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BILI SMO VAMA NA RASPOLAGANJU

Prijatelji,

Prošlo je bezmalo dvadeset godina od kada sam srela neke od vas koji su stigli u UK iz Bosne, još prije nego što je tamo počeo rat. Većina vas je stigla za vrijeme praznika

1992 g. Činilo se da je svaki avion donosio više klijenata za nas. Mnogi od vas, sada, imaju djecu koja su se ovdje vjenčala i "engleske" unuke, no na žalost, neki pripadnici starije generacije, na žalost nisu više sa nama. Za nas iz CBF/WJR, iz Odbora za izbjeglice to je značilo da smo svi "upregnuti u kola". Niko nije imao zimsku odjeću a London je postajao sve hladniji. Nastala je potraga za zimskim kaputima, pantalonama, džemperima itd. Trebala su nam i kolica, pelene, krevetići i dječija hrana i odjeća.

Samo poneki od vas su znali engleski što nam je činilo poteškoće.

Trebalo je naći i smještaj pa smo vas u sprezi sa Jewish care-om rasporedili po hotelima u Golders Green-u i Jews' Temporary Shelter (Privremeni smještaj za Jevreje), dok je još bio u rekonstrukciji.

Zatim, morali smo pokušati da vas sve intervjuišemo, da doznamo ko ste, šta ste radili u Bosni i iz kojih mjesta ste stigli. Ispostavilo se da se radi o grupi veoma obrazovanih ljudi. Sedam arhitekata, doktori, univerzitetski profesori, čak i stručnjak za krompire, skupa sa kuharima, stručnim menadžerima itd. Također smo ustanovili da su Jevreji oženjeni Srbima, Hrvatima i Muslimanima, pa smo morali biti na oprezu da konflikt nije sa vama doputovao u London.

Da nije bilo partnerstva sa Jewish Care-om, a posebno saradnje sa Judith Hassan iz Holocaust Survivors Centre (Centar za preživjele Holokausta), vaša raspodjela uz očuvanje vašeg etničkog identiteta kroz La Benevolenciju ne bi protekla tako glatko. Tokom godina, i drugi su vas pomagali, posebno kod učenja jezika, finansiranja višeg obrazovanja i koleđa umjetničkog usmjerenja, pri traženju smještaja, namještaja, zaposlenja, preobrazbe itd.

Naučili smo kako je Holokaust razorio vaše porodice i zajednicu u Bosni, i desilo se drugi put u toku pedeset godina da postanete izbjeglice i ozbiljno trpite od rata u Sarajevu. Ja nikada neću vidjeti ljepote otoka na dubrovačkoj obali zbog njihove užasne jevrejske istorije.

Jevrejski odbor za izbjeglice imao je sada pune ruke posla da sredi komplikovanu dokumentaciju, i da apelira na Ministra unutrašnjih poslova da dozvoli dolazak u UK, bračnih drugova koji su ostali tamo. U tom smislu John Marshal, član parlamenta iz Hendona, bio je od ogromne koristi.

Najstarije izbjeglice koji su stigli bili su uvaženi Dr. Konforti, star 85 g., i njegova supruga koji su živjeli sa kćerkama. On je napisao dobar dio jugoslavenskog ustava i bio je vrlo blizak predsjedniku Titu. Bio je zatočen za Holokausta. Kako je žalosno doći u starosti iz jednog rata, ne poznavati jezik. Nadoknada mu je bila što je bio sa svojom djecom i unucima.

Za većinu vas život se normalizuje. Sarajevo nije više isti onaj grad koji ste napustili. Imala sam sreću da posjetim Sarajevo prije pet godina sa grupom iz JOINT-a. Posjetila sam sinagogu, jevrejsko groblje (gdje su se vodile većina borbi), stari Centar od drveta je već bio ponovo sagrađen, a ja sam vidjela čuvenu Hagadu u bančinom trezoru. Posjetili smo i projekat koji JOINT provodi putem sinagoge za pomoć svim starijim osobama do kojih su mogli doći u Sarajevu bez obzira na etničku pripadnost.

Kada ste stigli u London, žalili ste se kako ne možete naći pavlake, sireve i mlijeko sa različitih farmi ili zaista svježju hranu. Ja veoma uživam u vašoj hrani, ali je za mene suviše komplikovana priprema. Kolači su vam jako bogati i nisu dobri za liniju.

Mnogi od vas posjeduju veliki umjetnički talenat, što se moglo vidjeti na izložbi prilikom proslave desetogodišnjice vašeg dolaska, i kako svjedoči način na koji se priprema i štampa SaLon.

Za nas u Londonu, WJR (Svjetska jevrejska pomoć) je postala dobrotvorna organizacija koja nudi dobrobit i pomoć u inostranstvu. JRC (Odbor za Jevreje izbjeglice) zatvorio se lani jer već je tri godine kako nema novih izbjeglica. Postojanje države Izrael i ekspanzije Evropske zajednice ka istoku imaju u ovom trenutku za posljedicu da nema izbjeglica. WJR će pomoći ako se situacija izmjeni.

Kako je napisao Branko Danon u svom izvrsnom, dobro urađenom prilogu, u Domu Lordova, imali smo prijem da se zahvalimo svima koji su pomagali jevrejske izbjeglice od 1930-tih do 2005 g. Previše njih da se poimena navedu. Ovo je bila proslava za dobro urađen posao ali i tužna za sve nas koji smo tako zdušno radili skupa tolike godine.

Janet Cohen

WE WERE HERE FOR YOU

Friends,

It is nearly twenty years since I met some of you who had arrived in the UK from Bosnia, before the war there started. Most of you arrived during Yomtov 1992. Each plane seemed to have more clients for us. Now, many of you have children married here and have "English" grandchildren, but unfortunately some of the older generation are no longer with us.

For us in the CBF/WJR, the Jewish Refugees Committee, it was "all hands on deck". No one had winter clothes and London was getting colder, a search started for winter coats, trousers, jumpers etc. We also needed prams, nappies, cots and baby food and also clothes. Very few of you spoke English, which made it hard for us. Accommodation had to be found and together with Jewish Care you were put into hotels in Golders Green and the Jews' Temporary Shelter (in the process of being refurbished). Then we had to try to interview you all, to find out who you all were, your jobs in Bosnia and which cities you came from. We found we had a group of very professional people. Seven architects, doctors, university professors and an expert on potatoes, were among cooks, expert managers etc. We also found we had Jews married to Serbs, Croats and Muslims, and we had to be careful that the conflict did not travel to London with you!



Without the partnership of Jewish Care and especially Judith Hassan of the Holocaust Survivors Centre, your absorption, together with keeping your own ethnic identity through La

Benevolencija, would not have happened so smoothly. Others also assisted you over the years, especially with learning English, funding further education and Art colleges, housing, furniture, getting jobs, re-training etc.

We all learned how the Holocaust had destroyed your families and community in Bosnia, and this was the second time in fifty years you were refugees and had suffered seriously from a war situation in Sarajevo. I will never see the beauty of the islands off the coast of Dubrovnik because of their awful Jewish history.

The JRC now had much work to sort out documentation, which was complicated and also to apply to the Home Secretary to bring spouses left behind to the UK, John Marshal, MP for Hendon was an enormous help.

The oldest refugees to arrive, were the esteemed Dr. Konforti, aged 85 and his wife to live with their daughters. He had written much of the Yugoslavian constitution and was very close to president Tito. He had been detained in the Holocaust.

How sad to arrive from a war in an old age, not speaking the language of your new country, but he did have the compensation of being with his children and grandchildren.

Life is more normal for most of you, Sarajevo is not the same city you left behind. I was lucky enough to visit there 5 years ago with a JOINT party. I visited the synagogue, the Jewish cemetery (where most of the fighting took place). The old wooden Centre now rebuilt and I saw the famous Hagadah in the bank vault. We visited the non-sectarian scheme the JOINT carry out through the Synagogue to assist all the elderly they can reach in Sarajevo.

