

POGLED NAPRIJED

Na Godišnjoj skupštini u septembru ove godine, u okviru tema načelih, razgovarali smo o najavljenim promjenama okolnosti u kojima djelujemo i koje posljedice možemo očekivati od tih promjena. Doznali smo, naime, da se Jewish Refugees Committee, koji radi u okvirima World Jewish Relief-a, najvjerovatnije gasi krajem ove godine. Neoborivi razlog koji se navodi u najavi ove promjene, jeste da u ovom momentu ne postoji značajniji priliv Jevreja u UK, i da nije moguće identificirati žarište problema koje bi u bližoj perspektivi izazvalo veću migraciju Jevreja u UK. To konsekvntno znači da je neracionalno držati na okupu aparat (i plaćati troškove), čiji se smisao postojanja nalazi u pružanju pomoći jevrejskim izbjeglicama koje dolaze ovamo. Za nas je značajno da je ovaj Committee, dakle Odbor, predstavljao osnovnu podršku i finansijsku polugu koja je omogućavala naš rad, razvoj, aktivnosti...

Nakon perioda prilagodavanja i zadovoljavanja najvećih potreba praktične prirode kao što su recimo priprema prijava/molbi za azil, finansiranje kurseva engleskog jezika, smještaja i plaćanje hotela i stanova, briga za zdravstveno stanje i sl., naišao je period pomaganja našeg zajedničkog života kao organizovane zajednice. Da se prisjetimo: JRC je plaćao i plaća zakup prostora za sedmično okupljanje, štampanje SaLon-a, izlete (autobuski transport, a ponekad i subvencioniranje ulaznica i sl.), troškove predavača (ako su postojali), aktivnosti sa našim seniorima, dakle ukoliko, u najvećem dijelu i najbitnije troškove.

No, situacija nije dramatična, barem ne u ovom momentu. Kao i uvijek do sada JRC nas nije ostavio na cjedilu. Gospoda Janet Cohen nas je obavijestila, da se unatoč gašenju JRC-a, ona pobrinula da se za mimi nastavak naših aktivnosti ostavi namjenski iznos u budetu WJR-a koji će se protegnuti do kraja 2007, dakle još pune tri godine! Da kle, ukupno od 1992-2007g., 15 godina. To je lijepo. No, potiče na razmišljanja.

Počeli smo pristizati u Veliku Britaniju početkom 1992 g da bi nas krajem 1993g, bilo 121 na broju. Sada, na evidenciji stoji 108 duša. Osim privatnih života, vodili smo i socijalni život, kao zasebna grupa ljudi koja ima zajedničke osnove – neko je učestvovao više, neko manje. Za ovo vrijeme uradili smo dosta toga zajednički. I opet, mogli smo i više i manje, zavisi iz kog ugla gledate i šta ste očekivali. Upravo ta činjenica pobuđuje pitanje, šta nas očekuje iz 2007–me godine; šta mi očekujemo da će se desiti tada.

Da bi se odgovorilo na ova pitanja, možda prije svega treba postaviti jedno drugo pitanje: šta je za nas, za svakog pojedinca, značio ili znači ovaj socijalni vid naših života od dolaska pa na dalje. Da li je došlo do formiranja neke kolektivne svijesti o međusobnoj pripadnosti?

Ako je aglomerat - čije je vezivno sredstvo bio uglavnom interes - kakav smo mi bili po dolasku, prerastao u konglomerat - čije se vezivno sredstvo transformisalo u svijest o zajedništvu - onda i nije tako teško naći odgovore na postavljena pitanja. Tada postaje jasno da želimo da nastavimo zajednički život i u uslovima kada nam sredstva sa strane nisu više dostupna, drugim riječima, kada bude trebalo preći na samofinansiranje. Znači, ne treba da primjenjujemo posljednji član našeg statuta koji kaže da... "Zajednica prestaje da postoji kad za to više ne postoji interes"... No, u takvim izmijenjenim okolnostima ćemo vjerovatno govoriti o promjeni forme djelovanja, o obimu i selekciji aktivnosti, o nivou samodoprinosu (riječ koju je mnogi od nas namjerno htio zaboraviti), o drugom načinu evidencije prihoda i potrošnje, i o mnogo čemu drugom.

Ako se pak, ovaj process transformacije nije desio, dakle, ako nas je samo pojedinačni interes držao na okupu, i tada je odgovor jasan. Sasvim i odmah postaje jasno da se sa 2007 g. život naše zajednice gasi. Ni toga se ne treba stidjeti. Učinili smo mnogo toga skupa čime se možemo i treba da ponosimo.

Ja sam, izgleda, po prirodi optimista, i vjerujem u onaj prvi odgovor. A to znači da ja vjerujem da to što smo i poslije 12 (15) godina skupa daleko prevazilazili interes u onom oglednom smislu riječi. To znači da naš interes u zajedništvu ima daleko kvalitetnije značenje, da je potreba za okupljanjem izraz činjenice da počivamo na solidnom zajedničkom imenitelju. Taj imenitelj je zbir raznih faktora. Prvo, mislim da je nestalo međusobnog podozrenja koje je u početku visilo u vazduhu i koje je bilo rezultat činjenice da smo bačeni jedni ka drugima iz sticaja okolnosti a ne iz vlastitog izbora. Drugo, došlo je do međusobnog prilagodavanja; dvanaest godina je dovoljno dug period za ovaj proces. On se desi ili ne. Treće, ne smijemo zaboraviti da potičemo iz iste sredine (dva grada, uglavnom), da govorimo isti jezik, da nosimo istu kulturnu i istorijsku baštinu. I, četvrto, ali ne i posljednje - jevrejski dio ovog zajedničkog imenitelja. Ne tvrdim da je u našim medurelacijama jevrejstvo bilo dominantno, ali je stalno bilo u substratu, u podsvijesti i to uvijek sa izrazito pozitivnim predznakom.

Nadam se da razvoj događaja neće demantovati moja uvjerenja, a namjera ovog priloga je da nas sve ponukam na blagovremena razmišljanja i da 2007-mu godinu dočekamo spremni, sa jasnim mislima.

Branko Danon

A VIEW AHEAD

Within the topics dealt with at our annual assembly in September this year we started the discussion about the announced changes in the circumstances in which we function and what are the consequences that we might expect. Actually we have learnt that Jewish Refugees Committee operating within The World Jewish Relief will most probably cease to exist at the end of this year. The irrefutable reason mentioned for this change is the actuality that at the moment there is no major influx of Jews to the UK and looking in perspective it is not possible to identify any source of problems that might trigger a major migration of Jews to the UK in near future. Consequently it means that it is not rational to run an apparatus (and pay for its costs) the reason of which existence is to offer help to Jewish refugees coming to this country. For us it is significant that this Committee has meant the basic support and financial lever which has enabled our functioning, development, activities. ... The period of adjustment and meeting the key needs of practical nature - for instance the preparation of asylum applications, financing of English courses, accommodation and hotel charges, health care and similar things was followed by a period in which support has been given to our living in an organised community. Let us remind ourselves: JRC has been paying for the premises that we meet once every week, printing of SaLon, our outings (meaning coach charges and sometimes subsidizing the entrance tickets etc.), lecturer's costs (if applicable), activities with our seniors, actually most of the costs -the most essential ones.

The situation is not dramatic, though; at least not at the moment. As always JRC has not left us in the lurch. We were informed by Mrs. Janet Cohen of the closing down of JRC she saw to it that an amount should be left in WJR budget allocated for smooth continuation of our activities which will extend to the end of 2007, namely three more years! This actually means fifteen years in total, from 1992 to 2007. That is fine. But it calls for some thinking.

We started arriving to the UK early in 1992 and by the end of 1993 there were 121 of us here. Our present records show 108 souls. Alongside our private lives we lived our social lives as well as a distinctive group of people with common background. Some took more part in our activities, others less. Over this period we did quite a lot together. But we could do more or we could do less, depending on how you look at it and what were your expectations. Which leads to the question: what will we be faced with after 2007, what do we expect that might happen then.

In order to answer these questions we should pose other questions before: what this social aspect of our lives has meant for each and every person? Is there a collective awareness that we belong together?

If the agglomeration, with interest as its binding agent - the form we had upon arrival, has developed into a conglomeration the binding agent of which has transformed to the awareness of communal spirit than it is not that difficult to find answers to the posed questions. It becomes clear then that we wish to live side by side even in a situation when funds from other sources are no longer available to us, in other words when the time will come for self financing. It would mean that we would not have to apply the last article of our statute according to which "The Society ceases to exist when there is no more interest for its existence"... Yet, in such changed circumstances we would most probably be talking about a change in the form of our activities, about their scope and selection, about the level of self contribution (a word many of us deliberately wanted to forget) about another mode of income and expenditures evidence and about many other things.

On the other hand if this process of transformation should not happen, actually if only our individual interest kept us together, the answer is also obvious. It becomes immediately and completely clear that with 2007 the existence of our society will end. We should not be ashamed of this either. We did quite a lot together of which we can and should be proud.

It seems that I am an optimist by nature and I believe in the first answer. Namely I believe that the fact that we are still together after all these twelve (fifteen) years exceeds by far interest in its naked meaning. It means that our interest in our togetherness is of higher quality, that the need to get together is an expression of the reality that we rest on a solid common denominator. That denominator is a sum of different factors. Primarily, I think that the initial distrust among us has disappeared. That distrust took place because we were thrown together as a consequence of events not out of our choice. The second point is that we had mutually adapted. Twelve years is a period long enough for that process. Adapting happens or it does not. The third point is that we should not forget that our origins are the same (we are largely from two cities), that our language is the same that we carry with us the same cultural and historic heritage. The fourth but not the least point is the Jewish element of this common denominator. I do not maintain that in our relations Jewishness dominated, but it was always present in the background in the subconscious, always with a positive sign. I hope that the events will not deny my beliefs. The intention of these notes is to incite all of us to start thinking on time and have ready and clear ideas when 2007 comes.

