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Gavro Schwartz, Hrvatska

Časopis za židovsku kulturu, civilizaciju i povijest.
Godina 8, broj 29, Zagreb, siječanj 2023. Izlazi četiri puta godišnje.

TEMA BROJA: SINAGOGE I IDENTITETI

THEME OF THE ISSUE: SYNAGOGUES AND IDENTITIES



THE VOICE

of B'nai B'rith



Gavro Schwartz, Croatia

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Časopis *Glasnik B'nai B'rith* pokrenut je 2016. godine kao digitalni časopis s fokusom na židovsku kulturu, civilizaciju, povijest, kao i aktivnosti židovskih zajednica i pojedinaca te udruge B'nai B'rith u Hrvatskoj. Časopis izlazi četiri puta godišnje u dvojezičnom formatu, na hrvatskom i engleskom jeziku, a svi su brojevi dostupni na <https://www.bnaibrith.hr/hr/>. Svrha časopisa je ukazati na doprinos židovstva u razvoju hrvatske te europske kulture i civilizacije, povezati židovsku i opću javnost, kao i osigurati kontinuitet komunikacije između židovskih zajednica u Hrvatskoj i inozemstvu. Današnji suradnici uključuju judaiste, izraeliste, povjesničare, teoretičare umjetnosti i stručnjake za različita područja iz Hrvatske, Austrije, Indije, Izraela, Amerike, Poljske, Brazila i drugih zemalja.

The Voice of B'nai B'rith was started in 2016 as a digital magazine focusing on Jewish culture, civilization, history, as well as the activities of Jewish communities and individuals and the B'nai B'rith association in Croatia. The magazine is published four times a year in bilingual format, in Croatian and English, and all issues are available at <https://www.bnaibrith.hr/hr/>. The main objective is to point out the contribution of Judaism in the development of Croatian and European culture and civilization, to connect the Jewish and general public, as well as to ensure the continuity of communication between Jewish communities in Croatia and abroad. Today's contributors include scholars from areas of Jewish Studies, Israel Studies, historians, art theorists and experts in various fields from Croatia, Austria, India, Israel, America, Poland, Brazil and other countries.

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Paula Rem, urednica

Uz dvadeset deveti broj **Glasnika B'nai B'rith**



Poštovani čitatelji, poštovane čitateljice,

Ulazimo u osmu godinu izlaženja časopisa **Glasnik B'nai B'rith**.

Protekli mjeseci bili su veoma plodni za mnoge židovske zajednice, a ovaj broj časopisa nastojat će uhvatiti barem dio te atmosfere. Nastupila je nova godina u židovskom kalendaru – a nekoliko mjeseci kasnije i u svjetovnom – a nadajmo se da će se razvijati jednako dobro kao i prethodna. Proslavili smo također Sukkot, Yom Kippur i Hanuku – praznike zajedničke svim Židovima u svijetu, koji svjedoče o našoj povezanosti.

Catherine Szkop i Deborah Samuel odводе nas u Poljsku i Indiju svojim tekstovima koji svjedoče kako je židovski identitet vezan uz sinagoge kao mjesta molitve – ali postoji i veći aspekt židovskog identiteta koji nadilazi konkretan prostor. Catherine Szkop donosi izvrstan pregled krakovskih sinagoga, svojevrsan vodič svakome tko bi se našao u gradu – a Deborah Samuel odvođi nas čak u daleku Indiju, gdje su nekoć brojne židovske zajednice ostavile iza sebe mnogo značajnih tragova. Ovi tekstovi, bogati

fotografijama, odlično ilustriraju dva različita svijeta – europski i azijski, poljski i indijski – nastavljajući time temu o sinagogama.

Što se tiče lokalne poveznice s tematom, Tomislav Vuković i Lavoslav Špicer pišu o đakovačkoj i slavonskobrodskoj sinagogi, podsjećajući nas na vremena kad su ti gradovi imali snažne i velike židovske zajednice. Ne samo Poljska i Indija – već i hrvatski gradovi – nekad su imali mnogo veće židovske zajednice nego sad. Pa ipak, nije sve crno – štoviše, sve dok postoje male grupice zainteresiranih pojedinaca – naše će zajednice opstati. Tomu svjedoče izvještaji o aktivnostima u našim zajednicama.

Dugogodišnji urednik časopisa prof. Darko Fischer piše o Tjednu Izraela u Zagrebu. Ovaj broj također donosi prikaz plesne predstave “Sic transit gloria mundi” te prikaz povijesno značajne predstave “Brundibar”, koja se održava na lokaciji koncentracijskog logora Jasenovac, kao i osvrt na dokumentarni film “Mauthausen – dva života”, koji tematiziraju Holokaust.

Paula Rem, editor

Editorial to the 29th Issue of *The Voice of B'nai B'rith*



Dear readers,

We are entering the eighth year of publication of the *Voice of B'nai B'rith*.

The past months have been very fruitful for many Jewish communities, and this issue of the magazine will try to capture at least a part of that atmosphere. A new year has begun in the Jewish calendar - and a few months later in the secular one - and let's hope that it will develop as well as the previous one. We also celebrated Sukkot, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah - holidays common to all Jews in the world, which testify to our connection.

Catherine Szkop and Deborah Samuel take us to Poland and India with their texts that testify that Jewish identity is tied to synagogues as places of prayer - but there is also a larger aspect of Jewish identity that goes beyond a concrete space. Catherine Szkop provides an excellent overview of Krakow's synagogues, a kind of guide for anyone who happens to be in the city - and Deborah Samuel takes us even to distant India, where once numerous Jewish communities left behind many significant traces. These texts, rich in photographs, perfectly illustrate

two different worlds - European and Asian, Polish and Indian - thus continuing the theme of synagogues.

As for the local link to the topic, Tomislav Vuković and Lavoslav Špicer write about the synagogues in Đakovo and Slavonski brod, reminding us of the times when these cities had strong and large Jewish communities. Not only Poland and India - but also Croatian cities - once had much larger Jewish communities than now. And yet, not everything is black - indeed, as long as there are small groups of interested individuals - our communities will survive. This is evidenced by reports on activities in our communities.

Long-time magazine editor prof. Darko Fischer writes about the Week of Israel in Zagreb for this issue. This issue also features a presentation of the dance performance "Sic transit gloria mundi" and a presentation of the historically significant stage show "Brundibar", which takes place at the location of the Jasenovac concentration camp, as well as a review of the documentary film "Mauthausen - two lives", which focuses on the Holocaust.

Catherine Szkop

Tornjevi, ne tragovi: Krakow, grad sedam sinagoga

Catherine Szkop (*1997, Michigan / SAD) pripada prvoj generaciji poljskih Židova u SAD-u. Diplomirala je na Sveučilištu Michigan (*Go Blue!*) i Hebrejskom sveučilištu u Jeruzalemu, gdje stječe master diplomu iz judaistike. Njezin je istraživački fokus na proučavanju srednjovjekovne i moderne poljske židovske povijesti i kulture. Trenutno radi za Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM), pokret aktivan diljem svijeta i na internetu s ciljem suzbijanja antisemitizma, u Odjelu za partnerstvo te Odjelu za diplomaciju.

Sedam. Siedem. Ševa.

Danas se u Krakovu nalazi sedam sinagoga. Taj grad ima jednu od najstarijih židovskih zajednica u Europi. U tom gradu, židovska populacija nekoć je činila 25% ukupnog stanovništva. Židovska zajednica održavala je i punila sedam sinagoga različitih tokova štovanja za šabat, praznike, dnevne molitve, događaje u zajednici, brit milot, bar mitzvot i sve u između. Jedna od najvjerojatnijih spoznaja, barem za mene kao turista u obilasku sinagoge u Krakovu tijekom Festivala židovske kulture 2019., jest da su sve te sinagoge udaljene jedna od druge na nekoliko minuta hoda. Sama ova činjenica svjedoči o nekoć velikoj, uglednoj i uspješnoj židovskoj zajednici koja je nekoć živjela u drevnoj prijestolnici Poljske. Pridružite mi se u pregledu krakovskih sinagoga s kratkim povijesnim osvrtima.

High Synagogue (16.stoljeće)

U vrijeme kada je ova sinagoga osnovana, bila je najviše mjesto molitve za



High Synagogue, ulaz, 2019.

Izvor: Catherine Szkop

židovsku zajednicu u gradu, posebno imajući u vidu da je određena prostorija za molitvu bila na drugom katu i zahtijevala je da se vjernici popnu na jedan kat da bi došli do svetišta. Tijekom Drugog svjetskog rata, invazione nacističke snage uništile su većinu interijera, sačuvavši samo odabrani broj murala na zidovima. Danas

je ova sinagoga neaktivna i otvara se samo za određene obilaskе, kao i druge unaprijed dogovorene posjete.

Sinagoga Izaak (17.stoljeće)

Nazvana je po velikodušnom ban- karu koji je sinagogu darovao svojoj zajednici, Izaaku Jakubowiczu, sinagoga Izaak danas je dom i opslužuje današnju zajednicu Chabad u Krakovu, a suveniri i figurice prodaju se vani kako bi se pomoglo financiranje zajednice. Možda bankar Jakubowicz nije imao takvu viziju kad je predviđao budućnost sinagoge. Bez obzira na to, svetište ostaje jedna od najočuvanijih sinagoga u Krakovu, unatoč činjenici da je služila kao štala za životinje pod nacističkom vlašću tijekom Drugog svjetskog rata.

Sinagoga Kupa (17. Stoljeće)

Službeno posljednja sinagoga koju je židovska zajednica izgradila prije nego što je židovska četvrt Kazimierz postala uključena u općinu Kraków, sinagoga Kupa nema ugodno ime niti značenje na poljskom. Ako je vaš poljski zahrđao, onda budite uvjereni da je sinagoga srećom dobila ime ili po zajednici (kahal na hebrejskom) ili po kutiji za prikupljanje (kupat tzedakah na hebrejskom), budući da je svetište financirala sama zajednica Kazimierz. Unatoč nesretnom nazivu na poljskom, sinagoga se može pohvaliti spektakularnim muralima na svojim stropovima koji prikazuju gradove u modernom Izraelu i biblijske priče. Sinagoga u baroknom stilu, koja je obnovljena nakon pljačke i razara-



Kupa sinagoga (strop), 2019

Izvor: Catherine Szkop

nja koje su nacisti nanijeli svetištu tijekom Shoaha, danas nema vjerske funkcije niti je otvorena za javnost bez prethodne rezervacije ili posebnih okolnosti.

Stara sinagoga (15. stoljeće)

Kao najstarija sinagoga u Krakówu danas, njezino ime zasigurno odgovara njezinoj reputaciji. Na sličan način opljačkana i oskrnavljena od strane nacističkog režima, Stara sinagoga još uvijek simbolizira tradicionalni vjerski život koji su Židovi stoljećima održavali u Europi i jedna je od najvažnijih povijesnih sinagoga na europskom kontinentu, kao rezultat svoje bogate povijesti u očuvanju vjerskih tradicija. Posebno dirljivo, iznad ulaznih vrata u glavno svetište piše na hebrejskom, “kroz ova vrata ulaze pravednici.” S obzirom na sudbinu velike većine židovske zajednice u Krakówu, a kamoli vanjskih, religioznih članova koji su posjećivali ovu stoljećima staru sinagogu, ova bi izjava mogla poniziti suvremene posjetitelje i potaknuti ih na razmišljanje o generacijama rabina kao i vjernici laici koji su redovito posjećivali ovu sada neaktivnu sinagogu (za vjerske službe) prije Shoaha. Nakon obnove, sinagoga danas čuva artefakte iz Povijesnog muzeja u Krakovu koji se odnose na židovski život, povijest i vjersku praksu.

Remuh sinagoga (16. stoljeće)

Trenutačno jedina sinagoga koju službeno koristi lokalna židovska zajedni-

ca, kao i najmanja sinagoga u gradu Krakovu, sinagoga Remuh održava intimnu, jednostavnu atmosferu unutar svog svetišta i služi kao fizički testament “ponovno izgrađene” židovske zajednice kakva danas postoji. Nazvana po hebrejskom akronimu za slavnog rabina iz Kazimierza, koji je napisao dopunske aškenaske komentare na Shulchan Aroch rabina Yosefa Karoa, Remah je veličine ostalih 6 sinagoga u gradu ne po dizajnu, ukrasima ili visini, već po ostavštini svojih vjernika.



Remuh sinagoga (bimah), 2019

Izvor: Catherine Szkop

Hramska sinagoga (19. stoljeće)

Službeno “najnovija” sinagoga u Krakówu i središte početaka reformskog pokreta u europskom judaizmu,

sinagoga Tempel predstavlja spektakularnu manifestaciju arhitekture i obrtništva. Nakon uništenja židovske zajednice u Kazimierz u neposredno nakon Shoaha i završetka Drugog svjetskog rata, nekolicina preživjelih Židova iz obližnjih koncentracijskih logora vratila se u Kraków i zajedno molili u Hramskoj sinagogi kako bi osigurali *minyan*. Židovi različitih opredjeljenja su svoje službe održavali u zasebnim grupama unutar velikog, slikovitog svetišta. Danas je Hramska sinagoga mjesto niza društvenih događanja, od kojih je najpoznatiji koncert tijekom godišnjeg židovskog kulturnog festivala u Krakóvu, i ne održava izričito vjerske službe.

Sinagoga Wolf Popper (17. stoljeće)

Za vrijeme Festivala židovske kulture 2019., slučajno sam ušla u prostor koji je izgledao kao knjižara u Kazimierz. Nakon otprilike 15 minuta pregledavanja, otišla sam na drugi kat. Odjednom, na svoje iznenađenje, dok sam s drugog kata gledala u glavni prostor sinagoge, shvatila sam da je ova zgrada morala služiti kao sinagoga prije Holokausta, s obzirom na arhitekturu i dizajn prostora, te da upravo stojim u nekadašnjem ženskom dijelu. Nazvana po međunarodnom trgovcu koji je financirao njezinu izgradnju, sinagoga Wolf Popper služila je zajednici gotovo tri stoljeća prije nego što



Wolf Popper sinagoga, 2019

Izvor: Catherine Szkop

su nacisti potpuno uništili svetište. Nakon završetka Drugog svjetskog rata, židovska zajednica je prodala zgradu vlastima, koje su vidjele da je nekoliko preostalih židovskih tragova uklonjeno i renovirano kako bi služilo kao Omladinski kulturni centar grada. I nakon pada komunizma, Centar je nastavio s radom, no s posebnim naglaskom na židovsku povijest i kulturu. Danas se u zgradi izlažu umjetnička djela, prodaju knjige vezane uz židovski narod ili judaizam, dodjeljuju se stipendije istaknutim akademcima, održavaju se probe aškenaskog plesa, nudi obrazovni program i domaćin je mnoštvu drugih inicijativa.

Svakako, današnja obnova židovskog života potvrđuje stalnu prisutnost židovske zajednice koja je preživjela Shoah i skrivala svoj identitet tijekom dugog razdoblja, često bez mogućnosti prenijeti tradiciju i običaje svoje obitelji na svoju djecu iz straha. Unatoč tome, kako brojni mladi Poljaci

otkrivaju svoje židovske korijene i židovsko nasljeđe, trend koji se proširio i nastavio u proteklih nekoliko desetljeća od pada komunizma, židovski način života je “ponovno rođen” u gradu Krakówu s JCC (Jewish Community Center) koji se svaki tjedan može pohvaliti stotinama sudionika i posjetitelja.

Teška stvarnost, međutim, ostaje da se židovska zajednica u Krakovu nika da neće vratiti na svoju veličinu ni položaj koji je definirala stoljećima prije Holokausta. Sedam sinagoga koje su ostale, uglavnom su prazne iz tjedna u tjedan, podsjećajući građane i posjetitelje grada na židovsku zajednicu koja je nekad bila. Tisuće Židova, koji su nekad posjećivali ova svetišta, zajedno sa svojim snovima i obiteljima, nestali su zauvijek. Usprkos tome, sinagoge stoje kao svjedočanstvo svojih ubijenih članova iz cvatuće židovske zajednice koja je Kraków učinila svojim domom gotovo tisuću godina.

Catherine Szkop

Towers, Not Traces: Krakow, City of Seven Synagogues

Catherine Szkop (*1997, Michigan / USA) is a first generation Polish American with Jewish roots from the US. She is a proud graduate of the University of Michigan (*Go Blue!*) and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where she earned her MA in Jewish Studies and focused on medieval to modern Polish Jewish history and culture. She currently works for the *Combat Antisemitism Movement (CAM)* in the Partnerships and Diplomacy departments, fighting antisemitism around the world and online.

Seven. Siedem. Sheva.