In London when you came, you used to complain of not getting different cream, cheese and milk from different farms or really fresh food. I enjoy your food very much, but it is too complicated for me to cook. Your cakes are very rich and not good for the figure.

Many of you have great artistic talents as was on show at the ten year anniversary and the way SaLon is written and produced.

For us in London, WJR has become an overseas welfare/aid charity. The Jewish Refugees Committee closed last year and there have been no new refugees for 3 years. The state of Israel and the EU expanding eastwards, means no refugees at the moment. Should the situation change, then WJR will assist them.

As Branko Danon wrote in his excellent well written article, we had a reception at the House of Lords to thank all those that had helped Jewish refugees, too many to list from the 1930's - 2005. This was a celebration of a job well done, but sad for all of us that had worked so closely together for so many years.

Janet Cohen

NOVA KONFIKACIJA PRIJE "RESTITUCIJE"

Nakon nekoliko godina /svake dvije ili četiri godine / predizbornih obećanja i raznih kombinatorika, Predstavnički dom Parlamenta Bosne i Hercegovine, usvojio je tekst Zakona o prodaji nacionalizovanih stanova. Ovaj Zakon trebalo bi da usvoji i Dom naroda da bi isti postao provodiv i pravno legitiman, odnosno da bi se po rješenjima koja nudi mogla okončati nova prevara i provesti nova konfiskacija, mnogo grublja i na žalost definitivna, a pogubna po vlasnike nacionalizovanih stanova, odnosno njihove nasljednike.

Osnovni princip, na kojem i Jevrejska zajednica, kao i sve druge vjerske zajednice i nacionalna kulturno-prosvjetna društva insistiraju, je princip prirodne restitucije, gdje god je ona moguća, a ovdje je bila moguća. Ne usvajanje ovog principa, a Zakon o restituciji je trebao biti šansa za pokazivanje opredjeljenja u kojem pravcu ide naše zakonodavstvo, predstavljalo bi putokaz potencijalnim investitorima u Bosnu i Hercegovinu, da se okrenu drugim tržištima, gdje će njihove investicije, iz kojih će proisteći pravo vlasništva, biti adekvatno pravno i zakonski zaštićene.

Ovakvim rješenjima, kojima je nosiocima stanarskih prava omogućeno da otkupe "tude" nacionalizovane stanove, a da pravi vlasnici dobiju u vlasništvo "tude" stanove, odnosno stanove za koje nije podnesen zahtjev za povrat, država bi ušla u slijepu ulicu dvostrukre krade. Naime, pravim vlasnicima bi sada i definitivno bili "ukradeni" njihovi stanovi, a od firmi koje su između dva rata kupile stanove svojim radnicima, koji iz raznih razloga te stanove nisu vratili ili nisu željeli da vrate nakon ovog rata, bili bi "ukradeni" ti stanovi i blagonaklono predati u vlasništvo vlasnicima nacionalizovanih stanova. Ovim rješenjem država bi "oprala ruke" pred kako su političari izračunali brojnim glasačkim tijelom, dok bi manjinu glasačkog tijela definitivno "oslobodili" i nade da će jednog dana dobiti svoje nacionalizovane stanove. Perfidnost u tom rješenju je još drastičnija kada se zna da ovaj princip nije primijenjen na tzv. vakufske stanove, koji se vraćaju vakufima, a nosiocima stanarskih prava u vakufskim stanovima se takođe "daju" ukradeni stanovi firmi kupljeni između dva rata / od 1945.-1992. godine/. Ovim principom "većina" ipak neće biti ugrožena i opljačkana, te će brojni glasovi na narednim izborima ponovo otići onima koji su bili darežljivi i tuđom imovinom kupovali biračko tijelo.

Ostaje labava nada da Dom naroda neće prihvatiti ova rješenja, tako da prevara neće uspjeti, ali ovo je Bosna i Hercegovina i "ništa ne smije da nas iznenadi", zar ne ?

Boris Kožemjakin

U SARAJEVU NIŠTA NOVO

I ove godine, kao i mnogo godina ranije, osim svakodnevnih vapaja Karle del Ponte, znate već ono "ko o čemu, Karla o Ratku i Raši.", u Sarajevu ima i snijega.

Istine radi, Olimpijada je ove godine bila u Torinu, ali mi smo zaboravili otkazati snijeg, te nam opet pade. Ko zna za šta je to dobro, neka ga, reklo bi se.

Malo je dosadno, moram priznati, dijaspora prorijedila, niko da navrati, da nam malo otvorite vidike, da čujemo šta ima u tom bijelom svijetu, kako živite, kako se snalazite, mislite li pokatkad i na nas, mislim u cjelini, onako djuture....

No dobro, pripremamo se za Purim, osim molitve, sjetecete se, imamo mi ovdje i Purimsko sijelo. Ove godine nas ometoše neki Izrelci, dodje izraelski folklor u Sarajevu, pa se sjelo desi tek 25. marta, dvije sedmice nakon Purima, ali svejedno, važno je da ga mi zovemo Purimsko i da ima maski. Istine radi, u zadnjih desetak godina, možda je ovo sijelo s najviše maski, aktivirala nam se i omladina, svaka čast.

Izašao nam je i novi broj, prvi ove godine, Jevrejskog glasa. Brojna redakcija, malo saradnika, nedostatak tema i slični problemi, ali kome ja to pričam, zar u SaLONU nije slično? No, moram pohvaliti redakciju da obilato koristi digitalni fotoaparata, te umjesto da pišemo, u ovom broju se obilato slikasmo.

Bili smo u Novom Sadu, na Šoletu 2006, nije do graha ili pasulja, kako kome, nego do druženja na ex Jugo nivou. Zahvaljujemo Rupici, on je to sve osmislio, vrijedni prijatelji iz Novog Sada organizovali, a osim naših prijatelja iz Srbije, bila je i raja iz Hrvatske, te mi iz Sarajeva.

Još malo pa će i Pesah, veliko spremanje, Opštinu ćemo urediti kako znamo, Hagadu iščitati na Sederu, a sutradan bogami primiti i čestitke "vidjenijih" ljudi koji, neki trajno, a neki privremeno, borave u našem gradu.

A kada i to prodje, valja rukovodstvu Opštine pred članstvo, podnijeti raport šta se radilo ove dvije godine, malo se hvaliti, malo posipati pepelom, te ponovo birati nove predvodnike za naredni dvogodišnji period, ali o tome slijedeći put.

Sve vas u dijaspori volimo i mislimo na vas, te iako ste kupili svoje stanove, neki i prodali iste, dodajte nam. Kada već vi ne zovete nas tamo, dodjte vi ljetos u Sarajevu, dodjte predveče, pa da sjedimo cio dan.

Boris Kožemjakin



NEW CONFISCATION PRIOR TO RESTITUTION

After a few years (once in two or once in four years) of the pre-election promises and various combinations, Bosnia and Herzegovina House of Representatives has ratified the text of the Law on the Sale of the Nationalized Flats. This Law should be ratified by the House of the Peoples in order to become applicable and legitimate; actually the solutions it offers would enable the finalizing of a new deceit and implementation of a new confiscation, which would be much nastier and regretfully final but deadly for the owners of the nationalized flats and/or their heirs.

The Jewish community together with other religious communities and national cultural-and-educational societies insist on the basic principle of natural restitution wherever possible, and in this case it has been possible.

Should this principle not be accepted (and the law on restitution should have been a chance to indicate the direction of our legislation) it would be an indicator to the potential investors into Bosnia and Herzegovina to turn to other markets where their investments, which would eventually result in ownership, would be adequately legally protected.

