the sun or water for that matter, the poet says to his daughter: "Paint your own sun, dear." The examination of reality takes the form of reflection on time in "A Story of the Time". The narrative of our time is as amorphous as time itself. The question is whether one can really distinguish creator from her creation. One is reminded of the difficult question Yeats throws in his poem "Among School Children": How can we know the dancer from the dance? In "Change", the poet tries to figure out his own fear of the amorphous and omnipotent time in "a rising vapour in the morning teacup". Here, the poet echoes T. S. Eliot's Prufrock: "I have measured out my life with coffee spoons". Nowhere does Sigdel capture the banality of human existence in front of the enormity of time the way he does in this poem. However, Sigdel's reflection on reality is not guided by his quest for certainty. Instead, he is thrilled by its slipperiness and uncertainty. He finds this malleability of reality/time novel. Like a child obsessed with a new colourful toy with many features to explore, Sigdel is obsessed with reality with many shades and shards.

Writing in both the languages, Nepali and English, Sigdel has already carved a niche for himself in the the Nepali literature. As one of Sigdel's friends, I can easily understand his concern towards his country and people. I have seen him spend precious days and nights of his life on teaching and advocating for the rights of Nepali people on margins. He is always outspoken, fearless, honest and outgoing. Against this backdrop, his deep reflection on reality in relation to time, life or art is quite refreshing to me. I wonder whether he meditates over these difficult questions about life and art even when he is teaching in the classroom or chanting slogans in the streets of Kathmandu!

v vrtinec spraševanj o tem, kako ljudje zaznavamo resničnost. Ker je način, kako ljudje dojemamo resničnost, prav tako težko določiti kot barvo sonca ali, če hočete, vode, pesnik reče svoji hčerki: »Naslikaj svoje sonce, ljubica!« Raziskovanje resničnosti prevzame obliko premisleka o času v *Zgodbi o času*. Pripoved o našem času je tako amorfna, kot je čas sam. Vprašanje je, ali sploh lahko razlikujemo med ustvarjalcem in njegovo stvaritvijo. Naj vas spomnim na težko vprašanje, ki ga navrže Yeats v pesmi *Med šolskimi otroki*: »Kako naj vemo, kaj plesalec je, kaj ples?« (W. B. Yeats, zbirka *Nobelovci*, CZ, 1983, prev. Veno Taufer). V *Spremenci* pesnik skuša razumeti lasten strah pred amorfnim in vsemogočnim časom v sopari, »ki se dviga iz jutranje skodelice čaja«. Tukaj odmeva verz iz Eliotovega Prufrocka: »s kavno žličko sem svoje življenje zmeril« (T. S. Eliot, *Pesmi*, zbirka *Kondor*, MK, 1982, prev. Veno Taufer). Banalnosti človeškega bivanja na ozadju strahovitega časa Sigdel ne prikaže nikjer tako, kot jo prikaže v tej pesmi. Vendar pa Sigdelov premislek o resničnosti ne vodi želja po gotovosti. Nasprotno, vznemirjata ga nezanesljivost in negotovost. Raztegljivost resničnosti/časa vidi kot nekaj novega. Kot otrok, obseden z novo pisano igračo, ki jo še mora raziskati, je Sigdel obseden z resničnostjo, z njenimi mnogimi sencami in okruški.

Sigdel si je s tem, da piše v obeh jezikih, v nepalščini in angleščini, že izdolbel nišo v nepalski književnosti. Kot Sigdelov prijatelj z lahkoto razumem njegovo skrb za domovino in ljudi. Videl sem ga, kako je dragocene dni in noči porabil za učenje in zagovarjanje Nepalcev, ki živijo na obrobju. Vedno je odkrit, neustrašen, pošten in prijateljski. Ob tem pa me njegova poglobljena misel o resničnosti in njenem odnosu do časa, življenja in umetnosti osvežuje. Sprašujem se, ali meditira o

Maybe I am wrong about the poet's persona as an island! Well, Sigdel is not an island, but a swirling tide with its root to the seabed, a place of tranquility.

Bal Bahadur Thapa
Central Department of English
Tribhuvan University
Kathmandu, Nepal

11th November 2016

težkih vprašanjih o življenju in umetnosti tudi takrat, ko predava študentom ali skandira parole na ulicah Katmanduja. Morda se motim, ko mislim, da je pesnik otok. Sigdel zagotovo ni otok, ampak razburkano valovje, katerega korenine sežejo vse do morskega dna, kraja spokojnosti.

Bal Bahadur Thapa
Osrednja katedra za angleščino
Tribhuvanska univerza
Katmandu, Nepal

11. novembra 2016

Poetry and the Heroine

As usual, she
Or the heroine of my poem
Came unhesitantly at the square of the city;
Upon seeing her, all of a sudden
People pretended by lowering their heads
And hesitantly kept seeing
Her nude body.

Thereafter
Other subordinate characters of my poem
Became restless;
Situation turned perverse
And, my poem
Disappeared with the noise of the city
And today too, I could not write a poem.

Only because I need to write a poem
I can't ask her, the heroine of my poem,
Not to come to the square
Because
I equally love them
Who are encouraged to write poems
Upon seeing her.

Poezija in junakinja

Kot ponavadi je ona,
junakinja moje pesmi,
odločno prišla na mestni trg;
ko so jo ljudje zagledali, so se
začeli pretvarjati, da sklanjajo glavo,
a so si še vedno obotavljivo ogledovali
njeno nago telo.

Takrat
so stranski liki moje pesmi
postali nemirni;
položaj je postal pohujšljiv
in moja pesem
je izginila v mestnem hrupu
in tudi danes ne bi mogel napisati pesmi.

Samo zato, ker moram napisati pesem,
je ne morem prositi, junakinje moje pesmi,
naj ne hodi na trg,
saj
imam enako rad vse,
ki jih pogled nanjo ohrabri,
da napišejo pesem.

Lonely in a Crowd

One day
She got lonely
Amidst a crowd in the city.

Keeping the busy trade centers
In its lap
The city was lonely
For ages.

In a personal pursuit
I entered into the city;
With some prejudices, and
A few other pretensions
I mingled into the hurly-burly of the city.

In the passing of time
I myself
Got lost in the crowd
Then after
With a destiny to know oneself
Each day
I kept walking through
Every nook and corner of the city
The city got lost within itself
And I too abandoned the self searching.

