



GODIŠNJA SKUPŠTINA, SEPTEMBAR 2007

IZVJEŠTAJ SA 13. GODIŠNJE SKUPŠTINE JEVIJSKE ZAJEDNICE «PRIJATELJI LA BENEVOLENCIJE» U LONDONU

Trinaesta Godišnja skupština, a šesta koju vodim kao predsjednik održana je 09.10.2007 godine. Posjećeno kao i ranijih godina, a drugačija od ostalih jer je održana u utorak umjesto naše uobičajene srijede. Režim korištenja prostora je tako zahtijevao

Kao i uvijek Skupština je počela usvajanjem dnevnog reda i čitanjem izvještaja o radu u prošloj godini koja je ocjenjena kao veoma dobra. Ovaj put broj 13 nije opravdao svoju lošu reputaciju.

Kao najvažnije što je urađeno u prošloj godini je bilo da je uspješno prebrođen završetak trogodišnjeg prelaznog perioda finansiranja rada kluba tokom kojeg smo morali riješiti kako da nastavimo naše aktivnosti u novim uslovima. Jewish Refugee's Committee koji nas je finansirao završio je sa radom 2005 godine, ali je obezbijedio sredstva za naše aktivnosti za naredne tri godine. Ta sredstva su istekla krajem 2007 godine. Uz troškove administracije i tekuće troškove za rukovođenje čitavim projektom koje pokriva Jewish Care, nađena su riješenja za naše aktivnosti koje su zahtjevale najveće troškove.

Problem troška prostora za okupljanje je riješen tako da smo preselili u prostorije Holocaust Survivors' Centre-a. Prostorije koje nam pružaju odlične mogućnosti i fleksibilnost u radu, koristimo bez naknade.

Izadavanje našeg lista SaLon će se nastaviti, nadam se na radost svih onih koji su ga čitali u Londonu, Sarajevu i svim gradovima gdje smo se raspršili tokom ovih godina, a Salon se distribuira. Umjesto plaćanja za štampanje ponuđeno nam je da koristimo usluge Studia Marketinga koji radi publikacije za Jewish Care. Jedina promjena, umjesto prepoznatljivog harmonika formata, SaLon će u buduće biti u standardnom A4 formatu.

Troškovi izleta su bili stavka za koju smo mislili da će biti najteže riješiti. Međutim World Jewish Relief je prihvatio da nastavi finansirati izlete i nakon 2007 godine.

Zahvaljujući svemu ovome mi nastavljamo naše djelovanje sa smanjenim budetom a nesmanjenim aktivnostima.

Događaj koji je najviše obilježio aktivnosti u prošloj godini je bez sumnje bila prezentacija luksuznog izdanja reprinted poznate sarajevske Hagade održane u prostorijama ambasade BiH. Na ovom događaju u organizaciji ambasade i kluba prijatelja La Benevolencije obratila se Ambasadorica, Dr. Tanja Milasinović, a zatim počasni gost, Ministar vanjskih poslova, g. Sven Alkalaj. O značaju sarajevske Hagade i novom luksuznom izdanju govorili su g. Jakob Finci, Predsjednik saveza jevrejskih opština BiH i g. Goran Mikulić ispred izdavačke kuće Rabić. Na kraju večeri dvije djevojke iz Sarajeva, Fatima Hodžić, vokal i Omela Djukić, gitara, izvele su koncert Ladino muzike.

Prezentacija Hagade i koncert Ladino muzike ponovljeni su dva dana kasnije u prostorijama našeg kluba.

Gost našeg kluba su također bili Direktor AJDC za istočnu Evropu g. Yachiel Bar-Chaim sa temom "Jevrejsko nasljeđe bivše Jugoslavije - Razaranje, očuvanje i obnova". Gospodin Malcom Hardy govorio je na temu "Velika Britanija na Jadranu" povodom izdavanja svoje knjige, a g. Semir Osmanagić, zna se o čemu - o visokoim piramidama ili 'piramidama' kako ko na to gleda.

Ipak najveći dio naše aktivnost je priredjen vlastitim snagama. Tako smo imali seriju predavanja o Nikoli Tesli i olimpijadi u Sarajevu neumornog Dr. Sveta Gačinovića, seriju predavanja o starom Sarajevu i Mostaru.

Nisu za zaboraviti izleti koje redovno organizujemo jednom mjesečno od maja do oktobra, projekcije filmova, poetske večeri, rad sa seniorima i obične klubske aktivnosti, sto će reći igranje karata i drugih društvenih igara.

Za organizovanje naših redovnih sijela i proslava praznika treba odati priznanje Ženskoj sekciji koja se potrudila da to budu i večeri očuvanja bosanskih gurmanskih tradicija, ali i onih posvećenih jevrejskim praznicima. To je vjerovatno razlog da su ove večeri uvijek dobro posjećene, kako je naglašeno u izvještaju Ženske sekcije.

Finansijski izvještaj koji je priložen, pokazao je da smo u prošloj godini prihodovali £666.00, da smo u istom periodu potrošili £267.10, da je stanje blagajne na dan 20. septembra bilo £1587.83, te da je stanje blagajne na dan izvještaja bio £1986.73.

Godišnja skupština je završena glasanjem i izborom novog Izvršnog odbora u sastavu: Irena Altarac, Branko Danon, Vjera Jovanović, Olivera Ristić, Jadranka Smiljanić i Dragan Ungar, te staro/novi predsjednik, Boris Montiljo.

S obzirom da je u odboru samo jedna promjena, možemo misliti da je 'baza' zadovoljna našim radom, a na nama je da ponovimo ovako uspješnu godinu.

I na kraju kao što je to običaj 'izbornu pobjedu' smo 'proslavili' u obližnjem pabu.

Boris Montiljo

AGM, SEPTEMBER 2007

REPORT FROM THE 13TH AGM OF THE JEWISH SOCIETY "FRIENDS OF LA BENEVOLENCIJA" IN LONDON

The 13th AGM and my 6th in the capacity of President, was held on 9th October 2007. The attendance was similar to previous years, the only difference being that due to a busy schedule of the venue, the meeting was held on Tuesday as opposed to the habitual Wednesday.

As always, the meeting started with an agreement on the agenda and reading out a report on activities in the previous year. This was judged to be very good.

The successful end of a three-year transitional period, in respect of changes in the way the Society secures its annual budget, was regarded as the most important accomplishment of the last year. In this period we were faced with the decision how to proceed in the new financial circumstances. Our main contributor, the JRC, had closed down in 2005. At the same time they secured financial support for the following three years expiring in 2007. Notwithstanding the cost of administration and the running costs of management of the entire project which was taken care of by Jewish Care, solutions were found for continuation of the most costly activities.

Using the premises of the HSC solved the problem of a meeting venue. The HSC offers excellent conditions and flexibility and it is free of charge. The good news - for our readers in London, Sarajevo and wherever our readers now live and SaLon is being distributed - is that publishing of the newsletter will continue. Instead of having to pay for its printing we have been offered to print it through Jewish Care's Publication Studio. The only noticeable change will be the format. Instead of the trademark folding format, the SaLon in future will be printed in the standard A4 format. We thought that costs of outings would be the most difficult to solve. But as it happened, WJR agreed to finance our outings beyond 2007.

Thanks to all the above, we shall continue our activities as before despite a reduced budget.

The major event we have organized last year, was, no doubt the presentation of the luxurious reprint of the famous Sarajevo Haggadah, held in the premises of the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The presentation was introduced by Her Excellency the Ambassador, DR. Tanja Milasinovic. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Sven Alkalaj then addressed the floor. Mr Jakob Finci, the President of the Union of Jewish Municipalities of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Mr. Goran Mikulic on behalf of "RaBic" - the Publisher were speaking about the significance of the book. The evening was concluded with a concert of Ladino music, performed by artists from Sarajevo, Fatima Hodzic, vocal and Omela Djukic on the guitar. Two days later, the presentation and the concert were repeated in the premises of the HSC.

We also hosted Mr. Yechiel Bar-Chaim, Director of AJDC for Eastern Europe. His subject was "The Jewish heritage of Former Yugoslavia - Destruction, Preservation and Renewal".

On the occasion of publishing his own book, Mr. Malcolm Hardy, historian, talked on "Great Britain in the Adriatic". Mr. Semir Osmanagic gave a lecture on, well something everybody knows about, the pyramids or Pyramids, whichever you prefer, from Visoko,

It is worth mentioning that we organized the majority of our activities with our own resources. The tireless Dr. Sveto Gacinovic, granted us with a series of lectures on Nikola Tesla and a talk on Olympic Sarajevo from 1984. We also organized a series of lectures on old Sarajevo and Mostar.

One should not forget our monthly outings, from May till October, films screening, poetry evenings, work with our Seniors and the routine club activities such as card games and engaging in other socialising activities.