Branko Danon



Njena Ekselencija Ambasador Bosne i Hercegovine u UK Gđa. Elvira Begović

Prije nego što odgovorim na vaša pitanja željela bih da pozdravim sve čitaoce Biltena "SaLon", da im čestitam predstojeće praznike i da im poželim puno sreće i zadovoljstva u danima i godinama koje slijede.

Vama i članovima redakcije "SaLona", biltena koga redovno i sa zadovoljstvom čitam, želim puno uspjeha u radu.

Elvira Begović

Ambasador

Elvira Begović je rođena 1961. god. u Mostaru gdje je diplomirala na Ekonomskom fakultetu 1983. god. Postdiplomski specijalistički studij iz Menadžmenta i informacionih tehnologija je kao najbolji student generacije završila u Sarajevu 1996. god. Prvi je posao dobila u Olimpijskom Komitetu ZOI '84- na pripremi i organizaciji XIV Zimskih Olimpijskih Igru u Sarajevu. Nakon rada u Olimpijskom Komitetu, postavljena je za rukovodioca poslovne ZOI TOURS-a. Rat je, sa porodicom, provela u opsjednutom Sarajevu. U to vrijeme postaje izvršni direktor izdavačke i marketingške agencije Futura Group, a potom direktor Futura Media. Od 1999. god. preuzima mjesto zamjenika generalnog direktora nezavisne novinske agencije ONASA. Odlukom Predsjedništva BiH u avgustu 2001. god. imenovana je za Ambasadora Bosne i Hercegovine u V. Britaniji i S. Irskoj gdje u decembru iste godine predaje akreditivne NjV britanskoj Kraljici Elizabeti II. U oktobru 2003. god. predaje akreditivne predsjednici Irske, NjE Mary McAleese čime postaje prvi, nerezidentni ambasador BiH u ovoj zemlji. Punopravni je predstavnik BiH u Međunarodnoj pomorskoj organizaciji (IMO) sa sjedištem u Londonu. Prvi je za sada jedini ambasador BiH u Londonu, te jedna od rijetkih ličnosti sa prostora bivše Jugoslavije, čije se ime i biografija nalaze u knjizi "Who Is Who?", zajedno sa imenima i biografijama 30.000 svjetskih lidera današnjice.

1. Kada ste preuzimali dužnost Ambasadora B&H u Londonu, imali ste predodžbu sta vas očekuje i šta biste vi htjeli da uradite kako biste najbolje obavili zadatke koji vam predstoje. Sada, retrospektivno, možete li uporediti pretpostavke i realnost?

Kada sam se spremala za dolazak u UK bila sam svjesna da odlazim u jednu od najrazvijenijih i najuticajnijih država u Evropi i u svijetu. Zнала sam da me očekuju naporan rad i brojne obaveze, ali i da ću im, zahvaljujući svom znanju, iskustvu i energiji, podršci mojih saradnika iz Ambasade, Ministarstva vanjskih poslova, podršci Vlade i Predsjedništva BiH, građana BiH u zemlji i inostranstvu, te nadasve pomoći moga supruga, uspješno udovoljiti i time ispuniti očekivanja onih koji su mi ukazali povjerenje postavljajući me na ovu odgovornu dužnost.

Generalno moje pretpostavke su se pokazale kao tačne s tim što je posla i problema vezanih za posao bilo više nego što sam očekivala.

2. U prioritetu rješavanja problema negdje je stajao i podatak da u Velikoj Britaniji živi znatan broj ljudi koji su ovdje dospjeli iz B&H. Za razliku od vaših prethodnika, čini se da je uspostavljanje kontakata i rad sa njima bio visoko na vašoj listi zadataka?

Činjenica je da smo i ja i cjelokupno osoblje BiH Ambasade u Londonu intenzivno radili na uspostavljanju i razvijanju kontakata sa našim građanima. Posjetili smo mnogo klubova/udruženja u UK i u Irskoj, organizirali smo ili smo pomogli organiziranje brojnih kulturnih i drugih manifestacija (konzularnih dana, izložbi slika, koncerata, proljetnih sajмова, poslovnih konferencija, dana dopunskih škola, promocija turizma, promocija knjiga, konferencija za novinare, susreta sa BH zvaničnicima i visokim predstavnicom MZ...) i prijema kojima su prisustvovali ili u kojima su učestvovali građani BiH. Dočekivali smo i ispraćali naše reprezentativce u fudbalu, odbojci, plivanju... Zajedno smo se radovali zbog njihovih uspjeha i tugovali zbog njihovih neuspjeha. Vrata BiH Ambasade smo širom otvorili svim našim građanima. Zbog toga ne treba da čudi što oni ovu Ambasadu istinski osjećaju kao svoju domovinu na ovom tlu ili "svoju kuću" - kako to mnogi vole da kažu. To, uostalom, Ambasada BiH i treba da bude.

3. Prosjeka Englez kada i ako razmišlja o Bosni i Hercegovini nosi imidž nasilja kao glavnog faktora u životima ljudi. Da li vjerujete da ste svojim djelovanjem uspjeli da utičete na promjenu takvog javnog mijenja?

Nije mi baš poznato i ne vjerujem da je za "prosjeknog" Engleza BiH zemlja u kojoj je "nasilje glavni faktor u životima ljudi". Ja sam se, u proteklom periodu, susrećala sa hiljadama Britanaca, najrazličitijih socijalnih kategorija, nacionalnosti, religijskih ubjedjenja... i nitko mi, ama baš nitko nije izrekao sličnu tvrdnju. Ili tvrdnju da su Bosanci i Hercegovci skloniji nasilju od drugih naroda ili da su rat i nasilje karakterističniji za istoriju našeg naroda i naše države nego za istoriju drugih naroda i država ili...? Bliža mi je tvrdnja da većina Britanaca još uvijek prepoznaje i pamti našu zemlju po ratu i po zločinima koji su učinjeni na njenom tlu. Uostalom, Britance na njih stalno podsjeća hiljade njihovih komšija i prijatelja, građana BiH, kojima su, kao žrtvama rata, pružili utočište u svojoj zemlji.

Jasno, ne treba isključiti mogućnost da postoje pojedinci, pa i interesne grupe koje iz ovoga ili onoga razloga pokušavaju falsificirati istorijske činjenice i dokazati da je "nasilje glavni faktor u životima (naših) ljudi". Iako utjecaj i značaj takvih pojedinaca i/ili grupa u UK ne treba zanemariti, ne treba ga ni preuveličati.

Mislim da vas ne trebam uvjeravati u ono što je mnogim našim građanima koji žive i/ili rade u UK i Irskoj poznato, da sam se ja, od prvog dana po preuzimanju ove dužnosti, do danas, u svim prilikama i na svakom mjestu, svakom svojom javno izgovorenim ili napisanim rječju, gestom i pojavom suprostavljala predrasudama koje su narušavale ili koje su mogle narušiti ugled BiH. Jednako kao što sam se trudila da, u ovom dijelu svijeta, promoviram jednu novu, uspješniju i ljepšu BiH. To je, na kraju krajeva, bila moja dužnost i moja obaveza. Ali ne samo moja. To je bila i ostala patriotska obaveza svih nas, građana BiH, bez obzira na našu nacionalnost, religiju, zanimanje i trenutno mjesto boravka.

Da li sam u tome uspjela? Uspjevamo (uvijek mi je draže reći i čuti "mi" nego "ja") zahvaljujući našem znanju i našem trudu, te ne malo pomoći naših britanskih i irskih prijatelja.

Uspjevamo, na primjer, kada prestižni britanski magazin "Diplomat" koga, između ostalih, primaju sve ambasade i diplomatska predstavništava u Londonu, u najnovijem izdanju, objavi opširan i afirmativan članak o turističkim potencijalima postkonfliktnih zemalja. I kada čitavu naslovnu stranicu tog broja "Diplomata" krase fotografija obnovljenog Starog mosta u Mostaru uz rečenicu, identičnu naslovu antologijske kompozicije "Most iznad nemire rijeke".

Uspjevamo jer je, u pomenutom članku, uz prigodnu izjavu ambasadora BiH, objavljena i fotografija na kojoj državni sekretar za vanjsku politiku UK g. Jack Straw, u društvu visokog predstavnika lorda Ashdawnia i vaše ambasadorice u UK, promovira turističke potencijale BiH – držeći u ruci naš prvi Turistički vodič, štampan na Engleskom jeziku. Ova fotografija je, za svakog dobronamjernog, više od fotografije. Ona je poruka. Poruka ove zemlje svijetu i Bosni i Hercegovini – o Bosni i Hercegovini. I njenoj budućnosti.

Uspjevamo, jer posljednjih mjeseci ima sve više ovakvih i sličnih primjera.

Definitivno ćemo u tome uspjeti kada BiH i svi njeni građani u potpunosti usvoje zajedničke vrijednosti Evropske Unije: poštivanje ljudskog dostojanstva, slobode, demokratije, jednakosti, vladavinu zakona i ljudskih prava, uključujući i prava koja pripadaju manjinama ... i kada postanemo punopravna članica Evropske Unije.

4. U kontekstu gornjeg pitanja, da li promovisanje kulturnih posebnosti Bosne i Hercegovine (gdje je umjetnost jedna od poluga) može pomoći boljem razumjevanju ovašnje sredine i uopšte boljem međusobnom razumjevanju ljudi različitih kulturnih nasljedja? Da li razmišljanja o ovom nalaze mjesta u vašim izvještajima Ministarstvu vanjskih poslova?