By these solutions whereby it would be possible for the rightful occupants of a flat to buy "somebody else's" nationalized flat and in turn its real owners would get in possession of "somebody else's" flat, namely flats for which a request for restitution has not been submitted, the state would enter into a cul-de-sac of double theft. This actually means that the flats would be "stolen" from the real owners, and those flats that were bought by companies between the two wars for their employees who due to various reasons have not taken them back or did not want to take them back, would be "stolen" and kindly be given into possession of the owners of the nationalized flats. Doing this the state would "wash its hands" before the majority of the electorate, as the politicians see it, while they would "liberate" the minority of any hope to get back their nationalized flats.

The perfidy of this solution is even more drastic due to the fact that this principle has not been applied to the property of Muslim religious community which is returned to them, and those who are entitled to live in the flats of this community "get" the stolen flats from the companies which were bought between the two wars (1945 – 1992).

There is still a shaky hope that the House of the Peoples will not approve these solutions preventing thus the success of the deceit, but this is Bosnia and Herzegovina and "nothing should surprise us", is it not so?

By Boris Kožemjakin

NOTHING NEW IN SARAJEVO

This year, just the same as many years before, in addition to the daily well known cries by Karla del Ponte about Ratko and Rašo (Radovan), there is snow in Sarajevo again. To be precise the Olympic Games were in Turin this year, but we have forgotten to cancel the snow – so it fell again. Who could tell why this is good; let it be, as one might say. I have to admit that it has been boring a bit here; the Diaspora is less frequent now; nobody drops in to open our views – to let us know what is going on in that wide world, how do you live, how do you get on, do you think of us occasionally, I mean all of us in bulk. ...

Well, we are getting ready for Purim. As you might remember it is not just the time to pray here but also to have the Purim Party. We were hindered slightly this year by an Israeli folk group that came to Sarajevo, so that the party took place only on the 25th of March – two weeks after Purim. It is not important, though. What is important is that we had a party that we called the Purim party. It is also true that this was probably a party richest in fancy dresses over the last ten years or so. The young generation has become active – congratulations!

The new issue of Jevrejski glas (The Jewish Voice), the first one this year, has been published. A numerous editorial board, insufficient number of contributors, lack of topics and similar problems; but whom am I telling all of this – is it not similar in SaLon. Still, I have to praise the board for their ample usage of the digital camera, so instead of writing we take a lot of photographs.

We went to "Cholent 2006" in Novi Sad. It is not the beans that matter, well, to some of us, but socializing at the ex Yugo level. Our gratitude goes to Rupica, who thought it out and the diligent friends from Novi Sad who organized it. Except from our friends from Serbia, our mates from Croatia and we from Sarajevo were present.

Pesah is approaching. – we shall tidy the community centre the best we know, read the Haggadah during the Seder and the next day, really, we shall receive the congratulations of the "prominent" people, some of which are permanently and the others temporarily in our city.

When even this is over the management of the community is due to face the members and submit the report covering all the activities over the past two years, boasting a bit and taking a bit of blame for some things. Then the leaders for the next two-years period will be elected – but about this next time

We love you all in Diaspora and think of you, and although you have bought your flats – some of you even sold them, do come to see us. As you do not invite us to go there, why don't you come to Sarajevo in summer? Come in the evening so that we could sit the whole day through.

By: Boris Kožemjakin



RAV MOŠE BEN MAJMON – MAJMONIDES

30-og marta 1135 g. bio je Erev Pesah (prvo veće Pesaha). Tog dana, dakle prije 871 godinu rodio se u Kordobi jedan od velikana jevrejske misli, nauke i kulture. I ne samo jevrejske. Da, mislimo na Rabi Moše Ben Majmona, poznatijeg iz grčke verzije kao Mozes Majmonides, a za poznavaoce kao Rambam, sto je sažetak početnih slova njegovog imena.

Majmonides je dakle, rođen u Španiji, u gradu koji je bio pod vlasti Maura ali je sa porodicom kao trinaestogodišnjak morao da bježi od muslimanske sekte Almohada, koja je došla na vlast i tražila od Jevreja da konvertiraju na islam, u protivnom prijeti im progonoštvom ili smrt. A mi naivni, mislili da je ovaj tretman izmislila hrišćanska Inkvizicija. Lutajući neko vrijeme po hrišćanskoj Španiji njegov otac sa porodicom se smješta u Fez u Maroku, tada vrlo važnom kulturnom i akademskom centru. Iako mlad, u svojim dvadesetim godinama, Majmonides se već počinje nametati kao autoritativna ličnost pišući traktate (o logici i o jevrejskom kalendaru) a tada počinje rad na Komentarima na Mišna, jednom od njegovih krupnih djela. Istovremeno nastavlja sa studijama, posebno medicine. U komplikovanoj situaciji u kojoj su se tamošnji Jevreji našli sa alternativnom konverzija ili smrt, a koji su odabrali potajno praktcirati Judaizam, Rambam je bio ogromno ohrabrenje. Pod pritiskom jednog nadobudnog rabina koji je živio izvan Maroka, a koji je tvrdio da je konverzija uz potajno praktciranje judaizma bezvrijedna, i da su ti i takvi grijeshnici i otpadnici, mnogi su odlučili da definitivno napuste jevrejstvo. Rambam je intervenisao i dao tumačenja o pravim zakonima kada se život dovodi u pitanje i da je molitva uvijek Bogu prihvatljiva, odnosno da je spašavanje života važnije od forme.

Ovakav angažman je prouzrokovao dalje progone, porodica bježi u Izrael. Ne ostaje samo dugo, zbog ubogog života tadašnje jevrejske zajednice i pritisaka pa se konačno sele u Egipat, u Fostat, stari Kairo. Otac umire a mlađi brat David, trgovac dragim kamenjem, koji se brinuo za cijelu porodicu nakon očeve smrti, godinu dana kasnije tragično strada na moru. Za to vrijeme Rabi Moše završava i izdaje svoje prvo značajno djelo, Komentar na Mišna, i to na arapskom jeziku. Vrlo teško doživljava bratovljevu smrt. Principijelno odbija da živi od Tore, te počinje da radi kao ljekar. Unatoč opterećenju koje donosi liječnički poziv, nalazi vremena da piše i rukovodi jevrejskom zajednicom. 1177. godine postavljen je za lidera Jevrejske zajednice Fostata. To su godine njegove pune afirmacije kao lidera i mislioca; intervenisao u pomoći Jevrejima Jemena koji su zapali u teškoće sa vlašću i nekim vlastitim izrodima; razračunava se sa i raskrinkava jeretičku Karaitsku sektu koja je negirala oralno predanje Tore, istovremeno pozivajući pripadnike ove sekte da se vrate Judaizmu. Takođe koristi svoju poziciju dvorskog doktora kod Sultana Saladina za dobrobit Jevreja.

No svakako najvažnija njegova životna zaostavština dolazi iz ovog perioda a to je Mišne Tora. To je djelo kodifikacije, odnosno sistematizacije cjelokupnog jevrejskog zakonodavstva. Ovo djelo, za razliku od drugih njegovih djela, pisano je na hebrejskom jeziku sa ambicijom da prosječnom Jevrejimu omogući pristup jevrejskom zakonu. Prije pojave ovog značajnog djela, za primjenu zakona trebalo je detaljno poznavati Talmud i druge zakone. Talmud je, kao što je poznato predstavljao zbirku rabiničkih diskusija o jevrejskim zakonima, etici, običajima legendama i pričama koji su se do tada, kao usmeno predanje oslanjali na bibliju. Talmud u stvari predstavlja regulaciju jevrejskog života, kako vjerskog, tako i svetovnog. Čak ih je bilo dva – Jerusalemski i Vavilonski. I hajde se ti sad u tome snadji. Tumačenje su mogli davati oni najpućeniji. Neprocjenljiva je vrijednost Mišne Torah u približavanju jevrejskog svetovnog i duhovnog zakonodavstva prosječnom Jevrejimu toga doba. Ne poričući značaj ovog djela, zamjeralo mu se da je namjeravao da ovim zamjeni Talmud. Posebno se naglašava da u naučnom pristupu, kod određenih tumačenja ne postoji poziv na izvorište u Talmudu. Rambam je odlučno odbijao ove tvrdnje.