Tribute should be paid to our Women's Committee for successful organisation of regular getting together sessions and celebration of festivities. They have made extra effort to ensure the preservation of not only the traditions of Jewish Chagim but also of the Bosnian culinary skills. This explains the outstanding attendance on these evenings as stated in their report.

The Financial Report indicated that the total income was £ 666.00, that in the same period we have spent £ 267.10, the total as per cash book on 20th September 2006 was £1,587.83 and as of the day of this report was £1,986.73.

The AGM was concluded with voting and election of the new Board. The newly elected Board members are Irena Altarac, Branko Danon, Vjera Jovanovic, Olivera Ristic, Jadranka Smiljanić and Dragan Ungar. Boris Montiljo was re-elected for President. Considering the fact that there was just one change to the Board we can conclude that members are satisfied with our work and it is up to us to keep up the high standards.

Finally as is customary, we celebrated the "electoral victory" in the local Pub.

Boris Montiljo

Translation: Mía Kordić

BORIS MONTILJO, Predsjednik Jevrejske zajednice PLB u Londonu

1. Upoznaj nas sa sobom! Kratka biografija.

Roden sam 29.12.1946 u Sarajevu u onom posleratnom "bejbi bum". Znači sad sam u onim godinama koje mi ovdje u Engleskoj zovemo "ima free pass" što će reći ima preko 60 godina te je stekao pravo na godišnju besplatnu kartu za javni prevoz. Ovdje to dosta znači.

Odrastao sam u velikoj zgradi sa preko 50 djece tog "bejbi bum" perioda, što znači da sam u tim siromašnim posleratnim godinama imao zabavno rano djetinjstvo. Dalje sve uobičajeno: osnovna škola, srednja tehnička i građevinski fakultet. Zaposlio sam se u Projektnom Zavodu "Traser" i radio na projektovanju puteva 20 godina.

To su bile prosperitetne godine u onim našim krajevima. Uz pristojna primanja se mogao život lijepo organizovati. Tako sam sa velikom grupom prijatelja slobodno vrijeme provodio uz rekreativno bavljenje tenisom, vožnjom biciklom i skijanjem, uz neizostavne večernje izlaske u neki od bezbrojnih sarajevskih kafića. Sigurno najljepši period mog života.

Onda je došla 1992 godina koja je to sve promijenila. Počeo je rat, Sarajevo pod opsadom, sa svim onim tragičnim posljedicama koje idu uz to. Poslije 6 ratnih mjeseci provedenih u Sarajevu odlučio sam da izadem takozvanim 'Jevrejskim konvojem' u oktobru 1992g. Posle dvije sedmice provedene u Pirovcu i Makarskoj došao sam u Veliku Britaniju 3 novembra avionom iz Zagreba. To je bio posljednji let sa kojim se moglo ući u Britaniju sa starim jugoslovenskim pasošem bez vize. Poslije toga dugo vremena niko nije došao, vizu za ulazak nije bilo lako dobiti.

Tako su počeli moji izbjeglički dani. Moram reći da sam ja, a i svi ostali koji su došli u Veliku Britaniju na ovaj način, bili privilegovani izbjeglice jer se sve odvijalo uz pomoć i brigu mnogih jevrejskih organizacija, od J.O. Sarajeva, Splita, Zagreba do World Jewish Relief-a i Jewish Care-a u Londonu.

Sada nastaje period prilagodavanja na nove uslove života, učenje jezika i pokušaji da se ostvari neka egzistencija. Kada sam savladao jezik na nivou da mogu komunicirati počeo sam tražiti posao. To nije bilo lako jer je u to vrijeme Velika Britanija bila u ekonomskoj recesiji i nezaposlenost je za ovdašnje prilike bila velika. Srećom u maju 1996 g. dobio sam posao kao CAD operator (tehnički crtač na kompjuteru) u Projektnom birou Waterman Group. Posle par mjeseci sam unaprijeđen u projektanta početnika. Diploma koju sam donio iz Sarajeva nije ovdje zvanično priznata ali kompanija u kojoj se radi može da je prihvati. U istoj kompaniji sam već 11 godina i polako napredovao te sam sada Senior Designer (stariji projektant) što smatram uspjehom posebno s obzirom na moj poprilično "Tarzan English". Svoju radnu karijeru ću vjerovatno i završiti u istoj kompaniji jer ove životne godine nisu pogodine za traženje drugog posla.

2. Koji su svjetski događaji ostavili najveći utisak na tebe?

Ako izostavimo one događaje iz 90ih na našim prostorima koje su ostavile najveći utisak (i posljedice) na mene to bi sigurno bili sljedeći događaji:

Krenuću od pozitivnih događaja. Jedan od tih je sigurno način kako se razvija Evropska Unija. U ranim danima te unije, koja je počela kao Evropska trgovinska zajednica, imao sam utisak da će se ona ograničiti na 12 zemalja osnivača uz primanje u taj ekskluzivni klub još poneke zapadnoevropske visoko razvijene zemlje. Vjerovao sam da će taj klub gledati na ostatak Evrope kao na snabdjevače jeftine radne snage, sirovina i poljoprivrednih proizvoda bez mogućnosti pridruživanja i dobijanja svih onih razvojnih mogućnosti koje ta zajednica pruža.

Srećom nije bilo tako. Zajednica je krenula drugim putem. Poslije pada berlinskog zida otvorena su vrata i za zemlje iza takozvane Željezne zavjese koje zadovolje kriterije za pridruživanje. To je dovelo do naglog porasta broja članica. Ovaj proces treba da obezbjedi dugu političku i ekonomsku stabilnost na uvijek uzburkanom evropskom prostoru. Uvođenjem jedinstvene valute stvara se jedan ekonomski prostor koji će biti u mogućnosti da parira velikom rodaku preko bare. Nažalost, jedan tak brz proces izazvao je otpor u nekim zemljama zbog problema koji se javljaju u vremenu brzih političkih i ekonomskih promjena, pa nastoje taj proces usporiti. Međutim taj proces od globalnog značaja, brže ili sporije, ide dalje.

Mi možemo samo zaliti da su događaji iz 90ih vratili našu regiju godinama unazad te su mnoge zemlje koje su prije nama gledale u leđa sada punopravne članice zajednice dok je za većinu novih zemalja nastalih na našim prostorima to još daleki cilj.

Drugo sto je ostavilo utisak na mene je kako je internet od nekog 'science fiction'-a o kojem smo čitali početkom 90-ih postao neizostavna alatka u svakom birou i kući. Za svaku nepoznatu riječ, informaciju, događaj, rezervacije, kupovine, putovanja i slično internet je



postao prvo mjesto da tražimo rješenje. O komunikaciji sa prijateljima razbacanim po svim djelovima svijeta da i ne govorimo. Nama ovdje je specijalno korisno za čitanje štampe, slušanja radija a sada sa 'broad bando'-m i gledanje TV programa sa naših prostora. Nije čudo da je nazvan najvećim pronalaskom poslije točka.

Na kraju i jedan negativan događaj koji je ostavio najveći utisak na mene. To je svakako 9/11. Jedanaestog septembra kada je Al Kaida otela 4 aviona na redovnim putničkim linijama i izvršila samoubilačke napade na Twin Towers i Pentagon. Četvrti avion se srušio ne dosegnuvši svoj cilj za koji se sumnja da je bila Bijela Kuća. Ja sam bio na poslu i čim smo čuli o tome pogledali smo TV program koji se direktno uključio na praćenje tih događaja. Posebno je bilo stravično vidjeti događaje oko Twin Towers. Šokantno je bilo saznaje o jednom globalnom terorističkom pokretu koji do tada nismo previše ozbiljno shvatali.

3. Već šestu godinu uzastopice, biran si za Predsjednika Jevrejske zajednice 'Prijatelji La Benevolencije. To svakako podrazumjeva i tvoj pristanak. Šta te inspiriše da se neumorno angažuješ u radu ove zajednice?

Da, to je šesta uzastopna godina da sam biran za predsjednika. Naravno uz moj pristanak. Kada sam prvi put bio predložen i izabran, i sam sam bio pomalo iznenađen, jer zbog prirode mog posla nemam puno vremena da se angažujem na radu oko kluba. Međutim pokazalo se da to funkcioniše dobro jer su se i ostali članovi Upravnog odbora angažovali, posebno na dužnostima koje su im dodjeljene kao i na organizovanju i provođenju programa rada kluba. Moram napomenuti ogroman doprinos Branka Danona koji je 'spiritus movens' našeg kluba i apsolutno najzaslužniji za sve ove godine uspješnog rada kluba.