Now,
She lives in solitude
I too live a recluse
Though unaccompanied
We feel a crowd in us.

Osamljen v množici

Nekega dne
je osamela
sredi mestne množice.

Z živahnimi nakupovalnimi centri
v svojem naročju
je mesto že zdavnaj
osamelo.

Prišel sem v mesto
po osebnih opravkih;
z nekaj predsodki in
z nekaj drugimi zahtevami
sem se pomešal v mestni živžav.

Sčasoma
sem se tudi sam
izgubil v množici
in postalo
mi je usojeno, da sem vsak dan
hodil
in se iskal
po vseh kotih in vogalih mesta.
Mesto se je izgubilo v sebi
in tudi jaz sem opustil iskanje sebe.

Zdaj
živi v osami
in tudi jaz živim v samoti,
in četudi nisva skupaj,
čutiva v sebi množico.

Fear with the Flower

Flower is a symbol of a faith
And to bloom is a dedication;
The flower blooms, and
Dedicates herself
To everyone!

And then
The wind—
The water—
Shamelessly ravish her.
But, she wouldn't resist
Or probably she is weak enough to resist
The wind—
The water—
And accepts the gravity.

And from these flowers
Do we still expect new flowers to be born?
This question is
Yet unanswered.

Strah za rožo

Roža je simbol vere
in cvetenje je njena posvečenost.

Roža zacveti
in se preda
vsakomur!

In takrat si jo
veter –
voda –
brezsramno vzameta.
Toda ne upre se jima
ali pa je preslabotna, da bi se uprla
vetru –
vodi –
in sprejme nosečnost.

In potem še vedno pričakujemo,
da se bodo iz teh rož rodile nove?
Vprašanje,
ki za zdaj ostaja brez odgovora.

Shadow

Shadow—
A reality in itself, and
The reflection of a different reality.
The life pillar
Is nothing but a shadow
—It swings
—It squats
And retires of the
Shadow world.
Till then
We nurture illusion
In reflections/counter-reflections.
The dream-dialogue:
Of the real, with the unreal
Consciously/unconsciously.
There,
Shadow is a benchmark of the reality
It is the a benchmark of illusion too;
And the shadow itself becomes shadowless
And intentionally/unintentionally
The distinction disappears
Between the real and the unreal—
The gap vanishes.
The sequential existence
Before the retirement
Therefore—
Might be real
Or, unreal.

Senca

Senca –
resničnost sama po sebi in
odsev drugačne resničnosti.
Steber življenja
ni nič drugega kot senca
– ziblje se
– leze skupaj
in se umakne
iz sveta senc.
Do takrat
gojimo iluzijo
v odsevih/protiodsevih.
Sanjski pogovor:
o resničnem z neresničnim,
o zavestnem/nezavednem.
Tam
je senca mera za resničnost
in je mera za iluzijo;
in senca sama preneha metati senco
in namerno/nenamerno
izgine razlika
med resničnim in neresničnim –
reža izgine.
Iz tega sledi, da je bivanje
pred umikom
zato –
lahko resnično
ali neresnično.

A Story of the Time

The time asked a question—

*Who are you
whetting a sword
ahead of the prayer assembly
in the monastery?*

This might be a question against the civilization

Or,

The story of time itself.

Questions are nothing in themselves
Unless somebody else values them as such
Or deems appropriate to respond to it
They shall otherwise just remain
The grievances of time
Uttered by mistake.
That question
Stayed in the air for a moment.

The question was not merely a question
But like satire against the time itself
Like an effigy prepared to be burnt in the protest rally
Like an ironic grinning
Or like a puzzle rather than a question
It remained in the sky
Inviting more new questions.

Zgodba o času

Čas je vprašal –
kdo si,
ki brusiš meč
pred začetkom molitvenega zbora
v samostanu?

To bi lahko bilo vprašanje, naperjeno zoper civilizacijo
ali
zgodba o času samem.

Vprašanja sama po sebi niso nič,
če jih nekdo drug ne oceni kot takšna
ali ne meni, da je nanje primerno odgovoriti.
Drugače naj ostanejo
tožba časa,
pomotoma izrečena.
Vprašanje je za hip
obviselo v zraku.

Vprašanje ni bilo le vprašanje,
ampak satira na čas,
kot slika, pripravljena, da zagori na protestu,
kot ironičen nasmeh
ali kot uganka, po kateri je na nebu
ostalo le vprašanje,
ki zastavlja nova vprašanja.

Nearby the monastery
A monk whetting the edge of his sword
Raises slowly
As if crushed by a heavy responsibility
And to examine the sharpness of the sword's edge
Moves the tip of his thumb down towards the base.

As if he was ascertained
He throws his gaze in all directions of the monastery
And as if the monastery and he himself
Were both safe
As if the prayer assembly
That was to begin soon in the monastery
Was secured against all the odds
That monk inhales a long breath of satisfaction,
Keeps that whetted sword in the scabbard
And goes to join the prayer assembly.

This monk
Is the story of the time we live
And the questioner time
Itself the narrator of that story!

Blizu samostana
menih brusi rezilo meča,
počasi vstane,
kot bi bil zmečkan pod težko odgovornostjo,
in s konico palca potegne v smeri ročaja,
da bi preveril ostrino rezila.

Kot da bi hotel nekaj dognati,
pogleduje samostan,
in kot da bi bila samostan in on sam
varna,
kot da bi bil molitveni zbor,
ki se bo kmalu začel v samostanu,
zaščiten pred vsemi nevarnostmi,
zadovoljno in globoko vdihne,
spravi meč v nožnico
in odide, da bi se pridružil molitvenemu zboru.

Ta menih
je zgodba o času, v katerem živimo,
in spraševalec čas
je pripovedovalec te zgodbe!

A Conversation with God

During the prayer
to God
I said,
'I have nothing to offer
but my dreams.'

God was not assured.

Hundreds of devotees
queue up everyday
at least with a basket of flowers,
a few incense sticks,
and a coin or two.
I saw no reason
why God should be unhappy
with me, and with them all.

To God, I said again,
'I have nothing to offer
but my faith.'

God showed no sign of assurance.

I was hurt
because God, my last refuge,
abruptly dismantled.

In bewilderment,
silently,
I walked away.