Seven synagogues stand today in Kraków. A city that once fostered one of the oldest Jewish communities in Europe. A city, which documented a Jewish population that comprised 25% of the total municipal populace, whose Jewish community maintained and filled seven synagogues of different observance streams for Shabbat, holidays, daily prayers, community events, brit milot, bar mitzvot, and everything in between. One of the most astonishing realizations, at least for me as a tourist on the Kraków Synagogue tour during the Jewish Cultural Festival in 2019, is that all these synagogues stand within walking distance of each other. This fact alone testifies to the once large, prominent, and thriving Jewish community that once lived in the ancient capital of Poland. Join me as I bring the synagogue tour to you with some brief reflections and history at each synagogue stop:

High Synagogue (16th century)

At the time that the synagogue was established, it stood as the tallest place of prayer for the Jewish community in the city, especially considering that the designated prayer room was on the second floor and required congregants to climb one story to reach the sanctuary. During World War II, invading Nazi forces destroyed the majority of the interior, preserving only a select number of murals on the walls. Today, the synagogue remains inactive and only opens for designated tours as well as other prearranged visits.

Izaak Synagogue (17th century)

Named after the generous banker who donated the synagogue to his community, Izaak Jakubowicz, today the Izaak synagogue houses and caters to the present-day Chabad community of Kraków, with souvenirs and figurines sold outside to help finance the community. Perhaps not the vision



Izaak Synagogue, 2019

Source: Catherine Szkop

that banker Jakubwicz had for the future of the synagogue that he funded? Nonetheless, the sanctuary remains one of the most well-preserved of all the synagogues in Kraków, despite the fact that it had served as an animal stable under Nazi rule during World War II.

Kupa Synagogue (17th century)

Officially the final synagogue that the Jewish community built prior to the Jewish district of Kazimierz becoming incorporated into the municipality of Kraków, Kupa synagogue does not have a pleasant name nor meaning in Polish. If your Polish is rusty, then rest assured that the synagogue

was thankfully named after either the community (kahal in Hebrew) or collection box (kupa tzedakah in Hebrew), since the sanctuary was funded by the community of Kazimierz itself. Despite the unfortunate name in Polish, the synagogue boasts spectacular murals on its ceilings, depicting cities in modern-day Israel and biblical stories. The Baroque-style synagogue, which was restored following the looting and destruction that the Nazis inflicted upon the sanctuary during the Shoah, does not hold religious functions today nor is it open to the public without prior reservation or special circumstance.



Kupa Synagogue (bimah), 2019

Source: Catherine Szkop



Old Synagogue (bimah), 2019

Source: Catherine Szkop

Old Synagogue (15th century)

As the oldest synagogue in Kraków today, its name surely fits its reputation. Similarly plundered and desecrated by the Nazi regime, the Old Synagogue still symbolizes the traditional religious life that Jews maintained for centuries in Europe and stands as one of the most important historical synagogues on the European continent, as a result of its rich history in preserving religious tradition. Particularly moving, over top the entrance gate to the main sanctuary reads in Hebrew, “through this gate, righteous men enter.” Considering the fate of the vast majority of the Jewish community in Kraków, let alone the outwardly, religiously-observant members who frequented this centuries-old syna-

gogue, this declaration may humble modern-day visitors and inspire them to reflect on the generations of rabbis as well as lay worshippers who regularly attended this now inactive synagogue (for religious services) prior to the Shoah. After its restoration, today the synagogue holds artifacts from the Historical Museum of Kraków, as related to Jewish life, history, and religious practice.

Remuh Synagogue (15th century)

Currently the only synagogue officially in use by the local Jewish community, as well as the smallest synagogue in the city of Kraków, the Remuh synagogue maintains an intimate, simple atmosphere within its sanctuary and serves as a physical testament to the

“rebuilt” Jewish community as it exists today. Named after the Hebrew acronym for the famous rabbi from Kazimierz, who wrote the complimentary Ashkenazi commentaries to Rabbi Yosef Karo’s Shulchan Aroch, Remah sizes up to the other 6 synagogues in the city not by design, ornamentation, or height, but by the legacies of its faithful.

Tempel Synagogue (19th century)

Officially the “newest” synagogue in Kraków and the center for the beginnings of the Reform movement in European Judaism, Tempel Synagogue stands as a spectacular manifestation

of architecture and craftsmanship. Following the destruction of the Jewish community in Kazimierz immediately after the Shoah and the conclusion of World War II, the few surviving Jews from the nearby concentration camps returned to Kraków and worshiped together in Tempel in order to maintain a minyan, although the different observance streams would hold their services in separate groups within the large, picturesque sanctuary. Today, Tempel hosts a number of community events, most notably a concert during the annual Jewish cultural festival in Kraków, and does not hold explicitly religious services.



Tempel Synagogue, 2019

Source: Catherine Szkop

**Wolf Popper Synagogue
(17th century)**

Unknowingly to me, I entered what appeared to be a bookstore in Kazimierz during the Jewish Cultural Festival of 2019. After perusing for approximately 15 minutes, I migrated to the second floor of the store. Suddenly, to my surprise, as I looked out into the main area of the synagogue from the second floor, I realized that this building must have served as a synagogue prior to the Shoah, considering the architecture and design of the space, and that I was standing in what was once the women's section. Named after an international tradesman who financed its construction, the Wolf Popper Synagogue serviced the community for nearly three centuries prior to the Nazis' utter destruction of the sanctuary. Following the conclusion of World War II, the Jewish community sold the building to the authorities. The few remaining Jewish traces were removed and renovated in order to serve as the Youth Cultural Center for the city. Even after the fall of Berlin Wall, the Center continued to function, however with a specific emphasis on Jewish history and culture. Today, the building displays artwork, sells books related to the Jewish people or Judaism, presents the scholarship of prominent academics, holds Ashkenazi dance rehearsals, provides educational programming, and hosts a plethora of other initiatives.

Certainly, the present-day revival of Jewish life attests to the continued presence of the Jewish community who survived the Shoah and hid their identities during long periods, oftentimes without having the ability to transfer their family's traditions and customs to their children out of fear. Nonetheless, as a number of young Poles discover their Jewish roots and Jewish heritage, a trend that has expanded and continued over the past few decades since the fall of communism, a Jewish way of life has been "reborn" in the city of Kraków with the JCC boasting hundreds of attendees and visitors every week.

The hard reality, however, remains that the Jewish community of Kraków will never return to its size nor standing that it had been defined by for centuries prior to the Shoah. The seven synagogues that remain, stand mostly empty week in and week out, hauntingly reminding city residents and visitors of the Jewish community that once was. Thousands of Jewish individuals who filled the sanctuaries, each with their own dreams and families, reduced to cremations and rubble. Nevertheless, the synagogues stand as testaments of their murdered constituents from the flourishing Jewish community that made Kraków their home for nearly one thousand years.

Deborah Samuel

Putovanje kroz prošlost: bogata tapiserija sinagoga u Kerali (Indiji)

Deborah Samuel (*1991, Indija) je izraelistica i anglistica. Stječe obrazovanje u raznim zemljama, uključujući Kuvajt, SAD i Izrael, što potiče njezin interes za međunarodne odnose i transkulturalnu komunikaciju. Završila je preddiplomski studij engleskog jezika i književnosti te diplomski studij izraelistike na Hebrejskom sveučilištu u Jeruzalemu. Trenutno studira na diplomskom studiju iz međunarodnih odnosa na Sveučilištu u Haifi i Sveučilištu u Varšavi.

Tijekom blagdana, sinagoge diljem svijeta pune su vjernika i pobožnih sljedbenika koji se okupljaju na molitvama. Pozivam vas na putovanje do dvije sinagoge u Kerali, Indiji. Nadam se da ću opravdati svoju ulogu vodiča. Također se nadam da ćete uživati u ovom putovanju i da će fotografije biti prava vizualna poslastica. Dakle, vežite poja-seve, polijećemo – prijeći ćemo gotovo pola svijeta prema tropskoj državi Kerali u južnoj Indiji. Naša prva postaja bit će sinagoga Kadavumbagam (što znači sinagoga ‘na obali rijeke’) u Ernakulam, a druga stanica je sinagoga Paradesi (što znači sinagoga ‘stranaca’) u Mattancherryju, Fort Kochi.

Moje jutro počelo je relativno rano jer sam se morala voziti gotovo tri sata do Ernakulama. Vožnja je uključivala prekrasne prizore zelenih rižinih polja prekrivenih tepihom, stabala kokosa i banana, mirnih rukavaca, slikovitih brda i dolina te naravno jutarnji promet! Prolazak kroz prekra-



Znak Židovske ulice u Kerali.

Izvor: Deborah Samuel

san krajolik čini vožnju ugodnom, a zaustavila sam se popiti vruću šalicu čaja i pojesti izvrstan jutarnji obrok. Duga avanturistička vožnja uz ugodnu glazbu i društvo čini putovanje vrijednim truda. Nakon duge vožnje, konačno sam stigla u Ernakulam. Vozila sam prometnom Mahatma Gandhi Road (M.G. Road) da bih stigla do Židovske ulice u Ernakulam. Mnogi znaju za Židovsku ulicu u Mattancherryju, ali zanimljivo je da postoji nekoliko ulica pod tim nazivom u dru-



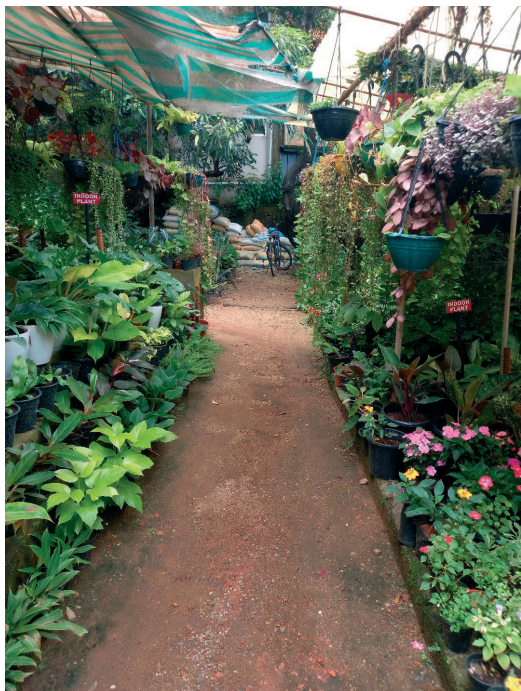
Ulaz u zgradu sinagoge Kadavumbagam

Izvor: Deborah Samuel

gim dijelovima Kerale, što dokazuje da su u različitim dijelovima zemlje postojale mnoge uspješne židovske zajednice. Židovska ulica u Kerali nešto je poput 'židovske četvrti' poznate u cijelom svijetu. Kad sam u Ernakulam vidjela natpis Jew Street, skrenula sam prema Market Roadu kako bih konačno stigla na odredište. Bio je to naporan dan s jutarnjom vrevom i ljudima koji su nastavili sa svojim dnevnim rutinama. I sama sam se osjećala kao turist jer sam prvi put posjetila ovaj dio grada.

Bio je prekrasan sunčan dan pa sam prošetala užurbanom tržnicom, gdje sam ugledala ploču sinagoge Kadavumbagam. Željela bih ukazati na jednu zanimljivost: sinagoga Kadavumbagam u Ernakulam je najstari-

ja aktivna sinagoga u zemljama Commonwealtha. Ušla sam kroz vrata i prošla kroz rasadnik biljaka prema zgradi u kojoj se nalazi sinagoga. Ulaz u zgradu uključuje poslovnu prostoriju s akvarijima. Zanimljivo je da je ovaj prostor nekoć bio školska učionica za židovsku djecu, koja su učila hebrejski jezik, kao i prostor za sastanke subotom. Zbog masovne migracije nakon formiranja države Izrael 1948. godine, više nije bilo djece za poučavanje što je rezultiralo zatvaranjem učionica. Danas sinagogom Kadavumbagam upravlja Elias Josephai poznat i kao 'Babu'. Židov iz Cochina, on vodi Cochin Blossoms, rasadnik biljaka i akvarije, i nada se da će prostor nekoć židovske učionice pretvoriti u međunarodni židovski muzej i židovsku knjižnicu.



Radasić biljaka na ulazu u sinagogu

Izvor: Deborah Samuel

Elias Josephai me je pozdravio na ulazu i nastavili smo razgovarati o Izraelu, židovskoj vjeri i drugim temama. Iz prodajnog prostora za akvarije pokazao mi je put do ulaza u sinagogu gdje sam htjela provesti neko vrijeme. Bila sam potpuno oduševljena, a fotografije će posvjedočiti intenzitetu moje reakcije. Vrata su se otvarala prema lijepom i šarenom svetištu s visećim svjetiljkama i lusterima.

Prije nego što zaronimo u povijest, željela bih dodati neke zanimljive činjenice o arhitektonskim elementima u sinagogama u Kerali. Njihova konstrukcija razlikuje se od onih u drugim dijelovima svijeta. Sinagoge u Kerali izgrađene su prema thachushastri, tj. keralskoj arhi-



Kadavumbagam sinagoga, interijer

Izvor: Deborah Samuel

tekturi. Pronašla sam zanimljivo objašnjenje karakteristika židovskih sinagoga na <https://jewishmonumentskerala.blogspot.com> koje navodim u nastavku radi boljeg razumijevanja. Ukratko, Gate House na ulazu u sinagogu vodi do kompleksa sinagoge kroz povjetarac. Potpuno zatvorena Azara / predsoblje i glavna molitvena dvorana, koja je dvokatno svetište, čine kompleks sinagoge. Tipično svetište uključuje sljedeće dijelove: (1) Tebah / Bimah (drvena platforma s koje se čita Tora), (2) Heichal (Kovčeg, oltar gdje se čuvaju svici Tore, obično izrezbaren i obojen drvom. Kovčezi su na zapadnoj strani (za razliku od europskih sinagoga), jer trebaju biti okrenuti prema Jeruzalemu); (3) drugi tebah (balkon jedinstven za sinagoge u Kerali s dva dijela: za muškarce i žene); (4) spiralno stubište koje vodi na balkon; (5) Židovska škola smještena iza ženskog odjela.



Interijer sinagoge Kadavumbagam

Izvor: Deborah Samuel

Povijest sinagoge Kadavumbagam

Dok smo na ovom putovanju, vratimo se u prošlost i shvatimo malo povijesti. Premda postoje različiti podatci i škole mišljenja o podrijetlu Židova u Kerali, zapravo postoji dosta činjenica o počecima židovskih naselja u regiji. U 11. stoljeću n. e. došlo je do rata između kralja Cranganorea i kralja dinastije Chola. Tijekom tog vremena, Joseph Raban, istaknuti židovski vođa, pridružio se kralju Cranganorea i borio se protiv kralja Chola oko godinu dana. Kako je kralj Cranganore dobio rat, darovao je Josephu Rabanu 72 četvorne milje zemlje pod nazivom 'Anjuvannam' kao nagradu za pobjedu. Anjuvannam je nazvan 'Jeruzalem Istoka', a Joseph Raban je postavljen za kralja ovog područja. Nažalost, Anjuvannam je napadnut uoči subote 1165. godine, zbog nesretnog događaja koji je rezultirao bijesom posljednjeg kralja iz dinastije Cheraman. Kao posljedica toga, kralj je udružio snage sa svojim maurskim saveznicima, što je rezultiralo smrću oko 40 000 Židova, ostavljajući oko 1000 Židova uključujući Josepha Rabana koji je izbjegao masakr i pobjegao u Chennamangalam. Nakon što su se preselili u Chennamangalam kao izbjeglice nakon nesretnog događaja, Joseph Raban i njegovi drugovi preselili su se u drugi grad Paravur i tamo osnovali Židovski grad. Židovi su se također preselili u druge dijelove Kerali i tamo se nastanili. Nakon smrti Josipa Rabana, njegovi sinovi su se međusobno sukobili



Fotografija s 450. godišnjice cochinske sinagoge.

Izvor: Deborah Samuel

oko vodstva. Zbog svađe među njima, razili su se jer se stariji sin preselio u Ernakulam, dok je mlađi sin prišao kralju od Cochina i zatražio od njega 'traku zemlje'. Stariji sin i grupa ljudi koji su se s njim preselili u Ernakulam izgradili su sinagogu Kadavumbagam u Ernakulamu 1200. godine.

Thapan Dubayehudi, lingvist i jedan od rijetkih preostalih Židova ovdje piše zanimljivu lingvističku vezu o Mattancherryju u svojoj knjizi 'The Real History Of The Cochin Jews Uncovered'. On piše da je podrijetlo imena Mattancherry od hebrejskog "matana" (dar) i riječi "cherri" (pojas zemlje), jer je to bio dar mlađem bratu od Maharaje od Cochina. Da se vratimo današnjici: Josephai Elias postao je čuvar sinagoge Kadavumbagam 1978. Sinagoga je prošla kroz mračno razdoblje razaranja i vandalizma. Unatoč tome, Josephai se obvezao održati bogatu židovsku povijest u Ernakulamu i osigurati da židovska povijest ne bude za-

boravljena u nadolazećim godinama. Nakon što sam neko vrijeme provela u sinagogi Kadavumbagam, upoznala se s njenom poviješću i snimila nekoliko fotografija, došlo je vrijeme da se privremeno oprostim i nastavim svoje putovanje prema poznatoj Židovskoj ulici u Mattancherryju u kojoj se nalazi sinagoga Paradesi. Ceste su vrvjele od gradske gužve. Dok sam se probijala kroz popodnevnu gužvu nakon ukusnog i zasitnog tradicionalnog južnoindijskog ručka, uputila sam se na otok Mattancherry. Vožnja je uključivala slikoviti prizor lučkog grada Cochina dok sam prolazila pored brodogradilišta i pomorske baze u kojoj se nalaze nosač zrakoplova i bojni brodovi indijske mornarice. Po dolasku u Mattancherry, prošetala sam turističkim ulicama i uputila se do sinagoge Paradesi koja je imala stalan protok turista i posjetitelja koji su željeli vidjeti još uvijek živo židovsko naslijeđe otoka.