A ono što mene inspiriše da se angažujem u radu je da se ova mala zajednica održi, da obezbijedimo uslove za sastajanje i druženje kao i da pružimo našim članovima program i aktivnosti sa kojima će provesti jedno prijatno veče. Važno je reći da nam je ovakvim radom ponuđen i dostupan jevrejski kontekst s kojim smo mnogi, uključujući i mene, prvi put, na pravi način ovdje stupili u kontakt. Takođe Odbor i ja radimo na tome da našim aktivnostima, programom i sjelima održimo jednu emotivnu vezu sa zemljom iz koje smo došli.

4. Možeš li povući neke paralele u radu kluba u ovih petnaestak godina kako živimo u Londonu?

Sigurno da ima velikih razlika. Prvih godina rada našeg kluba većina članova je stanovala na Golders Green-u, gdje je bio naš klub, ili u bliskim dijelovima grada. Mi smo se svi nekako više držali skupa kao neka homogena grupa, što je normalno kada se dođe u novu sredinu. To je prouzrokovalo da je i posjeta klubu bila veća. Kasnije sa seljenjem se dalje i dalje, zapošljavanjem i postepenim uklapanjem u ovdašnje društvo, ta homogenost se gubila, što se odrazilo i na posjećenost kluba. Međutim u osnovi to nije bio negativan proces jer naš cilj je i bio da se što veći broj ljudi snade u novim uslovima života. Ali i danas kada se u klub organizuje nešto interesantnije naši članovi dođu u klub iz najudaljenijih dijelova Londona.

Druga velika razlika je da smo prvih godina imali veći izbor tema, događaja i gostiju sa kojima smo mogli organizovati program u klubu. Vremenom se to iscrpilo pa je postalo teže nešto organizovati a da se ne ponavljamo. To je prouzrokovalo da smo se morali okrenuti vlastitim snagama što je pokazalo jako dobre rezultate i otkrilo neke talente među nama.

5. Najprijetniji i najneprijetniji trenutci u toku tvog predsjednikovanja?

Najprijetniji trenutci su svakako kada uspijemo organizovati neki događaj koji naizgled prevazilazi naše mogućnosti. Da spomenem samo nekoliko:

Jedan od takvih događaja je svakako prezentacija luksuznog izdanja reprinta sarajevske Hagade održana u prostorijama ambasade BiH.

Mnogi se sigurno sjećaju Dana kulture BiH dijaspore u Londonu koje smo takođe organizovali prije par godina. Trajali su čitavu sedmicu. Uz stalnu izlozbenu postavku imali smo svako veče sa različitim tematskim programom.

Što se najneprijetnijeg događaja tiče stvarno ne mogu izdvojiti neki koji mi je ostao u sjećanju. Normalno javljali su se problemi, što je i normalno kada se radi na organizaciji rada kluba kao što je nas. Problemi kako su se javljali tako su i rješavani. Ništa što bi mi se posebno urezalo u sjećanje.

6. Šta se događa sa našim klubom, što bi ostali trebali da budno motre

U klubu je, da kažem, sve normalno. Poslije onog prelaznog perioda kada smo riješili kako djelovati u novim uslovima mi nastavljamo kako smo i dosad radili. Znači na zadovoljstvo članova, prijatelja i sponzora.

Intervju vodio: Dr Svetlo Gaćinović

BORIS MONTILJO, President of the Jewish Society FOLB, London

1. Introduce yourself to us, please

I was born on 29.12.1946 in Sarajevo in the post-war baby boom. Accordingly I reached the age here in England referred to as "he's got a free-pass", meaning that I am over 60 and am holding a free ticket for public transport. It means a lot.

I grew up in a big block of flats. There were 50 other children there which, even in the poor post-war years, meant that I had a happy childhood. Nothing extraordinary about the rest: Grammar school, Technical High School and Civil Engineering at University. I got a job at "Traser", a design institute. I was designing roads for 20 years.

With a decent income, life could be organized nicely in those years. Having a big circle of friends I used to play tennis, ride bikes, ski and inevitably go out in the evenings to one of the many cafes. It was undoubtedly the best period of my life.

Then in 1992 everything changed. The war began; Sarajevo was under siege, bringing with it all the tragic consequences. After 6-7 months in Sarajevo, in October 1992, I decided to leave with the so called "Jewish Convoy". I came over to the UK on 3rd November after two weeks in Pirovac and Makarska. I was on the last flight on which it was possible to use the old Yugoslav passports and where no visa was required. For a long time after that no one could join in, due to problems with visas.

That is how my refugee days started. It is important to mention here that the likes of me were privileged refugees, because the whole influx was organized and taken care of by numerous Jewish organisations, starting with Jewish Communities in Sarajevo, Split, Zagreb all the way to World Jewish Relief and Jewish Care in London.

A period of adjustment to new life circumstances followed. I started taking English courses and looking for means of income. When I reached the level of communication with my English, I started looking for a job. It was very difficult as the UK was in recession at the time. Unemployment was high. Luckily in May 1996 I started as a CAD operator in the Design Bureau of Waterman Group. Soon I advanced to Engineer Designer. My certificate from Sarajevo did not stand for much, but the company that one works for may recognize it. I am with the same company for 11 years now and step by step have reached the position of Senior Designer. I regard this to be quite an accomplishment, especially taking into account my "Pigeon English". I will end my career in the same company, most likely. It is not very useful to shift jobs at my age.

2. What world developments impressed you the most?

Putting aside the events from the nineties in my country (especially the consequences) which affected me most, there were a few of them:

I would like to start with the positive ones. One of them, no doubt, is the path that the EU is taking. In the early days, when the Union started as the EEC, my impression was that it would limit itself to the 12 founding countries, incorporating only a few more from the circle of West-European developed countries. I believed that this Club would regard the rest of Europe as suppliers of cheap labour, raw materials and agricultural produce not allowing them to join in and enjoy all the development opportunities available to the members.

It did not happen that way, luckily. The Union took another path. In the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the door had opened to the countries formerly known to have been beyond the "Iron Curtain" provided they fulfil certain criteria. This has quickly increased the number of member states. This process is meant to secure long term political and economical stability to the ever troubled European region. The single currency has created a unique economic environment, able to reciprocate to the "big cousin" across the pond. Unfortunately, this rapid process has triggered resistance in some countries, due to problems created by accelerated political and economic changes so that these countries are trying to slow the process down. Nevertheless, slower or faster, it is on its way.

We can only regret that the unfortunate events from the nineties have thrown our region years back so that many of the countries, who years ago were far behind us in many respects, are now happy members of the Union. For most of the countries from our region it is still a distant dream.

Internet is, no doubt, the other big development. It started almost as some sort of "science fiction" that we read about in early nineties to become now an inevitable tool in each and every office and home. It is the first place to look for any unfamiliar word, or search for a piece of information, event, booking, purchase, travel and many other things. Not to mention the communication with friends dispersed all over the globe. It is especially useful to us, because we can read the press, listen to radio, and now with

broad band, watch TV programmes from our regions. It is no wonder that it is referred to as the greatest invention after the wheel.

And finally, the event that had the most devastating effect on me was certainly the 9/11, the eleventh of September, when Al Kaida seized four planes from regular passenger flights to use them for suicide attacks on Twin Towers and Pentagon. The fourth plane crashed never reaching its targets suspected to be The White House. I was at work at that time, and as soon as we heard that something was going on we switched on the TV programme that broadcasted the events as they took place. Especially dreadful was to see what was happening at Twin Towers. It was shocking to learn about the global terrorist movement that was not taken that seriously by us before those events.

3 Six years in a row you have been elected the president of the Jewish Society "Friends of La Benevolencija" in London. This evidently implies your consent to it. What inspires you to commit yourself tirelessly in the activities of this Society?

Yes, it is the sixth consecutive year that I have been elected the President. With my agreement, of course. When nominated and elected for the first time I was surprised a bit, because due to the nature of my job I do not have much time to be involved in our club activities. But the arrangement proved to be functioning well because the other members of the Board are also active, both on the various specific tasks they have been assigned to and on the planning and implementation of Club activities. I have to mention the huge contribution by Branko Danon who is "the spiritus movens" of our Club and the most deserving person over all the years of successful work.

My motivation to be active in our Society is the wish to keep this small community of ours going as long as possible; to provide a framework within which it would be possible for us to meet and socialize; and to offer our members such programmes and activities which they will enjoy. Worth noting is that this form of activity makes a Jewish context available to us. Many of us, including me, only after coming here have come for the first time in contact with it in the right way. The Board and I also hope to maintain the emotional link with the country that we come from.

4. Could you draw some parallels in the work of the Club over the fifteen years or so, since we started living in London?

No doubt, things have changed. During those early years most of our members lived in Golders Green (where our club was located) or in neighbouring parts of the city. It was the time when we all kept together in a homogenous group, as is normal when coming to a new environment. Thus, our Club used to be frequented more than it is nowadays. Moving to more distant locations, getting jobs and integrating at later dates meant lessening of the ties between us and this was reflected in the visits to the club. This basically was not a negative process because it is our aim to see that our members are settled in the new conditions of living. But even today, when something interesting takes place in the Club, people come from all over London.