Nema nikakve sumnje da svako promoviranje kulturnih, sportskih i drugih vrijednosti i posebnosti značajno doprinosi međusobnom upoznavanju, razumjevanju i izgradnji boljih i sadržajnijih odnosa između naroda i država. Direktna i/ili indirektna podrška koju je Ambasada BiH u UK i u Irskoj pružala brojnim manifestacijama ovog tipa najbolje ukazuje na značaj koji sam i lično pridavala i pridajem ovakvom promoviranju BiH. Podrazumjeva se da smo MVP BiH, pravovremeno i detaljno, po uobičajenoj proceduri, informirali o svim kulturnim, sportskim i drugim dešavanjima u kojima su učestvovali naši građani, svojevrsni ambasadori BiH u UK i Irskoj.

5. Sta preporučujete Vasem nasljedniku na mjestu Ambasadora?

Nemam posebnu preporuku za mog, koga ga vi nazivate, nasljednika na mjestu Ambasadora. Imam želju da novi i svaki slijedeći, novi ambasador BiH u ovim zemljama bude bolji i uspješniji od svoga prethodnika.

Ono što me niste pitali, a što bih željela da kažem na kraju je slijedeće: Imala sam veliku čast i zadovoljstvo da dužnost Ambasadora obavljam u dvjema državama prijateljima BiH.

Pred skori odlazak sa ove dužnosti, za koju će me trajno vezati lijepe uspomene, željela bih da se, u ime građana BiH i u svoje ime, zahvalim vladama i građanima Ujedinjenog Kraljevstva i Irske na pomoći u poratnoj obnovi naše zemlje, te snažnoj podršci reformama koje sprovodimo u cilju punopravnog priključivanja Bosne i Hercegovine Zajednici evropskih država.



With HE Elvira Begović The Ambassador of Bosnia & Herzegovina to the UK and Ireland

Before answering your questions I would like to convey my best regards to all "SaLon" readers and on the occasion of the coming holidays wish them happiness and pleasure in the coming days and years.

May you and the members of SaLon editorial board, a bulletin I enjoy reading on a regular basis be very successful in your work.

Elvira Begović

The Ambassador

Elvira Begović was born in Mostar in 1961 where she graduated from The School of Economics in 1983. When she completed her postgraduate studies in Sarajevo in 1996, specializing in management and information studies she was the best student of her generation. Her first job was in the Olympic Committee for WOG '84 – on preparation and organization of the Fourteenth Winter Olympic Games in Sarajevo. Following her work in the Olympic Committee she was appointed to the post of ZOITURS office manager. Together with her family she stayed in besieged Sarajevo all through the war. During that period she was appointed to the post of executive director in Futura Group, a publishing and marketing agency, and later the director of Futura Media. From 1999 she took over the post of General Director Deputy in the independent news agency ONASA. By a decree of Bosnia and Herzegovina Presidency in 2001 she was appointed Bosnia and Herzegovina Ambassador to the UK- Great Britain and North Ireland where in December that same year she handed over her credentials to Her Highness Elizabeth II, Queen of Britain. In October 2003 she handed over her credentials to the President of Ireland, Her Excellency Mary McAleese, becoming thus the first non-resident ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina in that country. She is the legitimate Bosnia and Herzegovina representative in the International Maritime Organization (IMO) the seat of which is in London. She is the first and for the time being only ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina in London and one of only a few persons from the region of former Yugoslavia whose name and biography are included in "Who is Who?", together with the names and biographies of 30,000 world leaders of the present day.

1. When taking the post of Bosnia and Herzegovina Ambassador to London you had an idea what to expect and what you would like to do in order to perform the task ahead of you in the best way. Now, looking at it in a retrospective could you compare the presumptions to the reality?

When preparing to come to the UK I was aware that I was going to one of the most developed and influential countries in Europe and the world. I was expecting hard work and numerous responsibilities but I knew that thanks to my knowledge, experience and energy; to the support of my associates in the Embassy and Foreign Affairs Ministry; the support of B&H Government and Presidency, the B&H citizens in the country and abroad; and most of all the support of my husband I would be able to do my job successfully and thus meet the expectations of those who placed their trust in me by appointing me to this position.

My assumptions proved to be correct in general terms although there was much more work and work related problems than I was expecting.

2. Among the priorities of the problems to be solved was the fact that a large number of people living in the UK arrived here from B&H. Contrary to what happened with your predecessors it seems that contacts and work with them was high on the list of your tasks.

It is true that both I and the whole staff of the B&H Embassy in London were working hard to create and develop contacts with our citizens. We have visited quite a number of clubs and associations in the UK and in Ireland; we have organised or helped the organisation of numerous cultural and other events (Consular days, painting exhibitions, concerts, spring fairs, business conferences, days of supplement education, tourism promotions, book promotions, media conferences, meeting with B&H officials and The High Representative); we arranged receptions at which B&H citizens were present or took part in. We were welcoming or seeing off our football, volleyball and swimming teams. We shared with them their joy in their successes and sadness in their failures. We opened wide the door of the B&H Embassy to all our citizens. It therefore should not be surprising that they consider this Embassy their real homeland on this soil, or "their home" as many like to refer to it. This is really what B&H Embassy should be.

3. Even if he thinks of B&H the average Englishman carries the image of violence as the main factor in the lives of people. Do you believe that your actions brought a change in such public opinion?

I am not exactly aware and I do not believe that for an "average" Englishman B&H is a country in which violence is the main factor in the lives of its people. Over the last period I have met thousands of British people of different social categories, ethnic

origins, and religious beliefs – and nobody has ever uttered a similar allegation, or an allegation that Bosnians or Herzegovians are more inclined to violence than any other nation or that war and violence are more characteristic of the history of our nation and our country than of the history of other nations and countries, or ...? I am much more familiar with the claim that majority of the British people still recognises and remembers our country by the war and crimes inflicted on its soil. After all, the British are continuously reminded of that by the thousands of their neighbours and friends, B&H citizens, victims of war, to whom they offered shelter in their country.

It is clear that one should not rule out the likelihood that there are individuals and even groups who due to this or that reason try to falsify historic facts and prove that "violence is the main factor in the lives of (our) people". Although the influence and the significance of such individuals and/or groups in the UK should not be neglected it should not be overstressed either.

I hope that there is no need to assure you, as is well known to many B&H citizens living and/or working in the UK and Ireland, that from the very first day of taking this position till today; on each and every occasion and place; with every publicly uttered and written word; by my every gesture and appearance I opposed the prejudices which damaged or could damage the reputation of B&H. Same as I tried to promote a new, more successful and more alluring B&H in this part of the world. It was, after all, my duty and my responsibility. But not only mine. It was and still is the patriotic duty of all of us, citizens of B&H, regardless of our ethnicity, religion, profession and present residence.

Was I successful in this? We are (I always prefer to say and hear "we" than "I") successful thanks to our knowledge and not small help by our British and Irish friends.

We are successful, as an example, when the prestigious British magazine "Diplomat", obtained, among others, by all the embassies and diplomatic offices in London, in its newest issue publishes an extensive article on the tourism potentials of post-conflict countries. The whole front page of that issue of "Diplomat" is adorned with by the photograph of the restored Old Bridge in Mostar with a sentence identical to the title of the well known composition "Bridge over Restless River".

We are successful because the mentioned article brings a statement by the B&H Ambassador appropriate for the occasion as well as a photograph of Mr. Jack Straw, the UK Foreign Affairs Secretary accompanied by Lord Ashdown and your ambassador to the UK promoting the tourism potentials of B&H by holding in her hand our first tourist guide book in English. For all the well intended persons it is more than a mere photograph. It is a message. A message of this country - to the world and to Bosnia and Herzegovina – about Bosnia and Herzegovina. And about its future.

We are successful because there has been an ever increasing number of such and similar examples over the recent months.

We shall finally be successful when B&H and all its citizens accept fully the common values of the European Union: respecting the human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law and human rights, rights of the minorities included ... and when we become full members of the European Union.

4. *Within the context of the previous question could you tell us, please, whether promotion of cultural specific features of Bosnia and Herzegovina (where art is one of the levers) could help better understanding by the local environment and in general better understanding among people of different cultural heritages.*

There is no doubt that any promotion of cultural, sports and other values and specific features contributes considerably to mutual appreciation, understanding and building of better and more meaningful relations between nations and states. Direct and/or indirect support by the B&H Embassy to the numerous events of this type best indicates how much significance I personally have attached to this type of B&H promotion. Apparently, B&H Ministry of Foreign Affairs was informed duly and on time according to the standard procedure of all the cultural, sports and other happenings involving our citizens, the unique ambassadors of B&H in the UK and Ireland.

5. *What are your suggestions for your successor, the next Ambassador?*

I have no special suggestions for my successor, as you call him. It is my wish that the next and every B&H ambassador after him should be better and more successful than his predecessor.

The thing you have not asked me but that I would like to say at the end is the following: It was a great honour and privilege for me to perform my duties of an Ambassador in two countries that are friends to B&H.

Before the approaching departure from this duty, leaving lasting pleasant memories, I would like to thank you on behalf of B&H the citizens the government and citizens of the United Kingdom and Ireland for their help in the post war restoration of our country and the strong support to the reforms implemented by us so that Bosnia and Herzegovina might fully enter the Union of European countries.

