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BILTEN JEVREJSKE ZAJEDNICE
"PRIJATELJI LA BENEVOLENCIJE"



KAKO NAS VIDE

Ivo Andrić

Tako se u Francuskom konzulatu mirno spremaju za odlazak. Ipak, jedno se pitanje postavlja i pred Davila. To je pitanje novca. Nešto ušteđevine, što su imali, Davil je još ranije otpremio u Francusku. Sad već mesecima im ne stižu plate. Sarajevski Jevreji, koji su radili sa Fresineom i često davali pozajmice i Konzulatu, sad su nepoverljivi. Davna ima ušteđenog novca, ali on ostaje u neodređenoj ulozi i u punoj neizvesnosti ovde u Travniku; ne bi bilo pravo lišavati ga onoga što ima i tražiti da pozajmljuje državi, i to na nesigurno.

Oba tumača, i Davna i Rafo Aijas, znali su dobro položaj u kome se nalazio Davil. I dok se on tako mučio i premišljao na koju stranu da se obrati, došao je jednog dana stari Salomon Atijas, Rafin stric, najugledniji od braće i glava celog mnogobrojnog plemena travničkih Atijasa.

Nizak, pregojen i krivonog, u masnoj anteriji, sa glavom bez vrata, postavljenom neposredno među uska ramena, on ima velike ispupčene oči kao kod ljudi koji pate od srčane mane. Sav je znojani i zadihan od toplog majskog dana i nenaviklog hoda uz strminu. Zatvorio je pažljivo vrata za sobomi dahćući pao na stolicu. Od njega udara zadah belog luka i neštavljenih koža. Na kolenima drži stisnute crne, maljave pesnice i na svakoj dlaci blešti sitna kap znoja.

Izmenjali su nekoliko puta pozdrave i vraćali se na iste beznačajne izraze učtivosti. Niti je Davil hteo da prizna da sa porodicom zauvek napušta Travnik, niti je zadihani i teški gazda Salomon mogao da kaže zbog čega je došao. Najposle, ipak Jevrejin otpoče onim hrapavim i grlenim glasom, koji je Davila uvek podsećao na Španiju, da uverava kako on razume neočekivane promene i velike potrebe država i državnih ljudi, kako su vremena teška za sve pa i za čoveka trgovca koji samo svoj posao gleda i – najposle, eto, najposle – ako gospodinu konzulu ne bi na vreme stigli dražavni novci, a put je put, i službena potreba ne može da čeka, tu je eto on Salomon

Atijas, uvek na službu Francuskom carskom ... to jest kraljevskom konzulatu i gospodinu konzulu lično i na raspolaganju sa ono malo što ima i što može.

Davil, koji je najpre pomislio da je Atijas došao da od njega nešto traži ili moli, bio je iznenađen i dirnut. Od uzbuđenja glas mu je bio nejednak. Lični mišići, između usta i podbratka, tamo gde je njegova rumena koža počinjala da vene i da se bora i opušta, zaigraše приметно.

Nastade zbunjeno nutkanje i zahvaljivanje. Najposle se sporazumeše da će Atijas pozajmiti Konzulatu, na menicu, 25 carskih dukata.

Salomonove buljave, krupne oči bile su vlažne, što im je davalo neobičan sjaj i pored žučkaste i zakrvavljene beonjače. I u Davilovim očima sjale su suze uzbuđenja, koje ga tih dana nije napuštalo. Sad su razgovarali lakše i slobodnije.

Davil je tražio birane reči da bi iskazao svoju zahvalnost. Govorio je o svojoj simpatiji i svom razumevanju za Jevreje, o čovečnosti i potrebi da se ljudi, bez razlike, shvataju i pomažu. Držao se opštih i neodređenih izraza, jer nije mogao više da govori o Napoleonu, čije je ime imalo za Jevreje veliku privlačnu snagu i naročito značenje, a još je manje smeo da pomene jasno određeno svoju novu vladu i novog vladaoca po imenu. Salomon ga je gledao svojim krupnim očima i jednako se znojio i teško disao; kao da mu je i samom sve to jasno i teško, isto toliko i teže nego Davilu, kao da razume i shvata potpuno kakva su muka i kakva opasnost svi ti carevi i kraljevi, veziri i ministri, čiji odlasci i dolasci ne zavise nimalo od nas, ali nas ipak dižu ili satiru, nas i naše porodice i sve što jesmo i što imamo; kao da je uopšte nesrećan što je morao da napusti svoju mračnu magazu i gomile koža i da se ispne na ovo uzvišeno i sunčano mesto i da sedi sa gospodom, na nenaviklim stolicama u raskošnim prostorijama.

Obradovan što je pitanje novca za put rešeno tako neočekivano lako i da bi celom razgovoru dao bar malo veseliji ton, Davil je rekao napola u šali:

-Zahvalan sam vam, i neću nikad zaboraviti da ste pored vaših briga stigli i da mislite na sudbinu predstavnika Francuske. I da vam pravo kažem, ja vam se divim da ste, posle svega što se ovde dešavalo, posle svih globa koje ste platili, u mogućnosti da ma kome šta pozajmite.

Nastavak sa strane 1

Jer vezir se hvalio da vam je do dna ispraznio blagajne.

Pri pomenu progona i globa koje su Jevreji imali da podnesu od Ali-paše, Salomonove oči dobiše ukočen i brižan, životinjski tužan izraz.

-Mnogo nas je to koštalo i mnogo nam je uzelo, i zaista je do dna iscrplo naša čekmedžeta, ali vama mogu da kažem i vi treba da znate ...

Tu Salomon pogleda zbunjeno u svoje znojne ruke na kolenima i posle kraćeg ćutanja nastavi nekim drugim, tanjim glasom, izmenjeno, kao da govori odjednom sa drugog kraja:

-Da, uplašilo nas je i koštalo mnogo. Jeste. I vezir je zaista oštar, oštar i težak gospodin. Ali on jedanput ima posla sa Jevrejima, a mi smo preturili desetine i desetine vezira. Veziri se menjaju i odlaze. (Istina svaki nešto odnese.) Odlaze veziri, zboravljaju šta su radili i kako su postupali, dolaze novi i svaki počinje iznova. A mi ostajemo, - pamtimo, beležimo sve što smo podneli, kako smo se branili i spasavali i – predajemo od oca na sina ta skupo plaćena iskustva. Eto zato naša čekmedžeta imaju dva dna. Do jednog dopre vezirova ruka i isprazni sve, ali ispod toga uvek nešto ostane za nas i za našu decu, da se spase duša, da se pomogne svoj i prijatelj u nevolji.

Tu Salomon pogleda pravo u Davila ne više svojim komično-bojažljivim i tužnim očima, nego nekim novim pravim i hrabrim pogledom.

Davil se nasmeja srdačno.

-Ah to je dobro. To mi se dopada. A vezir je smatrao da je neobično lukav i vešt.

Salomon ga prekide odmah tišim glasom, kao da je hteo i njemu da nametne niži ton.

-Ne, neću da kažem da nije. O da, to su vešta i mudra gospoda. Samo znate kako je, gospoda su mudra, silni ljudi, kao zmajevi su naša gospoda, ali gospoda ratuju, gospoda se sudaraju, troše. Jer, znate kako kod nas kažu, gospodarstvo je kao veliki vetar, kreće se, kida i osipa. A mi mirujemo i radimo, stičemo. I zato u nas duže traje i uvek se nađe.

-Ah, to je dobro, to je dobro – potvrđivao je Davil glavom, jednako se smejući i hrabreći Salomona da nastavi.

Ali upravo zbog tog smeha Jevrejin odjednom zastade i pogleda malo bolje konzulu u lice, opet onim svojim prvim, brižnim i bojažljivim pogledom. Poboja se da nije preterao i rekao što ne treba. I sam je uviđao da to što je govorio nije bilo ono što je želeo da kaže. On sam nije znao šta bi to trebalo da bude. Samo ga je nešto teralo da govori, da se požali, pohvali, objasni, kao čovek kome je data jedinstvena prilika, svega nekoliko dragocenih minuta, za važnu i hitnu poruku. Kad je već napustio svoju magazu, ispeo se strminom kojom inače nikad ne ide i seo u ovu svetlu sobu, u lepotu i čistoću na koje nije navikao, izgledalo mu je kao važno i dragoceno što može da razgovara sa ovim strancem, koji kroz nekoliko dana napušta ovu varoš, i to da razgovara kako možda nikad ni s kim više neće moći ni smeti da govori.