On the other hand, when we first came we had quite a choice of topics to cover, events to organize and visitors to come to our club. Over the time it became ever more difficult to organize something which would not mean repeating ourselves. The result was that we had to count on our own potentials and thus discovered some talents among us that we were not aware of.

5. What are the most pleasant and the least pleasant moments over the period of your presidency?

The most pleasant ones are, no doubt, the moments when we succeed in organising events which might seem to exceed our capabilities. Let me mention just a few: One of them is certainly the presentation of the luxury reprint of Sarajevo Haggadah organized in The Embassy of B&H.

I am sure that many still remember the Days of Culture of B&H Diaspora in London, also organized by us a few years back. This event lasted a whole week. An exhibition by various artists was on show over the whole period but there was a different programme every evening of the week.

I am not able, on the other hand, to think of any unpleasant event worth mentioning here. Problems do occur occasionally, of course, as is normal in the activities of a club like ours. But we always managed to solve them in a satisfactory way.

6. What is happening in our Club that the others should keep an eye on?

The situation in the Club is normal. Following the transitory period during which we found out ways how to function in the new circumstances, we continue with our standard activities. This means that we have the approval of our members, friends and sponsors.

Interviewed by: Dr. Svetislav Gaćinović

Translation: Branka Danon

UTISCI SA POSJETE IZLOŽBI "SACRED" U BRITISH LIBRARY

Prvom polovicom septembra, mala grupica iz naše Zajednice imala je neponovljivu priliku da posjeti fantastičnu izložbu u British Library, pod nazivom SACRED. Bila je to izložba sa ekspanatima koji su 90% iz fundusa British Library, što najbolje govori o veličini te institucije. Radi se o originalima knjiga i predmeta koji se bave religijom, i to svih tri monoteističkih religija, proisteklih iz Starog Zavjeta. Izložba je bila postavljena na prominentnom mjestu u lijepom i modernom zdanju British Library. Po prvi put su izložci sve tri religije međusobno raspoređeni tako da su tematski dijelili prostor. Rasored prostora, obrada ambijenta, oznake, objašnjenja i osvjetljenje, sugerisali su skoro mističnost, i nagnali na razmišljanje. Npr. da li biće koje vjeruje nosi u sebi bogobojažljivost jer mu je to usadio svemoguću u trenutku kreacije, ili vjeruje jer ne razumije. Uopšte, čovjek je imao utisak o nekoj apsolutnoj, mudroj tišini i dobronamjernosti koji su izbjicali iz ekspanata. Jer jedna pored druge ležali su primjerci Starog i Novog zavjeta i Kur'ana. Djelovali su toliko bezazlono. Zašto se onda ljudska potreba za vjerovanjem, pretvara u zlo i pošast u ime tog istog vjerovanja?

Mi smo imali izuzetnu sreću da nam je te nedelje vodič bila Ilana Tahan, kustos British Library za judaistiku. Precizne, koncizne i vrlo poučne informacije o ekspanatima, kako i pod kojim uslovima, sa kojom motivacijom je izložba sročena, dale su nam uvid u mnogo toga što bi nam ostalo nepoznato da nije bilo Ilane. Ne radi se ovdje samo o knjigama, bilo je tu raznih predmeta od čisto estetske prirode do upotrebne vrijednosti, koji su na sebi imali ili oznake ili upise iz svetih spisa, ili su predstavljali dio religioznog rituala.

Ljudska potreba za bilježenjem proizvoda uma, bilo da je riječ o intelektualnom ili sociološkom nasljedju, nikad nije mogla ostati u okvirima mehaničkog registrovanja. Od samog početka pisanja iskazala se i potreba za likovnim izrazom, za ukrašavanjem manuskripta; za ilustracijom sadržaja...za davanje oduška vlastitom umjetničkom naboju. S obzirom da je u ranim fazama istorijskog razvoja pismenost, iako ne uvijek, bila vezana za religiju, odnosno za religiozni establišment – crkvu, sinagogu, džamiju – i umjetnost ukrašavanja knjiga se raslojila po principima tog establišmenta. Hrišćanstvo dopušta slobodu prikazivanja božanstva (uglavnom u vlastitom obličju), dok Islam i Judaizam ne. U Hrišćanstvu ukrašavanje postaje dio ilustracije sadržaja teksta, njegova pratnja, a i tumačenje, što ponekad, s obzirom na ograničeni prostor, rezultira briljantnim minijaturama. U Judaizmu i kod Islama, opet, u uslovima totalne zabrane likovnog predstavljanja božanstva i ljudskog bića, potreba za likovnim izražavanjem okrenula se samom tekstu, slovu. Ovo dovodi do razvoja kaligrafije, do fantastičnih i prelijepih formi. Odušak se našao i biljnom svijetu i geometrijskoj formi, što dobija naziv arabske, gdje se postepeno gubi granica između potrebe za vjernim prikazivanjem i mašte. Razvojem tehnologije i komunikacija posebno, dolazi do sve intenzivnije razmjene iskustava, pa će ilustracija ljudskog lika postepeno prodirati u onaj dio Islamske i Hebrejske literature koji su nešto dalje od Kur'ana/Svetog pisma (koji u tom pogledu ostaju tabu), a kaligrafija će slobodno naći utočište u Hrišćanskim tekstovima. Uočljiva je i direktna ko-relacija između moći i ukrasa. Što je poručilac/mecena imućniji, ilustracija je bogatija. Ne radi se o prosuđivanju umjetničke vrijednosti produkta, to su druge relacije. Radi se o težnji proglašavanja vlastitog statusa i bogatstva.

Pri svemu postojala je među ekspanatima i jedna druga, suptilnija podjela. Mnoge izložene knjige su bile stvarane (možda je to prava riječ) prije nego što je Gutenberg izmislio štampu, znači radi se o rukopisima, pa samim tim – unikatima. To, vjerovatno, isto znači da štampane knjige nisu unikat. No, čini se da ponekad čovjek mora biti specijalista da bi uočio razliku, jer su rani slovoslagajući morali posjedovati istu strast prema kreaciji, pošto je to rana tehnologija iziskivala. Šta u tom kontekstu reći o vrijednosti knjiga. Da li je vrijedniji rukopis (slikopis)? Hagade rađenog u Španiji u 14-om stoljeću, ili štampana biblija (Stari zavjet) iz Portugala iz kraja 15-og stoljeća.

ako se zna da je to prva knjiga uopšte štampana u Portugalu!

Ovo je neosporno, jedan od onih događaja kada čovjek ostane fasciniran stvaranjem. Ja nikad nisam krio da zavidim ljudima koji su obdareni talentom. Talenta je ovde bilo na pretek.

Da na kraju kažem nešto čime sam i počeo. Izložba je sročena i skrojena na izbalansirani način, sa očiglednom namjerom izbjegavanja svakog takmičenja i konfrontacije, već naglašavanja međusobne interakcije i obogaćivanja. Što se mene tiče uspjeli su, izašao sam obogaćen osjećajem mira i ljepote.

Branko Danon

IMPRESSIONS: VISIT TO THE EXHIBITION "SACRED" IN BRITISH LIBRARY

In early September a small group of our members had a privilege to join a guided tour of the groundbreaking exhibition SACRED held in the British Library. 90% of all exhibits are owned by the British Library which speaks volumes about the greatness of that institution. The original books and manuscripts along with items used in religious ceremonies of all three monotheistic faiths originating from the Old Testament were on display.

The exhibition was staged in the beautiful building of the new British Library. SACRED marks the first time that the exhibits from all three major faiths shared the same display cabinets. The treatment of space, the exhibition layout the signage and illumination have contributed in equal measure to almost mystical feeling of sacred and inspired one to ponder whether belief is a product of God's intervention during Creation or whether it comes from human ignorance. The impression one had while looking at those sacred texts was that of an infinite calm, wisdom and goodwill. The Holy Books of Qur'an, The Old and The New Testament, were displayed side by side in all their beauty and innocence. One could not but wander how and why a deeply rooted human need to believe has brought about so much evil and suffering in the name of that belief.

Our group was lucky to have as a guide Ms. Ilana Tahan, Head of Judaica at British Library. She gave us concise enlightening and easy to follow information about the exhibits and the reasoning behind the layout of the exhibition.

Human desire to register thoughts be it of intellectual or sociological nature, has never stopped at pure mechanical level. Along with the first written texts, came the need for artistic expression. As a result, decorations and illuminations became an integral part of written word.

