Spirit of Bosnia / Duh Bosne
An International, Interdisciplinary, Bilingual, Online Journal
Međunarodni, interdisciplinarni, dvojezični, online časopis

A Word About Man

Mak Dizdar

FIRST

Enclosed within a body encased in skin
You dream of heaven’s fecund return

Housed in a brain imprisoned in a heart
The sun you revere from this dark cave

Imprisoned in flesh locked up by these bones
How can this space

To heaven be bridged?

SECOND

Confined in a ribcage captured by silver
In your grandeur no finer than the peasant

Enclosed within a body shut in by skin
You dream that this earth with heaven agrees

Wrenched from heaven bread and wine you desire
But will your dwelling

Your home ever be?

THIRD

Locked in flesh encaged by bones
These bones your flesh will gore

Wrenched from heaven bread and wine you desire
But stone and smoke are all there are

Of these two hands is one not yours?
The one who wants

The other to kill?

FOURTH

Encased in a brain captured in a heart
The sun you call ceaselessly from the dark pit

You dream of heaven drawing nigh
Through blades of grass the body drunkenly swerves

Held fast by roots immersed in blood
In this sorrowful dance

Are you last or first?

FIFTH

In that sorrowful dance neither last nor first
You are a gathering for creatures and a playground for worms

Trapped in a body that makes itself a grave
When will the body from its own accord

move?

Translated by Keith Doubt – © 2007 Keith Doubt

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