Zaboravljajući svoje prvobitno snebivanje i tešku nelagodnost, sve je jače osećao potrebu da ovom stancu kaže još nešto, o sebi i svojim, nešto hitno i tajno, iz ove travničke rupčage, iz vlažne magaze, gde se živi teško, bez časti i pravde, bez lepote i reda, bez suda i svedoka, kao poruku upućenu ni sam ne zna kome, tamo nekom

boljem, urednijem i prosvetljenijem svetu u koji se konzul vraća. Jedanput da kaže nešto što nije samo lukavstvo i oprez, što nema veze sa sticanjem i štednjom, sa svakodnevnim računom i cenjkanjem, nego naprotiv sa davanjem i rasipanjem, sa bolnom i velikodušnom gordošću i iskrenošću.

Ali upravo ta silna želja, koja je odjednom na njega naišla, da saopšti i dostavi dalje nešto opšte i krupno o svom postojanju u životu i o mukama svih travničkih Atijasa oduvek, sprečavala ga je da nađe pravi način i potrebne reči koje bi kratko i dostojno izrazile to što njega sada guši i nateruje mu krv u glavu. Zato je govorio zamuckujući, ne ono što ga je svega ispunjavalo i što je toliko želeo da izrazi – kako se bore i kako uspevaju da sačuvaju nevidljivu snagu i dostojanstvo – nego samo iskidane reči koje su mu dolazile na jezik.

-Eto ... tako se održavamo i tako imamo, i ne žalimo ... za prijatelje, za pravdu, za dobrotu koja nam se ukazuje. Jer mi ... jer i mi ...

Tu mu se naglo ovlažiše oči i prekide glas. Od zabune ustade. Diže se i Davil, dirnut neodređenim ganućem i prijateljstvom, i pruži mu ruku. Salomon prihvati živo tu ruku nenaviklim, nespretnim pokretom i promuca još nekoliko reči kojima je molio da ih ne zaboravi i da kaže tamo gde može i kome treba, da oni ovde žive, da se muče i mukama iskupljuju. To su bile samo nejasne i nepovezane reči koje su se mešale sa Davilovim izrazima zahvalnosti.

Nikad neće moći biti kazano šta je to što tuši Salomona Atijasa u ovom trenutku, što mu nateruje suze na oči i uzbuđenu drhtavicu u celo telo. Kad bi umeo, kad bi mogao uopšte da govori, on bi rekao otprilike ovo:

„Gospodine, vi ste preko sedam godina bili ovde među nama i za to vreme ste nama Jevrejima ukazivali pažnju kakvu nikad nismo doživeli ni od Turaka ni od stranaca. Prizivali ste nas kao ljude, ne izdvajajući nas od ostalih. Možda vi ni sami ne znate koliku ste nam dobrotu time ukazali. Sad, vi odlazite. Vaš car je bio prisiljen da se povuče pred nadmoćnim neprijateljem. U vašoj zemlji se dešavaju mučne stvari i velike promene. Ali vaša zemlja je plemenita i moćna i sve joj se mora na dobro okrenuti. I vi ćete naći svoj put u svom zavičajju. Za žaljenje smo mi koji ostajemo, ova šaka travničkih Jevreja sefarada od koje su dve trećine Atijasi, jer vi ste bili za nas kao malo svetlosti očima. Vi ste videli život koji provodimo, i učinili nam svako dobro koje čovek čoveku može da učini. A ko dobro čini, od njega svak još više dobra očekuje. Zato se usuđujemo da vas zamolimo još i ovo: da budete naš svedok na Zapadu odakle smo i mi došli i koji bi trebalo da zna šta se od nas učinilo. Jer, čini mi se, kad bismo znali da neko zna i priznaje da mi nismo ono što izgledamo ni onakvi kako živimo, lakše bi nam bilo što sve moramo da snosimo.

Pre više od tri stotine godina digao nas je iz naše otadžbine, jedinstvene Andaluzije, strašni, bezumni, bra-toubilački vihor, koji i danas ne možemo da shvatimo, i koji ni do danas nije sebe shvatio, razbacao nas svuda po svetu i načinio od nas prosjake kojima ni zlato ne pomaže. Nas je, evo bacio na Istok, a život na Istoku nije za nas lak ni blagosloven, i što čovek dalje ide i bliže se primiće sunčevom rođaju, sve je gore, jer je zemlja sve mlađa i sirovija, a ljudi su od zemlje. I naša je muka u tome što nit smo mogli da potpuno zavolimo ovu zemlju kojoj dugujemo što nas je primila i dala nam utočište, nit

KAKO NAS VIDE THROUGH THE EYES OF OTHERS 3

smo mogli da zamrzimo onu koj nas je nepravedno oterala i prognala kao nedostojne sinove. Ne znamo je li nam teže što smo ovde ili što nismo tamo. Ma gde bili izvan Španije, mi bismo patili, jer bi smo dve otadžbine imali uvek, to znam, ali ovde nas život suviše pritisnuo i unizio. Znam da smo odavno izmenjeni, ne pamtimo više ni kakvi smo bili, ali se sećamo da smo bili drukčiji. Davno smo krenuli i teško smo putovali i nesrećno smo pali i zaustavili se na ovom mestu, i zato nismo više ni senka onoga što smo bili. Kao prah s vočke koja ide od ruke do ruke, sa čoveka spadne prvo ono to je najfinije na njemu. Zato smo i mi ovakvi. Ali vi nas znate, nas i naš život, ako se ovo sme životom zvati. Živimo između Turaka i raje, bedne raje i grozних Turaka. Odesećeni potpuno od svojih i bliskih, staramo se da čuvamo sve što je špansko, pesme i jela i običaje, ali osećamo kako se sve u nama menja, kviri i zaboravlja. Pamtimo jezik naše zemlje, onakav kakav smo poneli pre tri veka i kakav se više ni tamo ne govori, a smešno natucamo jezik raje sa kojom patimo i Turaka koji nad nama vladaju. Tako da nije možda dalek dan kada ćemo čisto i ljudski moći da se izrazimo samo u molitvi kojoj zapravo i ne treba reči. Ovako usamljeni i malobrojni, ženimo se između sebe i vidimo da nam krv tanča i bleđi. Savijamo se i sklanjamo pred svakim, zlopatimo se i dovijamo, što se kaže: na ledu vatru ložimo, radimo stičemo, štedimo, i to ne samo za sebe i svoju decu nego za sve one koji su jači i drskiji od nas i udaraju nam na život, na obraz i na kesu. Tako smo sačuvali veru zbog koje smo morali da napustimo svoju lepu zemlju, ali izgubili gotovo sve ostalo. Na sreću i na našu muku, nismo izgubili iz sećanja ni sliku te naše drage zemlje, onakve kakva je nekad bila, pre nego nas je maćehinski oterala; isto kao što nikad neće ugasnuti u nama želja za boljim svetom, svetom reda i čovečnosti u kom se pravo ide, mirno gleda i otvoreno govori. Toga ne možemo da se oslobodimo kao ni osećanja da, pored svega, takvom svetu pripadamo, iako prognani i nesrećni, u protivnom živimo.

To bismo, eto, hteli da se zna tamo. Da naše ime ne uquine u tom svetlijem i višem svetu koji se stalno zamaćuje i ruši, stalno pomera i menja, ali nikad ne propada i uvek negde i za nekoga postoji, da taj svet zna da ga u duši nosimo, da mu i ovde na svoj način služimo, i da se osećamo jedno sa njim, iako smo zauvek i beznadno rastavljeni od njega.

I to nije sujeta ni prazna želja, nego stvarna potreba i iskrena molba.“

To bi, otprilike, bilo ono što bi Salomon Atijas kazao u ovom trenutku kad se francuski konzul sprema da zauvek napusti Travnik i kad mu Salomon daje teško uštedene dukate da bi mogao da putuje. To ili nešto slično bi rekao. Ali sve to nije uopšte bilo potpuno jasno i određeno u njegovoj svesti, a još manje dozrelo do izraza, nego je ležalo u njemu, živo i teško ali neizrečeno i neizrecivo. A ko u životu uspeva da izrazi svoja najbolja osećanja i najbolje želje? Niko; gotovo niko. Pa kako da ih izrazi travnički trgovac kožama, španski Jevrej, koji ne zna nijedan jezik ovog sveta kako treba, a i kad bi ih sve znao ne bi mu ništa koristilo, jer mu ni u kolevcu nisu dali da glasno plače, a kamoli u životu da slobodno i jasno govori. Ili to je uzrok i teško dokučljivi smisao njegovog zamuckivanja i drhtanja pri rastanku sa francuskim konzulom.