Suvernirnica sinagoge Paradesi

Izvor: Deborah Samuel

Povijest sinagoge Paradesi

U 16. stoljeću, mnogo europskih Židova doselilo je u Kochi. Nakon španjolske inkvizicije, pobjegli su od progona i pobjegli kroz Portugal, Tursku i Bagdad, te se probili do Kerale. Dobili su naklonost kralja od Cochina posebno zbog svoje boje kože jer je kralj favorizirao svijetlu put Europljana. Nova skupina sefardskih Židova koja je stigla u Kerala također je bila bogata i uspješna je u trgovini i poslu. To je dovelo do toga da im je kralj dao zemlju u blizini malabarskih Židova (prvih doseljenika). Kad su se smjestili, kralj je 1568. godine položio kamen temeljac za sinagogu Paradesi. Godine 1662. sinagoga je uništena u požaru

za vrijeme vladavine Portugalaca, a nakon dvije godine ponovno su je izgradili Nizozemci.



Znak sinagoge Paradesi

Izvor: Deborah Samuel

Po čemu je sinagoga Paradesi jedinstvena?

U njoj se nalaze razni rijetki antikviteti i povijesni elementi. Neki od elemenata koji je čine ekstravagantnom bogomoljom su svici Tore ukrašeni zlatom i srebrom, viseći stakleni lusteri uvezani iz Belgije i ukrasne svjetiljke. Posjetitelji su dužni skinuti obuću prilikom ulaska u sinagogu iz dva razloga: prvo, jer je to sveto mjesto bogoslužja. Drugo, pločice sinagoge posebno je uvezao iz Cantona u Kini Ezekiel Rahabi u 18. stoljeću. Posebna podnica izrađena je od 1100 keramičkih ručno oslikanih pločica i poseban je prizor za vidjeti. Osim toga, sinagoga također ima zamršeno izrezbareni kovčeg od tikovine u kojem se nalaze četiri svitka Tore koji su obloženi srebrom i zlatom. Ovdje se čuvaju i mnogi darovi koji su darovani židovskoj zajednici: orijentalni tepih koji je darovao posljednji etiopski car Haile Selassie, 1600 godina stare bakrene ploče na kojima se navode posebne privilegije koje je židovskoj zajednici dao kralj Cochina, te dvije zlatne krune koje su darovali kraljevi Cochina i Travancorea. Riječi nisu dovoljne da bi se opisali jedinstveni i lijepi elementi sinagoge. Fotografiranje je zabranjeno, ali uspjela sam napraviti nekoliko slika uz posebno dopuštenje. Trenutačno se o sinagogi Paradesi djelomično brine Odjel za turizam vlade Kerale. Povijesne činjenice razlikuju se od zajednice do zajednice – na temelju njihovog povoljnog položaja u društvu. Mnogo je priča o

podrijetlu i drugim činjenicama unutar židovskih zajednica u Kerali; neki narativi mogu međusobno proturječiti. Međutim, neke činjenice ostaju neosporne i nadam se da ste uživali u vizualnom putovanju. Kao što zaključujem, srdačno pozdravljam sve čitatelje i nadam se da ćete osim uživanja u tropskom raj (možda i malo indijskog kaosa) imati priliku posjetiti Keralu i svjedočiti njezinim židovskim korijenima.



Vanjski dio sinagoge Paradesi

Izvor: Deborah Samuel

Kad sam završila svoj dan u Židovskoj ulici u Mattancherryju, otišla sam s hrpom novih informacija i lijepih fotografija koje me motiviraju razmišljati o raznim temama. Sretna sam što sam krenula na ovo putovanje jer volim učiti nove stvari. Svaki dan je avantura, a samo otvorenog uma možemo naučiti nešto novo. Postoje mnogi detalji koje bih željela također uključiti u ovaj članak, ali morat ću ih ostaviti za drugi put.

Želim svim čitateljima sretnu 2023 godinu!

Deborah Samuel

Journey Through History: Traversing The Rich Tapestry of Synagogues in Kerala (India)

Deborah Samuel (*1991, India) is a third-culture individual. Having lived in various countries, she is passionate about international living and culture. She completed her undergraduate studies in English language and literature and graduate studies in Israel Studies from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She is currently continuing her graduate studies in International Relations at the University of Haifa and the University of Warsaw.

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During the festive season, synagogues all over the world are busy with worshippers and devout followers flocking for prayers and celebrations. That said, I am going to help you embark on a journey to two of the synagogues in Kerala. I hope I do justice in my role and I hope you enjoy this journey along with the pictures which I be-

lieve will be a visual treat. So, buckle up your seat belts and let's take off almost halfway across the world to the tropical state of Kerala in south India.

Our first stop was the *Kadavumbagam Synagogue* (meaning 'river-side' synagogue) in Ernakulam and later the *Paradesi Synagogue* (meaning 'foreigners' synagogue) in Mattancherry, Fort



Sign for the Kadavumbagam Synagogue

Source: Deborah Samuel



Gathering in the synagogue in Ernakulam around 1950.

Source: Deborah Samuel

Kochi. My morning began relatively early as I drove almost three hours to Ernakulam. My drive included passing through beautiful scenes of carpeted green paddy fields, coconut and banana trees, calm backwaters, picturesque hills and valleys, and of course not forgetting the morning traffic! Passing through the beautiful scenery makes a good drive, in addition to a stop for a hot cup of tea and a scrumptious morning snack. A long adventurous drive with pleasant music and company makes the journey worth it.

After my long drive, I finally arrived at Ernakulam. I drove through the busy Mahatma Gandhi Road (M.G. Road) to reach Jew Street in Ernakulam. Many

are aware of the Jew Street in Mattancherry but it is interesting to note that there are several Jew Streets in other parts of Kerala as well which proves the existence of once thriving Jewish communities in different parts of Kerala. Jew Street in Kerala is something like a 'Jewish Quarter' known worldwide. Once I saw the Jew Street board sign in Ernakulam, I turned to Market Road to finally arrive at the destination. It was a busy day with the morning hustle and bustle and people carrying on with their daily routines. I felt like a tourist myself as it was the first time that I was visiting this part of town.

It was a beautiful sunny day and I walked through the bustling market-



Plant nursery at the synagogue entrance

Source: Deborah Samuel

place and saw the *Kadavumbagam Synagogue* board. At this point, I'd like to add interesting historical information: The Kadavumbagam synagogue in Ernakulam is the oldest active synagogue in the commonwealth countries. I entered the gate and walked through a plant nursery towards the building which houses the synagogue. Once I entered the building, I walked into an aquarium business room. Interestingly, this space was once a Hebrew-medium school classroom for Jewish kids and a meeting space on Sabbaths. Due to the mass migration after the State of Israel was formed in 1948, there weren't any more kids to teach which resulted in the closure of the classroom space. Today, the Kadavumbhagam synagogue is managed by Elias Jose-

phai also known as 'Babu'. A Jew of Cochin, he runs Cochin Blossoms, the plant nursery, and aquarium business, and hopes to convert the once Jewish classroom space into an international Jewish museum and Jewish library.

I was welcomed by Elias Josephai and we carried on conversations about life in Israel, the Jewish faith, and other topics. From the aquarium sales area, we walked to the entrance of the synagogue which he opened so I could spend some time there. I was awestruck and you will see in the pictures the reason for my reaction. The doorway opened to a beautiful and colorful sanctuary with hanging lamps and chandeliers.

Before we delve into history, I'd like to add some interesting facts about the



View from the balcony of the Kadavumbagam Synagogue

Source: Deborah Samuel

architectural elements in the synagogues of Kerala. Their construction differs from those in other parts of the world. The synagogues in Kerala were constructed according to the *thachushastra*, i.e. Kerala architecture. I found an interesting explanation of the characteristics of the Jewish synagogues from <https://jewishmonumentskerala.blogspot.com> which I am mentioning below for a better understanding. To summarize, the **Gate House** at the entrance of the synagogue leads to the **Synagogue Complex** through a **Breezeway**. A fully enclosed **Azara / Anteroom** and the main prayer hall, which is a double storeyed sanctuary, are Synagogue Complex. A typical sanctuary includes four parts: (1) **Tebah / Bimah**

(a wooden platform from which Torah is read), (2) **Heichal** (Ark, an altar where the Torah scrolls are kept, usu-



Interior of the synagogue

Source: Deborah Samuel

ally carved and painted with wood. Arks are on the western side, unlike European synagogues, facing Jerusalem); (3) second Tebah (balcony unique to synagogues in Kerala with two parts: for men and women); (4) a spiral staircase which leads to balcony; (5) Jewish school located behind the women's section.



Interior of the Kadavumbagam Synagogue

Source: Deborah Samuel

History of the Kadavumbagam Synagogue

As we're on this journey, let's go back in time and understand a little bit of history. While there are many dates and schools of thought as to the origin of the Jews in Kerala, we know that despite the dates there were Jewish settlements in the region. In the 11th century CE, there was a war between the King of Cranganore and the King of the Chola dynasty. During this time, Joseph Raban, a prominent Jewish leader, joined with the King of Cranganore and fought against the Chola King which lasted for about a year. As the Cranganore King won the war he

gifted Joseph Raban 72 square miles of land called 'Anjuvannam' as a reward for the victory. Anjuvannam was called 'Jerusalem of the East' and Joseph Raban was appointed the king of this territory. Sadly, Anjuvannam was attacked on the eve of Sabbath in AD 1165, due to an unfortunate event that resulted in the fury of the last King of the Cheraman dynasty. Consequentially, the king joined forces with his Moorish allies, resulting in the death of about 40,000 Jews, leaving around 1000 Jews including Joseph Raban who escaped the massacre and fled to Chennamangalam. Following their move to Chennamangalam as refugees after the unfortunate event, Joseph Raban and his companions moved to another town called Paravur and established a Jew Town there. The Jews also moved to other parts of Kerala and settled there. After the death of Joseph Raban, his sons started fighting with each other in the name of leadership. Due to the quarrel among them, they parted ways as the older son moved to Ernakulam while the younger son approached the King of Cochin and asked him for a 'strip of land.'

The older son and the group of people who moved with him to Ernakulam built the Kadavumbagam synagogue of Ernakulam in 1200 CE. Thapan Dubayehudi, a linguist and one of the few remaining Jews here writes an interesting linguistic connection about Mattancherry in his book '*The Real History Of The Cochin Jews Uncovered*'. He

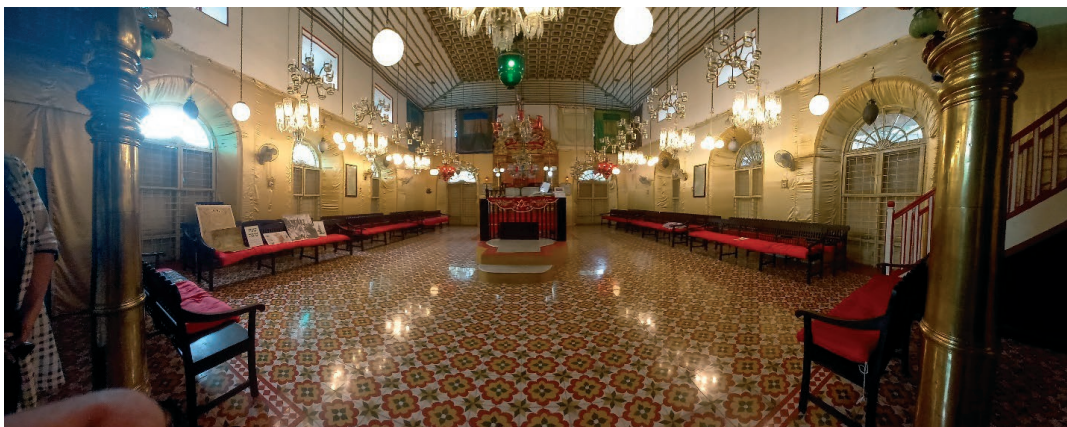


Entrance to the synagogue

Source: Deborah Samuel

writes that the origin of the name Mattancherry is from Hebrew “matana” (gift) and a word cherri (strip of land), because it was a gift to the younger brother by the Maharaja of Cochin. Fast forward to today, Josephai Elias became the caretaker of the Kadavumbagam synagogue in 1978. The synagogue went through a dark period of destruction and vandalism. Nonetheless, Josephai took it upon himself to maintain the rich Jewish history in

Ernakulam and to ensure that Jewish history would not be forgotten in the coming years. After spending some time in the Kadavumbhagam synagogue, understanding its history, and taking some pictures, it was time to temporarily bid farewell and continue my journey to the famously known Jew Street in Mattancherry which houses the Paradesi synagogue. The roads were bustling with the life of the city crowds. As I made my way through the afternoon traffic after a delicious and fulfilling traditional south Indian lunch, I headed to the island of Mattancherry. The drive included the scenic sight of the port city of Cochin as I passed the shipyard and naval base which houses the aircraft carrier and battleships of the Indian Navy. Upon arriving at Mattancherry, I strolled through the touristy streets and headed to the Paradesi synagogue which had its steady flow of tourists and visitors seeking to see the still-alive Jewish heritage of the island.



Panoramic view of the Kadavumbagam synagogue

Source: Deborah Samuel

History of the Paradesi Synagogue

Moving forward to the 16th century, Kerala witnessed an influx of European Jews to Kochi. After the Spanish Inquisition, they fled the persecution and escaped through Portugal, Turkey, and Baghdad, and made their way to Kerala. They gained the favor of the King of Cochin especially due to their skin color as the King favored the light skin tone Europeans. The new group of Sephardic Jews who arrived in Kerala was also wealthy and prospered in trade and business. This led to the King giving them land near the Malabari Jews (the early settlers). As they settled down, the foundation stone for the Paradesi Synagogue was laid in 1568 by the King. In 1662, the synagogue was destroyed by fire during the rule of the Portuguese and rebuilt by the Dutch after two years.



Sign of the Paradesi synagogue

Source: Deborah Samuel

What is unique about the Paradesi Synagogue?

It houses various rare antiques and historical elements. Some of the elements that make it an extravagant house of worship are the gold- and silver-decorated Torah scrolls, hanging glass chandeliers imported from Belgium, and decorative lamps. Visitors are required to remove their footwear while entering the synagogue for two reasons: first, since it's a holy place of worship. Second, the tiles of the synagogue were specially imported from Canton, China by Ezekiel Rahabi in the 18th century. The special flooring is made of 1100 ceramic hand-painted tiles and is a special sight to see. In addition, the synagogue also has an intricately carved teak ark that houses the four scrolls of the Torah which are encased in silver and gold. Many gifts that were gifted to the Jewish community are also kept here: An oriental rug gifted by the last Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie, 1,600-year-old copper plates which state the special privileges granted to the Jewish community by the King of Cochin, and the two gold crowns gifted by the kings of Cochin and Travancore. There are many limitations and words don't do sufficient justice to describe the unique and beautiful elements of the synagogue. Photography is prohibited and so I wasn't able to click a lot of pictures since I was given special permission. Currently, the Paradesi synagogue is partially taken care of by the Kerala government's Depart-



Picture from the Paradesi synagogue

Source: Deborah Samuel

ment of Tourism. Historical facts differ from community to community-based on their favorable positions in society. There are many stories about the origins and other facts within the Jewish communities in Kerala; some narratives may contradict each other. However, certain facts remain undisputed and I hope you've enjoyed the visual journey. As I conclude, I warmly welcome all the readers and I hope you get an opportunity to visit Kerala and witness its Jewish roots in addition to enjoying the tropical paradise (maybe some Indian chaos too).

As I ended my day at the Jew Street in Mattancherry I left with a load of information and pictures enough for me to think about a variety of issues and interesting facts. I am happy I made this journey as I learned and gained a pool of information which is what I love about life. Every day is an adventure and with an open mind, we will always learn something new. While there are many encounters that I would have wanted to include in this article, I will have to leave them for another time.

Wishing all the readers a happy 2023!

Tomislav Vuković

Sinagoga u Đakovu – Zaboravljeni svjedok jednog vremena

Tomislav Vuković profesor je povijesti i engleskog jezika. Diplomirao je na Filozofskom fakultetu u Osijeku, a zaposlen je u Osnovnoj školi Dalj. Član je europske odgojno-obrazovne mreže RAN Youth & Education (Radicalisation Awareness Network) koju je osnovala Europska komisija. Honorarno radi kao turistički vodič za područje istočne Slavonije. Autor je i pokretač turističke ture „Židovski Osijek / Tragovima židovske baštine u Osijeku“ koju provodi od 2016. godine.

Oni koji se zanimaju za slavonsku zavičajnu povijest, vjerojatno su čuli za đakovački logor iz vremena NDH, kao i za groblje na kome su pokopane žrtve tog logora. Međutim, mnogo slabije je poznata priča o đakovačkoj židovskoj zajednici koja je obitavala u tome gradu prije Drugog svjetskog rata. Njihovo duhovno središte bila je sinagoga koja je šezdesetak godina stajala u današnjoj Frankopanskoj ulici. Ovaj članak bit će podsjetnik na njeno postojanje, ali i priča o đakovačkim Židovima koji su svraćali u tu sinagogu.