In the early stages, literacy was closely linked to religious institutions, i.e. Synagogues, Churches and Mosques. As a result the art of decoration of manuscripts followed the principles of the particular religion. Christianity allowed representation of God in human form, which is strictly forbidden in both Judaism and Islam. In Christianity the decoration explains and illustrates the contents. Sometimes, due to limited space, these decorations become brilliant miniatures. On the other hand, due to the said restrictions, the need for artistic expression in both Judaism and Islam turned the artists to the text, to the letter itself. This resulted in the art of calligraphy, art of the beautiful and extraordinary forms. Inspiration was found in both the natural world and geometrical forms, giving us the art of arabesques, where the boundary between imagination and reality is blurred. The progress in technology and communications lead to exchange of ideas, giving way to human presentation in the literature of Judaism and Islam, which is not strictly the Holy Scriptures. Likewise the art of calligraphy was readily accepted in Christian texts. There is a direct relation between power and decoration. The wealthier the sponsor of a book, the more lavish and luxurious the decoration. This is not to say that there is a causality between wealth and artistic value, this is an entirely different discussion. This was merely a declaration of one's social standing and wealth.

Among the exhibits there was another underlying division. Quite a few books on display have been created (perhaps the right expression) long before Gutenberg invented printing. Those were manuscripts and therefore unique. This would lead us to believe that printed books were not unique, which is not strictly true. But it takes an expert to note the difference between manuscripts and early printed books, where the enthusiasm and creativity of the letter setters made up for inadequacy in printing technology. Having that in mind, notwithstanding the contents, how does one judge the true value of a book? How does one compare an illustrated manuscript of a Spanish Haggadah from the 14th century to an Old Testament book printed in Portugal towards the end of the 15th century, the earliest book ever printed in Portugal.

Without a doubt, this exhibition is one of those events which make us fascinated by the power of human creativity. I have always envied those with some kind of creative talent. Here it was in abundance.

Let me finish with what I started. This exhibition was conceived and designed in a balanced way. There was no intention of internal competition and confrontation, but interaction and mutual enrichment. As far as I am concerned, they have succeeded. I left the exhibition with feelings of peace and beauty.

Branko Danon

Translation: Mia Kordić



BILA SAM U PRAGU

Evo me opet u Pragu. Uživam i želim da neka svoja iskustva podijelim sa vama. Postoje mjesta koja nastojimo da stalno posjećujemo jednostavno zato što nam pružaju tako mnogo. Kao i u svakom drugom značajnom gradu, tako i ovdje u Zlatnom Gradu Pragu, razni ljudi doživljavaju na različite načine njegove mnoge vidove. Ovdje bi se mogao spomenuti duh Praga, njegova arhitektura, kulturno naslijeđe, Vltava, njegova muzika, literatura, ljudi, humor, hrana, pivo, kafane, nedavna obnova, sve to i još mnogo toga. Ali postoji još jedan vid Praga koji privlači hiljade i desetine hiljada ljudi. To je Jevrejski Prag o kome su napisani tomovi knjiga. U prostoru koji mi je na raspolaganju osvrnuću se na nekoliko poznatih činjenica prije nego što malo detaljnije opišem dvije znamenitosti.

*-Prag je jedan od najstarijih i najznačajnijih jevrejskih centara u Srednjoj Evropi. U različita vremena u njemu su se sklanjali mnogi jevreji iz susjednih zemalja, pa je kao rezultat toga vjekovima bio jedan od najvećih jevrejskih zajednica u Evropi. Posljednji veliki uspon jevrejske kulture u Pragu se nalazi pod znakom mnogih praških pjesnika, pisaca, filozofa i umjetnika na prelasku devetnaestog u dvadeseto stoljeće, čiji su radovi veoma obogatili modernu literaturu na češkom, njemačkom i hebrejskom. Negdje oko 1900-te godine većina Jevreja u Pragu je koristila češki jezik i mnogi su davali podršku češkom nacionalnom pokretu. Međutim u sferi moderne literature, njemački je zadržao ekskluzivan položaj kao zajednički jezik multinacionalne Austrougarske monarhije. Fenomen poznat kao Praška njemačka književnost, čiji su autori bili uglavnom Jevreji, stekla je svjetsko priznanje. Najpoznatiji od svih praških Jevreja pisaca bio je bez sumnje **Franz Kafka** (1882-1924). Njegove priče i esej (kao recimo *Metamorfoza*) su se pojavili tokom njegovog života, ali njegova tri nedovršena romana (*Proces*, *Tvrđava* i *Amerika*) posthumno je objavio njegov prijatelj **Maks Brod**. Maks Brod je bio dobro poznati praški novinar i pisac koji je bio odan češkoj kulturi. Bio je jedan od prvih koji je promovisao djela Jaroslava Haška i predstavio široj publici muziku *Leoa Janačka*. Među mnogim drugim, u Praškom krugu se također nalazio i „Goropadni reporter“ *Egon Ervin Kisch* (1885-1948).*

-Stara-nova sinagoga sagrađena u 13 stoljeću je jedna od najpoznatijih znamenitosti Praga zahvaljujući njenoj arhitekturi, mnogim legendama koje je okružuju, njenoj ulozi u jevrejskom životu u Pragu i značajnim ljudima koji su vezani za nju.

-Sat sa hebrejskim slovima na jevrejskoj vještici, iz 1764.

U narednom tekstu ću malo detaljnije opisati dvije znamenitosti koje se među ovim mnoštvom posebno ističu. To su Staro Groblje i Folklor

Staro groblje je jedno od najstarijih i najbolje sačuvanih jevrejskih grobalja u Evropi. Međutim to nije bilo prvo mjesto zakopavanja jevrejske zajednice. Postojala su druga srednjovjekovna groblja prije ovoga. Prvo srednjovjekovno jevrejsko groblje, poznato i kao Jevrejska bašta, bilo je osnovano vjerovatno početkom trinaestog stoljeća i tamo su vršeni pogrebi do 1478. godine, kada je Vladislav II naredio zatvaranje groblja, a preko groblja je sagrađena nova ulica. Staro jevrejsko groblje je osnovano početkom petnaestog stoljeća na zapadnom dijelu geta. Uprkos postepenom širenju, prostor groblja je uskoro dosegao svoj puni kapacitet. Kako je prema vjerskom običaju zabranjeno uzmemiravati grobove (pojedini grobovi treba da su odvojeni jedni od drugih slojem zemlje široke najmanje šest šaka – oko 56 cm), bilo je potrebno nanositi zemlju na stare grobove i u te nove slojeve postavljati naredna tijela, a postojeći nadgrobni spomenici su podizani na površinu. Vremenom je to dovelo do akumulacije gusto postavljenih spomenika iz različitih stoljeća, koji se naslanjaju jedni na druge.

Danas se na groblju nalazi skoro 12,000 spomenika, koji potiču sve od 1439 do 1787, kada je izdata zabrana na pogrebe u centru grada. Međutim stvarni broj pogreba koji je obavljen ovdje tokom tih 350 godina bio je mnogo veći, pošto su mnogobrojni spomenici bilo utonuli u zemlju, ili su uništeni tokom vremena. Istorijski gledano, ovo groblje je jedinstveno mjesto i predstavlja dragocjen dokument razvoja skulpture na jevrejskim spomenicima. Karakteristika spomenika iz 15 i 16 stoljeća su hebrejska slova duboko urezana u četvorougaoone blokove od crnog pješćara. U sedamnaestom i osamnaestom stoljeću spomenici su rađeni od bijelog i crvenkasto braon mramora na koje su hebrejska slova zapisivana u visokom reljefu, a uz to i razne



dekoracije i simboli. Epitafi na hebrejskom prvenstveno navode ime i datum smrti pojedinca.

Natpisi na srednjovjekovnim spomenicima su uglavnom veoma jednostavni. Oni navode samo rođeno ime preminulog i ime oca. Prezimeni, koja su nastajala od rođenih imena ili češće od mjesta porijekla, počela su se pojavljivati tek u šesnaestom vijeku. Od 16-tog stoljeća, spomenici se ukrašavaju raznim simbolima i znacima u reljefu. Neki od njih su opšte prirode i oslanjali su se na biblijsku literaturu, kao što su kruna (što simbolizuje mudrost i obrazovanje) i grozde (što simbolizuje bogat i plodan život). Drugi se odnose na porijeklo, ime i profesiju pojedinca; ruke koje blagosiljaju, na primjer, ukazuju na potomka Kohena, sveštenika tempa, dok bokal i lavor predstavljaju njihove pomagače, Levite.

Imena umrlih su najčešće predstavljena slikama životinja. Najčešće su prikazani lav (Jehuda, Arije), jelen (Cvi), vuk (Zeev), medvjed (Dov). Predstavljanje mitских životinja, kao što su krilati lav ili grifin, ima simbolično i zaštitničko značenje. Profesija pojedinca je obično predstavljena simbolom karakterističnog alata za tu profesiju, kao što su makaze za krojača, skalpel za ljekara, knjiga za učenjaka ili čitaoca molitvi i violina za muzičara. Specifična odlika starog Jevrejskog groblja su i motivi ženskih figura koji se mogu naći na spomenicima mladih neudatih žena.