Interesantan je njegov odnos i poznavanje tadašnjih vodećih filozofskih ideja. Bio je gorljiv pristalica Aristotelovih ideja ali se umnogome i razlikovao. Cijeli taj odnos vidljiv je iz jednog pisma svom studentu koji je nazvao More Nevuhim, u prevodu najbliže Vodič za zbunjene. Uočava se da je on tvrdio stajao na stanovištu da su jevrejski zakoni nepromjenljivi, iako su neki tvrdili drugačije. Ovaj njegov stav se vidi i iz njegove postavke o trinaest osnova Judaizma. Još se doticao mnogih tema sa ogromnom vještinom i erudicijom. Poznati su njegovi radovi i u oblasti medicine.

Treba reći da je njegov rad bio cijenjen i van jevrejskih krugova. Njegov gore navedeni Vodič je imao veliki utjecaj na opštu misao tog doba. Toma Akviński, ne samo da je bio dobar poznavalac njegovog djela nego se u nekim radovima i pozivao na njega. Ima jedna jevrejska narodna izreka: Od Moše-a (misleći na Mojsija) do Moše-a niko nije kao Moše.

Branko Danon

RABBI MOSHE BEN MAIMON – MAIMONIDES

It was Erev Pesah of 1135. On the 30th of March 871 years ago one of the giants of Judaism thought, science and culture was born in Cordoba. Yes, we refer here to Rabi Moshe Ben Maimon better known by his Greek name Moses Maimonides or Rambam – an acronym of his title and his name.

Born in Spain ruled by Moors at that time, Maimonides – aged thirteen – was forced to flee from Almohades, a Muslim sect who after conquering Cordoba demanded that the Jews convert to Islam or face death or exile. Naïve as we are we thought that this treatment was invented by Christian Inquisition. After moving about southern Spain for some time, his family eventually settled in Fez, Morocco, a very important cultural and academy centre at that time. Although a young man in his twenties, Maimonides already started to impose himself as an authority writing treatises (on logic and the Jewish calendar) and began work on his commentary on the Mishneh, one of his major works. Simultaneously he continued his studies, especially on medicine. In the complex situation in which the Jews had to choose between conversion and death and many had opted for conversion but secretly to continue the practice of Judaism, Rambam was a huge encouragement. Under the pressure of a pretentious rabbi from outside Morocco who maintained that conversion with secret practice of Judaism was worthless and that such Jews were sinners and heretics many decided to abandon Judaism. Intervening Rambam gave the interpretation of the true laws which govern when one's life has been threatened and explained that prayers are always acceptable to God – which really meant that saving lives is more important than the form.

Such involvement caused further persecutions and the family fled to Israel where they did not stay for a long time as the Jewish community was suffering from intense poverty and oppression. They finally settled in Fostat, the old city of Cairo. The father died and David, the younger brother – a dealer in precious stones – who continued to support the family after their father's death, perished at sea a year later. Over that period Rabi Moshe completed and published his first major work, the Commentary on the Mishneh, in Arabic. He was devastated by his brother's death. Unwilling to earn for living from his Torah he began to practice medicine. Despite the burden of the medical profession he continued with writings and leading the Fostat Jewish community. In 1177 he was appointed its leader. These were the years of his full affirmation both as a leader and a philosopher, during which he supported the Jews of Yemen who had difficulties with the authorities and some renegades of their own - he exposed and settled accounts with the heretical Karaites sect who denied the validity of Oral Torah; later he welcomed the followers of this sect back to Judaism. He also used his position as a doctor in Sultan Saladin's court for the benefit of the Jews.

The most significant legacy left from him comes from this period. It is the Mishneh Torah, in which he codified the entire body of the Jewish law. Unlike his other works Mishneh Torah was written in Hebrew and was intended to provide the average Jew with access to Jewish law. Until that major work appeared in order to ascertain the law it was necessary to have detailed knowledge of Talmud and other laws. As is well known Talmud is a compilation of rabbinic discussions on Jewish laws, ethics, customs, legends and stories which till then relied on the Bible in the form of oral tradition. Actually, both Jewish religious and secular life has been regulated by Talmud. On top of this there have been two of them – the Babylonian and the Jerusalem Talmud. It really was difficult to find one's way through it all. Only the best experienced could give the necessary explanations. Mishneh Torah is a priceless work because it brought closer the Jewish secular and religious legislation to the average Jew. Not denying the significance of this work some held against Rambam that he intended to replace the Talmud or that there was a lack of references in the Mishneh Torah. Rambam rejected these claims.

His approach to and knowledge of the leading philosophical ideas of that time are also interesting. He held Aristotelian thought in high esteem but also differed from him on many issues. This attitude is visible from the Moreh Nevuchim (guide for the perplexed) – a very long letter which he wrote to one of his students. Although there were some who maintained to the contrary it is notable that his firm position was that the laws of Judaism are not subject to changes. It is clear from his thirteen foundations of Judaism. He dealt with many other issues with immense expertise and erudition. His works on medicine are also known. It should be noted that his accomplishments were well received in the non-Jewish world as well. His above mentioned Guide had a powerful impact on the thought in general of that period. Thomas Aquinas was familiar with Rambam's writings and refers to them in his own writings. A Jewish folk saying goes: "From Moshe (Moses) to Moshe there arose no one like Moshe."

By Branko Danon

INFORMACIJA O OVOGODIŠNJEM BEJAHADU

Dragi prijatelji,

Ovogodišnji "Bejahad" će se održati od **9.9. – 16.9.**, u mjestu Hvar sa svojim galerijama, pjacetama, kalama, kao i novom kongresnom dvoranom hotela "Amfora" te u novim pratećim prostorima u hotelu. Pokrovitelji "Bejahada" 2006. su Ministarstvo kulture Hrvatske, JOINT i europski židovski kongres. Očekuje se oko 300 gostiju iz svijeta. Smještaj je u hotelu "Amfora" (4*) i u hotelu "Pharos" (3*). Kompletna prehrana (tri obroka) je u hotelu "Amfora" na vrhu hotela, s prekrasnim pogledom na Paklenske otoke. Na otvaranju manifestacije, nakon svečane večere i filma "Bejahad 2005", kraćim koncertom će nam se predstaviti **Monika Leskovar**, jedna od vodećih svjetskih čelistica.

Prva dva dana će gosti uživati u 12-13 projekata sa natječaja "Bejahad 2006" koji će se predstaviti širom grada Hvara. Uvečeer će nastupiti poznati sarajevski glumac **Zijah Sokolović** s umešbesnom komedijom „Cabares cabarei“.

U utorku je na programu "Jom Israeli" kojom prilikom ćemo uživati u programu koji će nam osmisliti **Hitachdut ole ex Yugoslavia**. U srijedu je na programu cjelodnevi razgovor na temu "Da li kulturna globalizacija ugrožava kulture malih naroda?" Prije podne nastupa jedan od svjetskih autoriteta židovske misli, gospodin **Gyorgy Konrad** sa svoja dva gosta, također svjetski poznata mislioca i intelektualca. Poslije podne, na istu temu, slijede razgovori u okviru okruglog stola koji moderira gospodin **Žarko Puhovski** (Zagreb), a na kome učestvuju **Lev Kreft** (Ljubljana), **Predrag Finci** (London), **Filip David** (Beograd), **Predrag Matvejević** (Rim) i **Saša Goldman** (Pariz). Uvečeer, vezano uz temu nastupaju **Nizza Thobi** (Minhen) s jidiš songovima i klecmer sastav iz Praga. U četvrtak prije podne će nam se predstaviti židovska zajednica iz Praga s poludnevnim programom. Poslije podne kao gost – nacionalna manjina, imati ćemo mogućnost i čast vidjeti Muslimane grada Zagreba. Nakon predavanja gospodina **Šefka Omerbašića** slijedi koncert zboru "Arabeske", a potom i svečano otvaranje izložbe **Mersada Berbera**. U petak ujutro idemo na izlet i u kombinaciji imamo 3 vrlo dobre ideje od kojih ćemo izabrati svakako najbolju. Uvečeer pocije Šabat koji ćemo provesti zajedno s rabinom **Kotelom Da Donom**. U subotu na žalost moramo napustiti prekrasni Hvar u kome ćemo provesti sedam nezaboravnih dana u druženjima, razgovorima, kupanju, učenju itd.