Židovi u Đakovštini

Prvi podaci o Židovima u Đakovštini zabilježeni su sredinom 18. stoljeća, u razdoblju dok je zakon Židovima još uvijek zabranjivao trajno naseljavanje u hrvatskim krajevima. Prvi Židovi onamo su dolazili kao zarobljenici i pregovarači, a poslije kao trgovci, dobavljači streljiva i živežnih namirnica za austrijsku vojsku. Ipak, kako je tadašnji zakon bio nedorečen, župani-

je su po vlastitom nahođenju mogle dozvoliti Židovima privremeno zadržavanje, kao i trgovanje u trajanju od nekoliko dana.

Tijekom prvog općeg popisa stanovništva u Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji (1850./51.), u đakovačkom kotaru zabilježeno je 313 Židova. Nešto kasnije, prema popisu iz 1880. godine, u tadašnjem đakovačkom upravnom kotaru (Đakovo, Drenje, Levanjska Varoš, Semeljci, Vrpolje i Vuka) živjelo je ukupno 30.796 stanovnika, od čega je Židova bilo 581, odnosno 1,89%. Pritom je u samom Đakovu bilo nastanjeno 332 Židova. Broj je rastao i u idućim godinama pa je 1890. godine u kotaru Đakovo živjelo 668 Židova, a od toga u gradu 373. Zanimljivo, u Drenju je postojao i dio sela koji se nazivao Židovaroš.

Židovske obitelji koje su u tome razdoblju dolazile na područje Đakovštine u većini slučajeva su potjecale iz tadašnje Ugarske, no bilo je i doseljenika iz udaljenijih krajeva poput Ga-



Sinagoga u Đakovu

Izvor: CENDO.hr

licije, Češke, Moravske ili Austrije. U početku se najviše Židova bavilo obrtom i trgovinom, među njima je bilo i gostioničara, dok su kasnije počela prevladavati viša intelektualna zanimanja (liječnici, učitelji, odvjetnici), kao i industrija, posebice mlinska. Zanimljivo, u Đakovu je svojedobno postojala i košer mesnica koju su držala braća Neumann na današnjem trgu Franje Tuđmana 4.

Porastom broja Židova javila se potreba za boljim organiziranjem te zajednice. Tako je 1852. osnovana đakovačka Židovska općina koja je 1860. preuzela brigu za vođenje matičnih knjiga rođenih, vjenčanih i umrlih. Do te godine matične knjige im je vodio rabin Židovske općine u osječkom Gornjem gradu, uz novčanu naknadu.

Iste 1860. ili 1861. godine đakovačka Židovska općina osnovala je i Chevru Kadischu (društvo za svrhu spasa - Verein zum Zwecke des Heiles), koje je djelovalo pod patronatom biskupa Josipa Jurja Strossmayera, te je jedno vrijeme čak nosilo i njegovo ime „Brüderschaft Josefs“. Društvo se brinulo za priređivanje sprovoda, njegovanje bolesnika i dijeljenje milostinje među siromahe. Iako su kroz osamdesetak najaktivnijih godina u gradu djelovala različita dobrotvorna, kulturna i sportska društva, Chevra Kadischa bila je najdugovječnije društvo đakovačkih Židova. Zapaženo mjesto u đakovačkim židovskim društvima pripadalo je obitelji Frank koja se u grad doselila krajem 19. stoljeća.

Gradnja sinagoge

Najvažnija središta društvenog života đakovačkih Židova bili su sinagoga i Židovska bogoštovna općina, smještena tik do sinagoge. Kako Židovi do 1860. nisu mogli biti vlasnici nekretina niti graditi bogomolje kao zasebne objekte, prva sinagoga u Đakovu uređena je u adaptiranoj privatnoj kući. Zna se da je ta sinagoga postojala 1856., a poslije ju je na istom mjestu zamijenila veća. Nova sinagoga u Đakovu izgrađena je između 1863. i 1880. godine u tadašnjoj Samostanskoj ulici (Samostanskom sokaku), na gotovo neizgrađenom uličnom potezu, na istočnome rubu povijesne jezgre. Danas je to Frankopanska ulica, jedna od glavnih gradskih prometnica koje se pružaju u smjeru sjever - jug. Sinagoga je ponajprije bila prepoznatljiva po svoja dva tornja. Njeno ulazno pročelje bilo je orijentirano prema zapadu, istočna apsida imala je potkovast tlocrt, a ispred je bila kovana ograda.

Prema nekim pretpostavkama sinagogu je izgradio Franjo Pačer iz Đakova, no to se ne može potvrditi s potpunom sigurnošću. Naime, arhivska i projektna dokumentacija sinagoge izgorjele su u vrijeme pogroma u NDH. Zna se pak da je sinagoga dovršena za vrijeme tadašnjeg predsjednika općine Adolfa Kohna (1842.-1912.), inače đakovačkog veletrgovca, te rabina Hermana Sommera i kantora Emanuela Pauschera.

Pripadala je tipu sinagoge s tornjevima koji su završavali oktogonalnim

tamburom i lukovicama orijentalne siluete. Pročelje je bilo raščlanjeno velikom rozetom, triforama i neoromaničkim portalom. U vrhu zabata stajao je *luhot*. Orgulje u sinagogi izradio je József Angster iz Pečuha.

Sinagoge s tornjevima smatraju se asimilacijskim tipom židovskog hrama koji je imao za cilj bolje uklapanje u katoličko urbano okruženje. Asimilacijski tip svojom je arhitekturom zato imitirao elemente crkvenog pročelja s parom zapadnih zvonika. Premda zvono, pa ni zvonik, nemaju nikakvog značenja u židovskoj liturgiji, tornjevi su kod takvih sinagoga spretno iskorišteni za smještaj stubišta koja su vodila do ženskih galerija. Ishodište toga tipa hrama za područje Austro-ugarske bio je projekt za sinagogu u Dohány ulici u Budimpešti. U hrvatskim uvjetima zvonici su bili nešto zdepastiji, no upravo su oni pomagali razlikovati siluetu sinagoge od, primjerice, katoličke crkve. Đakovačka sinagoga bila je jedna od devet sinagoga s tornjevima u Hrvatskoj.

U vrijeme predsjednika općine Josipa Franka u židovski hram u Đakovu uveden je i sinagogalni mješoviti pjevački zbor uz pratnju orgulja. Dirigent toga zbora bio je Pavo Kempf koji je i sam pjevao u zboru sve do travnja 1941.

Uz sinagogu je stajao rabinov stan, kao i već spomenuti ured Židovske bogoštovne općine. Zanimljivo, u Đakovu je kraće vrijeme djelovala i židovska konfesionalna škola, tzv. Izra-

elitička škola. Ona je osnovana oko 1860. godine, a prvi učitelj bio joj je Jakob Polak koji je u službi ostao godinu dana. Škola je djelovala do početka 1886./87. kada je raspuštena zbog malog broja polaznika te velikih troškova. Otad su djeca đakovačkih Židova polazila opću pučku školu.

Uništenje

Razvoj đakovačke židovske zajednice naglo je prekinut prelijevanjem antisemitizma iz nacističke Njemačke, a potom i uspostavom Nezavisne Države Hrvatske. Tijekom 1942. ustaške vlasti izdale su naredbu da svi Židovi moraju napustiti Đakovo, nakon čega su uslijedili pogrom i deportacije. Mnogo uglednih đakovačkih Židova ubijeno je u Jasenovcu, zajedno s cijelim svojim obiteljima. Među žrtvama Holokausta bio je i ranije spomenuti predsjednik Općine Josip Frank. Do završetka Drugog svjetskog rata đakovačka židovska zajednica *de facto* je potpuno nestala.

Slična sudbina zadesila je i đakovačku sinagogu. Njen palež u travnju 1941. bio je svojevrsan uvod u po-

grom koji će uslijediti. Palež se dogodio 19. travnja 1941. u večernjim satima, uoči rođendana Adolfa Hitlera (20. travnja). Zajedno sa sinagogom u podmetnutom požaru izgorjela je i zgrada Židovske općine, uključujući i njen cjelokupni arhiv. Objekt je ostao u ruševinama do 1943., kada su ostaci sinagoge potpuno uklonjeni. Parcela nekadašnje sinagoge tada je dodijeljena „Ustaši“ na 99 godina, za izgradnju radničkog doma. Ta izgradnja, međutim, nikad nije realizirana.

Nakon Drugog svjetskog rata, mjesto nekadašnje sinagoge ostalo je prazno sve do 1960ih godina, kada Jugoslavenska narodna armija ondje gradi stambenu trokatnicu. Ta zgrada i danas stoji u Frankopanskoj ulici. Pitanje je, međutim, koliko slučajnih prolaznika, čak i stanara, uopće zna za prošlost toga mjesta, budući da mjesto sinagoge nije obilježeno. U svjetlu toga, možemo se samo nadati da će gradske vlasti u budućnosti ondje postaviti kakvo spomen-obilježje, kao podsjetnik na jedan bogati, ali izgubljeni sloj đakovačke prošlosti.

Tomislav Vuković

Synagogue in Đakovo – A Forgotten Witness of One Epoch

Tomislav Vuković is a teacher of History and English. He graduated from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Osijek, and is employed at Dalj Elementary School. He is a member of the European educational network RAN Youth & Education (Radicalisation Awareness Network) founded by the European Commission. He works part-time as a tour guide for the region of Eastern Slavonia. He is the author and initiator of the guided tour “Jewish Osijek / Traces of Jewish Heritage in Osijek”, which he has been conducting since 2016.

Those who are interested in the history of eastern Croatia have probably heard about the Đakovo concentration camp from World War Two, as well as the cemetery where the victims of that camp were buried. However, the story of the local Jewish community is much lesser known. Their spiritual center was a synagogue that stood for about sixty years in today's Frankopanska Street. This article will be a reminder of its existence, but also a story about the Đakovo Jews who used to visit that synagogue.

Jews in Đakovo

The first records about Jews in Đakovo date back to the mid-18th century, when the law still prohibited Jews from permanent settling in Croatian regions. The first Jews came there as prisoners and negotiators, and later as merchants, suppliers of ammunition and foodstuffs for the Austrian army. However, as the law was vague at the time, the counties could, at

their own discretion, allow Jews to settle temporarily, as well as to trade for a few days.

During the first general population census in Croatia and Slavonia (1850/51), 313 Jews were recorded in the Đakovo district. A little later, according to the census of 1880, a total of 30,796 inhabitants lived in the former Đakovo administrative district (including Đakovo, Drenje, Levanjska Varoš, Semeljci, Vrpolje and Vuka), of which 581, or 1.89%, were Jews. At the same time, 332 Jews lived in Đakovo itself. The number continued to grow in the following years, so in 1890, 668 Jews lived in the district of Đakovo, whereas 373 of them lived in the town. Interestingly, in Drenje there was also a part of the village called Židovaroš (Jews' town).

The Jewish families that came to Đakovo in that period mostly arrived from what was then Hungary, but there were also immigrants from

more distant regions such as Galicia, Bohemia, Moravia, or Austria. In the beginning, most Jews were engaged in crafts, trade and innkeeping, while later higher intellectual professions began to dominate (e.g. doctors, teachers, lawyers), as well as industry, especially mills. Interestingly, there was once a kosher butcher's shop in Đakovo, which was run by the Neumann brothers on today's Franjo Tuđman Square.

With the increase in the number of Jews, there was a need for better organization of that community. Thus, in 1852, the Đakovo Jewish Municipality was founded, which in 1860 took over the responsibility for keeping the registers of births, marriages, and deaths. Until that year, the rabbi of the Jewish community in Osijek's Gornji Grad kept the registers for a fee.

In the same year 1860 or in 1861, the Jewish municipality of Đakovo founded the Chevra Kadischa (society for the purpose of salvation - Verein zum Zwecke des Heiles), which operated under the patronage of bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer, and for a time even bore his name "Brüderschaft Josefs". The society took care of organizing funerals, caring for the sick and distributing alms among the poor. Although various charitable, cultural and sports associations were active in the town during the eighty years of prosperity, Chevra Kadischa was the longest-standing association of the Đakovo Jews. A notable place in the Đakovo

Jewish community belonged to the Frank family, which moved to the town at the end of the 19th century.

Construction of the synagogue

The most important centers of the Đakovo Jews' social life were the synagogue and the Jewish community building, located right next to the synagogue. As Jews were not allowed to own real estate or build places of worship as separate buildings until 1860, the first synagogue in Đakovo was adapted in a private house. It is known that this synagogue existed in 1856, and later it was replaced by a larger one in the same place. The new synagogue in Đakovo was built between 1863 and 1880 in what was then Convent Street (Samostanski sokak), on an almost empty stretch of street, on the eastern edge of the historic core. Today, this is Frankopanska Street, one of the town's main arteries which runs north-south. The synagogue was primarily recognizable for its two towers. Its entrance facade was oriented towards the west, the eastern apse had a horseshoe-shaped floor plan, and there was a forged fence in front.

According to some assumptions, the synagogue was constructed by Franjo Pačer from Đakovo, although this cannot be confirmed with complete certainty. Namely, archival and project documentation of the synagogue were burned during the pogrom in the so-called Independent State of Croatia. However, it is known that

the synagogue was completed during the time of Adolf Kohn (1842-1912), a wholesaler from Đakovo, who was the head of the community then, as well as the time of Rabbi Herman Sommer and cantor Emanuel Pauscher.

It belonged to the type of synagogue with towers ending in an octagonal tambourine and bulbs of an oriental silhouette. The facade was divided by a large rosette, trifora (three-light window) and a neo-Romanesque portal. A *luhot* stood at the top of the gables. The organ in the synagogue was made by József Angster from Pécs.

Synagogues with towers are considered the assimilation type of Jewish

temple that aimed to fit better into the Catholic urban environment. The assimilation type therefore imitated the elements of the church facade with a pair of western bell towers. Although neither the bell nor the belfry has a meaning in the Jewish liturgy, the towers were skillfully used in such synagogues to house the staircases leading to the women's galleries. The origin of such temple for the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was the project for the synagogue in Dohány Street in Budapest. In Croatian conditions, the bell towers were a bit stockier, but they helped distinguish the silhouette of a synagogue from a Catholic church. The Đakovo syn-



Site of the former synagogue

Source: Tomislav Vuković

agogue was one of nine synagogues with towers in Croatia.

During the time when Josip Frank was the head of the community, a synagogal mixed choir accompanied by an organ was introduced into the Đakovo Jewish temple. The conductor of that choir was Pavo Kempf, who himself sang in the choir until April 1941.

Next to the synagogue there was the rabbi's apartment, as well as the previously mentioned Jewish community building. Interestingly, a Jewish confessional school also operated in Đakovo for a short time, the so-called Israelite School. It was founded around 1860 and its first teacher was Jakob Polak, who remained in the service for a year. The school operated until the beginning of 1886/87, when it was dissolved due to high costs and a small number of participants. After that, the children of Đakovo Jews attended a public school.

Destruction

The development of the Đakovo Jewish community was abruptly interrupted by the spillover of antisemitism from Nazi Germany, and then by the establishment of the Independent State of Croatia. During 1942, the Ustaša authorities issued an order that all Jews must leave Đakovo, which was followed by pogrom and deportations. Many prominent Jews from Đakovo were killed in Jasenovac, along with their entire families.

Among the victims of the Holocaust was the previously mentioned head of the Community, Josip Frank. By the end of World War Two, the Jewish community in Đakovo was *de facto* annihilated.

A similar fate befell the Đakovo synagogue. Its burning in April 1941 was a kind of prelude to the pogrom which would follow. The arson took place in the evening of April 19, 1941, on the eve of Adolf Hitler's birthday (April 20). Along with the synagogue, the building of the Jewish community, including its entire archive, burned down in the arson. The building remained in ruins until 1943, when the remains of the synagogue were completely removed. This plot of land was then assigned to the "Ustaša" for 99 years, for the supposed construction of a workers' home. That construction, however, was never realized.

After World War Two, the site of the former synagogue remained empty until the 1960s, when the Yugoslav People's Army built a three-storey residential building there. That building still stands in Frankopanska Street. The question is, however, how many passers-by, even residents, know about the past of this place, as the site of the synagogue is not marked. Considering this, we can only hope that the town authorities will once set up a memorial at this location, as a reminder of a rich, but a lost layer of Đakovo's past.

Lavoslav Špicer

Sinagoga u Slavonskom Brodu: bogata prošlost i dugo sjećanje

Lavoslav Špicer predsjednik je Židovske općine Slavonski Brod, nekad značajne i brojne zajednice. Premda danas u Brodu živi svega nekoliko Židova, Općina je još uvijek aktivna zahvaljujući g. Špiceru.

U Slavonskom Brodu na kraju 19. i početkom 20. stoljeća nalazila se jedna od najljepših sinagoga na ovim prostorima, namijenjena aktivnom religijskom životu tadašnje židovske zajednice.