Pogovor z Bogom

Med molitvijo
k Bogu
sem rekel:
»Ničesar nimam ponuditi,
razen svojih sanj.«

Bog se ni dal prepričati.

Na stotine vernikov
se zvrsti pred njim vsak dan
vsaj s košaro rož,
z nekaj palčkami kadila,
s kovancem ali dvema,
zato nisem videl razloga,
zakaj bi bil Bog nezadovoljen
z mano ali z njimi.

Spet sem rekel Bogu:
»Ne morem ti ponuditi drugega
kot svojo vero.«

Bog ni dal vedeti, da je prepričan.

Prizadelo me je,
da se je Bog, moje zadnje zatočišče,
nenadoma razblinil v nič.

Zaprepaden
sem tiho
odšel proč.

To my surprise,
a few minutes later,
God called me
and said,
'you become God
and I your devotee;
I want to dream,
to wish,
to pray,
And to hear you answer them all.'

Joy suffused my body,
but a dilemma lurked
behind the euphoria
of unexpected achievement.

To myself,
I mumbled,
"If I become God
there will be none to grant my wishes."
I found myself alone,
sorrow filled my body again,
and I changed my mind.

To God
finally I said,
'I don't want to become God,
I shall always remain a devotee
whose prayers are answered,
not answered.'

Na moje presenečenje
me je nekaj minut zatem
poklical
in rekel:
»Bodi ti Bog
in jaz bom tvoj vernik;
želim si sanjati,
želeti,
moliti
in da mi odgovoriš na moje molitve.«

Radost mi je prežela telo,
toda pod vzhičenjem
nad nenadnim dosežkom
je že prežal dvom.

Sam zase
sem zamrmral:
»Če bom postal Bog,
ne bo nikogar, ki bi uslišal moje želje.«
Ponovno sem bil sam,
žalost mi je zalila telo,
premisлил sem si.

Končno
sem rekel Bogu:
»Nočem postati Bog,
za vedno naj ostanem vernik,
čigar molitve so uslišane
ali neuslišane.«

Identity

12 letters of my name, altogether, I thought,
form my identity.

I meditated upon my name.

My name

ALL IN BLOCK LETTERS

My name

In Small Letters With Initial Capitals

My name

in Times New Roman, Font Size 12

My name

with a Suffix

My name

with a Prefix

My name underwent a series of modulations
and became a farce!

Who am I?

A name!

But even the name

now I meditate upon

had long become a numeric entity.

1/147: the administration verifies the registration,
and confirms my identity;

2492318: the immigration tallies its record,
and verifies my nationality.

My name

refrains from identifying me;

My name

contributes to my vulnerability;

My name

only exhibits my non-existence.

Identiteta

12 črk mojega imena, skupaj, sem pomislil,
oblikuje mojo identiteto.

Meditiral sem o svojem imenu.

Moje ime,

NAPISANO Z VELIKIMI ČRKAMI,

moje ime,

napisano z Malimi Črkami in Velikima Začetnicama,

moje ime,

v Times New Roman, velikost pisave 12,

moje ime

s pripono,

moje ime

s predpono,

moje ime je prestalo niz sprememb

in se spremenilo v burko!

Kdo sem?

Ime!

Toda tudi ime,

o katerem sem meditiral,

je že zdavnaj postalo številčna entiteta.

1/147: uprava preveri registracijo

in potrди mojo identiteto;

2492318: imigracijski urad preveri, ali se ujemam z vpisom

in potrди mojo nacionalnost.

Moje ime

mi preprečuje, da bi se identificiral;

moje ime

prispeva k moji ranljivosti;

moje ime

samo izkazuje moje neobstajanje.

This time, I silently chose
to unwrap the cover of my name
only to see my temporary identities
sink into the oblivion.

Zato sem se tiho odločil,
da odgrnem tančice svojega imena,
da bi videl, kako moje začasne identitete
tonejo v pozabo.

Shadows of War

At the courtyard
blossomed are the flowers—
in pink red and yellow.

The woman wakes up,
and each morning
stretches her eyes till the road ends of her sight
in the hope that her husband
who disappeared some ten years ago
might return.

She waited till she could;
but her husband never returned.
The last drop in her eyes rolled
and fell
unaccounted,
futile.
There was only one more thing she could do—
recollect the memories of the days bygone!

She remembered her husband
And gazed at the flowers he planted
before he left his house in enforcement.
And, in the blooming flowers at the courtyard
She found the vigour for a continued wait.

Sometimes she feared
when the flowers fell in their prime
by the struck of the wind;
But the new buds that appeared
in all their beauty and fragrance

Sence vojne

Na dvorišču
cvetijo rože –
rožnate, rdeče in rumene.

Ženska vstane
in se vsako jutro
zazre proti koncu ceste
v upanju, da se bo njen mož,
ki je izginil pred desetimi leti,
vendarle vrnil.

Čakala je, dokler je lahko:
toda njen mož se ni nikoli vrnil.
Zadnja kaplja se ji je skotalila iz oči
in padla,
nerazložljiva,
jalova.
Samo eno stvar je še lahko naredila –
zbrala spomine na minule dni!

Spominjala se je svojega moža
in gledala rože, ki jih je posadil,
preden so ga na silo odvedli iz hiše.
In v cvetočih rožah na dvorišču
je našla moč za nadaljnje čakanje.

Včasih je zadrgetala,
ko so se cvetovi v največjem razcvetu osuli
pod naletom vetra,
toda novi popki, ki so pognali
v vsej svoji lepoti in vonju,

reinforced in her the verve
to renew her wait.

After a long cohabitation
suddenly today
she suffocated her relationship with the flowers.
In them, she saw the shadow of malice;
And when the flowers swayed along
The tune of the gentle eastern breeze,
She feared it a death-dance.

An epitome of *nilakantha**, flowers gulped the incrimination
and honoured the silence.
Without the knowledge of the woman
flowers continued to offer homage
to the dead body of the woman's husband
buried at the courtyard
of his own house.

** Nilakantha means blue throat. According to a myth, god Shiva in Hindu myth swallowed poison to save people. And the effect of the poison made the throat blue.*

so okrepili njeno gorečnost,
jo utrdili v čakanju.

Po dolgotrajnem sožitju
je danes
znenada zadušila svoj odnos z rožami.
V njih je zagledala senco zla;
in ko se je cvetje uglašeno zazibalo
v vetju nežnega vzhodnika,
se je prestrašila, da je to mrtvaški ples.