BEJAHAD 2004

Ove godine Bejahad je obilježio mali jubilej, peti rođendan. Organizacija besprekoma, učesnika sve više sa svih strana, program na zavidnom nivou i sve to na potki ponovnih viđenja sa starim prijateljima, upoznavanja i stvaranja novih prijateljstava. Zanimljivo je napomenuti da je ove jeseni program Bejahada privukao izuzetnu pažnju hrvatskih medija. Novinari, fotografi, pa i snimatelji hrvatske televizije bili su prisutni svakog dana.

Program zaista bogat i raznovrstan slijedi uobičajenu šemu: red plesova, red izložbi, promocija knjiga (jako naglašeno ove godine), red filmova, a meni najinteresantniji red predavanja i diskusija na aktualne osjetljive teme.

Novina u programu bile su predstave učenika prve jevrejske škole u Hrvatskoj i plesovi djece iz Novog Sada; bilo je simpatično i ljupko.

Kiša je omela izvođenje koncerta grupe Jewseri (čitaj kako ti se sviđa) na glavnom trgu, ali je Gradska galerija u kojoj je otvorena izložba slika Zlatka Baureka bila prepuna. Slike su neobične, a po riječima samog Zlatka, one su refleksija njegovih sjećanja na ratno djetinstvo; hljebovi plove zrakom, rijeka, mostovi, ljudske figure naduvane i nekako utopljenički sivkaste prisutne na svim slikama. Tradicionalno prisutni koreografrani plesovi na glavnom gradskom trgu privukli su, kao gotovo svaka aktivnost u javnim prostorima, lokano stanovništvo i preostale turiste.

Organizatori su nam priuštili rijetko zadovoljstvo da poslušamo predavanje Gyorgy Konrada, jednog od najzanimljivijih pisaca Mađarske, intelektualca visokog ranga, čovjeka koji se oglašavao i oglašava u svakoj prilici protiv kršenja ljudskih prava. Konrad je održao predavanje na temu «Uticaj jevrejske kulture na evropsku kulturu» na potpuno nekonvencionalan način, uključujući uzroke i posljedice istorijskih činilaca. Gotovo kao nastavak predavanja održan je okrugli sto sa temom «Židovi, Izrael, danas». Voditelji i govornici Gyorgy Konrad, David Filip, David Albahari i Žarko Puhovski. Neizbježno pitanje modernog antisemitizma u Evropi danas Konrad je nazvao boljim od onog koji poznajemo, bez naslija, bez zvanične podrške bilo koje evropske zemlje. Uprkos činjenici da je procenat Jevreja u Evropi pao na jednocifreni postotak, dakle iako je ova etnička grupa defakto bezopasna, antisemitizam postoji i razvija se na više načina, kao ekonomski, politički i vjerski. Pomenute su među ostalim i izjave Solženjicina po kojim su Jevreji uvijek kroz istoriju trovali ruske mužike, a i neposredno su odgovorni za ulazak SAD u II svjetski rat.

Jevreji se danas optužuju da su začelnici «svih zala koja su se u Evropi dogodila»: komunizma, Marksizma, globalizacije, imperijalizma i čega sve ne. Ima nešto u tome, zar ne?

Objektivno, kaže Puhovski, antiislamizam potiskuje antisemitizam u Evropi. No činjenica da se među evropskim Jevrejima nalaze istaknuti umjetnici, pisci, filozofi, ali i industrijski magnati održava antisemitizam na «zavidnom» nivou.

Na kraju Puhovski ponovo u focus postavlja odnos Jevreja u Izraelu i dijaspori prema palestinskom problemu pitajući se «Smijemo li imati simpatije za jačega? I da li Evropa danas u ovakvoj konstalaciji može funkcionisati kao integracija, kao zajednica, kao društvo.»

Nakon svega viđenog možemo slobodno reći da je Bejahad svakako jedan od događaja u savremenom evropskom jevrejstvu koji dobiva sve više publiciteta i pohvala sa svih strana.

Bulka Kamhi-Danon



BEYACHAD 2004

This year meant a small jubilee for Beyachad; it was its fifth birthday. The organization was perfect; the number of participants from all over the world is ever increasing; the programme at an enviable level; and all that interwoven with meeting old friends and forming new friendships. It should be mentioned that this year the programme of Beyahad attracted special attention by Croatian media. Journalists, photographers and Croatian Television were present every day.

The really rich programme followed the usual pattern: a layer of dances, a layer of exhibitions, launches of books (very evident this year), a layer of films, and most interesting for me a layer of lectures and discussion panels dealing with current sensitive topics.

New in the programme were the performances by the pupils of the first Jewish school in Croatia and the dances of children from Novi Sad. It was likable and charming.

Rain hindered the concert of The Jewseri Group on the main square, but The Town Gallery which displayed the exhibition of paintings by Zlatko Baurek was packed. The paintings are unusual and according to Zlatko they reflect his memories of his wartime childhood. Present on all the paintings are loafs of bread floating through the air; a river; bridges; human figures swollen, their grey colour indicating that they were drowned. Like all the other activities in the public

spaces the traditionally present choreographed dances on the main square have attracted the local population and other tourists.

The organisers gave us the singular pleasure to hear the lecture by Gyorgy Konrad, one of the most interesting Hungarian authors, a high class intellectual and a man who has been expressing his opposition to violation of human rights. Konrad's lecture on the theme of "The influence of Jewish culture on the European culture" was presented in a completely unconventional way,

taking account also of the causes and consequences of historical factors. Almost as a continuation of that lecture there was a panel discussion the theme of which was "Jews, Israel, Today". The presenters and the participants were Gyorgy Konrad, David, Filip, David Albahari and Žarko Puhovski. The inevitable issue of modern anti-Semitism in Europe today Konrad identified as better than the one we know, with no violence and with no official support by any European country. Despite the fact that the percentage of Jews in Europe has fallen to a single figure, namely although this ethnic group is de facto harmless, anti-Semitism exists and develops in different ways – as economical, political and religious. Among other statements there was a mention of Solzhenitsyn declarations according to which always through history, the Jews had poisoned the Russian muzhiks and are also directly responsible for the USA joining of the Second World War.

Today the Jews are blamed to be the initiators "of all the evils that have happened in Europe": Marxism, communism, globalization, imperialism and who knows what else. There is a point there. Is there not?

In fact, Puhovski said, anti-Islamism holds back anti-Semitism in Europe. The reality that there are eminent artists, authors and philosophers among the European Jews, but industrial magnates as well maintains anti-Semitism at an "enviable" level nonetheless.

At the end, Puhovski focused again on the attitude of Jews in Israel and the Diaspora to the Palestinian problem. He asked himself if we are allowed to have inclination towards the stronger. He also asked if Europe today in its present constellation can function as integration, a community, a society.

Taking into account everything seen we can say without hesitation that Beyachad is one of the events in the present European Jewry that gets an ever bigger publicity and has been appreciated from all sides.

By Bulka Kamhi-Danon



U vremenu od 1. do 9. oktobra održana je u Londonu kulturna manifestacija pod nazivom “Cultural Celebration of the Diaspora of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Bridges”. Kao što je poznato ovu manifestaciju je pokrenula i organizovala La Benevolencija uz podršku Bricks-a i Pro Arte. Njen uspješan tok i završetak pobudili su širu pažnju, pa i pažnju medija dijaspore u drugim zemljama. U ovom broju SaLon donosi nešto skraćeni tekst Miše Marića objavljen u Bosanskoj Pošti, listu BH dijaspore koji izlazi u Norveškoj.

PRAZNIK U LONDONU

Odziv je bio veličanstven i, po svemu sudeći, ova smotra bh. kulture i umjetnosti je najkompletnije i najreprezentativnije predstavljanje stvaralaštva bh. dijaspore u Velikoj Britaniji od rata do danas. Sadržaj ću prenijeti iz kataloga bogato i s ukusom ilustrovanog reprodukcijama bh likovnih, primjenjenih i filmskih umjetnika i prepoznatljivim biljezima zavičajne arhitekture u rasponu od Starog most preko Počitelja do sarajevske biblioteke. Autor kataloga je Vesna Petković.

Zavjesa je podignuta 1. a spuštena 9. oktobra u prostorima «Salon des arts», smještenog na elitnoj Queens Gate aveniji, u centru Londona, na čijoj su se sceni pet večeri predstavljali već afirmisani i dolazeći bh. umjetnici. Otvorenje je upriličeno uz likovnu postavku autora Dobrivoja Beljakašića, Željka Čorovića, Tamare Jovandić, Jelene Kalicin, Zlatana Pilipovića, Sonje Radan, Dragane Smart i Miroslava Smiljančića. Najvećim dijelom diplomanti Sarajevske likovne akademije s trenutnom londonskom adresom.

Na poetsko-literarnoj večeri, stihom i prozom, predstavili su se Mirza Fehimović, Idriz Saltagić, Vladimir Albahari i vaš dopisnik. Etela Pardo je pročitala dirljivo pismo pozdrava i podrške Miroslava Jančića, kojeg je bolest zadržala u Sarajevu, a potom odlomak iz jedne od 20 nedavno publikovanih Jančićevih priča pod nazivom «Bosna izvan sebe». Predstavila je i odsutnog Himzu Skorupana. Nije stigao iz Sarajeva. Pod P.S. za ovo veče čini mi se potrebnim dopisati da su autori, u obilju vazećih bh. jezika, stihove i prozu govorili i na engleskom. Veće klasične muzike pripalo je violinstkinji Tatjana Goldberg i pijanistkinji, Sanji Lagumdžija – Hadžić. Na repertoaru su bile Bethovenove romane, Fioco, Raff, Schubert... Ovaj slušalac muzike je ljubio Zaima, povremeno i rado se družio s Himzom i Halidom Bešlićem, uživao govoriti stihove s Montenom, uz čudesnu gitaru Ivana Kalcinea, flautu Muamera Kolukčije, a uvijek je bio ponosan kad sa mostarski il' sarajevski simfonijar, muzicirali Vivaldija, Čajkovskog, Smetanu.