Židovska zajednica u Slavonskom Brodu

U industrijski aktivan grad Slavonski Brod, poznat po tvornici metala i

vagona, prva židovska obitelj dolazi 1868. godine. Ubrzo nakon toga, doseljava se još mnoštvo obitelji židovskog podrijetla, a Brod postaje velik i značajan grad. Na popisu iz 1873. godine, navedeno je da grad Slavonski Brod ima 16 židovskih obitelji. Te iste godine, 28. rujna pod predsjedanjem g. Josipa Bauera osnovana je Židovska bogoštovna općina i usvojen je njezin statut.



Razlednica koja prikazuje sinagogu.

Izvor: CENDO.hr, <https://cendo.hr/Opcine.aspx?id=22#gsc.tab=0>

Izgradnja

U Slavonskom Brodu živjelo je mnogo asimiliranih, ali i religijski aktivnih Židova, a zajednica je prije 2. svjetskog rata bila veoma živa i aktivna. Budući da u trenutku osnivanja Židovska općina nije imala svoje prostore, u početnim godinama članovi su se sastajali u iznajmljenim prostorijama u okviru Tvrđave Brod. Za vrijeme predsjedništva Jakoba Kohna, sastanci se odvijaju u njegovoj kući. Židovska općina kasnije kupuje tu kuću, koja, međutim, ne ispunjava uvjete za provođenje liturgije. Radi održavanja aktivnog religijskog života, javlja se potreba za izgradnjom sinagoge. Židovskoj općini bio je potreban poseban prostor u kojem će biti moguće održavati rituale i obilježavati vjerske blagdane. Kamen temeljac za izgradnju sinagoge položen je 14. rujna 1895. godine. Arhitekt g. Müller projektirao je sinagogu u maurskom stilu, koji je odudarao od ostalih zgrada u okruženju, a radove je izvela građevinska firma Henigsberg i Deutsch iz Zagreba. U temelje sinagoge uzidana je i povelja kojom se, osim uobičajenih zahvala caru, banu, županu i gradonačelniku Broda, posebno zahvalilo Građevinskom odboru koji je nadgledao izgradnju sinagoge. Sinagoga je zauzimala centralnu lokaciju blizu glavnog gradskog trga, što svjedoči o njezinoj važnosti i značaju židovskog doprinosa gradu. Krajem 19.

i početkom 20. stoljeća, u Slavonskom Brodu postojao je aktivan židovski život. Mnoštvo obitelji bavilo se djelatnostima uobičajenim za to razdoblje i podneblje, uključujući djelatnosti iz kojih je kasnije nastala tvornica Đuro Đaković.

Uništenje

Nažalost, nakon stradanja iz 2. svjetskog rata, židovska zajednica u Slavonskom Brodu nikad se nije obnovila do predratnih brojki. 14. travnja 1941. sinagoga je opljačkana i spaljena, a tijekom rata do 1944. godine bila je do temelja srušena. Tijekom raščišćavanja ruševina nakon kraja rata, pronađena je povelja zahvale, no nažalost, dosta oštećena. Snimke četiri lista povelje danas se čuvaju u Muzeju Brodskog Posavlja.

Spomen-ploča

S obzirom na ljepotu sinagoge i njezinu važnost u životu brodskih Židova kroz povijest, bilo je važno očuvati sjećanje na ovo mjesto. Na inicijativu tadašnje predsjednice Židovske općine Slavonski Brod Anđele Spitzer, 1994. godine Grad Slavonski Brod usvaja prijedlog o podizanju spomen-ploče na mjestu porušene sinagoge. Spomen-ploča se i danas nalazi na mjestu nekadašnje sinagoge.

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-7HEJ14OGE>

Lavoslav Špicer

Synagogue in Slavonski Brod: Rich History and Long Memory

Lavoslav Špicer is the president of the Jewish Community Slavonski Brod, a once significant and numerous community. Although only a few Jews live in Brod today, Jewish Community is still active thanks to Mr. Špicer.

In Slavonski Brod at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, there was one of the most beautiful synagogues in this area, intended for the active religious life of the Jewish community at that time.

Jewish Community Slavonski Brod

In 1868, the first Jewish family came to the industrially active city of Slavonski Brod, known for its metal and wagon factory. Soon after, many more families of Jewish origin immigrate, and Brod becomes a large and important city. In the census from 1873, it was stated that the town of Slavonski Brod had 16 Jewish families. That same year, on September 28, under the chairmanship of Mr. Josip Bauer, the Jewish Congregation was founded and its statute was adopted.

Construction

Many assimilated and religiously active Jews lived in Slavonski Brod, and the community was very alive and active before World War II. Since the Jewish Municipality did not have its

own premises at the time of its foundation, in the early years the members met in rented premises within the Brod Fortress. During Jakob Kohn's presidency, meetings take place in his house. The Jewish community later buys that house, which, however, does not meet the requirements for conducting the liturgy. In order to maintain an active religious life, there is a need to build a synagogue. The Jewish community needed a special space where it would be possible to hold rituals and celebrate religious holidays. The foundation stone for the construction of the synagogue was laid on September 14, 1895. The architect Mr. Müller designed the synagogue in the Moorish style, which stood out from the other buildings in the area, and the works were carried out by the construction company Henigsberg and Deutsch from Zagreb. A charter was built into the foundations of the synagogue, in which, in addition to the usual thanks to the emperor, the ban, the prefect and the mayor of Brod, special thanks were given to the Construction Committee that oversaw the construction



Postcard with a view of the synagogue (on the right).

Source: CENDO.hr, <https://cendo.hr/Opcine.aspx?id=22#gsc.tab=0>.

of the synagogue. The synagogue occupied a central location near the city's main square, which testifies to its importance and the significance of the Jewish contribution to the city. At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, there was an active Jewish life in Slavonski Brod. Many families engaged in activities common to that period and climate, including the Đuro Đaković factory.

Destruction

Unfortunately, after suffering from World War II, the Jewish community in Slavonski Brod never recovered to pre-war numbers. On April 14, 1941, the synagogue was looted and burned, and during the war until 1944, it was completely demolished. During the clearing of the ruins after the end of the war, a

charter of thanks was found, but unfortunately, quite damaged. Today, copies of the four pages of the charter are kept in the Museum of Brodski Posavlje.

Memorial plaque

Considering the beauty of the synagogue and its importance in the life of the Jews of Brod throughout history, it was important to preserve the memory of this place. On the initiative of the then president of the Jewish Community Slavonski Brod Anđela Spitzer, in 1994 the City of Slavonski Brod adopted a proposal to erect a memorial plaque on the site of the destroyed synagogue. The memorial plaque is still on the site of the former synagogue.

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-7HEJ14OGE>

Paula Rem

Perspektiva žrtve i počinitelja: dokumentarni film “Mauthausen – dva života”

U utorak, 15.11.2022. u kulturnom kinu Urania prikazan je dokumentarni film “Mauthausen – dva života”. Projekcija ovog filma bila je dio 12. Dana austrijske kulture u Osijeku, manifestacije posvećene očuvanju pozitivnih aspekata austrijske kulture, ali i prihvaćanju povijesne suodgovornosti austrijskog naroda za zločine počinjene tijekom nacističkog režima. Osim pripadnika austrijske manjine, film je posjetilo mnogo članova Židovske općine, što potvrđuje današnju dobru suradnju između dvaju nacionalnih manjina koje su tijekom povijesti prošle veoma komplicirana razdoblja. Potomci žrtava i počinitelja našli su se zajedno na projekciji s ciljem ostvarivanja zajedničke, pozitivnije budućnosti.

Upravo to je tema filma – Holokaust iz perspektive žrtve i počinitelja. U filmu redatelja Simona Wielanda, gledatelji prate izvješća jednog Židova koji je među rijetkima preživjelima koncentracijskog logora Mauthausen – i jednog pripadnika Wehrmachta, nacističke vojske. Film je snimljen 2017. godine, a produkcijski je dovršen 2020. Obojica protagonista u 2017. godini pripovijedaju priču osobno, u prvom licu, posjećujući mjesta zbiva-

nja i prisjećajući se – ne tako davne, već jezivo bliske – prošlosti. Stanisław Leszczyński, rođen 1922. u poljskom gradu Łódžu, preživio je boravak u koncentracijskom logoru Mauthausen zahvaljujući svojoj izuzetnoj fizičkoj snazi. Kao mladi sportaš u usponu, uspio je izdržati fizički naporne uvjete rada u kamenolomu Mauthausen. Prisjetio se kako su zatvorenici svakodnevno po cijeli dan nosili teško kamenje uz strme stube, a okrutni kapoi su ih odgurivali na najmanji znak slabosti. Zbog nasilja nadglednika – ali i naprosto fizičke slabosti – mnogi su zatvorenici padali niz stube i ostajali na mjestu mrtvi. Stanislaw pamti da je prosječni zatvorenik uspijevaao preživjeti samo dva tjedna u okrutnim uvjetima rada u kamenolomu. Osim izuzetne fizičke kondicije, Stanislaw je preživio iz još jednog razloga: živio je u baraci predviđenoj za boksače, koji su svojim boksačkim vještinama zabavljali nadglednike logora – i zbog toga dobivali dodatne porcije hrane. Nakon transporta u logor Gusen, Stanislaw se našao na samom rubu smrti – zbog izuzetne fizičke brutalnosti čuvara, gotovo je podlegao dubokim ranama. Pa ipak, budući da je bio snažan i ko-

ristan radnik, omogućena mu je operacija rana kojom mu je spašen život. Premda je bio veoma slab, a povratak na posao nakon tako dubokih ozljeda zacijelo bi mu donijela smrt, ubrzo nakon operacije, koncentracijski je logor oslobođen, a nekadašnji zatvorenici organizirali su se po skupinama i napustili logore.

Franz Hackl rođen je 1927. u selu Mauthausen. Prisjećao se kako je od mlade dobi pokazivao interes za aktivnosti kojima su se bavili i drugi mladi ljudi – pa je tako postao članom Hitlerjugenda. Navodi kako je članom postao bez razmišljanja ili promišljanja nacističke ideologije, jednostavno “jer su svi tad bili u HJ”. Kao mlad čovjek, podlegao je nacističkoj propagandi, sve dok se nije zaposlio u kovačnici logora Mauthausen. Franz navodi da je tijekom rada u logoru dobio priliku upoznati zatvorenike – i da je tada shvatio da su antisemitistički stereotipi neistiniti, da su Židovi žrtve, a nacisti su ti koji su zli. Pa ipak, Franz se spremno pridružio Wehrmachtu i postao dijelom vojske koja se borila na strani nacista. Nakon oslobođenja od nacizma, Franz navodi kako su Saveznici ubijali samo vojnike Wehrmachta koji su imali tetovažu SS ili SA, a ostale su pošteđjeli – jer ih je naprosto bilo previše. Pomalo je alarmantno da toliko mnogo godina nakon rata, Franz odbija priznati da je učinio bilo što loše: on se naprosto ponašao kako su se svi ponašali, radio što su svi radili. Gledatelji ne mogu ne pomisliti da se ispod toga možda kriju

i zločini o kojima ne bi rado govorio pred kamerama. Sretan što je preživio, Franz je odlučio reinterpretirati svoje sudjelovanje u nacističkom režimu, članstvo u Hitlerjugendu i vojevanje u Wehrmachtu.

Priča jedne žrtve i jednog počinitelja teku paralelno, a nijedan ni drugi ne bave se dodatnim interpretacijama svojih proživljavanja. Obojica pričaju svoje životne priče (više ili manje) objektivno, činjenično, ostavljajući na gledatelju zaključke. Na koncu, gledatelj postaje svjestan da se ti događaji uopće nisu dogodili davno – a mnogi se nisu ni suočili sa svojim djelima. Potomci nacista i njihovih suradnika ne mogu snositi odgovornost za postupke svojih predaka – pa ipak, mnogi od tih predaka nikad nisu prihvatili svoju povijesnu odgovornost za zločine, time prenoseći potomcima pogrešne poruke. Postoje potomci nacističkih počinitelja koji žive u uvjerenju da je Holokaust izmišljen i/ili prenapuhan, a da su stvarne žrtve njihovi preci. Upravo da bi se izbjegla opasnost izvrtanja žrtve i počinitelja, potrebno je više dokumentaraca vezanih uz taj užasni povijesni period – i, više od svega, potrebno je da ti dokumentarci dosegnu mlade i djecu, čiji se stavovi tek formiraju. Samo na taj način moguće je ostvariti pozitivni suživot između Židova i Austrijanaca, potomaka žrtava i potomaka počinitelja. Filmske projekcije poput ove hvalevrijedan su korak u održavanju ove multinacionalne suradnje.

Paula Rem

Perspective of the Victim and the Perpetrator: Documentary “Mauthausen – Two Lives”

On Tuesday, November 15, 2022, the documentary film “Mauthausen – two lives” was shown in the Urania cinema. The screening of this film was part of the 12th Day of Austrian Culture in Osijek, a manifestation dedicated to the preservation of positive aspects of Austrian culture, but also to the acceptance of the historical co-responsibility of the Austrian people for the crimes committed during the Nazi regime. In addition to members of the Austrian minority, the film was visited by many members of the Jewish Municipality, which confirms today’s good cooperation between the two national minorities that have gone through very complicated periods in history. Descendants of victims and perpetrators met together at the screening with the aim of achieving a common, more positive future.

This is exactly the topic of the film - the Holocaust from the perspective of the victim and the perpetrator. In the film directed by Simon Wieland, viewers follow the accounts of a Jew who is among the few survivors of the Mauthausen concentration camp – and a member of the Wehrmacht,

the Nazi army. The film was shot in 2017, and production was completed in 2020. In 2017, both protagonists narrate the story personally, in the first person, visiting places of events and remembering the - not so long ago, but eerily close - past. Stanisław Leszczyński, born in 1922 in the Polish city of Łódź, survived his stay in the Mauthausen concentration camp thanks to his extraordinary physical strength. As a young athlete on the rise, he managed to withstand the physically demanding working conditions in the Mauthausen quarry. He recalled how the prisoners carried heavy stones up the steep stairs every day, and the cruel capos pushed them away at the slightest sign of weakness. Due to the violence of the overseers - but also simply physical weakness - many prisoners fell down the stairs and remained dead on the spot. Stanislaw remembers that the average prisoner managed to survive only two weeks in the cruel working conditions in the quarry. In addition to his exceptional physical condition, Stanislaw survived for another reason: he lived in a barracks re-

served for boxers, who entertained the camp overseers with their boxing skills - and because of this, they received extra portions of food. After being transported to the Gusen camp, Stanislaw found himself on the verge of death - due to the extreme physical brutality of the guards, he almost succumbed to his deep wounds. And yet, because he was a strong and useful worker, he was given an operation on his wound that saved his life. Although he was very weak, and returning to work after such deep injuries would surely bring him death, shortly after the operation, the concentration camp was liberated, and the former prisoners organized themselves into groups and left the camps.

Franz Hackl was born in 1927 in the village of Mauthausen. He recalled how from a young age he showed interest in the activities that other young people were engaged in - so he became a member of the Hitler Youth. He states that he became a member without thinking or considering the Nazi ideology, simply "because everyone was in the HJ then". As a young man, he succumbed to Nazi propaganda, until he got a job in the forge of the Mauthausen camp. Franz states that while working in the camp, he had the opportunity to meet the prisoners - and that he then realized that the anti-Semitic stereotypes were untrue, that the Jews were the victims, and the Nazis were the evil ones. And yet, Franz readily joined

the Wehrmacht and became part of the army that fought on the side of the Nazis. After liberation from Nazism, Franz states that the Allies killed only Wehrmacht soldiers who had SS or SA tattoos, and spared the rest - because there were simply too many of them. It is somewhat alarming that so many years after the war, Franz refuses to admit that he did anything wrong: he simply behaved as everyone behaved, did what everyone did. Viewers can't help but think that there might be crimes hidden under that, which he would not like to talk about in front of the cameras. Happy to have survived, Franz decided to reinterpret his participation in the Nazi regime, his membership in the Hitler Youth and his service in the Wehrmacht.

The story of one victim and one perpetrator run parallel, and neither of them deal with additional interpretations of their experiences. Both tell their life stories (more or less) objectively, factually, leaving the viewer to draw conclusions. In the end, the viewer becomes aware that these events did not happen long ago at all - and many have not even faced their actions. Descendants of the Nazis and their collaborators cannot be held responsible for the actions of their ancestors - and yet, many of those ancestors never accepted their historical responsibility for the crimes, thereby passing on the wrong messages to their descendants. There are descendants of Nazi perpetrators who

live in the belief that the Holocaust was invented and/or exaggerated, and that the real victims were their ancestors. Precisely in order to avoid the danger of distorting the victim and the perpetrator, more documentaries related to that terrible historical period are needed - and, more than anything, it is necessary that these documentaries reach young people

and children, whose attitudes are just being formed. Only in this way is it possible to achieve a positive coexistence between Jews and Austrians, the descendants of the victims and the descendants of the perpetrators. Film screenings like this one are a commendable step in maintaining this multinational collaboration.