Kot simbol za *nilakantho** so rože popile obtožbe
in se poklonile tišini.
Ne da bi ženska to vedela,
so rože še naprej izkazovale čast
mrtvemu telesu njenega moža,
pokopanemu na dvorišču
njegove lastne hiše.

** Nilakantha pomeni modro grlo. Po hindujski mitologiji je bog Šiva pogoltnil strup, da bi rešil ljudi. Posledica strupa je bila, da se je njegovo grlo obarvalo modro.*

Change

The sun goes red
and slowly sinks in the West.
I sigh an extended breath
after a long-day suffocation of my own volition.
I choose to rebuke Time for its stagnancy,
The Time, but, embraces me in its engulfing spiral.
I gauge it from the pages in history:
The whirlwinds are but the sighs of the sinking sun—
A bright flash of the dying light!

After so much a wait
the pages read the same Darkness—
My truth, my reality.
And these days I fear the Broad Day Light.
Scary mornings come with another whirlwind,
It rages and rocks,
It shakes the foundation.
Aah!
But it all is a rising vapour
in the morning tea cup.

Sprememba

Sonce postane rdeče
in počasi utone na Zahodu.
Globoko vdihnem
po dolgem dnevu, polnem tesnobe, ki sem si jo sam pridelal.
Okaral sem Čas zaradi njegove lenobnosti,
toda Čas me objame in me brez preostanka pahne v svojo spiralo.
Prebiram ga na straneh zgodovine:
viharji so samo vzdihljaji tonečega sonca –
svetli bliski umirajoče luči!

Po neskončnem čakanju
so strani popisane z isto Temo –
z mojo resnico, z mojo resničnostjo.
In te dni me je strah jasne dnevne svetlobe.
Strašljiva jutra pridejo z novim viharjem,
ki besni in maje,
stresa temelje.
Aah!
Toda vse je sopara,
ki se dviga iz jutranje skodelice čaja.

The Chess Game

The first move—
a white pawn takes a double leap.
Second,
the black horse jumps in L.
Moves and counter moves,
the game continues.

The dice that are on the move
have no intentions.
And those with intentions
do not speak their mind.

How long can a game continue?
It has to end.
One wins,
or it can end in a draw.
“Double check!”
Finally, someone speaks cautiously.

But it’s just a game,
and, you can play it again.

This time too,
I’m back on the chess board
re-arranged,
for the next game:
A mere dice in flesh and blood!

Partija šaha

Prva poteza –
kmet se premakne za dve polji.

Druga,
črni konj skoči v L.
Poteze in protipoteze,
igra se nadaljuje.

Figure, ki se premikajo,
nimajo nobenih namenov.
In tiste, ki jih imajo,
o njih molčijo.

Koliko časa se lahko igra nadaljuje?
Mora se končati.
Nekdo zmaga
ali pa se igra konča z remijem.
»Dvojni šah!«
končno nekdo previdno reče.

Toda saj je samo igra
in lahko jo še enkrat zaigraš.

Tudi tokrat
se vrnem k šahovski deski,
pripravljeni
za naslednjo partijo:
tudi sam figura iz mesa in krvi!

Metamorphosis

I

A group of artists
have arrived into this city—
an Unreal City.

For ages
we had dreamt of a Real City.
And now
these artists have promised it for us.

II

In the Unreal City
the sun and the moon,
the sky and the earth,
the humans and the birds,
the trees and the turfs,
all exist
without our knowing they exist.

Because we lived in an Unreal City
we never bothered to know that they ever existed.

III

We have our big dreams,
and these artists have a big responsibility!
They've promised—
a new sun,
a new moon,

Metamorfoza

I

Skupina umetnikov
je prispela v mesto –
v Neresnično mesto.

Že od nekdanj
sanjamo o Resničnem mestu.
In umetniki so nam ga
obljubili.

II

V Neresničnem mestu
sonce in luna,
nebo in zemlja,
ljudje in ptice,
drevje in trate
obstajajo,
ne da bi mi vedeli zanje.

Zato ker živimo v Neresničnem mestu,
nas ni nikoli zanimalo, ali so sploh kdaj obstajali.

III

Imamo velike sanje
in umetniki imajo veliko odgovornost.
Obljubili so nam –
novo sonce,
novo luno

and of course, a new land.
A perfect city!

IV

We are now in the becoming of a Real City.
And the artists are busy undoing the scaffoldings of the
Unreal City.

They are experimenting with colours;
They are experimenting with words and the musical notes.
So, things are in mess.

Confusion prevails,
and we sometimes unwisely doubt things.

But they explain it for us—
it's a transition!

They want to reassure us.

Poor creatures!

We do everything to prove that we're reassured.

We are told

Our questioning disrupts the transformation of our place into
a Real City.

So, we silently choose to accept our own defacement—

Witness our own metamorphosis!

in seveda novo deželo.
Popolno mesto!

IV

Zdaj mesto postaja Resnično mesto!
In umetniki so zaposleni z razstavljanjem zidarskih odrov
Neresničnega mesta.

Eksperimentirajo z barvami;
eksperimentirajo z besedami in glasbenimi notami.
Zato je vse v neredu.
Prevladuje zmešnjava
in včasih nespametno podvomimo v stvari.
Toda razložijo nam –
to je tranzicija.
Hočejo nas pomiriti.
Uboga bitja!
Naredimo vse, da bi delovali pomirjeno.
Rekli so nam,
da bomo s spraševanjem zmotili spreminjanje našega kraja
v Resnično mesto.
Zato tiho sprejmemo lastno popačenje –
priče svoje lastne metamorfoze!

Uninvestigated

That's the morgue of the hospital
and, he lies dead there.
Adjacent to the Morgue is a Maternity Ward—
the place where he was born
some fifty-two years ago.

Earlier, the doctors cut his mother dead
to bring him into life
through a successful caesarean.
Now, they are carefully dissecting his body
for a successful post-mortem
to tell the reason he died.

Even after the successful caesarean and the post-mortem,
His medical reports never tell
Was his life successful?
Or, is his death meaningful?

Neraziskano

To je bolnišnična mrtvašnica
in on leži v njej, mrtev.
Zraven je porodniški oddelek,
kraj, kjer se je rodil pred
približno dvainpetdesetimi leti.