Ivo Andrić

And so at the French Consulate they quietly made preparations to leave. There was, however, one thing that worried Daville – the question of money. Some time before, he had sent to France all the savings they had. For months now he had received no pay. The Sarajevo Jews who had worked with Freycinet and often loaned money to the Consulate were now distrustful. D'Avenat had some savings, but he was staying on at Travnik in an ill-defined capacity and in a state of complete uncertainty, and it would not be fair to deprive him of what he had and ask him to lend money to the state, and without security at that.

Both the interpreters, D'Avenat and Rafo Atias, were well aware of Daville's predicament. And while he was fretting and wondering which way to turn, old Solomon Atias, Rafo's uncle, came in one day, unannounced. He was the most respected of the Atias brothers and the head of the whole numerous clan of Travnik Atiases.

Short, running to fat, and bowlegged, in a greasy kaftan, with a short-necked head that set almost flat on his narrow shoulders, he had the large bulbous eyes of those who suffer from a heart defect. He was out of breath and sweating profusely from the heat of the May day and the unaccustomed walk up the steep hill. Timidly he shut the door behind him and slumped panting into a chair. A scent of garlic and uncured hides enveloped him like a cloud. His hairy, dark-skinned fists lay clenched on his knees and a tiny bead of sweat glistened on every hair.

They exchanged greetings several times and floundered for a while in meaningless civilities. Daville would not come out and admit that he and his family were leaving Travnik, and the fat, panting Solomon was quite unable to say why he had come. At length, however, in that hoarse, throaty voice which always reminded Daville of Spain, Solomon began the discourse about unexpected changes and the great needs of states and state officials, which to him were perfectly understandable, and how times were hard for everyone, even the ordinary merchant who was only concerned with his own little bailiwick, and finally – well, finally – if *Monsieur le Consul* did not receive official funds on time, and, after all, a trip was a trip and one couldn't very well put off an official schedule, he, Solomon Atias, was here, always at the service of the French Imperial – or rather, French Royal – Consulate, and what little he possessed or was able to do was entirely at the disposal of *Monsieur le Consul*.

Daville, whose first thought had been that Atias had come to request or demand something of him, was surprised and touched. His voice shook with emotion: the muscles of his face, between the mouth and the chin, where his ruddy skin was beginning to wither and wrinkle and sag, twitched visibly.

Daville thanked him and, in the embarrassed pause that followed, pressed some refreshments on him. At length they agreed that Atias would lend the Consulate twenty-five imperial ducats on a bill of exchange.

Solomon's large bulging eyes grew moist, which made them glitter more than usual, so that their yellowish, blood-veined whites became less conspicuous. Daville's eyes, too, filled with tears of emotion – indeed, emotion

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seemed to be a permanent state with him these days. But now they could talk more easily and freely.

Daville sought to give his gratitude a wider, more encompassing expression. He spoke of his sympathy and understanding toward the Jews, of compassion and the need for people to know and help each other, without distinction. He confined himself to vague and general sentiments, for he could no longer speak of Napoleon, whose name had a special meaning for the Jews and still exerted a powerful attraction; nor could he speak openly and definitely about his new government or mention his new sovereign by name. Solomon perspired and breathed heavily, his big eyes resting on Daville, as if all that were clear to him and pained him also, as much as it pained Daville, if not more, as if he knew and thoroughly appreciated what trouble and what danger all those emperors, kings, viziers, and ministers really were, whose coming and going was not our making, yet had the power of lifting us up and grinding us into dust, us and our families and all that we represented or possessed; as if, in fact, he was distressed at having had to leave his dark warehouse with its stacks of hides and climb up to this high and sunny place, to sit with gentry and unaccustomed *fauteuils* in luxurious rooms.

Relieved that the problem of travelling money had been solved in this unexpectedly simple fashion, and wishing to give the conversation a more cheerful tone, Daville said half-jokingly: "I am really most grateful and shall always remember that with all your worries you found time to think about my predicament. And to tell you honestly, I am astonished to see that, after all that's happened here, after all those fines you've had to pay, you are still in a position to lend anybody to lend anybody anything. The Vizier was boasting that he'd emptied your cashboxes to the last thaler."

At the mention of the persecution and ransom which the Jews had suffered at the hands of Ali Pasha, Solomon's eyes took on a fixed, woebegone look of inexpressible sadness. "It has cost us a great deal and deprived us of very much. Truly our cashboxes are empty to the day. But I can tell you ... you ought to know ..."

Here Solomon looked down in confusion at the sweating hands in his lap and, after a short silence, went on in a different, subdued voice, quite changed, as though he had suddenly decided to approach it from another viewpoint: "Yes, it scared us and cost us quite a bit. Yes indeed. The Vizier is a hard man, truly hard and difficult. But he has had to do with us once, whereas we've had to do with dozens of them. Viziers come and go ... and each of them takes something with him, that's true. They go away and forget what they have done and how they have treated us; and then a new one arrives and it's the same thing all over again. But we remain, we remember, we keep a tally of all we've been through, of how we have defended and preserved ourselves, and we pass on these dearly bought experiences from father to son. And so our cashboxes have two bottoms. One is just deep enough for the Vizier to reach down and scoop clean, but underneath a little something always remains for us and our children, for the salvation of our soul, for helping ourselves and our friends when they are in need."

Now Solomon looked straight across at Daville, no longer with those comically baleful and frightened eyes, but with a new expression that was direct and bold. Daville

laughed heartily. "Ah, that's good. I like that. And the Vizier thought he was so clever."

Solomon interrupted him at once in a lowered voice, as if to let him know that he too should speak lower. "No, I am not saying that he is not. They are wise and shrewd people, that they are. But you know how it is, our masters are fine and mighty gentlemen, they're like dragons, our masters are, but they have to have their wars and fights and expenses. You know, we have a saying: big lords are like a big wind; they blow, they break things, they blow themselves out. And we lie low and keep on working and put something away for a rainy day. That's why we last longer and always have something."

"Ah, that's good. Very good." Daville said with a nod, smiling as before and encouraging Solomon to continue.

But now the smile caused Solomon to falter suddenly; he searched the Consul's face more closely, again with that earlier woebegone and timid look as if afraid that he had gone too far or said something he should not have; as though he realized that what he had said was not what he had wanted to say, although what that should have been he hadn't the least idea. But still something drove him to speak out, to complain, to praise and explain himself, like a man who, for a few precious minutes, had been given a unique opportunity to pass on an urgent and important message. From the moment he had left his warehouse and climbed up the steep hill where ordinarily he never went, and had sat down in this sun-filled room, surrounded by a beauty and cleanliness he was not accustomed to, it had seemed to him a rare and important thing to be able to talk to this foreigner who planned to leave town in a few days, to discuss things which, perhaps, he would never again dare or be able to discuss with anybody.

As his sense of wonder and acute discomfort began to wear off, he felt more and more impelled to tell this stranger a few other things, about himself and his family, and other secret and pressing things, from this weasel hole that was Travnik, from the musty warehouse where life was hard and devoid of justice and honour, without beauty and order, without judge or witnesses; and he felt it ought to be some kind of message addressed to some vague but telling entity, perhaps to that better, more orderly, more enlightened world to which the Consul would presently return. Just once, he felt, not connected with gain or money, with haggling and workaday accounts, but rather with giving and spending freely, with the pride of generosity, with sincerity and secret pain.

But the very desire that filled him so intensely all of a sudden, to convey and impart something more, some important and sweeping truth about his own life and situation and the indignities which the Travnik Atiases had had to endure all these years, prevented him from finding the right manner and the words needed to express, briefly and adequately, what now choked him and started the blood pounding in his ears. And so he began to stammer out, not the things he was so full of and which he longed to express – how they struggled and managed to preserve an invisible strength and dignity – but only the disjointed phrases that came to his tongue. "So you see ... that's how we keep going and how things are, and we don't regret ... for our friends, for the justice and good will shown to us ... because we ... we too ..."