Na filmskoj večeri, kratkim dokumentarnim i igranim filmovima predstavili su se Vesna Marić, Milan Babić, Zlatko Ivanišević i Galina Kalicin. Nakon projekcije upriličen je razgovor s autorima.

Svečana smotra stvaralaštva bh. dijaspore na ostrvu završena je koncertom tradicionalne bosanske pjesme i svjetskih evergrina. Nastupili su Alma Ferović, Vesna Urošević, Saša Kulidžan, Stuart Morley i Victor Mastoridis.

Ne pamtim, za ovo izbjegličkih godina, da se «ostrvska» Bosna i Hercegovina, u tolikom i tako reprezentativnom broju, okupila pod jedan krov, kao na otvorenju ove, dijasporni neophodne, smotre sstvaralaštva. Znan i neznan, drag zavičajni svijet, predstavnici domaćeg umjetničkog establišmenta, štampe, Home Office-a (Ministarstva unutrašnjih poslova), članovi diplomatskog kora predvođeni s osam ambasadora, prijatelji umjetnosti i prijatelji Bosne i Hercegovine ispunili su izložbeni prostor, pa čak i okolne, od hola do vrata. Otvarajući svečanost, pozdravila ih je i zahvalila na odzivu ambasadorice, Elvira Begović, koja je za nepune četiri godine zaslužno stekla poštovanje i sveopšte simpatije građana zemlje koju predstavlja, zvaničnog Londona i svjetske diplomatske kolonije u UK prestonici. Posebnu zahvalnost je iskazala četvorčlanom Organizacionom komitetu: Branko – Braci Danonu, predstavniku «The Friends of La Benevolencija». Vesni Petković, predstavnici «Pro Arte» kluba, Xenia Wilding, predstavnici dobrotorne organizacije «BRICKS» i Zack Malcomsonu, predstavniku «Salon des arts», koji su, uz podršku Ambasade BiH, najzastudniji «izvođači radova» na londonskim bh «Mostovima».

«Ubjedena sam», naglasila je ambasadorica Begović, «da će bh. slikari, muzičari, pjesnici, prozaisti, filmski autori i glumci upoznati vas s jedinstvenim duhom bh. naroda. Taj duh potiče iz zemlje smještene na raskršnicima različitih kultura i religija, gdje su različite civilizacije živjele kroz vjekove u toleranciji i međusobnom poštovanju ... Vjerujem da će ovaj projekat «Svečanosti kulture», pod jedinstvenim i simboličnim nazivom «Mostovi» unaprijediti kulturne veze i uspostaviti prisijske odnose prijateljstva i međusobnog poštovanja između BiH i UK.»

Sarajevski arhitekta, Braco Danon, «ambasador bh. kulture u sjeni», idejni začetnik stotine programa zavičajnih sadržaja i projektant ovog, kaže: «Od dolaska ovamo stalo mi je da dokažemo kako ne nosimo zavežljaj, nego jedan ljepši paket sa sobom. Mi ne želimo da se asimiliramo, jer bi nas to lišilo naših osobenosti. Mi želimo da se ravnopravno integrišemo u društvo u kojem živimo.»

Pred Smiljančićevim «Starim mostom» zatičem striju, njegovanu, elegantnu damu. Komentarise na engleskom: «Moj bože, kako se neko mogao držnuti da uništi ovu Ljepotu.» Vele mi da je jedn aod najpoznatijih engleskih slikarica, ime nisam upamtio. Supruga autoreva, Jadranka, bila mi je prva komšinica u Mostaru. Majka, Draga, veli, umrla prije

šest mjeseci. Divna je mati, čovjek i komšinica bila Draga Romano...

Mirza Begović me upoznaje sa hrvatskim ambasadorom, Zadrinimom, Joškom Paro. Obilazimo eksponate. Prijatan čovjek i razumije se u likovnosst. Kažem kako mi žao Lackovića, nedavno umro. I ambasador je ljubitelj naive. Pozivam ga u Exeter. Moj komšija, Bato Tomašević je vlasnik sjajne kolekcije nauvaca. Autor je monografije svih značajnih hrvatskih i ex-Yu naivnih slikara. Zna sve o Bati, rado bi došao da pogleda. Pohvalim mu se kako sam i sam bio vlasnik petnaestak skulptura bake Penauve. Baku obožava. Pričam mu o stariji. Kako sam je zvao moja baka i baka svih nas. Pisao katalog, otvarao izložbu. Savjetuje me da zabilježim sjećanja.

Jedno vitko, nasmijano, prelijepo djevojčice, hoda oko. Elvira me vodi do nje. «Ovo je Alma», predstavlja je. Čuli smo se telefonom kad je došla u London. Pranenu njenu, Eminu, Aleksa je uveo u pjesmu. Praunuka Eminina, Alma Ferović, Sarajka, magistrirala je pa nastavila ne Kraljevskoj muzičkoj akademiji. Sarajlija Dražen (Ilije) Simić i još neki mladi svijet se interesuje ko je. Objašnjavam važan, kao da sam i sam nešto zaslužan, a molim Mirzu, supruga Elvirinog, da nas fotografirše. Poslao bih unuku Emininom, a svom dragom prijatelju, Mugdimu Karabegu, u Čikago. Mirza fotografirše: u Exeteru ću zateći fotose. Mirza je jedan čestit drugar u kojeg se čovjek može pouzdati. Elvira me predstavlja egipatskom ambasadoru. Nije iznenađen kvalitetom postavke, ima uvid u bh. slikarstvo. Kažem mu kako je naš Mostarac, Salko Fejić, bio ambasador u njegovoj zemlji. I to zna. Sve čovjek zna ... Srećem Domeniku – Didiku Rakelić, uvijek jednako elegantnu i Zahu, uvijek jednako informisanog o svemu mostarskom kraj Neretve i o Mostaru «izvan sebe». Onda Gorana – Sohu Andrića. Taj nije čest. U biznisu je, stalno na putu. Sad uzео nov stan na Čelziju, jedna od najotmetnijih četvrti Londona, renovira po svom ćefu.

Supradan, nakon književne večeri, pozvao je društvo u restoran, želi da počasti. Goran je sa Mazoljice, Elvira s Brankovca, prvi komšiluk, a upoznali su se to veče u Londonu. Nije svijet mali. Svjet je čudo jedno veliko. A u tom velikom svijetu, nakon ove svetkovine, kao trska njezan narod zvani «bh. dijaspore», porastao je bar za dva koljenca.

Više se ne treba propinjati na prste da Englezima pogleda u oči.

Iz «Bosanske pošte» od 15. oktobra 2004

The event “Cultural Celebration of the Diaspora of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Bridges” took place in London from 1st to 9th of October 2004. As was already mentioned in our previous issue this was initiated and organised by La Benevolencija with the support of BRICKS and Pro Arte. Its successful course and end drew a wide attention not least the attention of the Diaspora in other countries. In this issue Salon brings a somewhat abbreviated article by Mišo Marić published in *Bosanska Pošta*, the paper of Bosnia and Herzegovina Diaspora published in Norway.

HOLIDAY IN LONDON

The response to this event was magnificent and it seems that this review of culture and creativity was the most complete presentation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Diaspora in United Kingdom from the war to these days. I will pass on the contents from the catalogue which was richly illustrated in good taste by reproductions of fine arts creations and well known land marks of homeland architecture, ranging from The Old bridge, through Počitelj to Sarajevo Library. The author of that catalogue is Vesna Petković.

The curtain went up on the 1st of October and it came down on the 9th of October in the premises of *Salon des arts* located in the elite Queens Gate Avenue in central London on the scene of which the already known and the coming artists of Bosnia and Herzegovina were performing. The opening was set up with the exhibition of the following authors: Dobrivoje Beljakašić, Željko Čorović, Tamara Jovandić, Jelena Kalicin, Zlatan Pilipović, Sonja Radan, Dragana Smart and Miroslav Smiljančić. Most of them graduated from Sarajevo Academy of Art with their present address in London.

Verse and prose at The Poetry and Literature Evening was presented by Mirza Fehimović, Idriz Saltagić, Vladimir Albahari and your reporter. Etela Pardo read a touching letter of greetings and support by Miroslav Jančić who stayed in Sarajevo due to poor health and later she read a fragment of one of his twenty recently published stories under the title “Bosnia in Britain”. She also presented to us Himzo Skorupan who was absent. He could not make it from Sarajevo. It seems to me that as a PS to that evening one should add that in the abundance of the current Bosnia and Herzegovina languages the authors read their poetry and prose in English as well. The classical music evening went to violinist Tatjana Goldberg and the pianist Sanja Lagumdžija-Hadžić. The programme included Beethoven romances, Fiocco, Raff, Schubert. ... The author of these lines as a music listener loved Zaim, occasionally and gladly socialised with Himzo and Halid Bešliagić, enjoyed telling his poetry in the company of Monteno, with the magic guitar of Ivan Kalcinea and flute of Muamer Kolukčija; and was always proud when the Mostar or Sarajevo symphony orchestras played Vivaldi, Tchaikovsky, Smetana. ...

During the short films evening we have seen the films by Vesna Marić, Milan Babić, Zlatko Ivanišević and Galina Kalcinea. Following the event discussion with the authors took place. The festive review of creativity of Bosnia and Herzegovina Diaspora on the island closed with a concert of traditional Bosnian songs and international evergreens. The performers

were Alma Ferović, Vesna Urošević, Saša Kulidžan, Stuart Morley and Victor Mastoridis.