Pred tem so zdravniki neuspešno operirali njegovo mamo,
umrla je, on pa se je rodil
z uspešno izvedenim carskim rezom.
Zdaj skrbno secirajo njegovo telo,
da bi z uspelo avtopsijo
izvedeli, zakaj je umrl.

Toda niti po uspelem carskem rezu niti po uspeli avtopsiji
zdravniška poročila ne povejo:
Je bilo njegovo življenje uspešno?
Je bila njegova smrt smiselna?

Reward

Twenty years ago
in her prime
she began her career
typing the decree of her boss.
In between
she has typed
a bulk of appointments
numbers of transfers
and, scores of promotions.
Every stroke on the type-machine,
she never realized,
was the counting of her own days.
By now
she has served enough
and today,
someone else is typing for her
a retirement letter.

Nagrada

Pred dvajsetimi leti,
na vrhuncu moči,
je začela kariero
kot tipkarica odlokov svojega šefa.
Do zdaj
je natipkala
množico sestankov,
številna nakazila
in obilico napredovanj.
Z vsakim udarcem na pisalni stroj
je štela svoje dni,
ne da bi se tega zavedala.
Dovolj
dolgo je služila
in danes
nekdo drug tipka zanjo
pismo o upokojitvi.

Gratification

That piece of bone
which the dog is recklessly sucking
is the one I threw
after sucking the marrow inside it.

Now,
when I see the dog
sucking it with immense satisfaction,
I envy the pleasure the dog receives
even sucking the bone without the marrow.

Poor dog!
Instead of abandoning the bone
It wags its tail to me still today
in gratification.

Podkupnina

Kost,
ki jo pes brezbrizno sesa,
je kost, ki sem jo odvrigel,
potem ko sem iz nje izsesal mozeg.

Zdaj,
ko vidim, s kakšnim
zadovoljstvom jo sesa,
mu zavidam užitek, ki ga ima
celo ob sesanju kosti brez mozga.

Ubogi pes!
Namesto da bi jo pustil vnemar,
mi še danes iz hvaležnosti
maha z repom.

Reality

Here they came

On a mission

In search of a 'right' man.

I proposed to them the tallest of men;

Very moment, they shrunk down to Liliputs themselves,

And, out of fear, they outright rejected the Gulliver.

Then I proposed them the shortest of men,

This time, they themselves swelled as big as the Gulliver

Out of scorn, they again rejected this poor Liliput.

Finally, I asked them who they really wanted:

“Tallest of the dwarfs,” they humbly answered.

Resničnost

Prišli so
z nalogo,
da poiščejo »pravega« človeka.
Predlagal sem jim najvišjega izmed ljudi;
v istem hipu so se skrčili na velikost liliputancev
in prestrašeni brez premisleka zavrnili Guliverja.
Potem sem jim predlagal najnižjega od ljudi,
tokrat so sami zrasli do velikosti Guliverja
in zaničljivo zavrnili ubogega liliputanca.
Na koncu sem jih vprašal, koga so pravzaprav želeli.
»Najvišjega od pritlikavcev,« so ponižno odgovorili.

Will Power

“In new Nepal,”
they said,
“Everything will change:
The economy will change
and, society will change.”
Optimistic and enthusiastic
I asked them –
“Will you also change?”
In confusion
they looked at each other
and, one of them said –
“We haven’t decided this yet.”

Volja do moči

»V novem Nepal«,«
so rekli,
»se bo vse spremenilo:
ekonomija se bo spremenila
in družba se bo spremenila.«
Optimističen in navdušen
sem jih vprašal –
»Se boste spremenili tudi vi?«
Zmedeno
so se spogledali
in eden od njih je rekel:
»O tem pa še nismo odločali.«

To Myself

That election

I voted with my own will.

This election

I am not sure

because

everybody speaks with threat

to vote for “the people”.

Samemu sebi

Na prejšnjih volitvah
sem glasoval po lastni volji.
Za te volitve
nisem prepričan,
saj
vsi grozeče govorijo,
da bodo volili »za ljudi«.

At the Teashop

At the teashop
They come every morning
For yet another cup of tea
After rounds of tea at their homes or elsewhere.
There is nothing special here:
Yes, Mithila *vaujau** still remembers the etiquette of a
business—

She'll smile indiscriminately
To anyone
Who comes at her teashop
Except those days
When a customer picks up a paper
At the teashop
And recounts the news
Of the scarcity of LP gas,
Or increase in sugar price.

They come and talk their business,
Their new boss in the office,
Or the communist party in the government.
She has nothing to do with those talks
But she still loves them
Because she practices the business etiquette
To love things
That bring profit to her.

* *Vaujau in Nepali means wife of a brother.*

V čajnici

Ob jutrih
prihajajo v čajnico
na še eno skodelico čaja
po skodelicah, ki so jih popili doma ali drugje.

Tu ni nič posebnega:

Ja, *vaujau** Mithila se še vedno spomni poslovnega bontona –
brez razlike se bo nasmehnila
vsakomur,
ki bo vstopil v njeno čajnico,
razen tiste dni,
ko stranka vzame v čajnici
časopis
in glasno obnavlja novice
o pomanjkanju plina za gospodinjstva
ali o dvigu cene sladkorja.

Prihajajo in se menijo o svojih poslih,
o novem šefu v pisarni
ali o komunistični stranki v vladi.
Nobene zveze nima s temi pogovori,
vseeno pa jih ima rada,
saj se vadi v poslovnem bontonu,
da ima rada stvari,
ki ji prinašajo dobiček.

* *Vaujau* v nepalščini pomeni svakinja.

Opportunity

Gun fired.
'Mr. K_ is dead!'
Somebody announced it in the crowd.
Everybody looked at me
with no pause
no shock
no sympathy
but as if I were an opportunity for them.
The hurling speeches,
The claims
And, counter claims –
They were tense.
Minutes later, there appeared a group
with bamboo sticks and funeral clothes.
They made me lie down,
Wrapped me with red flags
And declared me
“A martyr!”
Then,
I was under protection.
Young robust bodies guarded me.
I was surprised.
The whole life
When I lived in insecurity and fear
Nobody bothered for my protection.
Thank you dear shooter,
You brought me to peace,
and special protection!
Throughout my life
I was a nobody
disgraced and humiliated.