Now abruptly his voice broke off and his eyes began to

swim He got up in confusion. Daville rose too, moved by an inexplicable feeling of warmth and friendship, and gave him his hand. Solomon grasped the hand quickly with a jerky and unaccustomed movement, and stammered another few sentences, begging the Consul not to forget them and to put in a good word for them wherever and whenever he could over there, about their life here and how they paid for it with trouble and suffering. But the words were disconnected and unintelligible, and they mingled with Daville's expressions of gratitude.

No one would ever know what it was that was choking Solomon Atias at that moment; that brought tears to his eyes and sent a shiver down through his whole body. Had he known how, had he been a man used to speaking his thoughts, he might have said something like this: "Monsieur, you have lived here among us for seven long years and have shown us Jews the kind of consideration we have never received either from the Turks or from foreigners. You have treated us like human beings, without discrimination. You may not even be aware how much decency this has brought into our lives. And now you are leaving. Your Emperor has had to fall back before overwhelming enemies. Your homeland is now the scene of wrenching upheavals and great change. But yours is also a noble and powerful country which in the end will turn everything to good account. And you shall certainly find your way there. The ones who are to be pitied are we who remain here, we the handful of Sephardic Jews here in Travnik, of whom two thirds are Atiases, since to us you have been a small and hopeful ray of light, You have seen the life we lead and have been as good to us as it is possible for a man to be. And when a man does good, everyone expects him to go on doing it. And that is why we take the liberty of asking one more thing of you: that you be our witness in the West, which once was our cradle too, and which ought to be told what has become of us. For it seems to me, if we could but know that there are some who realize and acknowledge that we are not what we appear to be, not the kind of people our lives suggest, everything we have to bear would be more tolerable.

"More than three hundred years ago we were torn from our homeland, the unforgettable Andalusia, by a dreadful, insane, fratricidal storm which even today we cannot understand and which to this day has not understood itself. It has scattered us around the world and reduced us to a beggary that even gold cannot help. A few of us here were swept eastward, and life in the East is neither easy nor blessed for us; the farther a man travels and the nearer he gets to the Rising Sun, the worse it gets, for the land grows coarser and more barren, and men are creatures of the soil. It is our misfortune that we have not been able to give our whole heart to this land to which we are indebted for having welcomed us and given us haven, and have been incapable of hating the land which has unjustly driven us out and banished us like some unworthy progeny. We don't know which is the greater grief to us: being here or not being there. No matter what part of this earth beyond Spain we might be in, we would always suffer, for we would always have two homelands. This much I know. But here in this place, life has been particularly harsh and degrading for us. I know that for a long time now we have not been the same, yet we no longer remember what kind of people we once were, we only know that we were different. Ages have passed since we first set out on our journey, and the journey itself lasted an age, and we strayed to this ill-starred place and settled, and that is why we're no longer even a shadow of what we once were. Like the blushing

fuzz on a fruit that is passed from hand to hand, a man too first sheds what is finest in him. That's why we are the way you see us now. But you know us better than that – us and the kind of life we lead, if it can be called life.

We are wedged between the Turks and the Christian peasants, the poor downtrodden peasants and the terrible Turks. Utterly cut off from our own kind, we try to preserve everything that reminds us of Spain, the songs and the food and the customs, but the change within us goes on relentlessly, we can feel the erosion, the fading memory. We still remember the tongue of our country, the very same one we took with us more than three centuries ago, which is no longer spoken even there, and we mangle the language of these poor peasants who are victimized as we are, and of the Turks who lord it over us. And the day is perhaps not far off when the only pure and decent speech left to us will be the language of our prayer, which needs no words anyway. Isolated and few that we are, we marry among ourselves and watch our blood grow thinner and paler. We bow and scrape to everyone, we writhe this way and that only to survive – as they say, we make fire on ice. We toil, make a living, and save, and not only for ourselves and our children but, alas, for those too who are stronger and more arrogant than we, who threaten our lives, our self-respect, and our material security. That is how we have managed to keep our religion, the same one for which we had to abandon our lovely homeland, though we lost almost everything else in the process.

"Fortunately, and to our sorrow too, we have never lost from memory the vision of this dear homeland of ours as it once was before, like a stepmother, it cast us out; and by the same token we shall never stop longing for a better world, a humane and well-ordered world in which a man can walk upright and speak openly, without a shadow of fear in his eyes. This longing we shall never be able to suppress, nor the feeling that, in spite of everything, we belong to such a world, even though, banished and unhappy, we now live in another.

"This, then, is the story we would like you to tell *over there*, so that our name will be kept alive in that brighter and more civilized world which is forever crashing and dimming, forever shifting and changing, but which will never perish and will always exist somewhere for some men. Tell that world that we carry it in our hearts, that even here we serve it in our own fashion, that we feel ourselves part of it, although we are hopelessly and eternally separated from it. And this is not vanity or an idle wish, but a genuine need and a plea from the bottom of our hearts."

That, more or less, would have been what Solomon Atias might have told the French Consul on the eve of his leaving Travnik forever, at the moment when Solomon gave him his hard-earned ducats to enable him to travel. That, or something like it, is what he might have said. But none of it was very clear or explicit in his own mind, still less was it ripe for saying; it all lay inside him, a living, kicking weight as it were, dumb and inexpressible. And was there a man alive who could express his subtlest feelings and his noblest yearnings? No one, or almost no one. So how could a hide merchant of Travnik give tongue to them, a Spanish Jew who was no longer at home in any language? And even had he spoken all the languages of this world, what use would they have been, since even in his crib they had not let him cry out loud, let alone speak freely and clearly during his lifetime? But that was the reason and the import, hard though it was to decode it, of his stammer and trembling during his last visit to the French Consul.

Svi smo mi "Prokleti stranci"

Turističke agencije po cijelom svijetu oglašavaju Britaniju kao destinaciju sa svim njenim dvorcima, katedralama, utvrdama i drugim historijskim atrakcijama, kao vječne ljudske tvorevine i nešto što je tipično za zemlju Englesku i Britaniju u cjelini. Rijetko da ijedna agencija pomene da je pored ostataka Anglo-Saksonske i Keltske, kulturno-istorijska baština, velikim dijelom Normanska a nešto je malo ostataka od Rimljana i još prije njih boga pitaj koga sve. Od Williama Osvajača koji je pohodio sve krajeve, pa do danas, ostala su velelepna zdanja, kojima se cijeli svijet divi, a Britanija ubire podosta turističke love od toga.

U periodu 1100-1200 u engleske luke nadolazile su bujice ljudi iz ostatka Evrope svi iz različitih pobuda. Canterbury je izgledao tada kao danas recimo Luton ili Leichestor; pun došljaka iliti "bloody foreigners". To je mjesto čak bilo poznato po čudovišnim magijama- vjerovalo se da će slijepci progledati, gluvi pročuti itd. Postoje nebrojene priče i legende o tome. Iz tog perioda smatra se da potiču oni za koje ja ne znam da im dam ime na našem jeziku, ali su po načinu života, ono kako su kod nas živjeli Romi. Možda najbolje da se izrazi "Putnici", tako ih zvanično zovu ovi ovde ljudi su dolazili iz raznih zemalja, ne da ratuju, ne da pljačkaju, nego jednostavno rečeno, da rade. I tako su, polako ali sigurno, počeli da se razvijaju biznisi, da ne objašnjavamo do kojih su se razmjera razvili do današnjih dana.

U Nacionalnoj galeriji portreta u Londonu možemo se diviti velelepnim portretima engleske elite Tudora, nekoliko Henrija, njihovih žena, kojekakvih peerova, kardinala... Svi oni djeluju relaksirajuće, zadovoljni sami sa sobom. A kako i ne bi; Engleska je bila na vrhuncu moći, harala je svugdje po svijetu koristeći svoju morską armadu. Sve odiše "engleštinom". Ali umjetnici- bogami ne. Holbein, Van Dyck, John de Critz, Marcus Gheeraerts... bili su slikari, došljaci, iliti "foreigners". Čak i ona djela potpisana sa "unknown" bila su djela bjelosvjetskih slikara, najviše iz ostatka Evrope. Ti, koji se danas smatraju slikarskim velikanima, a s pravom to i jesu, do početku su lutali od dvora de dvora tražeći patrone da ih udome, da ne kažem, udvore. Dvorski bogatuni i oni okolo, takmičili su se ko će ostaviti bolji dojam svoje moći. Pravi Eldorado za majstore došljake. Ostavili su svoja imena da ih pamti cijelo čovječanstvo, jer su ostavili velika umjetnička djela za sobom, neponovljive vrijednosti. Ali su ostavili i svoja imena čijim se djelima divi cijelo čovječanstvo.