During these exile years I cannot remember even one occasion when the” Bosnia and Herzegovina “islanders gathered in such a big and representative number under one roof as was the case at the opening of this review of creativity so crucial for the Diaspora. Known and unknown dear people from my home country, representatives of local arts establishment, press, Home Office, members of diplomatic corps led by eight ambassadors, friends of arts and friends of Bosnia and Herzegovina filled the exhibition area and even spilled over beyond it. Opening the festive event the guests were welcomed by the Ambassador Elvira Begović who thanked the audience for the response. During less than four years she deserved the respect and general fondness of the citizens of the country she represents, of the official London and international diplomatic colony in the UK capital. She expressed her particular thanks to the four members of the Organizing Committee: Branko-Braco Danon, representative of “La Benevolencija”; Vesna Petković, representative of “Pro Arte” Club; Xenia Wilding, representative of “BRICKS” charity organization; and Zack Malcomson, representative of “Salon des arts”, who with the support of B&H Embassy are the most deserving “contractors” on the London Bosnian and Herzegovian “Bridges”. “I am quite sure”, emphasized the Ambassador, Mrs. Begović, “that the painters, musicians, poets, prose writers, film authors and the actors will introduce you to the unique spirit of Bosnia and Herzegovina people. That spirit originates from a country located on the crossroad of cultures and religions whose different civilisations have lived for centuries in tolerance and mutual regard. ... I believe that this project of “Culture Celebration” under the unique title “Bridges” will promote the cultural links and establish closer relations of friendships and mutual regard between B&H and the UK.” Braco Danon, a Sarajevo architect, “the shadow ambassador for B&H culture”, who started hundreds of programmes linked to our homeland and whose brainchild is this project as well, said: “Since our arrival to London I was eager to show that we do not carry a bundle with us but a much prettier package. We do not wish to assimilate because this would deprive us of our distinctiveness. It is our wish to integrate on equal basis with the society in which we live and create.”

In front of the “The Old Bridge” by Miro Smiljančić I found an elegant elderly still good looking lady. Her comment in English was: “My God, how anybody could dare to destroy this beauty.” I was told later that she was one of the best known English painters. I cannot remember her name. Jadranka, Miro’s wife, was my next door neighbour in Mostar. Her mother Draga, Jadranka told me, had died six months earlier. A wonderful mother, human being and neighbour Draga Romano was.

Mirza Begović introduced me to the Croatian ambassador, Joško Paro from Zadar. A pleasant man who understands art. I mentioned that I am sorry about Lacković who had died recently. The ambassador likes naive art as well. I invited him to come to Exeter. My neighbour Bato Tomašević has a collection of naive paintings. He is the author of a monograph of all the major naive painters from Croatia and former Yugoslavia. The ambassador knew all about Bato and would like to come and see. I bragged that I used to have some sixteen sculptures by Granny Penauva. He adores her works. I told him things about the old lady. About the way I used to call her my granny and granny to all of us. I told him I wrote a catalogue, opened the exhibition. The ambassador advised me to note down my memories. I will accept that advice.

A slender, jolly and most beautiful young girl strolls around. Elvira took me to her. “This is Alma”, she introduced her. We talked on the phone when she came to London. Emina, her grate grandmother was brought into poetry by Aleksa. Emina’s great granddaughter, Alma Ferović from Sarajevo had her masters degree and then continued her studies at The Royal Academy of Music. Dražen, (the son of Ilija) Simić from Sarajevo and some other young people wanted to know who she was. I was explaining, putting on airs as if I was responsible in a way for it, in the meantime asking Mirza, Elvira’s husband, to take a picture of Alma and myself. I would send it to Mugdim Karabeg, Emina’s gradson, a dear friend of mine, living in Chicago. Mirza took the picture. I knew: I will find the photographs once back in Exeter. Mirza is a decent friend a man can trust. Elvira introduced me to the Ambassador of Egypt. He was not surprised by the quality of the display. He has an insight into BH painting. I mentioned that our man from Mostar was the Ambassador to his country. He knew that as well. The man knew everything. ... I met Domenika – Didika Rakelić, elegant as always and Zaho, informed as always about everything in Mostar by Neretva River and also “Mostar in Britain”. Then I met Goran – Sohu Andrić. One cannot see him often. He is very much in business and travels a lot. Now he has a new flat in Chelsea, a posh area of London, and he refurbishes it to his liking.

A day after the literature evening he invited some people to a restaurant. He wanted to entertain. Goran is from Mazoljice, Elvira from Brankovca, almost in neighbourhood, but they happened to meet for the first time only that evening in London. The world is not small. The world is a big wonder. In that big world, after this festival, people called “B&H Diaspora” as tender as a came, grew by two feet at least.

There is no need any more to stand on toes to look into the eyes of the English people. From “Bosanska pošta” of 15 October 2004

Kako je Mostar zaslužio povelju grada – pravедnika

..... Početkom 1941. godine u Mostar je najprije stigla jedna grupa austrijskih Jevreja, mahom intelektualaca, koji su nastojali preko naše zemlje i preko Grčke dokopati se sjeverne Afrike, gdje su bili Englezi. Naša porodica je prihvatila jedan bračni par na stan i hranu. Oni su nam detaljno ispričali o svim strahotama koje nacisti rade Jevrejima. Daljnja sudbina te brojne grupe, nije mi poznata, ali izgleda da nisu uspjeli stići do Grčke. Pod utiskom noninih "prebiskazanja" i saznanja o zlodjelima što ih nacisti čine Jevrejima, moja porodica je sa smrtnim strahom dočekala dolazak okupatora u Mostar, aprila 1941. godine. Kasno noću neko je zakucao na ulazna vrata, oprezno sam se primakao vratima i vidio sam da su to komšije, mladići Ibro i Remzija Čišić. Prilikom ulaska u našu kuću Ibro je rekao: "Znamo, drage komšije kako vam je, mi smo došli da budemo sa vama, i samo preko nas mrtvih moći će neko da vas dirne." Šta sam tom prilikom osjećao i doživljavao ne da se opisati. Iako je i dalje bio prisutan strah, nestalo je osjećanja napuštenosti, bespomoćnosti, osjetio sam se i sretnim što živim sa tako plemenitim i divnim ljudima.

Sretna okolnost je bila da su u Mostar ušli italijanski vojnici, koji su bili tolerantni prema Jevrejima. U prvo vrijeme u gradu je bilo dvovlašće: vojnu vlast imali su Italijani, a civilnu je držala takozvana "Nezavisna država Hrvatska", ustaško-nacistačka tvorevina. Počela su masovna oduvođenja i ubijanja Srba. Tada je uhapšen i ubijen izvjestar broj Jevreja - ing. Levi, muž poznate modistice Side Levi, Herman Altkorn, jedan od sinova Tereze i Gavre Pape, i još neki. Neretva je nosila leševe ubijenih žrtava.....

Novi "država" je za Jevreje uvela nove zakone i propise. Svi Jevreji stariji od 10 godina morali su nositi žutu okruglu značku sa slovom Ž (židov); sva nepokretna imovina Jevreja postala je vlasništvo NDH-e (Nezavisne države Hrvatske): stariji-odrasli Jevreji morali si ići na prisilni rad. Mom ocu je oduzet dućan sa svom robom, zatim je postavljn "povjerenik" od strane ustaških vlasti, a otac je morao raditi u oduzetom dućanu, bez ikakve nadoknade; to je bio drugi vid prisilnog rada. Majka je određena da radi u prostorijama njemačke organizacije TOT, kao čistačica. To je donekle bila i sreća, jer je nisu tukli, pa ni maltretirali, što se ne može reći za one koji su bili određeni da rade na drugim mjestima. Po završetku čišćenja prostrija, kućepazitelj bi pregledao kako je sve urađeno, redovno bi bio zadovoljan maminim radom i puštao je da ide kući. Majka je govorila da su bili korektni prema njoj.

Tokom 1940/41. školske godine, završio sam i prvi razred gimnazije. Kada je trebalo da se upišem u drugi razred, na vratima gimnazije osvanula je velikim slovima ispisana obavijest: SRBIMA, ŽIDOVIMA, CIGANIMA I PSIMA ULAZ ZABRANJEN! Mostarsilka gimnazija je bila čuvena, u gradu je uživala veliki ugled, mnogi su sanjali da postanu njeni djaci, a eto za mene je bila zatvorena Jevreji su postali ljudi bez ikakvih prava i zaštite, ljudi van zakona, koje je mogao svako maltretirati, opljačkati ili ubiti bez ikakve odgovornosti. Zabranjeno nam je bilo posjećivanje kulturnih ili zabavnih priredaba i ulazak u te ustanove; bilo nam je zabranjeno i putovanje bilo gdje ili bilo kojim prevoznim sredstvom. Sve nedaće i zla lakše sam podnosio, jer sam imao osjećaj da većina mojih vršnjaka suosjećja sa mnom i spremni su mi pružiti svaku pomoć. Zbog toga vrlo tužno i bolno sam doživio kada mi je jedan školski kolega rekao: "Cezo zašto ti ne nosiš znak sa slovom Ž, ja znam da ti imaš više od 10 godina!"

Na našu sreću, Italijani su postepeno sve više i više sužavali ovlaštenja ustaških vlasti, tako da bar životi Jevreja a i Srba više nisu bili ugroženi. Prestao je prisilni rad, ali oduzeta imovina i važno dućan sa robom - nije vraćen. Bilo je nažno što smo ponovo mogli ići u sinagogu što je ljudima mnogo značilo. Mi u Mostaru smo sinagogu zvali templ, a mostarska templ-sinagoga bila je sagrađena početkom 20. vijeka; mostarski Jevreji bili su ponosni na tu lijepu, skladnu građevinu.