Priložnost

Puška je ustrelila.
»Gospod K. je mrtev!«
je oznanil nekdo v množici.
Vsi so se zagledali vame,
strmo,
neprizadeto,
brez sočutja,
kot bi bil za njih nekakšna priložnost.
Vročične debate,
zahteve
in protizahteve –
bili so napeti.
Nekaj minut zatem se je pojavila skupina
s palicami iz bambusa in pogrebnimi oblačili.
Položili so me na tla,
me zavili v rdeče zastave
in me proglasili za
mučenika!
Potem
sem dobil zaščito.
Stražila so me mlada robustna telesa.
Bil sem presenečen.
Vse življenje
sem preživel v negotovosti in strahu
in nikogar ni zanimala moja varnost.
Zato hvala ti, dragi strelec,
prinesel si mi mir
in me postavil pod posebno zaščito!
Vse življenje
sem bil nihče,
osramočen in ponižan.

Now,
a hero declared Martyr –
awarded millions from government funds
Free to consume both praise and prize.

Zdaj
sem heroj, proglašen za mučenika –
za katerega gredo milijoni iz državne blagajne,
svoboden, da poberem slavo in denar.

Wonders of a Leaf

Lying in bed
I dream of a caterpillar.

The caterpillar stops a while,
Dreams of a leaf
and resumes!
I lie, while
the caterpillar soothes me,
crawls upon me
and excites me with its
innumerable hands and feet.

Belly upon the belly,
caterpillar and me –
intoxicated,
we live a complete dream.
The caterpillar –
touches me,
gets aroused,
squeezes and sucks me,
and, transforms itself into a butterfly.

I, too, dream,
get excited with the touch,
and offer myself to be eaten up;
But, left with a mystic of life
I dream and wonder:
if the butterfly is my love,
my ultimate dream.

Čudeži lista

Ležim v postelji
in sanjam o gosenici.

Gosenica za hip obstane,
sanja o listu
in gre naprej!
Ležim, medtem
ko me gosenica pomirja,
ko leze po meni
in me draži s svojimi
neštetimi rokami in nogami.

S trebuhom ob trebuhu,
gosenica in jaz –
omamljena,
živiva popolne sanje.
Gosenica –
dotakne se me,
se vzburi,
me stiska in sesa
in se preobrazi v metulja.

Tudi mene, sanjajočega,
vznemiri dotik
in ponudim se, da bi bil pojeden.
Toda prepuščen skrivnosti življenja,
sanjam in se sprašujem:
je metulj moja ljubezen,
moja najvišja sanja.

Colour of the Sun

My daughter is busy colouring her thoughts
The fingers restlessly
Move across the drawings
On the card board paper.

“What is the colour of the sun?” she fumbles–
Yellow, orange, or crimson red–
Who knows it? The colour of the sun?
She takes a colouring pencil, and before she fills in
The colour, she tries to sharpen the tip of the pencil;
The tip breaks again and again...
And it only sharpens her nerves.

Irritated, confused,
She raises her head, and slowly, turns it a little right,
And gives a puzzled look at me,
Her eyes are enough to tell what she feels
About me; But I have never coloured
A sun, you know! I have never felt it closely
To know its colours. At times,
I have hated the irresistible heat, or
Its absence too. But colours?
Does the sun have a colour at all?
With my little daughter, the sun smiles, and how
Do I tell what colour is the smile?

It's raining heavily outside, and inside
My conscience erodes to create a grim, bleak lake
That receives the reflection of the sun.

Barva sonca

Mojo hčerko zaposluje barvanje svojih misli,
prsti ji brez počitka
drsijo prek risb
na risalnem listu.

»Kakšne barve je sonce?« ugiba –
rumene, oranžne, škrlatno rdeče –
Kdo jo pozna? Barvo sonca?
Vzame barvni svinčnik, in preden zapolni
sonce z barvo, ga poskusi ošiliti;
konica se vedno znova zlomi
in zato ji uspe ošiliti le svoje živce.

Razdražena, zmedena
dvigne glavo, jo počasi zasuka v desno
in me zbegano pogleda,
že z očmi mi pove, kaj čuti
do mene; toda veste, jaz nisem nikoli
barval sonca! Nikoli se mu nisem čutil tako blizu,
da bi spoznal njegove barve. Včasih
sem sovražil nevzdržno vročino ali
njeno odsotnost. Toda barve?
Ali sonce sploh ima kakšno barvo?
Moja hčerka se smehlja kot sonce in kako
naj vem, kakšne barve je nasmeh?

Zunaj močno dežuje in notri
me grize vest in izgrize čemerno, mrzlo jezero,
v katerem odseva sonce.

What colour is the sun in the lake?
The colour of my mind, probably.

To my daughter, I just said—
Paint your own sun, dear!

Kakšne barve je sonce v jezeru?
Najbrž barve mojega duha.

Hčerki sem rekel samo –
naslikaj svoje sonce, ljubica!

The Missing Sun

In her youthful fancy
she plucked the sun from the sky.

Filled in with immense passion
for this young morning sun,
she held it tight to her bosom
and felt its warmth skin to skin.

How long one can surrender?
The sun had its promise to the sky
To come back soon!

But unwilling to share the sun
with anyone else,
she wrapped the sun carefully
with her soft red shawl
and quietly hid it
in a corner of her own memory-shelf.

And now,
the sun no more shines in the sky
to show the world
how happy she is!

Pogrešano sonce

V mladostnem navdušenju
je utrgala sonce z neba.

Napolnjena z neizmerno strastjo
do jutranjega sonca,
ga je tesno privila k prsim
in na koži začutila toplino njegove kože.

Kako dolgo se ji lahko predaja?
Sonce je vendar obljubilo nebu,
da se bo kmalu vrnilo nanj!

Ampak ona noče deliti sonca
z nikomer,
skrbno ga je zavila
v mehke rdeče šal
in ga tiho skrila
v najtemnejši kot svojega spomina.

In zdaj
sonce ne sije več na nebu,
da bi svetu pokazalo,
kako srečna je.

Prevedla Katja Kuštrin

Embargo

My daughter is learning numbers.
She is learning the names of the months and days.
She wants to do things on her own—
Like her father, like her mother.
And we keep saying,
“Not now dear, you are too small for it.”

Now she has a wish— a wish to grow
And not to be a child anymore;
Because she wants to do things on her own,
Like her father, like her mother.
And, on her third birthday, she tells me:
‘Baba, when I will no more be a child?’
To her, this asking is important.
It’s about a sense of freedom,
A sense of the self.