A onda još jedan val izbjeglica, Hugenoti. Jadni ne bili, dobili su batina ko niko u Francuskoj samo zato što su bili Protestanti. Bilo je to negdje sredinom 16 i 17 vijeka, Kardinal Richelieu, ondašnji i tamošnji bog i batina mlatio je sve oko sebe što nije mislilo kao on. Kralj je za njega bio mala maca. Knjige (čitaj Google) kažu njih oho 500.000 rasturilo se glavom bez obzira. I šta će, kud' će jadni Hugenoti, nego u- Englesku ponajviše, i to u London. Šta sve oni nisu napravili da su i ulice dobile imena (Princelet Street, Fournier Street...), interesantan detalj; izgradili su crkvu u Brick Lane, da bi jednu generaciju kasnije postala sinagoga, i na kraju danas- džamija. A razvili su tekstilnu industriju, unaprijedili industriju papira, nema šta nisu unaprijedili, da bi iznad svega, postali- bankari (pogledajmo malo u nebo kad nas put navede u Canary Warf)

A onda, "šlagvort" na sve to. Jedan "bloody foreigner"

postaje, ni manje ni više, nego- kralj. I to Engleske. Jednostavno, čovjek doveden do Greenwicha u septembru 1712 i stao pravo na prijesto. Nema veze što nije znao ni beknuti Engleski. Posebna je to priča za sebe, možda drugom prilikom. Samo još, da mu je ime bilo neki George Louis. Iz Hanovera.

Nažalost, bilo je neslavnih afera, robovi ne pridošli, nego lovljeni pa dovođeni iz Afrike, Kariba... Tužna i sramotna priča duga nekoliko vijekova. Jedina svijetla tačka u tome je, da su mnogi od njih poslije, nekoliko generacija postali uvaženi građani ove zemlje, nemalo ih je sa titulama lordova, sirova itd, itd. Vjerovali ili ne, jedan je kao jedan- aestogodišnjak, postao rob, uhvaćen u današnjoj Nigeriji, i poslije mnogih životnih peripetija, putešestvija i avantura, pridružio se jednoj ekspediciji na Sjeverni pol.

A onda je došlo svima nama poznato viktorsko doba. Ropstvo je ukinuto, sve one restrikcije slobode koje su postojale su ukinute, sloboda govora, sloboda svega i svačega. Kojekakvi čudaci, skolari, doktori, genijalci, majstori svih mogućih zanata, cirkusaneri, i sve uglavnom pridošlice, tumarali su ulicama Londona i drugih gradova, organizirale su se u kojekakve organizacije.. Pisali su se manifesti, studije (Karl Marks, Fridrich Engels), Industrijska revolucija...

...I šta još reći. Britansko društvo je počelo polako dobivati karakteristike onoga čime se danas odlikuju Britanija i Britanci- ponosna svjetska vodeća sila (Tada je nastala ona poznata "Rule Britannia"- dan danas svaki Proms u Albert hallu završava sa time).

Još samo jedan detalj, evo neki dan, bili smo svjedoci proglašenja pobjednika na "Britain Got Tallent". Divne



figure od sjena ljudskih tijela, sklapale su detalje koje simboliziraju Veliku Britaniju. Remek djelo. Čovjek da pomisli kakvi patrioti, kad su svu svoju vještinu, znanje, nadarenost, napor, vrijeme, posvetili tome djelu. Kad tamo, a ono Madjari.

Istorija je svoje učinila (dakako i još čini), tako da danas Ostrvom tumaraju, bijelci ovi, oni, ovakvi, onakvi, otud i odonud, crnci iz svih mogućih južnih fela i rasa, žuti ovi, žuti oni, Evropljani zapadni, istočni, srednji, jugo- istočni, Balkanci, Indijci, Srbi, Hrvati, Azijati, Slovenci, Make-donci, Bosanci, Bošnjaci.... i ko još ne, i svi združeni pod jednim "Union Jack"- om.

A ja, poslije dvadeset godina odkako sam se pridružio ovoj međunarodnoj, međunacionalnoj, jenom rječju ovoj šarenoj ljudskoj paleti, i dan danas se sav stresem od užasa kad me neko prozove "Bloody foreigner". Od sada ću, bogami, nastojati da prisilim sebe da se otarasim takvog osjećaja. S pravom.

Dragan Ungar

MEDITATIONS

7

We are all “Bloody Foreigners“

When tourist agencies worldwide advertise Britain they describe it as a destination full of castles, cathedrals, fortresses and other historical attractions – the eternal human creations, typical of England and the whole of Britain. Almost no agency ever mentions that besides the remains of Anglo/Saxon and Celtic heritage a major proportion is of Norman material with a small some remains



from the Romans and who knows who else before them. Many exquisite buildings left from the times of William the Conqueror, who visited these regions, till our days are here for the world to admire and for Britain to collect quite a lot of tourist money.

In the period from 1100 to 1200 English ports were flooded with people from the rest of Europe who all had different reasons to come. At that time Canterbury resembled the present day Luton or Leicester for instance; full of immigrants or the “bloody foreigners”. The place was renowned for its miracles – it was believed that the blind would regain their sight and the deaf their hearing, etc. Numerous stories and legends recounting these occurrences still exist. It is also thought to be the period when the first “Travellers” appeared. (I cannot find an adequate translation for this in our language, but their way of life had been very similar to that of the Roma people in our country.) People would come from different countries not to fight, not to plunder - but simply to work. That is how gradually but definitely business started to develop – the scale businesses reach today will not be discussed here.

In The National Gallery of Portraits in London one can admire the outstanding portraits of English elite – The Tudors, a few Henrys and their wives, various peers, cardinals ... All of them give the impression of relaxation and self-satisfaction. Why not, indeed? England was at the peak of its power. They pillaged anywhere they could reach with their naval fleet. Everything oozed with “Englishness”. Not the artists, though. Holbein, Van Dyck, John de Critz, Marcus Gheeraerts ... were painters immigrants – the “foreigners”. Even the works bearing the signature “unknown” were the works of painters coming from God knows where, mainly the rest of Europe. These painters considered today to be the giants and rightly so, at the beginning were wandering from one court to another looking for patrons. Showing off the power and the wealth was rife at that time among the rich people at these courts and all those around them. This meant a real El Dorado for the immigrating masters. They left their names on their great masterpieces for the whole mankind to remember.

Another wave of refugees followed – the Huguenots. Poor, poor people, they were severely beaten in France only for being Protestants. That was in the 16th and 17th century. Cardinal Richelieu, who was the main show of that time and place, punished all those around him whose opinion differed from his. The king was insignificant compared to him. Books (read Google) tell us that some 500,000 fled the place and dispersed to wherever they could. And really where these poor, poor Huguenots

could come but to England? To London itself. It is difficult to remember all the things they did – but there are streets in London named after them (Princelet Street, Fournier Street) interesting is it not? They built a church in Brick Lane that a generation later became a synagogue and finally now a mosque. They developed the textile industry, advanced the paper industry and many other things but above all they became bankers (one should look up when coming to Canary Warf).

And then, an amusing answer to all this. A “bloody foreigner” becomes nothing more or less than a king; a king of England to that. Simply, the man rowed his boat to Greenwich in September of 1712 and stepped straight to the throne. It was not important that he did not know a word of English. That is another story. May be some other time. Just to mention that his name was George Louis – from Hanover.

There were, alas, many disgraceful affairs. The slaves did not come but were hunted and brought here from Africa, from West Indies; a sad and shameful story several centuries long. The only bright side to it is that many of their descendants some generations later became highly respected citizens of this country; quite a few among them knighted, holding the title of a Lord etc. Believe it or not, one of those who were caught in present day Nigeria at the age of eleven to become a slave, after many troubles, travels and adventures joined an expedition to the North Pole.