U pazuma programa će raditi tri radionice koje vode **David Albahari** (Mala škola pisanja), **Malina Cukon** (Mala škola judaika) i **Vatroslav Ivanuša** (Mala škola židovstva).

Cijena kompletnog sedmodnevnog aranžmana u dvokrevetnoj sobi po osobi iznosi u hotelu "Pharos" – 280 Eura za goste koji žive i rade na prostorima bivše Jugoslavije. Cijena u jednokrevetnoj sobi je 330 eura u hotelu "Pharos". U hotelu "Amfora" cijena po osobi u dvokrevetnoj sobi, za sedmodnevni aranžman iznosi 490 eura, a u jednokrevetnoj 550 eura. Cijene vrijede samo za one koji i dalje žive na prostorima ex Jugoslavije. Cijena za goste izvana su u hotelu "Pharos" za sedmodnevni aranžman u dvokrevetnoj sobi po osobi

330 eura, odnosno 370 eura u jednokrevetnoj sobi. U dvokrevetnoj sobi po osobi u hotelu "Amfora" cijena je 540 eura, odnosno 590 eura u jednokrevetnoj sobi.

Bejahad židovska kulturna scena prima prijave i uplate isključivo za sedmodnevne aranžmane (puni pansion)!

U cijenu nisu uračunati putni troškovi.

Uplate se mogu vršiti u:

Savez jevrejskih opština Beograd (Mikan Grinvald);

Jevrejska Opština Sarajevo (Nadža Finci);

Ured "Bejahada" Zagreb Maruličev trg 18, utorkom i četvrtkom od 10-12 sati, telefon ++ 3851 4814 096 kao i direktno na bankovni račun "Bejahad"-a kunski ili devizni, uz obaveznu naznaku "za Bejahad 2006" te ime, prezime i adresu pošiljatelja. U slučaju storniranja, gostu se vraća cjelokupni iznos.

Do skorog viđenja,

Vaš tim Bejahada



ELA SMILJANIĆ - PORTRET

Elia je rođena u Mostaru 01.02.1980 g. Stanovala je u divnom stanu sa roditeljima i sestrom iz koga se pružao lijep pogled na katedralu i rijeku. Imala je sretan život u Mostaru. Išla je u obližnju školu sa ostalom djecom. U školi je pokazivala strast za matematiku dok je predmeti kao istorija nisu baš mnogo zanimali. Ovo stoga što nije mogla napamet naučiti poglavlja iz udžbenika istorije kako je to nastavnica tražila. Poput većine djece, dugi dana ljetnjeg raspusta su bili njeno najdraže vrijeme. To je, međutim, bilo i vrijeme koje je provodila sa djedom i bakom, čije je kuhanje imalo za posljedicu dodatak od nekoliko kilograma tjelesne težine. Uvijek će se sa srećom prisjećati ovih toplih ljetnih dana.

Eli je bilo dvanaest godina početkom rata 1992 g. Bila je dovoljno odrasla da shvati šta se događa. Šest mjeseci boravila je sa majkom i sestrom u Hrvatskoj kao izbjeglica, nakon čega je stigla u Englesku. Ovih šest mjeseci su pokrenuli dramatičnu transformaciju. Sazrela je i osjetila se odraslom. Život prvih nekoliko sedmica, u hotelu, je bio veoma uznemirujući. Život je, čini se, počeo da se normalizuje kada je porodica prešla u stan a škola krenula. Školska realnost u stranoj zemlji bila je teška, a ratu u domovini nije se nazirao kraj. Ovo je značilo za ovu mladu osobu da treba napraviti zaokret u vlastitoj svijesti i prihvatiti činjenicu da je ostatak ovdje jedina raspoloživa opcija. Učinila je napor da se adaptira i najbolje što je znala da se uklopi u novu i neobičnu okolinu. Kao posljedica, sve je krenulo na bolje; jezik, samopouzdanje, kontrola školskog gradiva u cjelini...stvaranje prijateljstava slijedi. Motivacija za školovanje se vratila kao i traženje puteva boljeg obrazovanja.

Usprkos reputaciji srednje škole koju je pohađala, pokazala je svoj pravi karakter, i ohrabrila majkom, postigla dobar uspjeh na Maloj maturi. Tada su joj, osim matematike, interes zaokupili hemija i biologija, pa je izabrala da ih nastavi proučavati za maturu. Uživava intenzivno u ovom periodu svog života. Sada više ne postoji jezična prepreka i ona prestaje bivati autsajderom. Kako sama kaže: «Dobro sam se uklopila, sreća divne ljude i stekla neka doživotna prijateljstva».

Pošto je postigla dobre rezultate na maturi, upisala je studij hemije na UCL-u u Londonu. Veoma zrelo pristupa studijama sa jednim ciljem, da nakon studija stekne dobar i po mogućnosti, zanimljiv posao. Pobudio se poseban interes za hemizam lijekova i efekata na ljudsko tijelo. Nakon magistarskog kursa iz hemije koji je trajao četiri godine, još uvijek je osjetila da nije dovoljno naučila, budući je hemija oblast u kojoj se uvijek može ići dalje i dublje. Ovdje se priča o uspjehu nastavlja. Nakon diplome sa odlikom, odlučila je da nastavi još tri godine do titule Doktora nauka. «Nakon što sam uvidjela kako svi provodimo nekih četrdesetak godina radeći, stalo mi je do toga da studiram još tri godine, jer što ne bih uživala u studentskom životu što je duže moguće», kaže.

«Rad na doktoratu je bio jedinstveno iskustvo. Istraživanje na kome sam radila bilo je fascinantno. Napravila sam nova otkrića i naučila nove stvari. Istovremeno, ako stvari nisu išle kako valja, bilo je vrlo uznemirujuće. Nije uvijek bilo lako raditi tolike sate a za uzvrat dobiti, kako je izgledalo, mršave rezultate. Kako god, jedna me je stvar u to vrijeme rada na doktoratu, stalno motivirala. To je bila pomisao da ću možda jednog dana doći do značajnog otkrića koje bi preobratilo svijet nauke. Moj je doktorat bio završen lani u oktobru i čini me ponosnom što sam barem malo doprinjela svojoj naučnoj disciplini. Sada radim kao Istraživač hemičar pri Medical Research Council Technology. Posao podrazumijeva istraživanje i proizvodnju novih lijekova. Ne postoji ništa što je uzbuđljivije i više izazovno od mogućnosti da otkrijem nešto novo što će popraviti kvalitet ljudskog života i šanse za preživljavanje hiljadama ljudi u svijetu.»

Ove riječi objašnjavaju dobrim dijelom njenu životnu filozofiju. Jer, ako pokušate sa njom diskutovati na temu pripadanja i identiteta, odgovoriće vam da je oduvijek sanjala da postane naučnik, bez obzira bilo to u Mostaru ili Londonu. To je njeno biće. Sigurni smo da su njena važna otkrića na putu.



ELA SMILJANIĆ - PORTRAIT

Elia was born in Mostar on 1st February 1980. She lived in a beautiful flat with parents and sister, which had a lovely view of a Cathedral and river. Her life in Mostar was a happy one. Like all other children, she went to a close-by school. At school, she showed a passion for Maths and took little interest in subjects such as History. This, because she did not have the ability to memorize by heart details of chapters from the history book, which is what the teacher requested. Like most kids, the long summer holidays were her favourite. This was also the time to spend with her grandparents, adding a few kilograms from grandmother's cooking! These hot summer days in Mostar will always be reminiscenced upon with happiness.