Becoming a teenager would mark her first transition.
For me, it is just counting of a few more years.
I add ten more years to her present age.
My daughter will be excitedly counting these more years
For they mean ten more birthday cakes,
And ten more birthday gifts,
Before she finally arrives at it.

Oh, this transition is scary.
She will be thirteen.
She will be assertive.
She will try to live on her own—
No more like her father, no more like her mother,
Different from what she aspired for.

Prepoved

Moja hčerka se uči števil.
Uči se imen mesecev in dni.
Rada bi počela stvari po svoje –
tako kot njen oče, tako kot njena mama.
In midva ji venomer govoriva:
»Še ne, ljubica, premajhna si za to.«

Zdaj si želi, da bi odrasla
in da ne bi bila več otrok.
Ker si želi početi stvari po svoje –
tako kot njen oče, tako kot njena mama.
In na svoj tretji rojstni dan me vpraša:
»Očka, kdaj ne bom več otrok?«
Zanjo je to pomembno vprašanje.
Gre za občutek svobode,
občutek same sebe.

Najstništvo bo zaznamovalo njen prvi prehod.
Zame je to samo stvar nekaj let.
Njenim letom jih dodam še deset.
Moja hčerka pa jih bo vznemirjeno štela,
saj pomenijo deset rojstnodnevnih tort več
in deset rojstnodnevnih daril več,
preden bo prišla do tja.

Oh, ta prehod je strašljiv.
Imela jih bo trinajst.
Odločna bo.
Hotela bo živeti po svoje –
nič več kot njen oče, nič več kot njena mama,
drugače kot si je želela.

And now, we fear the number.
We fear the possible assertion
Of her breaking away from us.
And with this fear,
We declare the number an embargo—
Ominous and Tabooed!

In zdaj se bojiva številke.
Bojiva se njene morebitne odločnosti,
ki jo bo pahnila od naju.
In zaradi tega strahu sva razglasila
prepoved nad številko –
zloveščo in tabuizirano!

Zeal

What's your age?

she asked.

Do not believe the grey hairs,

I humbly replied.

Gorečnost

Koliko si star?

je vprašala.

Ne verjemi sivim lasem,
sem ji ponižno odgovoril.

Of My Poetry Class

Today, as every previous-year's day,
I'll meet a new batch of students
In my poetry class.
May be I'll talk to them on Chaucer
On how he democratically portrayed his characters
Or, may be as always,
Romanticize Ginsberg as a Hippie-hero
And elaborate his experiments with sex and drugs;
Or, I may be overtaken by the personal life of Yeats
By failures of his love life
More than the philosophical visions in his poems.

They'll have expectations
And may end in impressions,
I'll also have expectations
But I'll need to continue on those impressions,
The way I've been doing these many years.

In the classroom
They'll be my students
Or, I will be their teacher, by reciprocation.
Very consciously, we'll build and maintain the distance
Of our being—as a teacher, as students.
Each day, we'll interact with each other
Through faces-- foamy smiles this time, and frowns at other
times.

In the turn of the year, before my poetry classes end
These new faces will soon be registered as 'gold-old batch'
And I'll be left to expect new faces again.

O mojem pesniškem razredu

Danes, tako kot na isti dan lansko leto,
bom srečal množico novih študentov
pri svojem predavanju o poeziji.
Morda jim bom govoril o Chaucerju,
kako demokratično je upodobil svoje like,
ali pa bom, kot vedno,
romantiziral Ginsberga kot hipijevskega heroja
in razdelal njegove poskuse s seksom in drogami;
ali pa me bo Yeatsovo zasebno življenje
z njegovimi ljubezenskimi neuspehi prevzelo
bolj kot filozofska videnja v njegovih pesmih.

Prišli bodo s pričakovanji,
ki se lahko končajo z vtisi,
in tudi sam bom imel pričakovanja,
a bom moral graditi na teh vtisih,
tako kot to počnem že leta.

V razredu
bodo oni moji študentje
in obratno, jaz bom njihov učitelj.
Zelo vestno bomo gradili in vzdrževali razdaljo
med nami – kot učitelj, kot učenci.
Vsak dan bomo stopali v odnose –
zdaj bodo na obrazih vljudni nasmeški, zdaj bodo namrgodeni.
Ob koncu leta, preden se predavanja končajo,
bodo novi obrazi prepoznani kot »dobra stara družba«
in zapuščen bom pričakoval nove obraze.

At this moment of thought, as always,
I am drawn back to the same question:
With these fleets of fancy-fiery faces,
(As a new teacher to these new students),
Am I simply rehearsing to keep time away?

V tem trenutku se v mislih, kot vedno,
vrnem k istemu vprašanju:
ali s flotami žarečih obrazov
(kot novi učitelj novim študentom)
preprosto vadim upočasnitev časa?

Buffis*

There at the Dadabab camp in Somalia
Or the Sanischare camp in Jhapa
They are waiting for an opportunity
For a third country resettlement;
There is impatience, anxiety, and above all,
A desperate wait!

Friends are gone, neighbours are gone
There is news on the print about their new changed life
And, in a rare telephone conversation
An acquaintance recounts her Boeing experience;
It makes the wait more worthwhile,
But the anxiety accelerates.

My friend at the University is waiting for a visa interview
His colleagues are gone, even juniors are gone
There are posts on the social sites about their new changed status
And, in brief online chats,
They sympathize him for still being stuck in the old torn place;
It makes him more restless
And the anxiety accelerates.

Only yesterday Roshani said, “Dai, finally I’m going.”
“Where?” I asked her.
She only smiled in reply.
It was a shame that I didn’t know my own dream.

Buffis*

V taborišču Dadabab v Somaliji
ali v taborišču Sanichare v Jhapi
čakajo na možnost,
da bi se nastanili v tretji državi:
tam so nepotrpežljivost, tesnoba in predvsem
obupano čakanje!

Prijatelji so odšli, odšli so sosede,
časopisi prinašajo novice o njihovem spremenjenem življenju
in v osamljenem telefonskem pogovoru
znanka poroča o svoji izkušnji z boeingom,
to naredi čakanje vrednejše,
a tesnoba narašča.

