

Memoaristika Tee Batinić „Rat u Gradu“ dojmite će vas svojom slojevitosti, ali – moguće još i više – razgolićenošću ćudoređa dubrovačke svijesti fetive Dubrovkinje. Nije to ćudoređe anakrono i rasplinuto u nekakvu romantiziranu, maglovitu sjetu, nego je upravo tomu suprotno: svevremensko je i ustrajno protivu zla, protivu zatomljivača svega onoga življenja vrijednoga, protivu struje i vrtloga neorganski nastaloga gutača rodne joj dubrovačke grude i hrvatske domovine, života sama.

U bivstvovnom lancu od neživa kamena do Boga – kao izvorišta svega, sv. Toma Akvinac, između ostaloga, ukazuje kako je nama, ljudima, stremiti uzgori, k anđeoskome, a ne nizdoli, k bivstvovanju kakvo je prirodno jedino bezumnoj beštiji. Jer i kad je stiješnjen do krajnjih granica, čovjek još uvijek slobodno odabire vlastito bivstvovno stremljenje.

U vremenu kad *lijepa nam, draga i slatka sloboda...* do mûka o mîre biva raspršena udarima agresorskog velikosrpskog oružja, i naša pitoma dubrava u pogibelji pod navalom pogube ljudske naravi, autorica jasno raspoznaje stvarnost okolnosti, prihvaća novo stanje i nastavlja živjeti. Ona ne uzmiče ni pred neuralgičnim točkama, nego hrabro progovara o vlastitim duboko proživljenim iskustvima i emocijama. Njezine prosudbe – ako pogdjegdje i jesu suptilno pooštrene – opis su surovih bridova surove stvarnosti koji proizlazi iz izravne spoznaje, a ne vrhunaravna moraliziranja.

Iako ove „grmjelice“ pokatkada dosežu izvan margina tematiziranih vremenskih međa i čitatelja nakratko prolebde desetljećima, one uvijek kucaju pulsom Grada kojega – nimalo nas ne iznenađuje – gospođa Tea napušta jedino da bi se vazda vratila u nj, u Grad koji je i tada, dok je izvan njegovih mîra, sved s njom, u njoj.

U ovdje otiskanoj životopisnoj bilješci, autorica ističe kako je „zagovornica očuvanja dubrovačkog govora i dubrovačkog kulturnog i prirodnog nasljeđa“. Bjelodano je to u samome djelu. I, dakako, godi i uhu i umu. Usto, pitko je satkana ova autoričina nizanka stvarnih priča o stvarnom vlastitom doživljaju jednog stvarnog vremena. Vrijeme je to ožiljaka i suza, da, ali i vrijeme obilja malih i velikih pobjeda. Nadasve, vrijeme je to ljudskih priča iz kojih progovara i svijest i praslika, i one koje je gospođa Tea ovdje zapisala zaista zavrjeđuju vaše vrijeme. Preporučujem ih pročitati.

The memoirs of Tea Batinić, “War in the City,” will impress you with their complexity, but perhaps even more with their unflinching exposure of the moral fabric of Dubrovnik’s consciousness as embodied by a true native of the City. This moral compass is neither anachronistic nor dissolved in some romanticized, hazy nostalgia; on the contrary, it is timeless and resolutely opposed to evil, to the suppression of all that is worthy of life, to the current and whirlpool of inorganic forces consuming her native Dubrovnik soil and Croatian homeland—life itself.

In the existential chain from lifeless stone to God—as the source of all things—St. Thomas Aquinas, among other insights, points out that we humans should strive upward, toward the angelic, and not downward, toward an existence befitting only mindless beasts. For even when pressed to the utmost limits, man still remains free to choose his existential aspirations.

In a time when our cherished, dear, and sweet freedom... is shattered into silence by the strikes of Greater Serbian nationalist weaponry, and our gentle grove is endangered by the onslaught of the calamity of human nature, the author clearly perceives the reality of the circumstances, accepts the new state of affairs, and continues to live. She does not shy away from neuralgic points but bravely speaks about her deeply lived experiences and emotions. Her judgments—though occasionally subtly sharpened—are a depiction of the harsh edges of a harsh reality that arise from direct knowledge, not from lofty moralizing.

Although these “thunderbolts” sometimes reach beyond the margins of the time periods covered and briefly carry the reader across decades, they always pulse with the rhythm of the City—a fact that does not surprise us in the least—as Mrs. Tea leaves Dubrovnik only to always return to it, to the City that remains with her, within her, even when she is beyond its walls.

In the autobiographical note included here, the author emphasizes that she is “an advocate for preserving the Dubrovnik dialect and the cultural and natural heritage of Dubrovnik.” This is evident throughout the work itself and, of course, delights both the ear and the mind. Furthermore, this author’s collection of true stories about her real experiences during a real period is skillfully woven. Yes, that was a time of scars and tears, but also a time of abundant small and great victories. Above all, it was a time of human stories that speak of awareness and archetypes, and the stories that Mrs. Tea has recorded here truly deserve your time.

I highly recommend reading them.