She was 12 when the war started in 1992 - old enough to understand what was happening. With mother and sister, she stayed as a refugee in Croatia for 6 months, after which time, they arrived to the UK. These 6 months triggered a dramatic transformation. She had matured a lot and felt like a grown up. Living in a hotel for the first few weeks in London, was very unsettling. Life seemed to normalize when the family moved to a flat and school started. Settling into the school in a foreign country was difficult, however, the war in Bosnia was not coming to an end. This meant that this young person had to change the state of her mind and accept reality that there was no other option but to stay here. She made an effort to adapt and did her best to fit in this new and unusual environment. As a result everything started to improve; the language, the confidence, the grasp on the studies as a whole, making friends followed. Motivation towards schoolwork was restored and she started looking into ways to prosper her education.

In spite of the reputation of the secondary school she went to, she showed her real character, and with mother's encouragement, achieved good GCSEs grades. This is the period when apart from Maths, Chemistry and Biology caught her imagination and she chose to study all three subjects at a sixth form college. She enjoyed immensely this period of her life. By this time, the language barrier had finally disappeared and she was no outsider anymore. In her own words: "...I managed to fit in well, meet great people and make some life long friends".

After receiving good A-level grades, she went on to study Chemistry at UCL in London. Studies were now subject to a very mature approach, with one and only aim: to get a good and preferably interesting job, after education was complete. Her special interest was in the chemistry of medicines and the effect they have on human body. After going on to do a masters in chemistry for four years, she still felt to not have learned enough, chemistry being one of those subjects one really can learn more and progress in. The success story goes on here. After receiving a first class honours degree, she decided to go on for another three years and do a PhD. "I was keen to be a student for another three years seeing that we all spend forty years or so working, so why not enjoy your student life as long as you can?", she says

"Doing a PhD was certainly a unique experience. The research I conducted was fascinating. I made new discoveries and learned a range of new things. At the same time, when things were not going my way, I found it incredibly frustrating. It was not always easy working such long hours and producing, what felt like, little results. However, during these times, there was only one thing that constantly motivated me throughout my PhD and that was the fact that one day I might make a remarkable discovery, that may revolutionize the world of science. My PhD was completed in October last year, and I feel proud to have made at least a small contribution to my scientific discipline. I am now working as a research chemist for the Medical Research Council Technology. My job involves investigating and making new medicines. There is nothing more challenging and exciting than the prospect of one day discovering something new, which will improve the quality of life and survival chances of thousands of people across the world."

These words explain much of her life philosophy. Because if you try to discuss with her questions of belonging and identity, she would tell you that she always dreamed of being a scientist, be it in her native Mostar or London. This is what she really is. We are sure that her important discoveries are on their way.

HAZARI

Za hazare sam prvi put doznao čitajući Pavičev "Hazarski rečnik". On u tom romanu-leksikonu ovako opisuje Hazare: "Hazari su nezavisno i moćno pleme, ratnički i nomadski narod koji je u neizvesna vremena došao s Istoka, gonjen nekakvom vrelom tišinom, i u razdoblju od VII do X veka naseljavao kopno između dva mora: Kaspikog i Crnog. Zna se da su vetrovi koji su ih dognali bili vetrovi mužjaci, koji nikad ne nose kišu – vetrovi na kojima raste trava i oni je nose preko neba kao brade. Zna se takođe da su Hazari između dva mora osnovali moćno carstvo propovedajući nama danas nepoznatu veroispovest. Hazari su se objavili istoriji ušavsi u ratove s Arapima sklopivši savez sa vizantijskim carem Heraklijem 627 godine, ali je njihovo poreklo ostalo nepoznato, kao sto su iščezli i svi tragovi koji bi govorili pod kojim imenom i narodom Hazare treba danas tražiti. S istorijske pozornice Hazari su nestali zajedno sa svojom državom pošto su preobraćeni iz svoje prvobitne i nama nepoznate vere u jednu (pet se ne zna koju) od tri poznate veroispovesti onoga i ovoga vremena – hebrejsku, islamsku ili hrišćansku. Ubrzo posle preobraćanja, naime, usledio je raspad hazarskog carstva. Jedan od ruskih vojskovođa X veka, knez Svjatoslav, ne silazeći s konja pojeo je hazarsko carstvo kao jabuku. Hazarsku prestonicu na ušću Volge u Kaspijsko more Rusi su razorili 943 godine ne spavajući osam noći, a između 965 i 970 uništili su hazarsku državu. Očevici beleže da senke kuća hazarske prestonice još dugo nisu htele da se sruše pošto su same zgrade već davno bile uništene."

Ovo je na neki način poetizirana istorija Hazara, jer se Pavić Hazarima bavi tek toliko koliko je to u funkciji romana, a jedan drugi autor koji se takođe bavi istorijom Hazara donosi čiste fakte s kojim današnja nauka raspolaze.

Kevin Alan Brook u knjizi "The Jews of Khazaria" piše slijedeće: "Hazarska država se nalazila u Istočnoj Evropi i cvjetala je kao nezavisna država od oko 650 do 1016 godine. Kao značajna sila, Hazaria je održavala diplomatske i trgovačke veze sa mnogim narodima i nacijama (uključujući Bizantince, Alane, Madžare i Slavene) i utičući na tok srednjevjekovne istorije na mnoge načine. Da li znate, da nije bilo Hazara, veliki dio Istočne Evrope bi osvojili Arapi i tako postao islamski. Hazarski narod je pripadao turskim plemenima i pisao je RUNSKIM pismom koje je nastalo u Mongoliji.

Kraljevska porodica je poticala od Turske Ashinske dinastije. U IX stoljeću, kraljevska porodica, plemstvo i značajan dio Hazara je prešao na jevrejsku vjeru. Hazari koji nisu prihvatili jevrejsku vjeru preobraćeni su u Islam i Kršćanstvo. Poslije preobraćenja Hazarima su vladali jevrejski kraljevi koji su počeli prihvatati običaje jevrejske civilizacije uključujući Toru i Talmud, jevrejsko pismo i poštivanje jevrejskih praznika."

Važno je napomenuti da je Kevin Alan Brook pišući ovu knjigu koristio izvore i dokumente pisane na hebrejskom, arapskom, grčkom, armenskom, ruskom, mađarskom, švedskom i drugim jezicima.

Najnovija arhivska, lingvistička i arheološka istraživanja sa lokaliteta kao što su Čelarevo (Srbija), Eilend (Mađarska), Sarkel (Rusija), Balanjar (Sjeverni Kavkaz), Samikarakovskoje (Rusija), Navahrudk (Bjelorusija) i Birka (Švedska), govore da su Hazari tursko pleme koje se u 2 stoljeću raširilo Transkavkazom i kasnije zauzelo područja donje Volge. Ponovo se kao jaka sila pojavljivu u 8 stoljeću da bi se već od 8 do 10 stoljeća njihovo carstvo prostiralo sve od obala Crnog mora i Kaspijskog jezera do Urala i dalje na zapad do Kijeva. Njihov glavni grad ITIL postaje veliki kulturni i trgovački centar. Osvojili su zemlje Povoljskih Bugara i Ural te nametnuli danak istočnim Slavenima. Ne miruju pa zarate s Arapima, Perzijancima i Armencima. Hazari se nisu uplitali u religiju pokorenih plemena i naroda - religiozna sloboda je bila potpuna. Za Hazare kažu da su u 8 stoljeću prihvatili jevrejsku vjeru (prvo kraljevska porodica, plemstvo i jedan dio hazarskog stanovništva) dok su drugi prešli na Islam i Kršćanstvo. U 10 stoljeću ušli su u savez sa Bizantiskim carstvom u kojem su se istakli u borbi protiv Arapa. Godine 965 vojvoda od Kijeva (Svjatoslav) putokao je Hazare i njihovo je carstvo propalo. Nakon ovog poraza Hazari nestaju sa svjetske pozornice i gubi im se svaki trag. Postoje neke teorije da su Aškenazi (Jevreji iz istočnoevropskih zemalja) potomci Hazara, ali ta teorija otvara neka druga pitanja o kojima ja nisam kompetentan da pišem.