Paula Rem

“Brundibar” u konclogoru Jasenovac: o fiktivnom i stvarnom zlu

Cesta je bila okružena maglom, ne gustom, ali zloslutnom: dan je bio veoma mračan, a tek kad smo se približili lokaciji, shvatili smo da je vanjska temperatura dosta visoka. Nije hladno ni vruće – ali sparina je veoma neugodna. Došli smo usred tonske probe: zauzimamo mjesta pola sata ranije, s obzirom da je u publiku trebalo pristići nekoliko stotina učenika viših razreda osnovne škole. Nakon pregledavanja spomen-muzeja i mjesta stradanja Jasenovac, učenici su dobili izvanrednu priliku pogledati

“Brundibar”, autentičnu predstavu nastalu u vrijeme Holokausta, koju su za propagandne svrhe morala izvoditi djeca u češkom koncentracijskom logoru Terezina.

Dječju operu “Brundibar” skladao je češki Židov Hans Krasa uz libreto Adolza Hoffmeistera i scenografiju Františka Zelenke 1938. godine u Pragu. Nakon što je većina praških Židova deportirana u koncentracijske logore, nacisti su organizirali djecu-zatočnike u logoru Terezina za izvođenje



Prizor iz predstave: fiktivni negativac Brundibar

Izvor: privatni arhiv



Prizor iz predstave

Izvor: privatni arhiv

ove predstave svaki put pri dolasku Crvenog križa i ostalih međunarodnih organizacija u cilju stvoriti iluziju da su zatočnici njihovih konclogora ugodno smješteni i, štoviše, slobodni baviti se umjetnošću. Djeca su izvela predstavu čak 55 puta za različite međunarodne odbore, a ista je snimljena i kao propagandni film. Međunarodni crveni križevi i odbori za ljudska prava nisu polagali pretjerano mnogo važnosti na stvarno očuvanje ljudskih prava, pa ih tako tretman prema Židovima i ostalim ugroženim grupacijama, segregacija i prisilni rad nisu pretjerano mnogo zamarali. Njima je bilo važno da na papirima sve štima: dokumentacija je bila u redu, šarena predstava je bila u redu: pravili su se da ne primjećuju ono što se događalo iza kulise. Flashback: Pripadnici crvenih križeva i inih organizacija energično plješću dječjim glumcima na

njihovoj spektakularnoj izvedbi. Očarani simpatičnom izvedbom i vokalnim sposobnostima židovskih dječjih glumaca, međunarodna povjerenstva ocjenjuju uvjete u koncentracijskom logoru prolaznom ocjenom i odlaze svojim putem, pretvarajući se da ne znaju što se događa kad predstava završi. Nakon što je fiktivni negativac Brundibar pobijeđen, stvarni negativac preuzima kontrolu. Zavjesa pada, sudionici predstave se nakratko vraćaju u mizernu egzistenciju konclogora; pripadnici međunarodnih organizacija sjedaju u svoja vozila, ne videći u tome ništa sporno. Dobro zabavljeni, crvenokriževci se smiju, komentirajući kvalitetu dječje izvedbe, a s druge strane kulise, djeca, skladatelj i glazbenici dobivaju obavijest o relokaciji; preusmjerava ih se u vlak za Auschwitz. Vlak staje na odredištu, pogon se još nije ni ohladio, a novo-

pridošli su upućeni prema plinskoj komori, gdje su smaknuti tehničkom preciznošću. Predstava je završila, a stvarni život donio je smrt.

Ova snažna pozadina ključna je za razumijevanje radnje i načina izvođenja ove opere: stil pjevanja je više nalik na mjuzikl, nego na operu; trajanje je ispod 40 minuta, što je izvrsno prilagođeno dječjoj koncentraciji; poruka je da se zajedništvom može nadići sve društvene nepravde. Članice dječjeg zagrebačkog zbora “Zvezdice”, pod vodstvom Zdravka Šljivca, igraju veoma zahtjevnu ulogu: kao da forma mjuzikla / opere nije dovoljno kompleksna sama po sebi, jer kombinira istovremeno pjevanje, glumu i ples, ova predstava ima veoma tešku povijesnu pozadinu. Tridesetak članica zbora izvanredno su odigrale svoje uloge, autentično i dostojanstveno evocirajući uspomenu na sve žrtve nacizma. Izvedba dječjih sopranistica evocira na kombinaciju bajkovitog Disneya (čiji su animirani mjuzikli poput “Snjeguljice” tada već bili svjetski poznati) i bezvremenskog Broadwaya. Jedna vesela i nježna predstava poput “Brundibara” u totalnoj je opoziciji sa stvarnim povijesnim okolnostima. Nadrealnoj atmosferi doprinosi činjenica da je predstava koja promovira najvažnije općeljudske vrijednosti poput zajedništva i solidarnosti bila pokrićem za najstrašnije zločine.

Predstava se izvodi u sklopu projekta “Festival židovskog filma – Festival tolerancije” koji je pokrenuo Bran-

ko Lustig. Hrvatski prijevod libreta napisale su Ana Tonković Dolencić i Marija Tonković; predstavu je producirala Nataša Popović, a režirali Hrvoje Korbar i Krešimir Dolencić. U ulozi redatelja / nacista istaknuo se Zoran Pribičević, u ulozi Brundibara Božidar Peričić. Producentica Nataša Popović istaknula je važnost obrazovanja djece o temi Holokausta, naglašavajući kako je važno posjećivati spomen-mjesta poput Jasenovca, govoriti i pisati o toj temi. Popović je također istaknula zadovoljstvo činjenicom da je tijekom dva recentna izvođenja opere bilo prisutno preko 400 učenika: pohvalno je što mnogi nastavnici povijesti i roditelji sve više prepoznaju važnost edukacije o temi Holokausta.



Najava za Brundibar

Izvor: privatni arhiv

Izvođenje predstave na mjestu jasenovačkog logora smrti pun je pogodak: s Kamenitim cvijetom nalijevo i autentičnim vlakom kojim su se zatvorenici transportirali nadesno od pozornice, predstava poprima autentičnost. Postaje nam jasno da nije riječ o fikciji – već jezivoj stvarnosti. Predstava u izvedbi zagrebačkog zborora “Zvezdice” nije samo autentična replika izvorne izvedbe, već mnogo više od toga: postoji okvirna radnja, meta-radnja, koja izvrsno uokviruje radnju i podsjeća na bolnu stvarnost iza jedne šarene dječje predstave. Radnja govori o siromašnom bratu i sestri koji pjevaju na ulici, nastojeći skupiti novac za bolesnu majku. Međutim, ostala djeca preferiraju uličnog zabavljača Brundibara, timbartonovski našminkanog klauna koji ismijava vokalnu izvedbu dvoje dječjih protagonista. Sva djeca daju novac šarenom Brundibaru, a nitko ne obraća pozornost na siromašnog brata i sestru. Preko noći, tri životinje-lutali-

ce slušaju tužnu životnu priču brata i sestre te okupljaju djecu, nagovarajući ih da pomognu. Zahvaljujući vrapčiću, mački i psiću, dvoje siromašnih protagonista uspijeva skupiti novac za mamu. Nakon što im Brundibar otkriva novac u svrhu provokacije, djeca zajedno potrče za njim i svladaju ga. Fiktivni negativac je svladan: ali onaj stvarni zapravo je cijelo vrijeme bio tu, među djecom, nitko ga nije primijetio niti identificirao. Istinski negativac nije šaljivi klaun Brundibar. Unatoč njegovim klaunskim spletkama i nekorektnom odnosu prema drugim uličnim izvođačima – on nije zao. Zlo je daleko podmuklije i krije se pod prividom normalnosti: pod maskom nečeg benevolentnog i pozitivnog.

Kroz predstavu, višeput se pojavljuje misteriozni odrasli lik buržoaskog izgleda, koji odudara od siromašnog izgleda dječjih likova. Na samom početku predstave, ovaj lik predstavlja redatelja koji probija “četvrti zid” go-



Dramatično finale predstave

Izvor: privatni arhiv



Djeca hodaju u smjeru stvarnog jasenovačkog vlaka

Izvor: privatni arhiv

voreći da, unatoč optimističnim stihovima opere “pjevajmo sad’ svi, od sveg’ smo jači mi”, u stvarnosti sretan kraj nije bio moguć. Malo kasnije, ovaj lik daje potporu siromašnoj djeci u njihovom pjevanju, imitira njihove pokrete i nastoji ih motivirati kad nitko drugi to ne čini; nešto kasnije, on je prikazan kao nastavnik tjelesne kulture (ili nešto slično), koji pokazuje vježbe velikoj skupini djece. Na samom koncu predstave, dječji ples zajedništva pretvara se u vojničko marširanje, glazba se transformira u koračnicu, a misteriozni lik pojavljuje se u nacističkoj uniformi. Dječji likovi demontiraju šarene kocke koje su predstavljale grad. Grad sad leži u ruševinama, što je jasna referenca na 2. svjetski rat, ali i opći kolaps društva temeljenog na nacizmu. Na koncu, dječji likovi grade prolaz nalik na ulaz u koncentracijski logor. Lik u nacističkoj uniformi postrojava djecu i tjera ih kroz ta vrata, a u pozadini je

simbolički ispušten dim koji evocira ciklon-B, ali i simbolički prikazuje smrt. Djeca prolaze kroz sivi prolaz i odlaze jasenovačkom zelenom travom u smjeru – stvarnog, autentičnog vlaka kojim su u vrijeme nacizma zatočnici odvođeni u Jasenovac. Ovaj prizor izuzetno je snažan i daje stvarnosni dojam predstavi. Djeca odlaze u koloni u smjeru vlaka, zatim zastaju, okreću se i dolaze nazad: ne u koloni, već slobodni, držeći se za ruke. Vraćaju se u uništen grad iz kojeg su bili istjerani i dostojanstveno stoje, gledajući publiku u oči.

U ovom trenutku jasno je da mlade članice zbora “Zvezdice” ne izvode predstavu o fiktivnom negativcu Brundibaru: već o stvarnom negativcu, nacizmu. Dječje pjevačice izvanrednih vokalnih sposobnosti ne glume siromašnog brata i sestru, vrapčića, psića ili mačku, već de facto uprizoruju scene deportacije i smrti stvarne djece-glumaca koji su izvodili pred-

stavu u nacističkim koncentracijskim logorima. U svojoj mladoj dobi, dječje izvođačice stavljaju se u kožu dječjih žrtava Holokausta. Dječji izvođači sada evociraju sjećanje na dječju-glumce koja su, nakon izvođenja predstave u propagandne svrhe, deportirana u Auschwitz i ubijena. Na licima izvođačica iz "Zvezdica" sada se ocrtavaju emocije straha, tuge, ali i dostojanstvenosti i nade. Prolazak kroz "vrata" simbolizirao je svojevrsnu smrt: djeca su već umrla, ali sada se vraćaju. Dobro je pobijedilo, zlo je poraženo – čak i u stvarnosti, koju,

nažalost, mnoga djeca-izvođači nisu dočekali živi. Pa ipak, židovstvo je opstalo, a dobro je pobijedilo. Premda su mnogi potomci žrtava Holokausta, logično, iselili za vrijeme ili nakon rata, mnogi su odlučili ostati, unatoč svemu; ostati u društvu koje ih je onomad odbacilo, ne zamjerati, već se truditi izgraditi novo, bolje društvo na ruševinama starog. Magla se podigla, sunce je zasjalo: povratak djece jasenovačkom poljanom, na kojoj sada raste trava, simbolizira početak mesijanskog doba, novi početak u svijetu tolerancije i prihvaćanja.

Paula Rem

“Brundibar” in Concentration Camp Jasenovac: Real and Fictional Evil

The road was surrounded by fog, not thick, but ominous: the day was very dark, and only when we got closer to the location did we realize that the outside temperature was quite high. It's not cold or hot - but the humidity is very unpleasant. We arrived in the middle of the sound rehearsal: we take our seats half an hour early, considering that several hundred upper elementary school students were supposed to arrive in the audience. After visiting the Jasenovac Memorial Museum and the site of the martyrdom,

the students had an extraordinary opportunity to watch “Brundibar”, an authentic play created during the Holocaust, which had to be performed by children in the Czech concentration camp Terezina for propaganda purposes.

The children's opera “Brundibar” was composed by the Czech Jew Hans Krasa with a libretto by Adoloz Hoffmeister and scenography by František Zelenka in 1938 in Prague. After the majority of Prague's Jews were deported to concentration camps, the



Scene from the show: a fictional antagonist Brundibar

Source: private archive

Nazis organized children-prisoners in the Terezina camp to perform this play every time the Red Cross and other international organizations arrived in order to create the illusion that the prisoners of their concentration camps were comfortably housed and, moreover, free to do art. The children performed the play as many as 55 times for different international committees, and it was filmed as a propaganda film. International Red Crosses and human rights committees did not attach too much importance to the actual preservation of human rights, so the treatment of Jews and other vulnerable groups, segregation and forced labor did not bother them too much. It was important to them that everything was right on paper: the documentation was in order, the colorful show was in order: they pretended not to notice what was happening behind the scenes. Flashback: Members of the Red Cross and other organizations energetically applaud

the child actors during their spectacular performance. Charmed by the sympathetic performance and vocal abilities of the Jewish child actors, the international commissions give the conditions in the concentration camp a passing grade and go their separate ways, pretending not to know what happens when the play ends. After the fictional villain Brundibar is defeated, the real villain takes control. The curtain falls, the participants of the play briefly return to the miserable existence of the concentration camp; members of international organizations sit in their vehicles, not seeing anything objectionable in it. Well amused, the Red Crossers laugh, commenting on the quality of the children's performance, and from the other side of the stage, the children, the composer and the musicians are notified of the relocation; they are diverted to the train to Auschwitz. The train stops at its destination, the engine has not even cooled down yet,



Scene from the show

Source: private archive



Scene from the show: two protagonists and a nazi character (real evil)

Source: private archive

and the new arrivals are directed to the gas chamber, where they are executed with technical precision. The show ended, and real life brought death.

This strong background is crucial to understanding the action and the way this opera is performed: the singing style is more like a musical than an opera; the duration is under 40 minutes, which is excellently adapted to children's concentration; the message is that togetherness can overcome all social injustices. The members of the Zagreb children's choir "Zvezdice", under the direction of Zdravko Šljivac, play a very demanding role: as if the musical / opera form is not complex enough in itself, because it combines singing, acting and dancing at the same time, this play has a very difficult historical background.

About thirty members of the choir played their roles wonderfully, authentically and dignifiedly evoking the memory of all the victims of Nazism. The performance of the child sopranos evokes a combination of fairy-tale Disney (whose animated musicals like "Snow White" were already world-famous at the time) and timeless Broadway. A cheerful and tender play like "Brundibar" is in total opposition to the real historical circumstances. Adding to the surreal atmosphere is the fact that the show, which promotes the most important universal human values such as togetherness and solidarity, was a cover for the most terrible crimes.

The play is performed as part of the project "Festival of Jewish Film - Festival of Tolerance" initiated by Branko Lustig. The Croatian translation of the

libretto was written by Ana Tonković Dolenčić and Marija Tonković; the play was produced by Nataša Popović and directed by Hrvoje Korbar and Krešimir Dolenčić. Zoran Pribičević stood out in the role of the director / Nazi, Božidar Peričić in the role of Brundibar. Producer Nataša Popović stressed the importance of educating children about the Holocaust, stressing the importance of visiting memorial sites like Jasenovac, speaking and writing about the topic. Popović also expressed satisfaction with the fact that over 400 students were present during the two recent performances of the opera: it is commendable that many history teachers and parents increasingly recognize the importance of education on the subject of the Holocaust.

Performing the play on the site of the Jasenovac death camp is a hit: with the Stone Flower to the left and the authentic train used to transport the

prisoners to the right of the stage, the play takes on authenticity. It becomes clear to us that it is not a matter of fiction - but a gruesome reality. The play performed by the Zagreb choir "Zvezjedice" is not only an authentic replica of the original performance, but much more than that: there is a framework plot, a meta-plot, which perfectly frames the plot and reminds us of the painful reality behind a colorful children's play. The story tells about a poor brother and sister who sing on the street, trying to raise money for their sick mother. However, the other children prefer the street entertainer Brundibar, a clown with Timbarton make-up who makes fun of the vocal performance of the two child protagonists. All the children give money to the colorful Brundibar, and no one pays attention to the poor brother and sister. During the night, three stray animals listen to the sad life story of a brother and sister and



Children lined up towards actual concentration camp train

Source: private archive

gather the children, persuading them to help. Thanks to a sparrow, a cat and a puppy, two poor protagonists manage to collect money for their mother. After Brundibar steals their money as a provocation, the children run after him together and overpower him. The fictional villain was defeated: but the real one was actually there all along, among the children, nobody noticed or identified him. The real villain is not the jokey clown Brundibar. Despite his clownish schemes and incorrect attitude towards other street performers – he is not evil. Evil is far more insidious and hides under the guise of normality: under the guise of something benevolent and positive.