Postoji još nekoliko jevrejskih grobalja u Pragu i svako od njih je sa interesantnom istorijom.

Jevrejski folklor Praga. Godine 1847 Leopold Vizel i Salomon Kon su po prvi put u Pragu objavili zbirku Jevrejskih narodnih priča i legendi pod nazivom *Sipurim* (priče na hebrejskom) u kojima se našla i grupa priča iz praškog geta. Nedugo zatim praški jevrejski folklor je uvršten u stare češke priče Jozefa Svateka, Aloisa Jiraseka i Adolfa Veniga. Većina ovih priča i legendi je vezana za ličnosti gradonačelnika jevrejskog grada – Mordehaja Maizela i njegovog savremenika – rabina Judu ben Becalela, poznatog pod imenom Rabi Loev.

Najpoznatija je priča o praškom Golemu. Po legendi njega je Rabi Loev stvorio od gline na obali Vltave jedne noći u martu 1580. godine. Pričalo se da ga je on oživio formulom koja je sadržavala božije ime koje se ne smije spominjati. Golem je dobio ime Jozef, a Rabi Loev ga je zaposlio kao slugu da radi u jevrejskom kvartu: da mete ulice, nosi vodu, cijepa drva, itd. Golem je bio neumoran i nije se žalio; nisu mu bili potrebni ni hrana ni piće. Bio je nevjerovatno jak i hrabar i branio je jevrejski kvart od napada.

Jedino o čemu je trebalo voditi računa bilo je da ne bude živ na Šabat. Rabi Loev bi deaktivirao Golema tako što bi u petak na večer, prije početka Šabata sklanjao formulu iz njegovih usta. Na kraju je glineno tijelo Golema položeno u potkrovlje Stare-nove sinagoge, gdje kasnije nikome nije bilo dozvoljeno da uđe. (Grobovi Rabi Loeva, zapravo rabina Jude ben Becalela, je najposjećeniji spomenik na Starom groblju. Du njegovog groba nalazi se mali spomenik njegovog unuka Samuela ben Becalela. Legenda kaže da se spomenik Rabi Loeva pomjerio da bi napravio prostor za unukov grob.)

Na osnovu priče o praškom Golemu nastale su mnoga literarna djela i pozorišne drame, kao i mnoga umjetnička djela i nekoliko filmova.

Nisam uspjela naći bunar u koji bih bacila novčić da zaželim ponovni odlazak u Prag, ali kako izgleda da se tamo dešavaju čuda možda ću i ponoviti neki od prijatnih trenutaka koje sam tamo provela. Možda ćete i vi poželjeti da tamo odete. Vrijedi.

Branka Danon

I VISITED PRAGUE

Here I am in Prague again, enjoying it and wishing to share some of my experiences with you. There are places that one tries to visit times and again simply because they offer so much. As is the case with any great city so also here in the Golden City of Prague its different aspects are experienced in different ways by different people. Its spirit, architecture, cultural heritage, Vltava; its music, literature, people, humour, food, beer, coffee shops, recent revival; all this and many more could be mentioned here. But there is yet another aspect of Prague attracting people in their thousands and tens of thousands. That is the Jewish Prague, about which volumes of books have been written. In the space available for my account, before concentration on two of its features, I will just mention some of the well known facts

*-Prague is one of the oldest and most prominent Jewish Centres in Central Europe. At various times it was a refuge for many Jews expelled from neighbouring countries and as a result, for several centuries was one of the largest Jewish communities in Europe. The last peak of Jewish culture in Prague is marked by the names of many Prague poets, writers, philosophers and artists at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, whose works significantly enriched modern Czech, German and Hebrew literature and culture. By around 1900 the majority of Jews in Prague were using the Czech language and many supported the Czech national movement. In the sphere of modern literature, however, German retained its exclusive position as the common language of the multinational Austro-Hungarian Empire. The phenomenon known as Prague German Literature, whose authors were mostly Jews, attracted world-wide acclaim. The most famous of all Prague Jewish writers was undoubtedly **Franz Kafka** (1883- 1924). His short stories and essays (such as *The Metamorphosis*) appeared in his lifetime, but his three unfinished novels (*The Trial*, *The Castle* and *America*) were published posthumously by his friend **Max Brod**. Max Brod was a well-known Prague journalist and writer who was also devoted to Czech culture. He was one of the first who promoted the work of Jaroslav Hašek and introduced the music of *Leoa Janaček* to the general public. Among many others, the "Prague Circle" also included the Raging reporter" *Egon Ervin Kisch* (1885-1948).*

-The Old New Synagogue built in the 13th century is one of the best known Prague landmarks due to its architecture, the numerous legends enveloping it, its role in Prague Jewish life and the prominent figures who were active there.

-The clock with Hebrew dial on the Jewish Town Hall from 1764.

I will describe now in somewhat bigger detail two features standing out among the abundance of these facts. These are: The Old Cemetery and the Folklore.

The Old Cemetery is one of the oldest and best preserved Jewish cemeteries in Europe. It was not, however, the Jewish community's first burial spot. There were other medieval cemeteries before this one. The first medieval Jewish cemetery – also known as Jewish Garden – was founded probably at the beginning of thirteenth century and burials took place here until 1478 when Wladislav II ordered the closure of the cemetery and a new street was built across the cemetery grounds. The Old Jewish Cemetery was founded in the early 15th century on the western edge of the ghetto. Despite gradual enlargement, the cemetery plot soon reached its full capacity. As it is prohibited to disturb old graves under religious custom (individual graves should be separated by a layer of earth of at least six handbreadth – about 56 cm in width), it was necessary to pile earth onto old graves and place other bodies into these new layers, while existing tombstones were raised to the surface. In time this produced an accumulation of densely packed tombstones from various centuries, leaning one upon the other.

Today the cemetery contains almost 12,000 tombstones, spanning from 1439 to 1787, when a ban was placed on further burials in the centre of town. The actual number of burials held here during these 350 years, however, is much greater, for countless tombstones either sank into the ground or were destroyed in the course of time. The cemetery is a unique site in terms of history and valuable record of the development of Jewish tombstone sculpture. The tombstones from the 15th and 16th centuries are characterized by Hebrew inscriptions deeply carved into black rectangular sandstone blocks. In the 17th and 18th centuries tombstones were made of white and reddish brown marble with Hebrew inscriptions carved in high relief and various decorative features and symbols. Hebrew epitaphs primarily state the individual's name and the date of death. Inscriptions on medieval tombstones are generally very simple. They mention only the forename of the deceased and that of the





father. Surnames, derived from forenames or more frequently from the place of origin, only started to appear in the sixteenth century. From the 16th century, tombstones became adorned with various symbols and signs in relief. Some of these were of a general nature, drawing on biblical literature, such as the crown (symbolizing wisdom and scholarship) and grapes (symbolizing a rich and fruitful life). Others relate to the individual's origin, name or profession; blessing hands, for example, indicate descendants of the temple priests, the Kohens, while a pitcher or basin represents their helpers, the Levites.

The names of the dead are most often symbolized by images of animals. The most frequently depicted include the lion (Yehuda, Aryeh), deer (Tzvi), wolf (Zeev), bear (Dov). The depiction of fabled animal imagery such as winged lion and griffin has both symbolic and protective significance. The individual profession is usually symbolized by the characteristic tools of the trade such as pair of scissors for a tailor, a lancet for a physician, a book for a scholar or a prayer reciter, and a violin for a musician. Specific features of the old Jewish Cemetery include motifs of female figures which can be found on the tombstones of young unmarried women.

There are still a few more Jewish cemeteries in Prague, each with interesting history of its own.

Prague Jewish Folklore. 1847 saw the first publication in Prague of a collection of Jewish folk tales and legends by Leopold Weisel and Salomon Kohn, entitled *Sippurim* (tales in Hebrew), which also contained a group of stories from the Prague ghetto. It was not long before Prague Jewish folklore became incorporated in the old Czech stories of Joseph Svatek, Alois Jirasek and Adolf Wenig. Most of these tales and legends are associated with the personalities of the mayor of the Jewish town Mordecai Maisel and his contemporary, Rabbi Judah ben Bezalel, known as Rabbi Loew.

The most famous tale is that of the Golem of Prague. Legend has it that it was created from clay on the bank of Vltava River by the miraculous Rabbi Lowe one night in March 1580. He is said to have brought it to life with a formula (the *shem*) which contained the unmentionable name of God. The Golem was given the name Joseph and was employed by Rabbi Loew as a servant around Jewish Quarter, sweeping the streets, carrying water, splitting wood, etc. The Golem was tireless and uncomplaining; it needed neither food nor drink. It was exceedingly strong and fearless and defended the Jewish Quarter from attacks.