Moj prijatelj z univerze čaka na pogovor za vizo.
Njegovi kolegi so odšli, celo gimnazijci so odšli,
na družabnih omrežjih so objave o njihovem novem
spremenjenem statusu
in v kratkih pogovorih prek spleta
sočustvujejo z njim, ki še vedno tiči v žalostnem starem kraju;
to ga dela nemirnega
in tesnoba narašča.

Šele včeraj je Roshani rekla: »Dai, končno grem.«
»Kam?« sem jo vprašal.
Nasmehnila se mi je v odgovor.
Postalo me je sram, da ne poznam svojih sanj.

At the camp, in the University, and at our homes,
We live with a buffis
A hope and an anxiety
Of hunting the *impalas*** , our dreams!

** Buffis is an African/Somalian term that means anxiety that we have when we are waiting for some good thing to happen.*

*** Impalas are rare species of antelope found in Uganda, especially the Kampala region. It is believed that the city Kampala received its name as such to mean the 'hill of impalas'.*

V taborišču, na univerzi, po naših domovih,
živimo z buffisom,
upanjem in tesnobo,
da bomo ujeli *impale***, naše sanje!

** Buffis je afriški/somalski izraz, ki označuje tesnobo, ki jo čutimo, ko čakamo, da se bo zgodilo nekaj dobrega.*

*** Impala je redka vrsta antilope v Ugandi, še posebej v regiji okoli Kampale. Obstaja prepričanje, da je Kampala poimenovana prav po impalah in da pomeni 'grič impal'.*

About the Author

Keshab Sigdel (born 1979) is a Nepali poet, academic, translator and editor. Sigdel's published works include *Samaya Bighatan* (2007), a collection of poems in Nepali, and *Six Strings* (2011), a co-authored joint anthology of poems in English. Sigdel's poems are published in literary journals like *Grey Sparrow* (USA), *Snow Jewel* (USA), *Syndic Literary Journal* (USA), *Sijo Saing'hwat* (South Korea), *Naya Gyanodaya* (India), *The Art of Being Human* (Canada), *Kabita Bangla* (Bangladesh), *Kampala Poetry Anthology* (Uganda), *Of Nepalese Clay* (Nepal), *Kalashree* (Nepal) along with translations in English, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Thai, Kannada, Sambalpuri, Bengali, Japanese, and South Korean.

Sigdel is the editor of two journals *Rupantaran* (publication of Translation Department, Nepal Academy, the apex body of Literature and Arts in Nepal) and *Of Nepalese Clay* (literary magazine of the Society of Nepali Writers in English).

His poems and plays are taught in school and University courses in Nepal. He is also the recipient of two literary awards 'Bhanubhakta Swarna Padak' (2014) and 'Kalashree Srijana Puraskar' (2015).

Keshab Sigdel works as an Assistant Professor in English at the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal.

O avtorju

Keshab Sigdel (r. 1979) je nepalski pesnik, akademik, prevajalec in urednik. Objavil je pesniško zbirko v nepalščini *Samaya Bighatan* (2007) in je soavtor antologije, napisane v angleščini, *Six Strings* (2011). Pesmi objavlja v literarnih revijah po vsem svetu, med drugim so izšle v literarnih revijah *Grey Sparrow* (ZDA), *Snow Jewel* (ZDA), *Syndic Literary Journal* (ZDA), *Sijo Saing'hwai* (Južna Koreja), *Naya Gyanodaya* (Indija), *The Art of Being Human* (Kanada), *Kabita Bangla* (Bangladeš), *Kampala Poetry Anthology* (Uganda), *Of Nepalese Clay* (Nepal), *Kalashree* (Nepal) in so prevedene v angleščino, hindi, urdu, tamilščino, tajščino, kannada, sambalpuri, bengalščino, japonsščino in korejščino.

Sigdel je urednik revij *Rupantaran* (publikacije prevajalskega oddelka nepalske akademije, ki je najvišje telo za literaturo in umetnost v Nepal) in revije *Of Nepalese Clay* (literarne revije Društva nepalskih pisateljev, pišočih v angleščini).

Njegove pesmi in drame so vključene v nepalski šolski in univerzitetni program. Za svoje delo je prejel literarni nagradi »Bhanubhakta Swarna Padak« (2014) in »Kalashree Srijana Puraskar« (2015).

Keshab Sigdel dela kot izredni profesor angleščine na osrednji katedri za angleščino na Univerzi Tribhuvan v Katmanduju v Nepal.

Kazalo / Contents

From a Tide to Tranquility: A Glance at Sigdel's Poems	4
Od razburkanosti do spokojnosti: bežen vpogled v pesmi Keshaba Sigdela	5
Poetry and the Heroine	14
Poezija in junakinja	15
Lonely in a Crowd	16
Osamljen v množici	17
Fear with the Flower	18
Strah za rožo	19
Shadow	20
Senca	21
A Story of the Time	22
Zgodba o času	23
A Conversation with God	26
Pogovor z Bogom	27
Identity	30
Identiteta	31
Shadows of War	34
Sence vojne	35
Change	38
Sprememba	39

The Chess Game	40
Partija šaha	41
Metamorphosis	42
Metamorfoza	43
Uninvestigated	46
Neraziskano	47
Reward	48
Nagrada	49
Gratification	50
Podkupnina	51
Reality	52
Resničnost	53
Will Power	54
Volja do moči	55
To Myself	56
Samemu sebi	57
At the Teashop	58
V čajnici	59
Opportunity	60
Priložnost	61
Wonders of a Leaf	64
Čudeži lista	65

Colour of the Sun	66
Barva sonca	67
The Missing Sun	70
Pogrešano sonce	71
Embargo	72
Prepoved	73
Zeal	76
Gorečnost	77
Of My Poetry Class	78
O mojem pesniškem razredu	79
Buffis	82
Buffis	83
About the Author	86
O avtorju	87

BARVE SONCA / COLOURS OF THE SUN

Keshab Sigdel

Prevedla: **Vera Pejovič in Peter Semolič**

Spremna beseda: **Bal Bahadur Thapa**

Urednik: **Peter Semolič**

Jezikovni pregled: **Petra Koršič**

Fotografija na naslovnici in oblikovanje naslovnice: **Katja Kuštrin**

Izdajatelj: **Kulturno-umetniško društvo Poiesis, Trebinjska 8, 1000 Ljubljana, www.poiesis.si**

Ljubljana, januar 2017