Next came the Victorian era, well known to all of us. Slavery was abolished; all the existing freedom restrictions were abolished. All sorts of eccentrics, scholars, doctors, geniuses, masters of all crafts, circus artists, almost all of them immigrants, strolled along the streets of London and other cities. Various organizations were established, manifestos and studies were written (Karl Marks, Friedrich Engels). The Industrial Revolution.

What more to say. The British society started taking the qualities characterizing present day Britain and the British – a proud world leading power. (The well-known “Rule Britannia” dating from those days is an obligatory ending to Proms in Albert Hall).

Just another detail more. Some time ago we witnessed the award winning ceremony for Britain Got Talent. Lovely figures made by human body shadows folded into details symbolizing Great Britain. A masterpiece, really. One would think – how patriotic these people are to devote all their skill, knowledge, talent, effort, time to achieve this effect. But lo and behold – these were Hungarians.

The history has made its mark (it certainly has been doing it still). Thus, the people roaming this Island today are: white - these and those, from here and from there; black – from the south of various origins and races; yellow these and those; people from Europe – west, east, central, south-east, Balkans, people from India, Serbs, Croats, people from Asia, Macedonians, Bosnians – and who knows who else – each of them in charge of a Union Jack.

As for me, even today twenty years after I joined this international, multinational or should I say colourful human palette, my hair stands on end when somebody refers to me as “bloody foreigner”. From now on I will do my best in order to get rid of that feeling. And rightly so.

Dragan Ungar

POSJETITE PERI GRIN – Mur i Roden

Sezonu naših izleta ove godine otvorio je jedan kulturni događaj. Posljednje nedjelje u aprilu posjetili smo Peri Grin, park skulptura i sjedište Fondacije Henrija Mura, jednog od najznačajnijih skulptora 20-og vijeka koji je tu živio i radio sve do svoje smrti 1986. god. Neposredan

povod je izložba Mur – Roden koja je otvorena 29. marta i trajaće do 27. oktobra. Ovo je prvi put da su djela nekog drugog umjetnika izložena u parku uz

skulpture Henri Mura. Iako su mnogi od nas bili u Rodenovom muzeju u Parizu i vidjeli mnoštvo Murovih skulptura na raznim izložbama, bilo je zanimljivo vidjeti djela ova dva velikana skulpture na jednom mjestu.

Nakon vještog manevarisanja našeg mladog šofera po uskim seoskim putevima, autobus nas je doveo u Park gdje smo nakon kratke pauze i čaja sreli našeg vodiča Amandu Grin bez čijeg informativnog, znalačkog i jasnim jezikom izraženog objašnjenja, mnogo detalja iz života i rada ova dva umjetnika i ideja bi ostalo neshvaćeno ili propušteno.

Odnos između figure i okoline je jedna od ključnih tema ove izložbe. Stapanje ljudske figure sa prostorom, preslikavanje formi iz prirode na figuru (specijalno kod Mura) dovelo je do toga da figura slijedi topografiju prostora, da se brišu granice između antropomorfnih i geoloških formi, pa u njegovim skulpturama možemo vidjeti doline, klance, kličove. Rodenove skulpture izvire direktno iz grubog kamena, kosa na ležećoj figuri teče poput rijeke, bedro ima oblik oblog brda. Pored toga,



njihov zajednički interes je kondenzacija i fragmentacija ljudske figure – otuda torzo kao tijelo sažeto u čistu formu, ruke kao najizrazajniji dio tijela – zanimljivo, ne lice. Obojica su znali kako da prikažu tijelo čiji mišići se naslućuju ispod draperije (kod Rodena), ili oblikih formi kod Mura - u tome obojica priznaju uticaj Mikelandela.

Uživali smo u komentarima našeg vodiča, pokušavali pogoditi šta predstavljaju Murova dva prilično monumentalna šuplja eliptična prstena koja bez postamenta izranjaju iz zemlje (tražili smo filozofsku dimenziju negativnog prosotra, a dobili objašnjenje inspiracije koje nas je namijalo. Mur je vidio sekretaricu kako zabija makaze u kantu sa pijeskom i kada je vidio ušice makaza dobio je ideju). Sve što je Mur stvorio, ma kako to apstraktno izgledalo, došlo je kao reakcija na forme i predmete koje je vidio u prirodi. Umjetničko oko vidi drugačije od nas običnih smrtnika, pa ni rupa nije za Mura samo rupa, nego negativni prostor kroz koji se gleda u druge forme. Roden, koji je na prvi pogled razumljiviji jer su skulpture realne, plijeni snagom izraza ljudskosti, skinuo je skulpture sa pijedestala ukočene formalnosti i dao im topli ljudski lik.

Izuzetno smo uživali u obilasku parka i pogled na polje puno ovčica iz kojeg se izdiže humka sa jednom od mnogobrojnih Murovih ležećih figura u fantastičnoj harmoniji sa okolinom i kontrastu sa nebom. Kraj obilaska je začinjjen posjetom studijima i izložbi tapiserija koje su po Moorovim crtežima tkale članice Vestfild koledža iz

Saseksa. One su napravile izuzetne tapiserije gdje su teksturom vlakana, nijansama boja slijedile poteze Murove četkice. Krajnji rezultat je ne kopija crteža, nego individualno umjetničko djelo.

Kada smo prilično umorni sjeli u autobus da odemo na zasluženi ručak u pub u obližnjem Bishop Stopfordu - opšti je zaključak da je ovo bio jedan od najljepših izleta koji smo organizovali. Svim članovima našeg kluba koji nisu mogli ići na izlet, toplo preporučujemo da posjete izložbu koja nije tako daleko od Londona. Sigurna sam da će neki od nas otići opet, jer će doživljaj biti drugačiji u drugo doba dana, ili drugo doba godine. To je i bila namjera Henrija Mura kada je osnovao ovaj park kao svoju trajnu zadužbinu.

Mia Kordić



DO VISIT PERRY GREEN – Moore & Rodin

A cultural event marked the beginning of this year's outing season of our Club. On the last Sunday in April we visited Perry Green, home of the Sculpture Park and The Henry Moore Foundation. Henry Moore, one of the great-



est sculptors of the 20th century lived and worked at Perry Green until his death in 1986. The reason for visiting the Park at this particular time was the current exhibition 'Moore - Rodin' that was opened on 29th March and runs until 27th October. This is the first time that sculptures from another artist are displayed alongside Moore's in the Park. Although a lot of us have visited Musee Rodin in Paris and saw quite a few of Moore's sculptures at different exhibitions it was very interesting to see works of two of the greatest sculptors of the modern age juxtaposed.

After skilfully negotiating the narrow country lanes our young coach driver safely brought us to Perry Green where we were served tea before meeting our tour guide Mrs Amanda Green without whose informative, well and clearly explained facts, a lot of ideas and important details about the work of these two artists would be missed or not properly understood.

One of the key themes of this exhibition is the relationship between the figure and the landscape. The fusing of body with nature, translation of natural objects and forms into figure (especially with Moore) resulted in figures emulating the topography of place, in blurring boundaries between anthropomorphic and geological forms; thus one can find, cliffs, chasms, hills in many of Moore's works. Rodin's sculptures spring from the rough body of stone, hair is flowing like a river, woman's thigh follows the con-

tour of a hill. Apart from this, another common theme for both artists was condensation and fragmentation of human form – a body reduced to torso as its pure form, hands as more expressive part of the body than a face. They were both influenced by Michelangelo in depicting that internal tension, the muscles that can be seen bulging through draperies in many of Rodin's sculptures.

We really enjoyed listening to our guide, we tried to guess what two monumental elliptical rings protruding from earth represent. We were searching for a philosophical dimension of the negative space only to be told, what provoked a lot of laugh, that Moore found the inspiration for this sculpture when he once saw his secretary thrusting the scissors into a bucket filled with sand – and handles how protruding). Whatever Moore created, no matter how abstract it was, came as a reaction to forms or objects he found in nature. The artist's eye sees things differently from us mere mortals, so the hole is not just a hole, for Moore it is a negative space through which one can observe other forms. Rodin who is at first glance more

legible being more realistic in presentation of human form grabs our attention with his sheer strength of representing humanity. He stripped figures down from the pediment of lifeless formalism and gave them warm human qualities.