Maxime Rodinson u knjizi "Izrael i Arapi" takodje spominje Hazare i navodi slijedeće: "Nakon pada Jevrejske države u Izraelu (Palestini) poslije poraza od Rimljana, dakle od 70 godine do sudbonosnog dana 1948 godine (kada je proglašena država Izrael u UN) samo su dvije jevrejske države bile formirane. Prva se pojavila u Jemenu na

početku 6 stoljeća i njom su vladali Jevreji. Druga država je bila carstvo Hazara, narod tusko-mongolskog porijekla koji je prešao na jevrejsku vjeru i čiji su kraljevi bili Jevreji, i ova država je trajala od 8 do 10 stoljeća”.

Ovaj tekst o Hazarima sam počeo Pavićevim «Hazariskin rečnikom» pa je red da i završim citatom iz ove knjige, u kome se objašnjava zašto su Hazari prihvatili jevrejsku vjeru;

«Pošto je stigao na hazarski dvor, Sangari je tokom polemike s hrišćanskim i islamskim predstavnikom hazarskom kaganu objasnio jedan san i time ga privoleo da zajedno sa ostalim Hazarima pređe u jevrejsku veru, onu koja čeka od budućnosti više nego od prošlosti. Rečenicu koju u snu kazuje andeo kaganu i koja glasi «» Bogu su drage tvoje namere, ali tvoja dela nisu», objasnio je uporedivši je sa pričom o Adamovom sinu Setu. «» Postoji ogromna razlika – rekao je Isak Sangari kaganu – između Adama kojega je stvorio Jehova, i njegovog sina Seta, kojeg je stvorio Adam. Prema tome, Set i svi ljudi za njime jesu Božija namera, ali čovečije delo. Otuda treba praviti razliku između namere i dela. Namera je i u čoveku ostala čista, božanska, glagol ili logos, koji prethodi činu kao koncept čina, ali je delo zemaljsko, nosač imena – Set. U njemu su vrline i mane jedna u drugoj kao šuplje lutke koje se skrivaju jedna pod drugom. I samo tako se jedan čovek može odgonetnuti, ako se s njega skidaju jedna po jedna šuplja lutka, veće zvono s manjeg. Zato ne treba da shvatiš - zaključio je Sangari – da te je andeo onim rečima u snu prekorevao; naprotiv, ništa pogrešnije od takvog tumačenja. On je jednostavno hteo da ti skrene pažnju na to kakva je stvarno tvoja priroda.....»

O Hazarima, naravno ako vas to interesuje, možete naći dosta podataka na internetu pod odrednicama, Khazar, Qhazar, Hazari itd.

Želimir Kućinović-Čaja.



THE HAZARS

Khazars came to my notice for the first time when I was reading “The Dictionary of the Khazars” by Milorad Pavić. His description of Khazars in this novel-lexicon is the following: “Khazars were an independent dominant tribe, a nomadic warriors’ people who came from the East at an unknown time, expelled by some scorching silence and inhabited the land between the two seas – the Caspian and the Black Sea in the period between the Seventh and Tenth century. It is known that the winds that drove them were the male winds, never bringing rains - winds on which grass is growing; winds wearing beards over the sky. It is also known that between these two seas the Khazars founded a mighty empire preaching a religion not known to us today. Khazars revealed themselves in history when they started wars with Arabs and formed an alliance with Heraclius, the Byzantine emperor, in 627, but their origin remained unknown and all the traces that might have indicated under which name and people the Khazars should be looked under today have disappeared. The Khazars vanished from the stage of history together with their state after they converted from their original, unidentified religion into one (not known which one) of the three recognised religions of that and our time – Hebrew, Islam or Christian. In fact, soon after their conversion the Khazari Empire disintegrated. Duke Sviatoslav, one of the tenth century Russian army leaders ate the Khazaria country as an apple not even dismounting from his horse. In 943 the Khazaria capital at the mouth of the River Volga into the Caspian Sea was demolished by the Russians not sleeping for eight nights and between 965 and 970 the Khazaria state was destroyed by them. Witnesses note that the shadows of the houses in the Khazari capital refused to fall down long after the houses themselves were destroyed.”

Writing a novel about Khazars Pavić wrote this poetical account of their history. Another author also dealing with their history stated pure facts available now to the science. In his book “The Jews of Khazaria” Kevin Alan Brook writes: “The kingdom of Khazaria was located in eastern Europe and flourished as an independent state from about 650 to 1016. As a major world power, Khazaria enjoyed diplomatic and trade relations with many peoples and nations (Including the Byzantines, Alans, Magyars, and Slavs) and changed the course of medieval history in many ways. Did you know that if not for the Khazars, much of eastern Europe would have been overrun by the Arabs and become Islamic? The Khazar people belonged to a grouping of Turks who wrote in a runic script that originated in Mongolia. The royalty of the Khazar kingdom was descended from the Ashina Turkic dynasty. In the ninth century, the Khazarian royalty and nobility as well as a significant portion of the Khazarian Turkic population embraced the Jewish religion. After their conversion, the Khazars were ruled by a succession of Jewish kings and began to adopt the hallmarks of Jewish civilization, including the Torah and Talmud, the Hebrew script, and the observance of Jewish holidays. A portion of the empire’s population adopted Christianity and Islam.”

It should be noticed that writing this book Kevin Alan Brook used sources and documents written in Hebrew, Arabic, Greek, Armenian, Russian, Hungarian, Swedish and other languages.

Newest archive, linguistic and archaeological research works on localities such as Čelarevo (Serbia), Eiland (Hungary), Sarkel (Russia), Balany (North Caucasus) Samikarakovskoye (Russia) Navahrak (Byelorussia) and Birka (Sweden) indicate that Khazars are a Turkic tribe that spread over Trans Caucasus in the second century and later settled in the region round Volga River. It reappears in the eighth century again as a strong power and from the eight to the tenth century their empire covered the area from the Black Sea and Caspian Sea to Ural and further to the west to Kiev. Itil, their capital, became a major cultural and commercial centre. They captured the countries of Povol Bulgarians and Ural and imposed taxes on Eastern Slavs. Not being able to live in peace they started wars with Arabs, Persians and Armenians. They did not interfere with the religion of the conquered tribes and peoples – their religious freedom was complete. It is said about the Khazars that they embraced the Jewish religion. In the tenth century they forged an alliance with Byzantium to fight the Arabs. After their defeat by Sviatoslav, the Duke of Kiev in 965 their empire collapsed and

they disappeared from the world scene. There are some theories that the Ashkenazi Jews are the descendents of Khazars, but this theory opens some other questions that I am not competent to write about.

Maxim Rodinson also mentions Khazars in his book “Israel and the Arabs” Saying: “After the fall of the Jewish State in Israel (Palestine) when defeated by the Romans, actually from the year 70 to the crucial day in 1948 (when the state of Israel was proclaimed in the UN) only two Jewish states were formed. The first one, which was ruled by Jews, appeared in Yemen early in the sixth century. The other state was the empire of Khazars, a people of Turkic-Mongolian origin who converted to Judaism ruled by Jewish kings. This state existed from the eighth to the tenth century.”