The only concern was that it must not be alive on the Sabbath. Rabbi Loew deactivated the Golem by removing the *shem* from its mouth on Friday evenings before the Sabbath began. In the end, the clay body of the Golem was lain in the Old-New Synagogue's attic, where no-one was subsequently allowed to enter. (The grave of Rabbi Loew, actually Rabbi Judah ben Bezalel, is the most visited monument in the Old Cemetery. Next to his tomb is located the little tombstone of his grandson Samuel ben Bezalel. Legend has it that the tombstone of Rabbi Loew moved itself in order to make room for his grandson's grave.)

The story of the Prague Golem became the basis for many literary works and theatre plays, as well as a number of artworks and several films.

I could not find any wishing well to throw a coin which would take me to Prague again, but as it seems that miracles happen there I might repeat some of the pleasant moments experienced there. You might wish to go there yourself. It is worthwhile.

Branka Danon

BEJAHAD 2007

U izvodenju zagrebačkog hora "LIRA" pjesmom je počela ovogodišnja manifestacija Bejahad u Grand hotelu Adriatic u Opatiji. Već tradicionalna židovska kulturna scena i ove godine je privukla izuzetnu pažnju medija. Svečanom večerom, pozdravnim govorom izaslanika predsjednika Mesića, koktelom dobrodošlice i premijerom filma "Bejad 2006" zvanično je proglašen početak.

U prekrasnom ambijentu Opatije okupilo se oko 300 učesnika sadašnjih i nekadašnjih stanovnika bivše Jugoslavije.

Već prije zvaničnog otvaranja, toplina sastanka, nebrojeni zagrljaji i poljupci, radost ponovnog susreta su nas pripremili za seriju uživanja koja slijede.

Ni ove godine nije bilo ništa novo da je program izvrsan, organizacija besprekorna, a govornici i nosioci programa na zavidnom nivou.

Sigurno je da Bejahad nije ljetovanje, nije samo mjesto susreta prijatelja, nego i ponajprije prava "Židovska kulturna scena".

Dr Vlado Šalamon najavio je da će ovogodišnji opatijski program imati poruku "Kulturom do zajedništva".

Tema je bila "Pravednici među narodima - Muslimani Bosne i Hercegovine". Govorili su nam, o pravednicima općenito, Mirjam Aviezer, poznata nam kao Mirjam Štajner, a o svojim najdražim Boik Korkut i Sara Pečanac, kćer naše sarajke Zejnebe Hardage. Usput je Sara održala govor hvaliči i veličajući svoju novu domovinu-Izrael.

Organizator nam je ove godine na podijum doveo pored ostalih, Oskara Danona, Predraga Matvejevića, Davida Albaharija, i izuzetnog Žarko Puhovskog bez kojeg Bejahad ne bi bio ono što jeste. Puhovski je i ove godine govorio u više navrata, uvijek jednako aktuelan, otvoren i uvjerljiv.

Oskar Danon nam je uz muzičke ilustracije objašnjavao "kako slušati klasičnu muziku i zašto je neka muzika vrijedna a druga nije. Na primjerima nam je pokazao neke od kriterija i priuštio nam jedno izvanredno prijepodne. Mladi-stari gospodin, pun duha i života je na nas prenio svoje oduševljenje.

Tema okruglog stola bila je "Dijaspora kao Domovina", osjetljiva tema za sve nas koji tako živimo. Govorila je izvanredna Daša Drmda, David Albahari, Predrag Matvejić, Ana Somlo i Žarko Puhovski kao moderator. Dileme i sumnje koje mi poznamo, ali ih ne znamo tako dobro formulirati, stvorile su gustu atmosferu emocija.

U večernjim satima uživali smo u predstavama Seke Sablijić i Zijah Sokolovića (malo previše za moj ukus), no sala je bila krcata, a dva debela sata njegovih začimljenih šala oduševile su auditorij.

U paviljonu Juraj Šporer posjetili smo izložbu Zlatka Boureka i Ismara Mujezinovića. Zlatkova platna dosljedna sebi i za mene novi aspekt Mujezinovićevih djela, nepoznat i lascivan.

Posebno želim da pomenem izvanrednu likovnu izložbu još jednog starog gospodina, Franka Horvata, koji doduše, ne govori naš jezik, ali jezik radova kojim govori plijeni. Jedan od prvih evropskih fotografa, bavio se gotovo svim vrstama i temama koje fotografija pruža. Pred nas je donio svoje radove na temu mode. Fotografija jednog suncobrana stvara iluziju žene koja iza njevo stoji i samo se nazire izazvala je ponajviše komentara, a Horvat je o njoj vrlo rado govorio.

Među impozantnim brojem promocija novih knjiga, izdvojila bih i promociju kao i samu knjigu Slavka Goldštajna "1941, godina koja se ponavlja". Promotori, Milan Jergović iz Zagreba i Ivan Lovrenović iz Sarajeva izazvali su izdenu gužvu na štandu knjiga, primjerci su razgrabljeni a obećanja da će se pojaviti novo izdanje do sada se nisu obistinila.

Standardni dio programa, varijacije na temu izraelskih plesova dovele su nam mladost i osvježenje što nesumljivo nedostaje učesnicima.

Slušali smo večernji koncert Timne Brauer, ciganskog ansambla, koncerte na otvorenom, no najljepše nam je bilo na stepeništu pred kongresnom dvoranom sa našim Rašom, Nenadom, Jojom i ostalim darovitim i duhovitim, uz spontano veselje, pjesmu i provalu smijeha poslije svakog vica.

Prvi put sam uživo čula Predraga Matvejevića, već samo to je bilo vrijedno dolaska na Bejahad 2007.

Mediji su svakodnevno pratili događaje i štedro izvještavali o gotovo svakom programu. Bio je to, vjerovatno centralni kulturni događaj u Opatiji. Imali smo priliku da upoznamo, Amira Muzura, šarmantnog, poduzetnog mladog gradonačelnika Opatije.

Uzged, hotel je izvstan (i dogodine će se Bejahad u njemu organizovati), intelektualni nivo izvanredan, ambijent veličanstven i uz sve to još smo posjetili Brione i Rovinj.

Ako možete, dodite da vidite i čujete. Možda ćete se i vi zaljubiti.

Bulka Kamhi D.

BEYACHAD 2007

A song by "Lira" a Choir from Zagreb marked the beginning of this year's Beyahad event at Grand Hotel Adriatic in Opatija. This already traditional Jewish cultural scene attracted yet again exceptional attention by the media. The official opening was announced at the formal dinner during which a delegate of President Mesić gave a greeting speech. This was followed by a cocktail party and the premier of the film "Beyahad 2006".

Some 300 participants – present and previous citizens of former Yugoslavia - gathered in the exquisite setting of Opatija.

Even before the formal opening, the cordiality of the gathering, numerous hugs and kisses and the sheer joy of another meeting prepared us for a succession of pleasures to follow.

This year was no exception – once more the programme was excellent, the organisation flawless, and the speakers and other contributors to the programme outstanding. ...

One thing is certain. Beyahad is not a summer camp. It is not just a friends get-together place, but also and foremost a true "Jewish Cultural Scene".

Dr. Vlado Šalamon had announced that the message of this year's Opatija programme would be "Reaching Togetherness by Culture". The Theme was "The Righteous among People. – The Moslems of Bosnia and Herzegovina". Mirjam Aviezer known to us as Mirjam Štajner, talked about the righteous in general, and Boik Korkut and Sara Pečanac, the daughter of our Sarajevo fellow citizen Zejneba Hardaga, talked about those dearest to them. Using the opportunity of taking the floor Sara also prised and glorified her new homeland of Israel.

Among those that the organizer brought to the podium this year were Oskar Danon, Predrag Matvejić, David Albahari and the excellent Žarko Puhovski without whom Beyahad would not be the event it is. This year again Puhovski talked to us several times - always equally relevant, frank and convincing.

Using musical illustrations Oskar Danon explained to us "how to listen to classical music and why some music is more worthy than other". By examples that he used to explain some of the criteria he presented us with a very pleasant morning. This young elderly gentleman with energetic temperament passed his enthusiasm to us.

The topic discussed at the round table was "Diaspora as a homeland", a very sensitive subject for all of us living that way. The speakers were the excellent Daša Drmda, David Albahari, Predrag Mavejević, Ana Somlo and Žarko Puhovski as a moderator.

The dilemmas and doubts that we know but are not able to put so well into words created a dense atmosphere of emotions.

During the evening hours we enjoyed the performances by Seka Sablijić and Zijah Sokolović (although a bit over the top to my taste), his spicy jokes entertained the packed animated auditorium for two hours.

In the Juraj Šporer pavilion we visited the exhibition by Zlatko Bourek and Ismar Mujezinović. Zlatko's paintings were consistent with his work but I found a new unfamiliar and lascivious aspect to the works by Mujezinović.