We loved strolling around the Park admiring the view of a field scattered with sheep with a mound on the top of which sits one of the Moore's famous reclining figures in perfect harmony with the landscape and the contrasting sky. In the end we visited a barn with tapestries made by members of the Westfield College from Sussex created after Moore's sketches. By using different texture of wool, different shades of colour and different techniques they followed the strokes of Moore's brush and in doing so created the tapestries of such a beauty and power that they become works of art in their own right.

When fairly exhausted we finally boarded the coach to take us to a well-deserved pub lunch in near-by Bishop's Stortford we came to a conclusion that this was one of the most satisfying outings we had made so far. We strongly recommend a visit to this exhibition which is not that far from London to all our members who missed the trip. No doubt that some of us will visit the exhibition again because the experience will be different when visited at a different time of day and in different season. This is exactly what Moore intended when he set up the Park of Sculptures as his last legacy.



Mark Thompson

Rodni list

Priča Danila Kiša

Cornell University Press, 2013. 226 str.

Po svoj prilici u nas biografija Danila Kiša ne bi bila jedinstveni događaj kao što je pojava takve knjige ovdje u Velikoj Britaniji, jer je pisac, esejist, prevoditelj i pjesnik Danilo Kiš u Hrvatskoj poznat, ima svoj krug vjernog čitateljstva, njegove su knjige dostupne, bilo u prodaji ili u knjižnicama zaslugom Mirjane Miočinović koja se brine o njegovoj književnoj ostavštini. Iz biografskih razloga spomenula bih da je Feral Tribune 1997., i objavio njegovu nadopunjenu autobiografsku knjigu pod naslovom "Gorki talog iskustva", u kojoj su kronološkim redom sakupljeni Kiševi razgovori od 1972. – 1989., s raznim književnim kritičarima u tadašnjoj Jugoslaviji ili inozemstvu, povodom izdanja njegovih pojedinih djela i TV drama. (prvo izdanje je nekoliko mjeseci poslije piščeve smrti objavio BIGZ /Bgd još 1990.) Ovu zbirku razgovora moglo bi se opisati kao Kiš *par lui meme*, slično onoj davnoj koloni iz prošlog stoljeća francuskih biografija pisaca i filozofa, budući da i ovdje kroz razgovore Kiš sam objavljuje poglede na književnost, priča o svojim uzorima i svom radu, te ulogu autobiografije u njemu, posebno povezano s njegovim djetinstvom židovskog djeteta u vrijeme nacizma, činjenice koje u njegovoj prvoj autobiografskoj trilogiji romana (Rani jadi, Bašta Pepeo, Peščanik) imaju bitnu ulogu uz lik oca i njegove smrti u Auschwitzu. U europskim zemljama sva su djela " jedinog jugoslavenskog svijetskog pisca ", da parafraziram mađarskog kritičara, prevedena na dvadeset jezika, dok interes za njega i njegovo djelo ne zamire, dapače. U pojedinim dijelovima bivše Jugoslavije danas je Danilo Kiš, posebno među mladima kulturni lik, pa kao pisac nikada nije bio ni toliko omiljen niti popularan. Ipak u Velikoj Britaniji, nezasluzeno, nije do sada šire poznat osim među dobrim poznavateljima europskih književnosti, dok je široj publici uglavnom nepoznanica. "Velik i nepoznat" kaže njegov biograf. No stvari se izgleda mijenjaju jer je prije par mjeseci izašao jedan njegov roman u novom prijevodu, prikazan nedavno u The Guardianu, a ovih dana nas je zabljesnula prva biografija Danila Kiša na engleskom koja će zbog svoje velike kvalitete i globaliziranog svijeta sigurno situaciju, obzirom na ovog pisca, promijeniti.

Vjerujem da je teško da bi se za Danila Kiša moglo naći boljeg biografa od engleskog pisca, novinara i povjesničara Marka Thompsona, autora ove nove biografije. Kao povjesničar Thompson je dobar poznavatelj povijesti i prilika balkanske regije i južnog djela Europe što potvrđuju tri dosadašnje knjige; izvrsno istražena i zanimljivo pisana povijest prvog svjetskog rata u alpskoj regiji sjevera Italije: "The White War; Life and Death on the Italian Front 1915-1919" (Bijeli rat, izd. London, 2008). No još mnogo ranije zapaženi su njegovi izvještaji za britanske novine iz Jugoslavije na rubu raspada, krajem osamdesetih i početkom devedesetih prošlog stoljeća koji su mu poslužili kao temelj izvrsne sinteze događaja u njegovoj prvoj knjizi " A Paper House, The Ending of Yugoslavia" (Kuća od papira; Kraj Jugoslavije) prilika i gledišta raznih ljudi s kojima se susretao diljem tadašnje države, nagovještavajući skori rat i njen raspad. Izvještavajući kao ratni dopisnik za vrijeme ratnih

godina pratio je i huškašku i prljavu ulogu mnogih medija, temom njegove druge knjige: "Forging the War; Media in Serbia, Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (Kovanje rata: Mediji u S,H i BiH) .

Ovakvo solidno poznavanje jezika, povijesti, društvenih prilika uključivši naravno umjetnost i književnosti naroda bivše Jugoslavije, inspiriralo je kod Thompsona veliko zanimanje i divljenje za književno djelo Danila Kiša čija je sudbina po mnogo čemu simptomatična za tragični kraj zemlje iz koje je poniknuo. Thompson je mnogo godina, strpljivo i s pažnjom proučavao djelo i životni put velikog jugoslavensko- židovsko- srpsko- crnogorskog književnika. Po svemu hvale vrijedan trud rezultirao je nadahnutim biografskim djelom, objavljenim u SAD pri Cornell University Pressu 2013., a od skora i u Britaniji pod naslovom " **Birth Certificate** " ("Rodni list")

Za naslov knjige, a ujedno kao i njenu osnovnu strukturu, autor je iskoristio Kiševu autobiografsku bilješku sastavivši je kao svoj CV u jednoj prilici dodjeljivanja književne nagrade u Gorskom Kotaru, zamoljen da ukratko ispriča o sebi. Pojedine rečenice, pasosi ili samo mali skupovi riječi iz ove bilješke od dvije stranice ukomponirane su kao naslovi poglavlja Thompsonove inovativne biografije Kiša. Čitatelj/ica stiče dojam da ga subjekt biografije poput virgilijevskog vodiča usmjerava kroz vlastiti život i djelo. Uz to knjiga je, kao uostalom i Kiševa djela, obogaćena pravim dokumentarnim i dokumentarno fotografskim materijalom, mnogim svjedočanstvima prijatelja, obitelji, kritičara, poznatih književnika, a i grafički je inovativno dizajnirana. Sve zajedno pruža dojam *homage-a* Kiševoj ideji pisanja proze što daje istinsku autentičnost biografiji. Čini se da nema kamena ispod kojeg bi se skrivao neki detalj o Kišu, a da ga Thompson nije okrenuo razgovarajući i nalazeći reference o Kišu u pisanjima ili sjećanju mnogih ljudi u raznim zemljama, među Kiševim kolegama piscima koji su ga cijenili, ili navodili u svom pisanju kao što su Milan Kundera, Susan Sontag, Salman Rushdie, Stanko Cerović, Nadine Godimer, Philip Roth, Josip Brodsky, Mirko Kovač, Predrag Matvejević ili Peter Esterhazy da nabrojim samo neke. Čitanje ove biografije moglo bi se usporediti sa šetnjom kroz našu zajedničku memoriju u kojoj se konstantno evocira na gotovo zaboravljene događaje, sukobe gledišta, političke pritiske, ali i bude davno zaboravljene emocije. Thompson uspjeva na više planova, kako na životopisnom i jednako impresivno na planu književne kritike, značajke interpretacije i analize. Metodom dubinske analize svakog Kiševog djela, uključivši ranu poeziju i mladenačku prozu, nalazi im mjesto ne samo u piščevoj biografiji već ih smještava u povjesni ili geografski okvir i socioško psihološki kontekst.