Throughout the play, a mysterious adult character with a bourgeois appearance appears several times, which contrasts with the poor appearance of the children's characters. At the very beginning of the play, this character represents the director who breaks through the "fourth wall" saying that, despite the optimistic lyrics of the opera "let's all sing now, we are stronger than anything", in reality a happy ending was not possible. A little later, this character supports poor children in their singing, imitates their movements and tries to motivate them when no one else does; a little later, he is shown as a physical education teacher (or something similar), showing exercises to a large group of children. At the very end of the play, the children's community dance

turns into a military march, the music transforms into a marching band, and a mysterious figure appears in a Nazi uniform. The children's characters dismantle the colorful cubes that represented the city. The city now lies in ruins, which is a clear reference to World War II, but also the general collapse of society based on Nazism. At the end, the child characters build a passage similar to the entrance to a concentration camp. A figure in a Nazi uniform lines up the children and forces them through that door, and in the background there is a symbolically released smoke that evokes Zyklon-B, but also symbolically depicts death. The children pass through the gray passage and leave on the green grass of Jasenovac in the direction of the real, authentic train that used to take prisoners to Jasenovac during the Nazi era. This scene is extremely powerful and gives the play a realistic feel. Children leave in a column in the direction of the train, then stop, turn around and come back: not in a column, but free, holding hands. They return to the destroyed city from which they were driven out and stand with dignity, looking the audience in the eye.

At this moment, it is clear that the young members of the choir "Zvezdice" are not performing a play about the fictitious villain Brundibar: but about the real villain, Nazism. Child singers with extraordinary vocal abilities do not play the role of a



Children returning from “death” in the show

Source: private archive

poor brother and sister, a sparrow, a puppy or a cat, but de facto stage the scenes of deportation and death of real child-actors who performed in Nazi concentration camps. At their young age, child performers put themselves in the shoes of child victims of the Holocaust. Child performers now evoke the memory of child actors who, after performing a play for propaganda purposes, were deported to Auschwitz and killed. The faces of the performers from “Zvezdice” now depict emotions of fear, sadness, but also dignity and hope. Passing through the “door” symbolized a kind of death: the children had already died, but now they are coming back.

Good won, evil was defeated - even in reality, which, unfortunately, many child-performers did not see alive. And yet, Judaism survived, and good won. Although many descendants of Holocaust victims, logically, emigrated during or after the war, many decided to stay, despite everything; to stay in the society that rejected them back then, not to hold grudges, but to try to build a new, better society on the ruins of the old one. The fog lifted, the sun shone: the return of the children to the Jasenova field, where grass now grows, symbolizes the beginning of the messianic age, a new beginning in the world of tolerance and acceptance.

Darko Fischer

Tjedan Izraela u Zagrebu 2022.

U Zagrebu je od 20. do 29. studenog 2022. godine održan tradicionalni tjedan Izraela. To je kulturna manifestacija u organizaciji Židovske općine Zagreb. Ona se svake godine od 1999. održava u glavnom gradu Hrvatske. Cilj te djelatnosti je upoznati građane Zagreba i Hrvatske s izraelskom i židovskom kulturom, njenom dugom povijesti ali i uspješnim suvremenim dostignućima. Iz godine u godinu manifestacija je postajala sve popularnija, broj posjetitelja se povećavao, dobivene su mnoge pohvale i priznanja a 2013. taj je događaj proglašen najboljim javnim programom Židovske općine Zagreb. Procjenjuje se da je te programe do sada vidjelo preko 30000 gledalaca. Program je bio sufinanciran sredstvima Savjeta za nacionalne manjine Republike Hrvatske. Kao i svake godine, program je bio raznovrstan. Priređene su kazališne predstave, koncerti, prikazi knjiga, diskusije uz okrugli stol, filmska predstava i koncert klezmer glazbe.

Dvije kazališne predstave održane su u Zagrebačkom kazalištu mladih (ZKM). Prva od njih, pod naslovom „Kamen“, rezultat je suradnja Beogradskog dramskog pozorišta i ZKM-a. Predstava na nešto neobičan način pokušava prikazati sudbinu židovske obitelji u Njemačkoj za vrijeme Holokausta i u poslijeratnom razdoblju komunizma u istočnoj Njemačkoj kroz priču o kući u kojoj se

izmjenjuju stanari ovisno o političkim prilikama. Autor drame, njemački pisac Marius von Mayenburg i režiser Patrik Lazić nisu se držali kronološkog slijeda priče i događaja, već su neobičnim vremenskim skokovima nastojali prikazati kontraverze raznih ideoloških razdoblja od 1933. do 1980. u Njemačkoj. Takav pristup djeluje kao eksperiment čiji uspjeh će se tek kasnije moći objektivno vrednovati ako predstava doživi više izvedbi i bude prihvaćena od publike. U svakom slučaju predstava je za dobru glumačku družinu bila svojevrstan uspješno obavljen izazov.

Druga kazališna predstava, „Sedam sekundi vječnosti“ održana je također u ZKM-u. Bila je to monodrama austrijskog književnika Petera Turrinija koju je izvela ljubljanska glumica Polona Vetrlih. Naslov sugerira izazovnih sedam sekundi u jednom filmu holivudske glumice Hedy Lamar koja je prva imala hrabrost da na filmu u kratkom insertu prikaže ljepotu svoga tijela. Predstava je prikaz karijere nekada poznate i slavne holywoodske glumice Hedy Lamar. Osim glumačke karijere ova je žena židovskog porijekla bila i talentirana fizičarka te je ostavila neke izume koji se i danas koriste u suvremenim elektroničkim komunikacijskim uređajima. No to nisu sve kontraverze ove filmske ljepotice, koja je, kao i mnoge druge osobe iz tog okruženja, doživljavala

nesretne trenutke usamljenosti tražeći utjehu u alkoholu.

Knjigu poznatog izraelskog pisca Davida Grossmana predstavili su glavni urednik izdavačke kuće Fraktura Seid Serdarević i Nataša Barac urednica časopisa Ha Kol koji izdaje Židovska općina Zagreb. Ovo je već četvrta Grossmanova knjiga koju je izdala izdavačka knjiga Fraktura. Prevoditeljica s hebrejskog je Andrea Weiss Sadek koja se izvanredno dobro snašla u teškom Grossmanovom tekstu. Ona je 11 godina živjela u Izraelu pa je razumljivo da je postala uvažena i vrlo plodna prevoditeljica izraelskih pisaca na hrvatski jezik. Sama prevoditeljica, na žalost, nije mogla prisustvovati ovom događaju, no Nataša Barac je zahvaljujući svom dobrom poznavanju literature izvrsno upoznala slušatelje s osobinama s vrijednošću Grossmanove knjige kao i o značaju Grossmana u izraelskoj i svjetskoj književnosti.

Zagrebačka sinagoga, sagrađena 1867. godine u samom središtu grada (danas Praška ulica 7) bila je značajno arhitektonsko dostignuće graditelja Ivana Kleina. Bila je ukras grada i središte vjerskog života zagrebačkih Židova. U nacističkom ludilu uništavanja svega židovskog, ustaše su već 1941. donijele odluku o rušenju tog sakralnog objekta, što je vjerojatno najveći kulturocid napravljen u glavnom gradu Hrvatske. O značaju te građevine i prilikama koje su vladale neposredno i u vrijeme njenog rušenja govorilo se na „Okruglom stolu“, događaju u okviru „Tjedna Izraela“ i 80. te godišnjice rušenja sinagoge.

Povjesničar Tvrtko Jakovina, povjesničarka umjetnosti Snješka Knežević, te predsjednik i rabin Židovske općine, Ognjen Kraus i Luciano Prelević dali su svoje viđenje značaja te građevine i posljedice njenog rušenja. Ostaje žalostna činjenica, da ni nakon 80 godina od rušenja te velebne građevine, na tom mjestu, osim skromne spomen ploče, nema ništa što bi podsjetilo na nekada brojnu i utjecajnu židovsku zajednicu Zagreba. Prazan prostor na tom mjestu služi kao parkiralište!

Marokanski dokumentarni film o Židovima u Maroku prikazan u dvorani Židovske općine Zagreb uz prisutnost veleposlanika i Izraela i Maroka prikazao je za nas malo poznate podatke, da je u Maroku do 1948. živjelo oko 300.000 Židova i da su se nakon te godine gotovo svi oni iselili u Izrael. Slušajući izjave lokalnih stanovnika, film sugerira da su odnosi Židova i Marokanaca bili vrlo dobri, a da je do iseljenja u Izrael došlo iz vjerskih razloga, želje Židova da žive u svojoj obećanoj zemlji. Film, međutim, nije prikazao i drugu stranu tog događaja a to je bio strah Židova Maroka, da će zbog izraelsko arapskog sukoba u arapskom Maroku Židovi doživjeti velike neugodnosti.

Tjedan Izraela završio je uvijek veselim i nadahnutim koncertom klezmer glazbe zagrebačkog sastava Jewsers. Kao i uvijek, ovaj sastav izvodeći klasična židovska djela s istoka Europe kao i moderne izraelske kompozicije oduševio je publiku i dao joj povoda da s nestrpljenjem očekuje sličan doživljaj za godinu dana.

Darko Fischer

Israel Week in Zagreb 2022

The traditional Israel Week was held in Zagreb from November 20 to 29, 2022. It is a cultural event organized by the Jewish Community Zagreb. It has been held every year since 1999 in the capital of Croatia. The aim of this activity is to acquaint the citizens of Zagreb and Croatia with Israeli and Jewish culture, its long history or successful contemporary achievements. Year after year, the event became more and more popular, the number of visitors increased, many praises and recognitions were received, and in 2013 the event was declared the best public program of the Jewish Municipality of Zagreb. It is estimated that over 30,000 viewers have seen these programs so far. The program was co-financed by the Council for National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia. As every year, the program was diverse. Theater shows, concerts, book presentations, round table discussions, a film show and a klezmer music concert were organized.

Two theater performances were held at the Zagreb Youth Theater (ZKM). The first of them, entitled “The Stone”, is the result of cooperation between the Belgrade Drama Theater and ZKM. In a somewhat unusual way, the play tries to show the fate of a Jewish family in Germany during

the Holocaust and in the post-war period of communism in East Germany through the story of a house in which the tenants change depending on political circumstances. The author of the play, the German writer Marius von Mayenburg and the director Patrik Lazić did not stick to the chronological sequence of stories and events, but tried to show the controversies of various ideological periods from 1933 to 1980 in Germany with unusual time jumps. Such an approach acts as an experiment, the success of which can only be evaluated objectively later, if the play experiences more performances and is accepted by the audience. In any case, the play was a successfully completed challenge for a good cast.

The second theater performance, “Seven Seconds of Eternity” was also held at ZKM. It was a monodrama by Austrian writer Peter Turrini, performed by Ljubljana actress Polona Vetrih. The title suggests a challenging seven seconds in one film by this actress who was the first to have the courage to show the beauty of her body in a short insert on film. The play is a presentation of the career of the once famous and famous Hollywood actress Hedy Lamar. In addition to her acting career, this woman

of Jewish origin was also a talented physicist and left some inventions that are still used today in modern electronic communication devices. But these are not all the controversies of this film beauty, who, like many other people from that environment, experienced unhappy moments of loneliness, seeking solace in alcohol.

The book by the famous Israeli writer David Grossman was presented by the editor-in-chief of the Fraktura publishing house, Seid Serdarević, and Nataša Barac, the editor of the magazine Ha Kol, published by the Jewish Municipality of Zagreb. This is Grossman's fourth book published by Fraktura. The translator from the Hebrew is Andrea Weiss Sadek, who handled Grossman's difficult text remarkably well. She lived in Israel for 11 years, so it is understandable that she became a respected and very prolific translator of Israeli writers into Croatian. The translator herself, unfortunately, could not attend this event, but Nataša Barac, thanks to her good knowledge of literature, excellently introduced the listeners to the qualities and value of Grossman's book, as well as the significance of Grossman in Israeli and world literature.

The Zagreb Synagogue, built in 1867 in the very center of the city (now Praška Street 7), was a significant architectural achievement of the builder Ivan Klein. It was the decoration of the city and the center of the religious life of Zagreb's Jews. In the

Nazi frenzy of destroying everything Jewish, the Ustasha already in 1941 made a decision to demolish that sacred building, which is probably the biggest culturocide committed in the capital of Croatia. The significance of that building and the circumstances that prevailed immediately and at the time of its demolition were discussed at the "Round Table", an event within the framework of "Israel Week" and the 80th anniversary of the synagogue's demolition. Historian Tvrtko Jakovina, art historian Snješka Knežević, and the president and rabbi of the Jewish Municipality, Ognjen Kraus and Luciano Prelević, gave their views on the significance of this building and the consequences of its demolition. The sad fact remains, that even after 80 years since the demolition of that magnificent building, there is nothing at that place, apart from a modest memorial plaque, to remind us of the once numerous and influential Jewish community of Zagreb. The empty space in that place serves as a parking lot!

A Moroccan documentary film about Jews in Morocco, shown in the hall of the Jewish Municipality of Zagreb in the presence of the ambassadors of both Israel and Morocco, showed little-known information for us, that there were about 300,000 Jews living in Morocco until 1948, and that after that year almost all of them emigrated to Israel. Listening to the statements of local residents, the film suggests

that relations between Jews and Moroccans were very good, and that the emigration to Israel occurred for religious reasons, the desire of the Jews to live in their promised land. The film, however, did not show the other side of that event, which was the fear of Moroccan Jews, that because of the Israeli-Arab conflict in Arab Morocco, the Jews would experience great inconvenience.

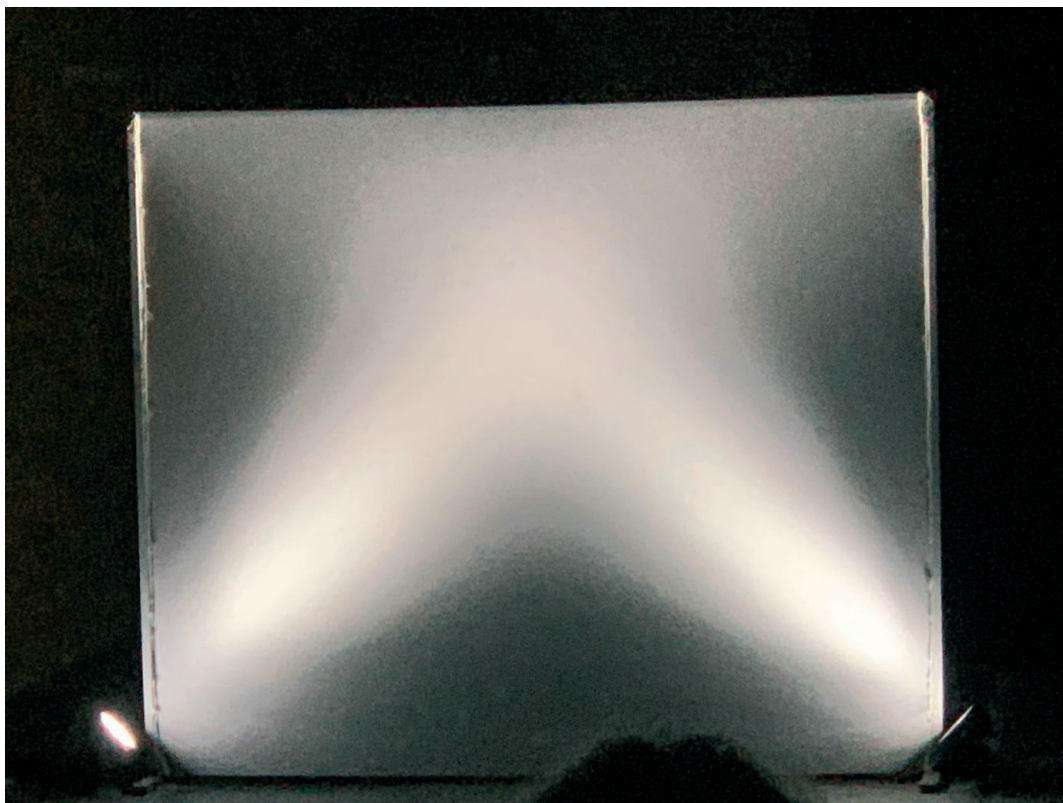
The week of Israel ended with the always cheerful and inspired concert of klezmer music by the Zagreb band Jewsers. As always, this ensemble, performing classical Jewish works from Eastern Europe as well as modern Israeli compositions, delighted the audience and gave them reason to look forward to a similar experience in a year.

Paula Rem

***Sic transit gloria mundi:* aspekti židovskog identiteta izraženi plesom**

Nekoliko dana prije samog programa, koordinatorica Mjeseca židovske kulture Nives Beissmann ugodno nas je iznenadila obaviješću da je još jedan program naknadno uvršten u Mjesec židovske kulture. Riječ je o diplomskom radu Tanje Rute Grgić, studentice neverbalnog teatra na Akademiji za umjetnost i kulturu u Osijeku, pod

vodstvom mentorice red. prof. art. Maje Đurinović i sumentora Matije Ferlina. 21. rujna 2022. u 20 sati u kulturnom prostoru Barutane, gdje se odvijaju mnogi underground umjetnički programi, izvedena je plesna predstava latinskog naslova *Sic transit gloria mundi*, u značenju *Tako prolazi slava svijeta*. Unatoč naslovu poganskog pri-



Prizor iz plesne predstave

Izvor: Boris Lichtenthal



Prizor iz plesne predstave

Izvor: Boris Lichtenthal

zvuka, tema je inspirirana mnogim židovskim motivima i kulturološkim podrijetlom autorice. Uz Tanju Rutu Grgić, nastupio je kolumbijski plesač i koreograf Parsifal Plazas, koji je reflektirao njezine pokrete. Dvoje plesača upoznalo se na studiju plesa u Kini, gdje su plesali zajedno u internacionalnom ansamblu Beihe Body Theatre u Nanjingu. Za predstavu "Savitri" osvojili su prvu nagradu na natjecanju kazališta u Kini.