I would like to mention in particular the outstanding exhibition of Mr Frank Horvat, yet another elderly gentleman, who cannot speak our language it is true, but the language of whose works captivates. One of the first European photographers, he went in for almost every aspect of photography. We were shown his works dealing with fashion. A photograph of a parasol producing the illusion of a hinted woman standing behind it attracted most comments. Horvat was pleased to talk about it.

Among the numerous launches of new books I would single out both one launch and the book itself. It is "1941, A Year That Keeps Repeating" by Slavko Goldstein. The promoters: Milan Jergović from Zagreb and Ivan Lovrenović from Sarajevo attracted a huge crowd at the book stand; copies were bought up, but the promise that there will be a reprint has not materialized yet.

The standard part of the programme – variations involving Israeli dances – brought to us youth and refreshment that the participants are undoubtedly in need of.

We listened to the Timna Brauer evening concert, the gypsy ensemble concert and outdoor concerts, but we got the best of pleasure just sitting on the stairs in front of the congress hall with our friends Raša, Nenad, Joja and other gifted and witty people spontaneously singing and bursting into laughter after every joke.

It was the first time that I heard Predrag Matvejić in person; if it were only for this it was worthwhile coming to Beyahad 2007.

The media followed the events every day and reported amply about almost every programme. It was, probably, the central cultural event in Opatija.

We also had the opportunity to meet Mr. Amir Muzur, the charismatic, enterprising, young mayor of Opatija.

Incidentally, the hotel is excellent (next year Beyahad will take place there again), the intellectual level was outstanding, the ambience splendid and to add to all that we visited the Briuni Islands and Rovinj. If you can do it, come to see and hear it all. You might fall in love as well.

Bulka Kamhi D.

Translation: Branka Danon

BEJAHAD

29. 8. - 30. 9. 2007.



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IZDAVAČ ◊ PUBLISHER

Jevrejska Zajednica "Prijatelji La Benevolencije" London
Jewish Society "The Friends of La Benevolencija" London

ADRESA ◊ ADDRESS

Shalvata - Jewish Care, Att Mr Branko Danon
Parson Street - Corner of Church Road
London NW4 1QA

Email: salon@benevolencija.eu.org

REDAKCIJA ◊ EDITORIAL BOARD

Branka Danon, Branko Danon, Maja Đurđević
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TEHNIČKI UREDNIK DESIGN AND
I KOMPJUTERSKA ◊ COMPUTER
OBRADA PROCESSING

Dejan Stojnić

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SaLon is free of charge and published quarterly

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Printed by Freedman Brothers Printers

IZRAEL

Izrael, ili službeno Država Izrael je zemlja na jugoistočnoj ivici Sredozemnog mora. Sa stanovništvom od 7,2 miliona, čiju većinu čine Jevreji, Izrael je jedina jevrejska država na svijetu. Ona je domovina i arapskim muslimanima, hrišćanima i družima, kao i drugim vjerskim i etničkim grupama. Jerusalem je prestonica države, sjedište vlade i najveći grad.

Korjenje moderna država Izrael je u Zemlji Izraelskoj, centralnom pojmu judaizma tokom više od tri hiljade godina. Nakon Prvog svjetskog rata Liga naroda je odobrila Britanski mandat za Palestinu sa namjerom da se stvori „domovina za jevrejski narod“. Godine 1947 Ujedinjene Nacije su odobrile podjelu Mandata Palestine na dvije države, jednu jevrejsku i jednu arapsku. Arapska Liga je odbila plan, ali je 14 maja 1948. godine Izrael proglasio svoju nezavisnost.

Porijeklo imena Izrael se nalazi u Bibliji, a počinje sa Jakovom. Ali prije nego što se pozabavimo imenom Izrael, prvo ćemo objasniti kako je nastalo njegovo rodno ime – Jakov. Esav i Jakov su bili bliznaci rođeni Isaku i Rebeki. Esav je bio prvorođeni, a njegov brat Jakov koji se rodio odmah iza toga držao se Esavu za petu. Tako „Jaakov“ (Jakov) proističe iz hebrejskog korijena „akev“ što znači peta. Kasnije kada je odrastao, otišao je u Haran da se oženi. Na putu za Haran, Jakov je imao viziju u kojoj je vidio ljestve koje dosežu do neba po kojima anđeli idu gore dole. Sa vrha ljestvi čuo je glas Božiji, koji je ga je više puta blagosiljao. Ta vizija se često naziva Jakovljeve ljestve. Nekoliko godina nakon toga vraćajući se kući, sada sa svojom porodicom, Jakov je proveo noć sam, posvećujući se Bogu. Tu se pojavilo misteriozno biće (prema nekima „čovjek“, a prema drugima „anđeo“) i hrvalo se sa Jakovom do zore. Kada je vidio da ne može da pobedi Jakova dotakao ga je. Tada je Jakov tražio blagoslov, a misteriozno biće je reklo da će se od tada pa na dalje Jakov zvati Izrael (na hebrejskom „Jisra'el“ što znači onaj koji se borio sa Bogom). Jakov je tada zatražio da dozna ime bića, ali je biće odbilo da odgovori. Kasnije je Jakov nazvao to mjesto Pnei-el (što znači „Božije lice“), rekavši „vidio sam Boga licem u lice i poživio“.

Potomci Jakova su poznati kao Djeca Izraela, ili Izraelčani, a zemlja koju im je Bog obećao je poznata kao zemlja Izrael, ili „Erec Izrael“. Kada se deset plemena izdvojilo da formira nezavisnu Sjevernu kraljevinu nakon smrti Solomona, uzeli su ime JEHUDA, iz čega proističe ime Jevrej. Opis „Djeca Izraela“ kasnije postaje „Kuća Izraela“, „Narod Izraela“ i zatim samo „Izrael“ kao kolektivno ime za Jevreje, bilo da su potomci po majčinoj liniji od Jakova ili da su prešli na Judaizam. Tako Izrael postaje i etnički i religijski pojam. Moderna jevrejska država osnovana u Palestini 1948. godine je usvojila ime Izrael, nakon nekih diskusija o alternativnom nazivu (Cijon).

Izrael je također često i ime i prezime među Jevrejima.

Pripremila: Branka Danon

ISRAEL

ISRAEL in Biblical Times



Israel, officially the State of Israel, is a country in South-eastern edge of the Mediterranean Sea. With a population of 7.2 million, the majority of whom are Jews, Israel is the world's only Jewish state. It is also home to Arab Muslims, Christians and Druze, as well as other religious and ethnic groups. Jerusalem is the nation's capital, seat of government, and largest city.

The modern state of Israel has its roots in the Land of Israel, a concept central to Judaism for over three thousand years. After the World War I, the League of Nations approved the British Mandate for Palestine with the intent of creating a "nation home for the Jewish people". In 1947, the United Nations approved the partition of the Mandate of Palestine in two states, one Jewish and one Arab. The Arab League rejected the plan but on May 14, 1948, Israel declared its independence.

The origin of the name of Israel is in the Bible and it starts with Jacob. But before the account about the name of Israel we shall explain his birth name first – that of Jacob. Esau and Jacob were twins born to Isaac and Rebecca. Esau was the firstborn and his brother Jacob who was born immediately after, was grasping Esau's heel. Thus, "Yaakov" (Jacob) derives from the Hebrew root "akev" meaning heel. Later, when he grew up he went to Haran to get married. On route to Haran, Jacob experienced a vision in which he saw a ladder reaching into heaven with angels going up and down it, a vision that is commonly referred to as Jacob's Ladder. From the top of the ladder he heard the voice of God, who repeated many of the blessings upon him. Some years later on his way back home, now with his family Jacob spent a night alone,

in communion with God. There, a mysterious being ("a man", according to some, or "the angel" according to others) appeared and wrestled with Jacob until daybreak. When he saw he could not defeat Jacob he touched him. Jacob then demanded a blessing, and the mysterious being said that from now on Jacob would be called Israel (Hebrew Yisra'el, meaning "one who has struggled with God"). Jacob then asked the being's name, but the being refused to answer. Afterwards Jacob named the place Pnei-el (meaning "face of God"), saying "I have seen God face to face and lived."

Jacob's descendants were known as the Children of Israel or Israelites, and the land promised to them by God became known as the land of Israel, Eretz Yisrael. When the ten tribes broke away to form an independent Northern Kingdom after the death of King Solomon, they took the name of JUDAH from which the term Jew originates. The designation "Children of Israel" eventually became "The House of Israel", "the People of Israel" and then just "Israel" as the collective name of all Jews, whether born of matrilineal descent from Jacob or converted to the faith of Judaism. "Israel" thus became both an ethnic and religious concept. The modern Jewish state founded in Palestine in 1948 adopted the name Israel after some discussion of the alternative (Zion).

Israel is also a common given name and surname among Jews.

Prepared by: Branka Danon