U tom ludom ratnom vremenu bilo je neko čudno viševlašće u Mostaru. Glavnu pa i odlučujuću riječ imali su itilijanski okupatori. U prvjoj polovini 1942. godine, pored ustaša, pojavili su se u Mostaru i četnici Draže Mihajlovića....

U područja pod italijanskom upravom počeli su pristizati Jevreji iz raznih dijelova bivše Jugoslavije, jer su u tim područjima imali određenu zaštitu i životnu sigurnost. Najviše došljaka je bilo iz Sarajeva. Bježali su od nacisti, njihovog terora, oduvođenja u koncentracione logore i ubijanja. Za svako putovanje trebala je propusnica - vrsta putnog dokumenta, izdana od ustaških vlasti. Bila je vrlo razvijena mreža falsifikatora propusnica, jer od posjedovanja propusnice ovisio je i život. Samo sa propusnicom (koja je glasila na neko lažno ime, nekog muslimana ili katolika), moglo se pobjeći iz Sarajeva i doći "u luku spasa" - u Mostar. Žene Jevrejke često su dolazile u Mostar pod zarom ili feredom, kao muslimanke, dok su muškarci sa kovrdžavom jevrejskom kosom imali muke da tu kosu raznim tehnikama isprave da bi manje ličili na Jevreje. U Mostar su Jevreji dolazili na razne načine, ali daleko najviše željeznicom. Često su ustaške patrolе okrivale Jevreje prilikom putovanja u Mostar. Posebno je rigorozna kontrola bila u stancici Konjic; tu su, na žalost, mnogi otkriveni, uhapšeni i daljnja sudbina im je

bila u glavnom tragična. Nije bio rijedak slučaj da se jedan član porodice uspješno dokopa Mostara, a drugi da bude uhapšen. Očev brat Rafo je krenuo onako na sreću i uz veliki rizik u Sarajevo da nekim poznanicima odnese propusnice za dolazak u Mostar. Pri povratku iz Sarajeva, u Konjicu, otkriju njega i još jednoga njegovog saputnika da su Jevreji i odmah uhapsu i sprovedu u policijsku stanicu . Zahvaljujući njegovoj izuzetnoj duhovitosti i snalžljivosti, stric Rafo se uspio zvuci iz kandža ustaške policije, dok njegov saputnik, nažalost, nije bio te sreće.

Po slobodnoj procjeni, ovako ili onako, u područja pod italijanskom upravom, prvenstveno u Mostar, stiglo je nekoliko hiljada Jevreja. U samom Mostaru je prije početka II svjetskoga rata živjelo svega nekoliko stotina Jevreja. Po sjećanju, to su bile porodice: Altarac, Altkorn, Atijas, Bergman, Brodman, Danon, Fromer, Finci, Gaon, Hajon, Kabiljo, Konforti, Kon, Koen, Lajhner, Levi, Mandlbaum, Papo, Perera, Romano, Salom, Širc i Tijano. Bili su mahom trgovci, zanatlije, ugostitelji, a bio je i izvjestar broj intelektualca- novinara, pravnika, inženjera, bankara, činovnika, doktora. Rabin je bio David Perera. Nije bilo jako bogatih, a ni jako siromašnih porodica, svi su bili ponosni na svoj grad Mostar i na građansku pripadnost tvi sredini na bistroj rijeci Neretvi.....

Svi Jevreji Mostara, prihvatili su koliko je više moguće izbjeglica, koristivši svaki kutak u kući, a kada bi iskoristili sve svoje smještajne mogućnosti zamolili bi komšije da pomognu da se nadje kakav takav krov nad glavom stalno pridoлаzećim Jevrejima - izbjeglicama. Mi smo primili dvije četveročlane izbjegličke porodice, naše rodake - prodcu Alberta Danona iz Sarajeva i porodicu Katan -

Veliki broj Jevreja koji je došao u Mostar našao je na vrlo topal prijem i pružana im je na razne načine pomoć od strane mnogih građana Mostara svih vjera....

Zbog pružanja prijateljske, svestrane pomoći Jevrejima, a posebno mnogobrojnim pridošlim izbjeglicama tokom II svjetskog rata, grad Mostar je dobio najveće israelsko priznanje - POVELJU PRAVEDNIKA.....

.. Cezar Sadika Danon - izvod iz neobjavljenog rukopisa

How Mostar Deserved the Charter of a Righteous Town

... It all started early in 1941 when a group of Austrian Jews, most of them intellectuals, arrived in Mostar in an attempt to get through our country and Greece to North Africa where the English were. Our family provided lodgings and food to a married couple. They described in detail all the horrors brought on the Jews by the Nazis. I am not aware of the later destiny of that numerous group, but it seems that they never made it to Greece. Under the impression of Nona's predictions and of what we had learnt about the atrocities inflicted on Jews, my family was in mortal fear when the occupiers entered Mostar in April 1941. Late at night somebody knocked on our door. Cautiously I came to the window and saw that these were our neighbours the young men Ibro and Remzija Čišić. Coming in Ibro said, "We know, dear neighbours, how you feel. We came to be with you and only over our dead bodies people can do you any harm." It is difficult to describe how I felt then. Although the fear was still there the feeling of desertedness and helplessness disappeared and I sensed happiness because I lived with such kind and wonderful people.

As it happened Mostar was occupied by Italian army, who were much more tolerant towards the Jews. The first period was marked by a dual rule: the military power was held by the Italians and the civil by the so called "Independent State of Croatia", an Ustasha Nazi construction. Mass imprisonments and killing of Serbs started. At that time a certain number of Jews was also killed. Among them engineer Levi, the husband of the well known milliner Sida Levi, Herman Altkorn, one of the sons of Tereza and Gavro Papo, and some others. The bodies of the killed victims were carried by the waters of Neretva River.

The new state introduced new laws and regulations for the Jews. It was compulsory for all the Jews above the age of ten to wear a round yellow badge with the letter Ž (Židov – Jew) on it. All Jewish estates became the property of NDH (Nezavisna Država Hrvatska – The Independent State of Croatia). The adult Jews were compelled to forced labour. My father's shop with all its merchandise was confiscated from him, than an "agent" was appointed by the Ustasha authorities and without being paid my father had to work in that shop; that was yet another form of forced labour. My mother was allocated to work as a cleaner in the premises of the German organization TOT. It was good luck in those circumstances because she was not beaten nor abused, something that happened quite often to those who were allocated to work at other places. Afer she would complete her cleaning duties a caretaker would inspect her work and as he would always be satisfied with it he would let her go home. My mother used to say that they always behaved correctly with her.

I completed my first grade of the secondary school in 1940/41, and it was time for me to enrol

into the second grade. On the door of the school an proclamation written in large letters read: ENTRENCE FOREBIDDEN TO SERBS, JEWS, GIPSIES AND DOGS! The Mostar high School was well known and it enjoyed high reputation in the town. Many had dreamed to become its pupils, but it was closed for me. Jews became people with neither rights nor protection, they were outlawed and everybody had the right to hurt them, plunder them or even kill them without being accountable for that. We were not allowed to go to any culture or social event, we were also not allowed to travel anywhere by any means of transport. It was easier for me to bear all these misfortunes because I was under the impression that most of my friends sympathized with me and that they were ready to offer me help if needed. That is why I felt so depressed and hurt when one of my fellow pupils told me, "Cezar, why don't you wear the badge with the letter Ž on it, I know that you are older than 10!"

Fortunately the Italians had been gradually decreasing the powers of the Ustasha authorities so that at least the lives of Jews and Serbs were not threatened any more. Forced labour had stopped but the confiscated property, our shop with all the merchandise amongst others had not been returned. The fact that we could go to the synagogue again meant a lot to the people. In Mostar we used to call the synagogue a temple. The Mostar temple – synagogue was built early in the 20th century and the Mostar Jews were proud of that pleasing, gracious building.

During that mad war period a strange polyarchy prevailed in Mostar. The most important and decisive voice was that of the Italian occupiers. In addition to the Ustashes the Chetniks of Draža Mihajlović appeared in Mostar in the first half of 1942.

Jews from different parts of former Yugoslavia started appearing in the regions under Italian administration because there they had a certain degree of protection and their lives were safe. Most of these people came from Sarajevo. They were fleeing the Nazis, their terror, transport to concentration camps and killings. A pass, or a type of travel document issued by Ustashe authorities, was needed for any travel. A network of people forging the passes was well developed as lives depended on the possession of one. Only with a pass (with a false name of a Muslim or a Catholic) it was possible to fled Sarajevo and come to the port of salvation – Mostar. Jewish women frequently came to Mostar covered under veils like Muslims, while men with curled Jewish hair had problems straightening it using various techniques in order to disguise their look. The Jews would come to Mostar in different ways, but mostly by railway. Ustasha patrols would frequently detect them on their way to Mostar. Control was especially rigorous in Konjic station; many were sadly discovered there, arrested and their destinies after that were tragic in most cases. Very often one member of the family would manage to get to Mostar while the other would be arrested. My father's brother Rafo tried his luck when he went to Sarajevo to take passes to some friends for their travel to Mostar. In Konjic, on the way back from Sarajevo, he and another fellow passenger were discovered to be Jews and were immediately arrested and taken to the police station. Thanks to his exceptional sense of humour and wit my Uncle Rafo managed to escape the claws of the Ustasha police while his fellow passenger unfortunately did not have the same luck.