Pristižući do Barutane, u jednom sam trenutku pomislila da nitko nije došao na predstavu, da bih već u sljedećem trenutku čula pozdrave poznatih glasova. Na ovom neosvijetljenom prostoru prekoputa Drave, usred starih

katakombi, nije se doslovno mogao vidjeti ni prst pred nosom: pa ipak, unatoč mraku, uspjeli smo pronaći jedni druge. Oslanjajući se isključivo na druga osjetila, stupili smo u interakciju, razgovarali ili naprosto šutke stajali zajedno, jer lijepo je imati prijatelja s kojim se može šutjeti, kako piše u *Bijelom klaunu*. Petnaestak minuta činilo se dugo, a moglo je trajati i još dulje: nasuprot ostalim programima Mjeseca židovske kulture, koje je karakteriziralo davanje izjava i fotografiranje pod jarkim svjetlima raznovrsnih javnih prostora, sad smo se nalazili na mokroj travi uz katakombe, u mraku i tišini, a nitko se nije usuđivao uništiti tamu bljeskaju-

ći svjetlom s mobitela. Ova atmosfera nastavila se kroz plesnu predstavu, temeljenu na dualnostima: svjetlo-tama, život-smrt, vidljivo-nevidljivo, stvarnost-sjenovitost. Tek kad je došao trenutak za ulazak u Barutanu, ustanovili smo da je posjećenost predstave izvrsna: cijeli prostor bio je ispunjen posjetiteljima, koji gotovo da nisu mogli pronaći mjesto za sjesti. U trenutku ulaska u stari vojni prostor Barutane, gledatelj se nalazi odsječenim iz vanjskog svijeta, u posebnoj dimenziji gdje postoji samo ples i glazba.

Koreografkinja, redateljica i dramaturginja plesne predstave Tanja Ruta Grčić navodi kako je njezin rad in-

spiriran knjigama Brune Schulza i doktorskim radom dr. Edith Stein, a također su prisutne reference na židovskog filozofa Martina Bubera i elementi transcendentalne fenomenologije Edmunda Husserla. Sonata za čelo br. 8 Zoltana Kodalya izvrsno se uklopila, dajući određen etno-prizvuk, osjećaj ne toliko transcendencije, koliko imanencije, postojanja jedni u drugima. Neva Begović izvrsnim sviranjem uživo nastavila je u publici održavati osjećaje koji su već bili probuđeni zbog samog settinga i prostora. Tehnikom suvremenog plesa, autorica je prikazala trodijelnu priču o rođenju, životu i smrti. U prvom dijelu, dvoje plesača gotovo zrcalno preslikavaju međusobne pokrete, u sklo-



Prizor iz plesne predstave

Izvor: Boris Lichtenthal



Nakon plesne predstave

Izvor: Boris Lichtenthal

pu s filozofijom Martina Bubera, koji je pisao o nužnosti “ogledati se u Dru-gome”. Na voiceoveru se čuje govor o životu i smrti. Sadržaj je nebitan, samo cjelokupna atmosfera je važna: od prvog do zadnjeg trenutka, plesna predstava odiše mirom, spokojem, utjehom, kao da govori gledatelju da će sve biti u redu.

Drugi dio predstave, u kojem su sudjelovali mladi umjetnici Rafael i Hela Grgić, sastojao se od korištenja osvjetljenog platna i igre sjenama. Umjetnici se nisu pak striktno pridržavali svoje zadane pozicije – naći se iza platna – već su rukama i prstima ubadali platno, nastojeći ga probiti, nadići, izići iz “unutarnjeg” u “vanj-

ski” svijet – što im pak nije uspijevalo. Ovaj moment podsjetio je na Platonovu špilju, jer bića iza platna nikako nisu uspjela postati trodimenzionalna. Publika je bila nalik na zatočeničke špilje koji vide samo sjene, a ne i doista ono što se nalazi iza platna. Taj odraz platna može biti kritika na današnji medijski svijet – jer ne vidimo stvarnost iza medija, nego samo sliku koju predstavljaju – ali i osvrt na ograničeno ljudsko stanje u kojemu nije moguće vidjeti “transcendentalnu” stvarnost, već samo površne obri-se. Ovaj moment čak je nalikovao na ultrazvučni prikaz fetusa u maternici, koji se želi roditi, a kako se približava moment poroda, prostora u “mater-

nici” je sve manje, a tame sve više: moment života istovremeno približava to biće smrti.

U trećem dijelu, muška figura leži u položaju nalik na fetalni, okrenut leđima publici, trzajući se u finalnim momentima života. Ženska figura približava se, želi mu se približiti, ali ne uspijeva: oboje umiru prije nego što uspijevaju doći jedno do drugoga. Nakon njihove smrti, pušten je dim koji istovremeno evocira sjećanje na plinske komore i Holokaust, ali i simbolizira odlazak njihove duše. Kraj nije uznemirujuć, već nasuprot, beskonačno umirujuć.

Na koncu, “uskrsnuli” plesači izlaze pred publiku i pitaju za impresije. Publika aktivno sudjeluje u dijalogu s plesačima, izražavajući osjećaje vezane uz predstavu, ali i postavljajući kontrapitanja. U ovom dijelu progra-

ma, plesači su se osvrnuli na iskustvo nastupa u Puli i Osijeku, navodeći da je more u Puli prekrasno, ali Osijek je ipak veliki grad s mnoštvom kulturnih aktivnosti, boljim tehničkim uvjetima za izvedbu, ali i stanovništvom koje rado posjećuje programe i ne boji se izraziti emocije. Koreografkinja je naglasila kako je osnovni cilj plesne predstave bio prikazati smrt kao sastavni dio života, nešto umirujuće, a ne uznemirujuće, nešto što ne donosi kraj, već i novi početak, jer je važno završiti jednu priču da bi druga mogla započeti.

Dobro raspoloženi, izlazimo van, komentirajući kako je izvrsno što je plesna predstava uvrštena u Mjesec židovske kulture, donoseći jedan novi žanr i omogućavajući publici sudjelovanje u interaktivnom iskustvu suvremenog plesa.

Paula Rem

Sic transit gloria mundi: Expression of Jewish Identity through Dance

A few days before the program itself, the coordinator of the Month of Jewish Culture, Nives Beissmann, pleasantly surprised us with the news that another program was subsequently included in the Month of Jewish Culture. It is the graduation thesis of Tanja Ruta Grgić, a student of non-verbal theater at the Academy of Arts and Culture in Osijek, under the guidance

of mentor ed. prof. art. Maja Đurić and co-mentor Matija Ferlin. On September 21, 2022, at 8 p.m. in the iconic venue Barutana, where many underground art programs take place, a dance performance with the Latin title *Sic transit gloria mundi*, meaning Thus passes the glory of the world, was performed. Despite the pagan-sounding title, the theme is in-



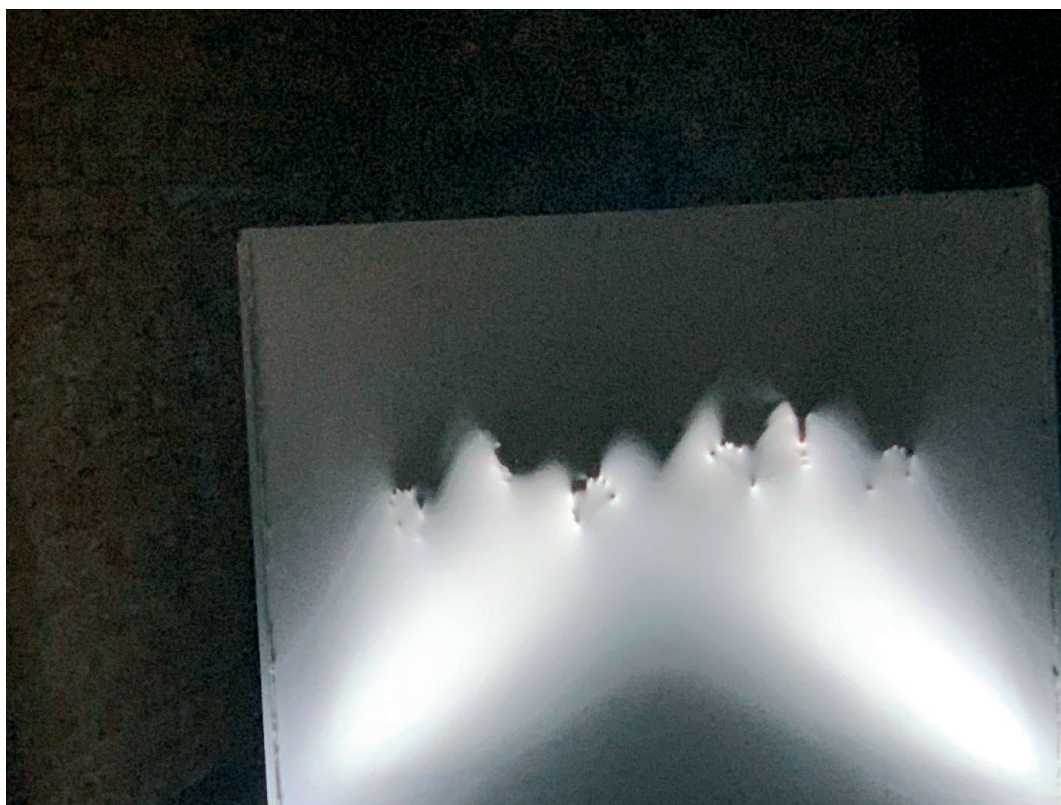
A scene from a dance performance

Source: Boris Lichtenthal

spired by many Jewish motifs and the author's cultural background. Along with Tanja Ruta Grgić, the Colombian dancer and choreographer Parsifal Plazas performed, reflecting her movements. The two dancers met at a dance studio in China, where they danced together in the international ensemble Beihe Body Theater in Nanjing. For the play "Savitri" they won the first prize at the theater competition in China.

Arriving at Barutana, at one moment I thought that no one had come to the show, only to hear the greetings of familiar voices in the next moment. In this unlit area across the Drava, in the middle of the old catacombs, you

literally couldn't see a finger in front of your nose: and yet, despite the darkness, we managed to find each other. Relying solely on other senses, we interacted, talked or simply stood silently together, because it is nice to have a friend with whom one can be silent, as written in the White Clown. Fifteen minutes seemed long, and it could have lasted even longer: in contrast to the other programs of the Month of Jewish Culture, which were characterized by giving statements and taking photos under the bright lights of various public spaces, we were now on the wet grass next to the catacombs, in the dark and silent, and no one dared to destroy the darkness



A scene from a dance performance

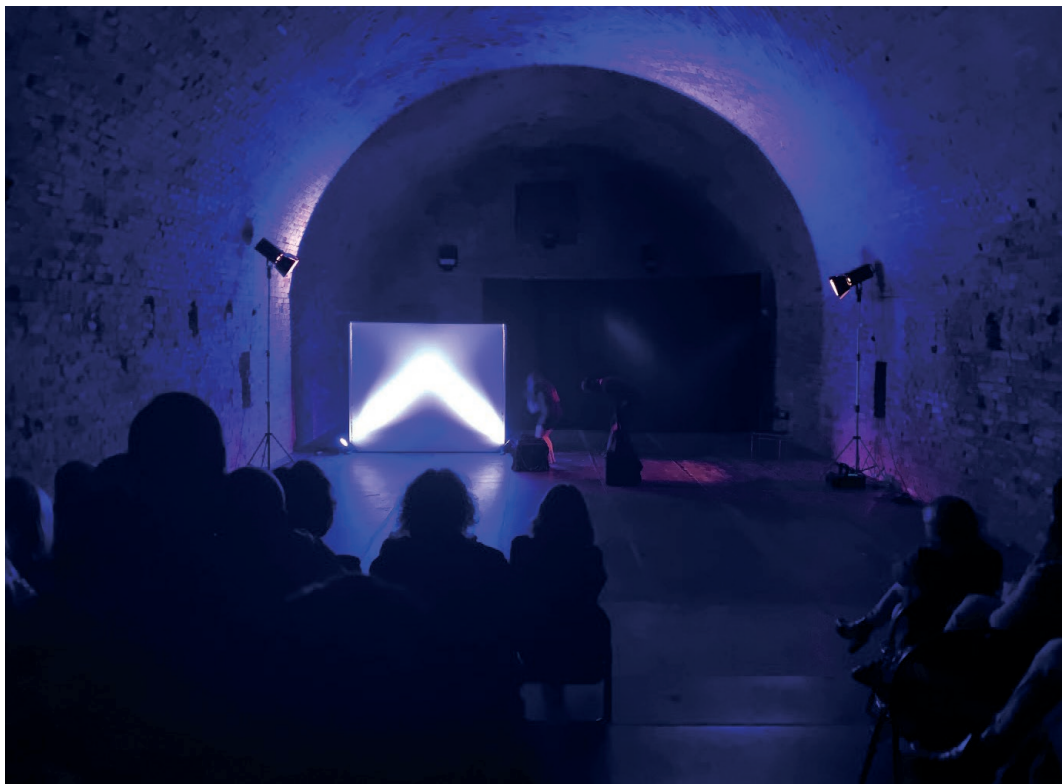
Source: Boris Lichtenthal

by flashing the light of a cell phone. This atmosphere continued through the dance performance, based on dualities: light-darkness, life-death, visible-invisible, reality-shadowiness. It was only when the moment came to enter Barutana that we found out that the show's attendance was excellent: the entire space was filled with visitors, who could hardly find a place to sit. At the moment of entering the old military premises of Barutana, the viewer finds himself cut off from the outside world, in a special dimension where there is only dance and music.

Choreographer, director and playwright of the dance show Tanja Ruta Grgić states that her work is inspired by the books of Bruno Schulz and the doctoral work of Dr. Edith Stein, and there are also references to the Jewish philosopher Martin Buber and elements of Edmund Husserl's transcendental phenomenology. Sonata for cello no. Zoltana Kodaly's 8 fit in perfectly, giving a certain ethno-sound, a feeling not so much of transcendence, but of immanence, of being in each other. Neva Begović, with her excellent live performance, continued to maintain the feelings in the audience that had already been awakened by the setting and space itself. Using the technique of contemporary dance, the author presented a three-part story about birth, life and death. In the first part, the two dancers almost mirror each other's movements, in line with the philosophy of

Martin Buber, who wrote about the need to "look at others". A speech about life and death is heard on the voiceover. The content is irrelevant, only the overall atmosphere is important: from the first moment to the last, the dance performance exudes peace, tranquility, comfort, as if telling the viewer that everything will be fine.

The second part of the performance, in which the young artists Rafael and Hela Grgić participated, consisted of the use of an illuminated canvas and a game of shadows. The artists did not strictly adhere to their given position - to find themselves behind the canvas - but they poked the canvas with their hands and fingers, trying to break through it, go beyond it, get out of the "inner" world into the "outer" world - which they did not succeed in doing. This moment reminded me of Plato's cave, because the beings behind the screen never managed to become three-dimensional. The audience was like the prisoners of the cave who see only shadows and not what is really behind the screen. This reflection of the canvas can be a criticism of today's media world - because we do not see the reality behind the media, but only the image they present - but also a reflection on the limited human condition in which it is not possible to see "transcendent" reality, but only superficial outlines. This moment even resembled an ultrasound image of a fetus in the womb, which



A scene from a dance performance

Source: Boris Lichtenthal

wants to be born, and as the moment of birth approaches, the space in the “womb” is getting smaller and darker: the moment of life simultaneously brings that being closer to death.

In the third part, a male figure lies in a fetal-like position, with his back to the audience, twitching in the final moments of life. A female figure approaches, wants to get closer to him, but fails: both die before they can reach each other. After their death, smoke was released, which simultaneously evokes the memory of the gas chambers and the Holocaust, but also symbolizes the departure of their souls. The end is not disturbing, but on the contrary, infinitely soothing.

At the end, the “resurrected” dancers appear in front of the audience and ask for impressions. The audience actively participates in the dialogue with the dancers, expressing feelings related to the performance, but also asking counter-questions. In this part of the program, the dancers reflected on the experience of performing in Pula and Osijek, stating that the sea in Pula is beautiful, but Osijek is still a big city with many cultural activities, better technical conditions for performance, but also a population that gladly visits the programs and not afraid to express emotions. The choreographer emphasized that the main goal of the dance performance was to



A scene from a dance performance

Source: Boris Lichtenthal

show death as an integral part of life, something soothing, not disturbing, something that does not bring an end, but also a new beginning, because it is important to finish one story so that another can begin.

In high spirits, we head out, commenting on how great it is that the dance performance is included in Jewish Culture Month, bringing a new genre and allowing the audience to participate in an interactive contemporary dance experience.