U naponu stvaralačke snage, ubrzo nakon oluje napada i polemike oko njegovog do tada najboljeg djela "Grobница za Borisa Davidovića" Kiš je napustio Jugoslaviju i emigrirao u Francusku gdje je radio kao lektor za srpsko hrvatski jezik na sveučilištima u Bordeauxu, Lilleu i Nancyju. Na francuski je njegova djela prevodila njegova francuska supruga Pascal Depleche koja ga je i njegovala do smrti. Premda je iz Jugoslavije otišao nakon sukoba s dogmatičkim kritičarima, quasi- piscima i nacionalistima u Srbiji, i jer ga je mentalitet mahale psihički gušio, nije dao da se njegov odlazak u emigraciju politički iskoristi i da ga se proglašava disidentom, ulogom od kakve je oportunistički mogao profitirati. Umro je 13 godina nakon odlaska, prerano, od raka na glavu, a samo kratko vri-

eme nakon njegove smrti 1989. Jugoslavija se raspala u ratovima do kojih su doveli upravo oni dogmatici i nacionalisti zbog kojih je Kiš pošao u emigraciju.

Židovske priče i životi, posebno progoni kojima su bili izloženi kroz stoljeća, česta su Kiševa tema. Nakon trilogije romana koje je zvao *bildungs* romanima, židovske priče slijede u "Enciklopediji mrtvih" i naravno u "Grobnici za Borisa Davidovića". Thompson sada nalazi zanimljiv podatak o jednoj namjeravanoj knjizi u čijem ga je ostvarenju vjerojatno prekinula smrt. Roman je trebao biti o Diegu Piresu, renesansnom pjesniku koji je pred progonom inkvizicije preko Ancone iz Portugala došao u Dubrovnik gdje je našao utočište, povratio se Judaizmu, uzeo ime Isaiah Koen i tu ostao do kraja života. Na kraju svog života Kiš je sudjelovao u pravljenju dokumentarnog filma o ženama Židovkama na Golom otoku. Osobno sam ga poznavala i bila sam ljuta na njega i režisera Mandića (premda se potonji kasnije ispričao) koji su dozvolili da se u filmu u razgovorima sa Židovkama iz Izraela, bivšim zatvorenicama na Golom otoku, bolno okleveta moju majku. Kiš negdje kaže: "Vjerujem da za samoga sebe mogu da kažem da u svojim knjigama nikad nisam izdao ljudske ciljeve. Da ih ne bi izdao svaki pisac svestan svoje odgovornosti mora tragati za formama umetničkog izražavanja koja mu omogućavaju da nađe istinu. On mora dobro da se čuva imaginacije na koju je utjecala ideološka ili revolucionarna vera." Kad je film prikazan Kiš je već umro, razgovor o tome, korekcija ili sprika više nisu dolazili u obzir i strašna je greška otišla u eter. Nepotrebna uvreda jedne od života napačene žene, naprosto zbog nepažnje, omaške zabune imena. Ženi Lebl se ispričala mojoj majci jer ju je ta druga intervjuirana žena tu oklevetala da ih je ona progonila dok ustvari čak nisu bile na Golom otoku istovremeno. Nažalost ovdje je zbog površnosti televizije kao medija i nepoštivanja vlastitih principa o potrebi dokumentarne vjerodostojnosti, jedna teorija pala u vodu.

Susan Sonntag je povodom Kiševe smrti pisala da je "Smrt Danila Kiša... nesretno prekinula jedno od najvažnijih



putovanja u književnosti što ih je poduzeo i koji pisac druge polovice 20 stoljeća... a u uvodu Thompson već prvom rečenicom nagovještava svakom ljubitelju

književnosti koji se zainteresira za pisca početak velike književne avanture: "Opsjednut pisanjem, politikom i umjetnosti slobodnoj od politike, strastveni antikomunist i antinacionalist Danilo Kiš je bio čovjek liberalnog uvjerenja i žestokih emocija. Etnička anomalija, svjetovni židovski agnostik, kultura instinkta i apetita gonjenog gubitkom bio je boem kojeg ništa osim vlastite vokacije nije moglo dovesti u red. Iz njegovih prepirki sa samim sobom, društvom ili dogmaticima društvenog uređenja, Kiš je destilirao četiri ili pet superlativnih knjiga, pišući i revidirajući u samotničkom razdiranju, kondenzirajući do krajnosti da bi postao "genije određenog vremena, iskustva i mjesta."

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Mark Thompson

Birth Certificate

Birth Certificate, The Story of Danilo Kiš

Mark Thompson

Cornell University Press, 2013, hb, 226pp, £24.95

Reviewed by Vesna Domany-Hardy

Danilo Kiš, the innovative Yugoslav Jewish writer of a country which is no more, could have no better biographer than Mark Thompson. A historian of the Balkans and author of several important books about the region, Thompson has passionately studied the life and work of Kiš for almost 20 years.

This innovative biography succeeds both as a depiction of the writer's life and as a work of literary criticism, analysing each piece of Kiš's writing in its historical, geographical, sociological and psychological context.

Thompson has used as title, but also as a structural backbone, a two-page autobiographical note that Kiš himself wrote as his CV for an award ceremony. Each sentence of this note has become a chapter of this biography so Kiš himself serves him as a guide. Besides the book is well documented, quotes from Kiš's works, photos and testimonies of family, friends and other international writers or artists who have encountered, befriended or respected Kiš. These admirers include Susan Sontag, Milan Kundera, Salman Rushdie or Peter Esterhazy – he could be said to be a writer's writer.

The 20th century European/Yugoslav/Jewish/Montenegrin writer was born in 1934 in what is now Serbia, to Eduard Kiš, a Hungarian-speaking Jewish railway inspector, and Milica Kiš, an Eastern Orthodox Montenegrin. When the powers of Axis occupied the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in April 1941, the Hungarian army marched into Vojvodina and fascist Arrowhead gangs rounded up the Jewish population, massacring them along the shores of the Danube. In Novi Sad Eduard Kiš, narrowly survived execution when the murderers ran out of ammunition. Immediately after this narrow escape, Eduard took his wife and their two young children to what he believed was safety of his native village in Hungary. Suffering poverty, starvation and cold, they barely survived the long war years, depending on scant family mercy and on running errands for other villagers. In 1944, with the Nazi occupation of Hungary, Eduard was deported with the rest of his Jewish family to end his life in Auschwitz. Of all Eduard's family only one of his sisters survived.

After the war Danilo's mother managed to take the children back to Yugoslavia where they eventually found shelter and some normality in the fold of her Montenegrin family. At that point Danilo, then aged 13, could fully appreciate the safety of life in the ancient Montenegrin capital Cetinje, surrounded by the epic mythological heroism of his mother's proud people. He went on to study literature in Belgrade, where he eventually settled and discovered himself as a writer.

It was not the picturesque and romantic Montenegrin stories that informed Kiš's writing, but his difficult and indelible wartime childhood. The figure of his father and the manner of his death in the Holocaust became central to Kiš's writing from his brilliant early novels, *Garden*

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Ashes and Klepsidra. Kiš was to be among the first important writers of the 20th century to dedicate his literary talent to writing about the Holocaust in the novel form.

Kiš's refusal to promote his work through demonstrating loyalty to the regime brought him into conflict with its ideological watchdogs. At the peak of his career his independent stance drove him to exile in France, not easy for anyone, but even less so for a writer. This was in the late 1970s when the mediocre literary critics in Serbia, owing their positions and good living to lip-service to the Communist Party, accused Kiš of plagiarism in his best-known novel, *The Tomb of Boris Davidovich*. At that time Kiš was published, acclaimed and awarded prizes in neighbouring Croatia as well as elsewhere in Europe and this attack provoked a media battle for and pro Kiš that raged for some time. Finally Kiš replied with his book *Anatomy Lesson* in which he not only exposed the ignorance of his critics, but also demonstrated his erudite knowledge of literature and literary tools. In a way *Anatomy Lesson* is his own theory of literature.

In 1989, on the eve of the nationalistic wars that brought about Yugoslavia's self-destruction, the avidly anti-nationalist exiled Kiš prematurely succumbed to incurable throat cancer.

Now Danilo Kiš is a cult figure among the younger generation in all the parts of former Yugoslavia and as a writer he has never been more loved or popular. Though well known in France and Germany and, particularly, in Central and Eastern Europe, Danilo Kiš is not widely known in the English-speaking world. Hopefully this illuminating story of his life and work, plus recent reissues of some of his works with new translations, will help to bring the writer the wider recognition he deserves.

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