According to a free estimate several thousands of Jews came in this way or another to the regions under the Italian administration, primarily to Mostar. Before The Second World War only a few hundred Jews lived in Mostar. As far as I can remember the following families lived there: Altarac, Altkorn, Atijas, Bergman, Brodman, Danon, Fromer, Finci, Gaon, Hajon, Kabiljo, Konforti, Kon, Koen, Lajhner, Levi, Mandlbaum, Papo, Perera, Romano, Salom, Širc and Tijano. They were mainly merchants, craftsmen or in catering occupations, but there were some highly educated professions as well: journalists, lawyers, engineers and doctors. David Perera was the rabbi. There were no very rich or very poor people. All of them were proud of their town of Mostar and the fact that they belonged to that municipal surrounding on the clear waters of Neretva River.

All Mostar Jews accommodated as many refugees as they could, making use of every corner of their houses and when running short of space even turning for help to their neighbours in order to find roof for the continuously arriving Jewish refugees. We took two families each of four members who were our relatives. They were the family of Albert Danon from Sarajevo and the Katan family.

The large number of Jews who came to Mostar was warmly received and helped by many Mostar citizens of all religions.

To acknowledge the friendly comprehensive help that Mostar extended to the Jews especially to the large number of refugees who arrived there during the Second World War Israel has bestowed on it its highest recognition – THE CHARTER OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Cezar, Sadik, Danon – excerpt from a non published manuscript



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“Gori vatra“ i u našem Klubu

U dosadašnjim aktivnostima Kluba pokušaji sa filmskim projekcijama davali su promjenljive, najblaže rečeno polovične razulate. Ponekad je bio slab ton, ponekad slika, ponekad nije bilo posjete jer nije pravo vrijeme, ponekad opet nije bilo završetka filma - i sve tako “krupne” prepreke. Izbor da se zajednički odgleda film Pjera Žalica “Gori vatra” bio je, međutim, pun pogodak. Posjeta u Klubu, tema filma, intenzitet pažnje tokom projekcije bili su vrijedni napora da se ova akcija pripremi. Ni ipak manjkav ton kopije kasete nije umanjio doživljaj predstave. To je sasvim i razumljivo: ta tužna lokalna priča osvojila je simpatije gledalaca u Zagrebu, Beogradu, Sarajevu, a okitila se sa nekih petnaestak filmskih nagrada. Otuda je razumljivo da je osjetljivost posjetilaca u klubu, ljudi mahom deceniju i po odvojenih od svoga podnebljiva zatrepčila i posebnim intenzitetom.

Sam Žalica, u jednom intervjuu, kaže da je njegov film priča o ljudima koji su i u najnevjerojatnijim uslovima spremni da sačuvaju nadu i da se na svoj način bore. “Kroz slike svakodnevnog života koji je gori nego što ljudi zaslužuju, želio sam da pokažem one jednostavne trenutke sreće i prijateljstva koji im nedostaju, na one obične stvari za koje su oni ni krivi ni dužni prisiljeni da se bore i često moraju da se ponižavaju da bi ostvarili minimum predušlova za budućnost.”

Ali ono što prvlači ljude, pa i posjetiocce našeg kluba, jeste osobina tih Žalicih junaka da, uprkos svemu i bez obzira odakle dolaze, opet imaju neke drske snage da ostanu duhoviti, da odreguju na sve što sadrži iskricu humora, poruge, dosjetke. Kad se pogleda film o tima ljudima, lišenim zapravo svake šanse, ostaje da je ta duhovitost jedina preostala životna energija koja ih održava. Priča o maloj bosanskoj kasabi i, u koju treba da stigne predsjednik SAD Bil Klinton, je podesan okvir da se ta stvarnost ispolji ne toliko tragično, nego kao tužna komedija koja izaziva i smjeh i tugu, divljenje i saosjećanje.

Pribilježio U.M.

In memoriam

Miroslav Jančić

Smrću Miroslava - Mire Jančića prestaje jedan nadasve aktivan život i veoma raznovrsan i plodotvoran angažman.

Rodjen je u Sarajevu 1935 godine, gdje je završio školovanje i rano se opredijelio za novinarstvo. Počeo je u sarajevskom “Oslobodjenju”, a uskoro je postao dopisnik toga lista iz Londona; po povratku se njegov interes proširio. Pisao je drame (Bosanski kralj, Grešni Erceg) koje su izvodjene na scenama bosansko-hercegovačkih pozorišta; pisao je romane (Tvrtko, Crni sine, Svitac), ogledao se u publicistici (Kako sam izdao nacionalnu stvar). Stigao se baviti i politikom i različitim angažmanima u domenu kulture i kulturne politike. Bio je direktor drame Narodnog pozorišta u Sarajevu, podpredsjednik grada Sarajeva, zatim član Predsjedništva Socijalističkog saveza Bosne i Hercegovine. U dva potpuno različita navrata obavljao je posao portparola u Sarajevu: u civilizacijskom zenitu rodnog Sarajeva bio je portparol XIV zimskih olimpijskih igara, a početkom rata bio portparol vlade u Sarajevu, “portparol pakla”, kako je to nazvao naslovom svoje knjige. Stigao je baviti se i diplomatijom: Zadnje dane SFRJ proveo je kao njen ambasador u Gani.

Rat i njegove reperkusije snažno su uticale na sadržaj i intenzitet književne produkcije Miroslava Jančića. U tom vremenu objavio je dvije knjige memoarske strukture - “Portparol pakla” i “Posljednji ambasador”, zatim je, težeći da adekvatno reaguje na tragičnu sudbinu njegove zemlje neočekivano, već kao zreo pisac, počeo pisati, političku i refleksivnu poeziju - pisao je ponekad na engleskom pa prepjevavao na materinji jezik ili obrnuto. Tako je potreba da reaguje na dramatično zbivanja potakla možda najplodniji period njegovog literarnog stvaralaštva

Tokom svoga boravka u Londonu vrlo aktivno je učestvovao u raznovrsnim aktivnostima “La Benevolencije”; tu je bio rado vidjen drug, zemljak i gost, najviše promocoja njegovih knjiga iz zadnjeg perioda obavljeno je u našem klubu i tu će ostati u živom sjećanju svih onih koji su ga znali susretali.

Milan Uzelac

“Fire is Burning“ in our Club as well

So far the results of our attempts to screen a film in the club were varied to put it mildly. The tone was poor at times, the picture was poor at other times; there were occasions when the visit was low because the time was not suitable or the end of the tape was missing – all of these were “big” obstacles. The choice to view together “Fire is burning”, a film by Pjer Žalica was nevertheless a hit. The number of visitors, the topic of the film and the intensity of attention were worth the effort to prepare this action. Even though the tone was not of the best quality the experience of the show was not diminished. It is completely comprehensible: viewers in Zagreb, Belgrade and Sarajevo liked the sad local story and the film was awarded some fifteen film prizes. This explains the intensive sensitivity of our Club viewers, people separated from their environment for almost a decade and a half now.

In an interview Žalica said that his film is a story about people ready even under most incredible circumstances to keep hoping and to fight in their special way. “Through images of everyday life, much worse than people deserve to live, I wanted to show the simple moments of happiness and friendship they miss, those basic things which they are forced to fight for with no fault of their own and are often pushed to degrade themselves in order to realize the minimum of prerequisites for the future.

The thing that appeals to people, visitors to our Club among others, is the feature of Žalica’s characters that regardless of everything and of the place that they come from they still have some arrogant strength to keep to their sense of humour and react to anything with even the least spark of humour, mockery and witticism. Seeing the film about these people deprived of any chance for proper living it becomes clear that sense of humour is the only remaining life energy sustaining them. The story of a small Bosnian town expecting Bill Clinton, the USA president, to visit it is a suitable framework to express that reality, not so much as a tragedy but as a sad comedy bringing about laughter and sadness, admiration and sympathy.

Noted by: U.M.

In memoriam

Miroslav Jančić

The death of Miroslav Jančić brought to a stop a primarily active life of highly diversified and fruitful interests.

He was born in Sarajevo in 1935, where he completed his education and early in his age he decided to go for journalism. He started his career “Oslobodenje”, a Sarajevo paper, and soon became its correspondent from London. Coming back to Sarajevo his interests became broader. He wrote plays (The Bosnian King, The Sinful Erceg) which were performed on the stages of B&H theatres; he wrote novels (Tvrtko; Disgraced Son, The Firefly); he showed his abilities in reporting (How I Betrayed the National Issue). He found time to be involved in politics and in different activities in culture and culture politics. He was The Director of Drama in Sarajevo National Theatre, The Vice President of Sarajevo City, later a member in the Presidency of B&H Socialist Alliance. On two completely separate occasions he performed the job of Spokesman in Sarajevo; during the civilisation zenith of his native Sarajevo he was

the Spokesman of the XIV Winter Olympic Games and early during the war he was the Spokesman of the Government in Sarajevo, “The Hell Spokesman”, as he described it by the title of his book. He found time also to go in for diplomacy as well. He spent the final days of SFR of Yugoslavia as its ambassador in Ghana.

The war and its repercussions had a strong effect on the contents and intensity of Miroslav Jančić literary production. During that period he published two books of memoirs by their structure – “The Hell Spokesman” and “The Last Ambassador”; later on as a mature author and aspiring to react in an adequate way to the tragic destiny of his country he unexpectedly he started writing political and reflexive poetry – there were times when he wrote in English and later wrote its version on his mother tongue or vice versa. Thus the need to react to the drama in real life prompted the probably most fruitful period in his literary creativity.

During his stay in London he was very active in the various actions of “La Benevolencija”; he was an appreciated friend, compatriot and guest here, launch of most of his books from the last period was in our club and he will remain in vivid memories of those who knew him and who met him.

Milan Uzelac