I have started this article with “The Dictionary of Khazars” by Pavić and I will end with a quotation from the same book explaining why the Jews adopted Judaism:

“Upon arriving on the Khazar court, during debate with the Christian and Islam representative Sangari explained to the Khazar khagan a dream, talking him so into converting together with the other Khazars to Judaism, the one religion which expects more from the future than from the past. This sentence told by the angel to khagan in his dream: “God is in favour of your intentions, but not of your deeds” Sangari explained by a comparison to the story on Adam’s son Seth. “There is a huge difference – Isaac Sangari said to khagan - between Adam who was created by Jehova, and his son Seth, who was created by Adam. Thus, Seth and all the men following him are God’s intention, but are man’s deed. This is why intention should be distinguished from the deed. In man also the intention remained pure, divine, a verb or a logo, which precedes the act as a concept of the act, but the deed is worldly, the holder of the name – Seth. The virtues and vices in it are one within the other - similar to the hollow dolls hidden one underneath the other. And really, the only way to read a man is to take one by one the hollow dolls from him, the larger bell from the smaller one. It is why you should not take it that the angel was reproaching you in your dream – Sangari concluded – on the contrary it is a mistake to explain it that way. He only wanted to draw your attention to your real nature ...”

Should you be interested, there is quite a number of entries about Khazars on the internet under Khazars, Qhazars, Hazari etc.

By Želimir Kućinović - Čaja

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Parson Street - Corner of Church Road
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Email: Sa.Lon@ukgateway.net
salon@benevolencija.eu.org

REDAKCIJA ◊ EDITORIAL BOARD

Branka Danon, Branko Danon, Želimir Kučinović - Čaja, Sveto Gaćinović,
Vesna Domanj-Hardy, Dragan Ungar

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KNJIGA O RUTH

Ova poetično idilična priča također potiče iz perioda sudija (između 1250 i 1050 stare ere). Ona daje uvid u život običnih ljudi tog vremena. Sem toga ona je i dio porodične istorije kralja Davida koji je bio potomak glavne junakinje.

Knjiga je dobila ime po jednoj od ličnosti – Ruti. Zajedno sa svojom sverkvom ona je junakinja ove priče koja slijedi: Elimeleh, čovjek iz Betlehema - Judeja, njegova žena Naomi i njihova dva sina Malon i Heleon došli su u doba gladi da borave u zemlji Moavskoj. Tamo je Elimeleh umro, a njegova dva sina se oženiše, Malon je uzeo Rut za ženu, a Heleon Ofru. Objte te žene su bile Moavke. Zatim umru i oba sina. Nakon izvjesnog vremena Naomi je doznala da je glad u Judeji prestala i odlučila da se tamo vrati. Mada ju je Naomi odgovala, Rut je otišla sa svojom sverkvom u Betlehem, i svoju sudbinu je vezala sa sudbinom naroda Judeje. Ove dvije žene su stigle u Betlehem u doba žetve ječma. Jasno je bilo da su bile krajnje siromašne. Elimeleh je imao nasljedstvo zemlje kod svoje rodbine, ali ako se ne bi našao „Go'el“ (Go'el je izraz koji se susreće u porodičnom pravu Izraelčana. On se odnosi na bliskog člana porodice „srodnika – iskupitelja“, koji preuzima dužnosti „geule“ – „iskupljenja“ ili „povrata“ u ime osiromašenog člana porodice), Naomi bila primorana da proda tu zemlju. Elimeleh je imao dobro stojećeg rodaka u Betlehemu čije ime je bilo Boaz. Kao i kod drugih i kod njega se obavljala žetva. Naomi je poslala Rut da ubire klasje koje njegovi žetaoci ostave na polju, na šta su siromašni imali pravo. Nakon što je ljubazno sa njom razgovarao i učinio još poneku uslugu i dalje slušajući savjete svoje sverkrve, prišla je Boazu po noći i predala se njegovoj milosti. Ona se Boazu dopadala, ali je obavjestio da postoji srodnik koji joj je bliži nego što je on, pa je prema tome imao pravo prvog da iskupi imanje Elimeleha, stoga će biti potrebno da se taj srodnik odrekne svog prava prije nego što bi on (Boaz) mogao da tu nešto poduzme. Tako je on pozvao tog rodaka na kapiju grada pred starješine i obavjestio ga stanju žene i snahe Elimeleha i o njegovom (srodnikovom) pravu da iskupi imanje i da se oženi sa Rut. Srodnik je izjavio da tu ne želi i izuo je cipelu u znak da se odrekao prava u korist Boaza. Nakon toga je Boaz kupio imanje od Naomi, oženio se sa Rut i postao otac njenog sina Obed-a, koji je kad je za to došlo vrijeme postao otac Jeseja, koji je bio otac kralju Davidu.

Poznati odlomak iz ove priče glasi:

Ali Rut reče: nemoj me nagovarati da te ostavim i od tebe odem; jer kuda god ti ideš, idem i ja; i gdje se god ti nastaniš nastaniću se i ja; tvoj je narod moj narod, i tvoj je Bog moj Bog. Gdje god ti umreš, umrijeću i ja, i ondje ću biti zakopana. To neka mi učini Gospod i to neka mi doda, smrt će me samo rastaviti s tobom. (Rut 1:16-17)

Sa jedne strane ovaj pasus je ilustracija njene poznanje i prihvatanje jevrejstva, a sa druge strane njene odanost sverkrvi, Naomi. Ova zadržavajuća ljubav i preuzimanje obaveza da se drugoj osobi učini dobro je glavna karakteristika ove priče.

Pripremila Branka Danon



THE BOOK OF RUTH

This poetically idyllic story is yet another one set in the period of Judges (between 1250 and 1050 BC). It gives an insight into the lives of ordinary people of the time. It also provides a family history for King David, who was descended from Ruth.

The book takes its name from one of its characters, who, with her mother-in-law, Naomi, shares the honour of being its heroine. The story is as follows: Elimelech, a man of Bethlehem-Judah, with his wife, Naomi, and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, went in time of famine and sojourned in the land of Moab. There Elimelech died, and the two sons married, Mahlon taking Ruth as his wife and Chilion taking Ophra – both women of Moab. Then both sons likewise died. In due time Naomi heard that the famine in Judah had passed, and determined to return thither. Ruth,

in spite of the dissuasion of Naomi, accompanied her mother-in-law to Bethlehem, and cast in her lot with the people of Judah. The two women arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest. Naturally they were in a state of dire poverty. Elimelech had had an inheritance of land among his brethren, but unless Go'el could be found (The term Go'el derives from the realm of Israelite family law. It describes a close relative, a "kinsmen – redeemer" who takes upon himself duties of "geulla" – "redemption" or "recovery" on behalf of a needy family member), Naomi would be compelled to sell it. Elimelech had a prosperous relative in Bethlehem whose name was Boaz, and who, like others, was engaged in the harvest. Naomi sent Ruth to pick up the odd ears of corn the reapers had left in his field, as the poor were entitled to. After he had spoken kindly to her and shown her some favours, she, still acting upon the advice of her mother-in-law, approached Boaz at night and put herself in his power. Boaz was attracted to her, but informed her that there was a kinsman nearer than he who had the first right to redeem the estate of Elimelech, and that it would be necessary for this kinsman to renounce his right before he (Boaz) could proceed in the matter. Accordingly he called this kinsman to the gate of the city before the elders, and told him of the condition of the wife and daughter-in-law of Elimelech, and of his (the kinsman's) right to redeem the estate and to marry Ruth. The kinsman declared that he did not desire to do so, and drew off his shoe in token that he had renounced his rights in favour of Boaz. Boaz thereupon bought the estate from Naomi, married Ruth, and became by her the father of Obed, who in due time became the father of Jesse, the father of King David.

The famous passage from this story reads as follows:

But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back from following you. For where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people are my people, and your God my God; where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus my God do to me, and so may he do more, if anything but death separates me from you." (Ruth 1:16-17)

It illustrates her discovery and acceptance of Judaism on the one hand and the strength of dedication to her mother in law, Naomi, on the other. This extremely admirable love and commitment to the welfare of another person is the main feature of this story.

Prepared by Branka Danon