

SAMPLE  
TRANSLATION

SREČKO KOSOVEL  
JUSTICE

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## Srečko Kosovel: Justice

Politics gambling with the moment,  
counting on disorientation,  
giving political promises to supporters;  
inside, its shallow brevity  
engulfed by an abject fight for abject aims.

\*

There has been no era so grand in its  
questions and so pathetic in its answers  
as ours.

\*

No wonder we have lost our faith in the divinity  
of the religion that was interfering high and low  
for a fortunate outcome in war, and preaching loyalty  
and complaisance towards European moguls,  
thus driving millions of innocent victims  
to death, orphaning tens of millions.

\*

Is it strange that in this era we are said to be trivial?

We are trivial because we want to serve  
trivialities, selfish ideas.

\*

We know it is the era of mediocrity, epigones  
and seekers, we know it is the era of lies, insincerity  
and hypocrisy. But even the confession itself is too much  
for us: to dare to acknowledge to ourselves  
the cruellest truth of all, that the life  
we are living is a *lie* and we have to live  
another, which will be the *truth*.

\*

We are slaves, and dream rather than  
choose to live and rule ourselves.

Even as we are being beaten with the whip of European  
imperialisms, we are kneeling before God,  
praying for our righteous masters.  
And they in turn let us have God and take from us  
all the rights given to man by God.

Too much have we been looking at Europe,  
too little at ourselves.

\*

True sense is not in civilisation or education,  
but in the culture of the heart. Once and for all we have to  
deal with those who in their petty bourgeois  
complacency have become blind to  
injustice and wrong. Once and for all let us  
deal with those who have been consoling starved,  
frostbitten mankind with otherworldly comforts,  
bemisting man with Christian humility  
and mercy.

\*

It is our belief that only during the time of Justice  
shall love prevail among people as the condition,  
goal and content of the life of each individual  
and mankind; love as a factor,  
turning mankind into a unit,  
the condition of eternal peace.

\*

Fighting for truth, defending justice,  
protesting against all counterhuman  
acts by blasé contemporary civilisation,  
fighting against rotten culture;  
in all this the spiritual force will show its potential.

\*

And let me set this down: all today's life,  
corruption, trafficking, all this can be healed.

All today's culture is a lie, all today's  
civilisation is a phrase, *all mere form  
or a way to anchor political positions.*

\*

I discovered a civilised face, and behind it shone,  
elementary, the true face of man.  
Fully alive, but fully repressed.

\*

Culture strikes out on its own.

It is like light: its force lies in quietness and luminosity;  
it does not hum like life, which erects  
prouder buildings by the day.

And neither does culture demand it; itself alone is the building  
above buildings, the construction of a weightless mentality,  
the building of mind and spirit, not taking an inch of land  
from mercenaries, *and it prides itself upon this*;  
it is eternal and everywhere, always watching over us  
like a bright goal towards which we should be heading.

\*

Pay no mind to those who sell their beliefs  
for a bowl of lentils, nor to those  
who have no beliefs at all.

It's only the seriousness and honesty of fellow warriors  
we should be interested in. Nor can we promise to any  
of them privileges we are not entitled to  
ourselves.

Nor should we claim that it is *us* who  
lead you to the land of Justice.

Not *us*, but *all* who fight  
for honesty, sincerity and principle  
in life, will contribute to progress.

\*

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## Calling Upon You

I am calling upon you, rebels of fire and earth,  
brothers of storm and brothers of tempest,  
brothers of floods and of shipwreck,  
brothers of all broken European hearts,  
I am calling upon you, brothers of this trampled soil,  
look, there... the grass has grown green,  
grown green and come to life, brothers  
of all broken European hearts!

Oh, if only love should awaken  
like this grass in hearts of the trampled,  
the poisoned by wrath and by hatred,  
if only this song should sing high,  
the tiny grass that has come to life. –

I am calling upon you, brothers of universal love!

\*

The victory of *truth* in the cultural,  
*humanism* in the economic,  
*justice* in social life  
will be the greatest triumph of modern mankind.

\*

We are a fire that must burn out, radiate into this darkness  
to illuminate it.  
Fire is not matter, but a mission.  
Therefore we do not fear death:  
death is our mission,  
death to the rotten, terrible life.

Therefore our mission is – the mission of presence.

\*

You only get to know a person  
when they have *command*.

Command is a test of a person's ethical power,  
striving to perform decent acts.

Youth is threatened from all sides by parties, and the times  
are marked by such depression that a person  
is measured by party affiliation, and is even  
allowed to live or sentenced to die according to the same.

So it is that gentlemen politicians, representatives  
of our "mild nation" and "lovely homeland"  
have made such a complete mess, confusing  
*country* and *party*.

Naturally, gentlemen politicians look at youth  
with a critical eye.

They consider it *matter*, whereas youth is *life itself, the seed of life*.

\*

This is the real meaning.

And another: the life of the soul.

In the soul, the centre of all ethnical feeling,  
originates all human action.

Cultural work is therefore necessary.

The real meaning is not in civilisation or education,  
but in the culture of the heart.

\*

A special feature of deep and beautiful souls  
is to show their lives,  
to show the only path  
that a soul should take: towards Beauty.

\*

*History is not repetition,  
but creation.*

This is the only stance towards history  
that we should take.

We should not be following examples from the past,  
but from the living present, which we feel within ourselves.

\*

I see you: you are small; not because of numbers,  
but through timidity.

Why despair when mankind is being *regenerated*?

Deliverance is coming: *the deliverance of mankind*.

But you are depressed and dying.

Can't you feel the shimmer?

Can't you feel the crowds on the move?

A new mankind is rising.

So what, if it comes from the lowlands!

*It has been humiliated.*

So what, if it comes from the bottom!

*It has been defiled.*

So what, if it comes with thunder and lightning!

*It has been suppressed.*

\*

Only a mighty phalanx of all the oppressed  
will be our solution. For only those who've been oppressed  
are able to feel and create a new justice,  
a new world, built for man.



\*

And just as a crystal can only be shaped by the pressure  
of mountains and heavy layers of rock, so an idea,  
pure and mighty, only rises under a tight  
pressure of circumstance, can only acquire  
its life-force and confirmation through suffering.

\*

Man is a representative of the whole.  
What man feels, has to be done,  
it has to be done for the whole.

\*

Every revolution is a reflection of the cosmic will.

\*

Just as a mother's entire organism has to suffer giving birth  
to a child, so the entirety of mankind has to suffer giving birth  
to an idea.

\*

European man is our ideal,  
diverse in its faces  
but unified in its great striving:  
to love all people and act true to that love.

\*

Spirit should never be a slave; we should  
serve it and make it our only leader.  
We have been born to carry the torches of Spirit,  
to assemble around it, to try to gather  
about it the humanity that has gone astray.  
It is our task and our duty  
to light the unquenchable light and to orient ourselves  
by this fixed and eternal Pole.

\*

## Working, We Are Building

Working, we are building  
our future.  
Rolling rocks  
for its construction,  
dazzlingly white, fiery bright.  
And we keep quiet.

Towers glaring in  
golden hopes.  
Placed by the doors  
are mighty dreams  
like a fiery sea shimmering  
in golden flames.

And our work is granite-hard. and  
our dreams are pure like gold. and  
our dreams are no delusion.  
The future belongs to those who believe in it.