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GHEŻIEŻ MEMBRI

Kif wiehed jgħid bl-Ingliż, “all good things come to an end” u l-istess jgħodd għas sena akademika li għada kemm għaddiet.

Meta tkunu qed taqraw din il- “newsletter” tkunu bdejt看 tgawdu il-vaganzi tas-sajf rilassati forsi b’xi granet hdejn il bahar, għalkemm naf li bosta minnkom tkunu mpenjati bin-neputijiet li issa jkunu bil-vaganzi. Forsi wkoll ma tonqosx xi safra.

Nispera li is-sugġetti magħzula kienu ta’ interess għal magġor parti tal-membri tagħna. Kif stajtu tinnotaw din is-sena xi sugġerimenti tal-assoċjazzjoni dwar sugġetti għal lectures ġew milqugħa mid-direttur tal- Ġerantologija.

Il-programm ta’ din is-sena kien verament mhawwar b’sugġetti ta’ interess għall-firxa kbira tal-membri tagħna kif tixhed l-attenzenza tassew numeruza li dejjem kien hemm. Pero’ forsi l-iktar wahda kienet li għall-ewwel darba kellna sensiela ta’ tahdidiet mogħtija mill membri tagħna stess. Is-sugġetti kienu varjati hafna, minn poeziji, storja, pjanti, sahħa, ortografija tal-Malti, tagħrif fuq il “First Aid” sa astronomija. Hawn nieħu l-okkazzjoni biex niringrazzja lil dawk il-membri li resqu l-quddiem u taw il-kontribut tagħhom.

Din is-sensiela żgur mhux ser tkunu ta’ darba biss. Għalhekk inhegġeg minn issa lil membri oħra li għandhom tagħrif li jixtiequ jaqsmu magħna l-membri biex jikkuntatjawni halli nibda nipprepara l-pjan biex inressqu lid-direttur Dr Marvin Formosa għall-approvazzjoni tiegħu.

Iktar tard dan ix-xaħar jibdeu il-laqgħat tal-kumitat biex jibda jiffassal il-programm għas-sena li ġejja. Nassigurakom li mhix xi haġa faċli biex issib letturesti li jikkommettu ruħhom għal tmin ġimgħat. Ninsab ċert li s-sena akkademika li ġejja mhix ser tkun ta’ suċċess inqas minn ta’ qabilha.

Ħawnhekk nixtieq niringrazzja lil-kumitat immexxi minni għal hidma tiegħu biex ikun ta’ servizz għall-membri tal-U3e. Fejn jidhlu l-ħargiet kellna mawriet għal postijiet ta’ interess li nizlu tajjeb mal-membri.

Bhas-sena ta’ qabel kellna mawra barra minn Malta, fejn il-membri żaru Pariġi u ġurnata fi Sqallija. Kien hemm forsi min baqa’ ddizappuntat li ma setax jattendi minnħabba li stajna naċċettaw san-numru ta’ postijiet li jista jesa kowċ.

Nixtieq naġħlaq billi nawguralkhom vaganzi ta’ mistrieħ u tgawdija u nispera, jekk Alla jrid, li tergħu tkunu magħna għas-sena akkademika li jmiss.

For those who walk with the Aged

Blessed are they who understand.
My faltering step and shaking hand.
Blessed are they who know my ears today
Must strain to catch the things they say.
Blessed are they who seem to know
My eyes are dim and my mind is slow.
Blessed are they who look away
When tea spilled on the cloth the other day.
Blessed are they with a cherry smile
Who stopped to chat for a while.
Blessed are they who know the way
To bring back memories of yesterday.
Blessed are they who never say
“You’ve told that story twice today”.
Blessed are they who make it known
That I’m loved, respected and never alone
And blessed are they who ease the days
Of my journey ome in loving ways.

Gemma Vella for J.H Grimsby.



Francis Ebejer

Francis Ebejer tweled fit-28 ta' Awwissu 1925 f'Had-Dingli.

Missieru Ġużè kien is-Surmast tal-iskola Primarja f'Had Dingli waqt li ommu kienet għalliemna tal-Matematika fl-iskola sekondarja ċentrali fil-Belt Valletta. Fl-1942, wara li ha l-edukazzjoni tiegħu fil-Liċeo, beda l-Kors tal-Medicina fl-Università ta' Malta imma ma kompliehx u daħal interpretu Inġliż-Taljan mal-*British Eighth Army* fl-Afrika ta' Fuq. Sentejn wara daħal għalliem mad-Dipartiment tal-Edukazzjoni. Fl-1948 mar għall-kors ta' sentejn f'St Mary's College fi Twickenham, Middlesex. Wara li temm il-kors huwa laħaq surmast, kariga li żamm sakemm irtira fl-1978. Sadanittant, bejn l-1961 u l-1962 huwa nġhata l-*Fulbright Travel Grant* għall-Istati Uniti, fejn dam tmien xhur.

Sal-1950 Ebejer kiteb biss bil-lingwa Inġliża. Ix-xogħlijiet tiegħu jikkonsistu f'poeżiji, novelli, artikli u saġġi. Fl-1953 ippubblika novella fil-*Woman's Own*. Meta beda jikteb bil-Malti fl-1950, daħal għall-kompetizzjoni tal-*Malta Drama League* għar-Rediffusion. Ir-radjudramm *Ċpar fix-Xemx* rebħu l-ewwel premju. Aktar tard ġie ppubblikat f'*Lehen il-Malti*. Minn hawn 'il quddiem ir-radjudrammi kotru bis-sħiħ. Fost l-oħrajn ta' min isemmi *Bwani*, *Sefora*, *Is-Sejha ta' Sarid*, *Dawra Durella*, *Majjistral*, *Ix-Xorti ta' Mamzell* u *Il-Bidu Jintemm*.

Fil-bidu tas-snin sittin, l-interessi ta' Ebejer daru għat-teatru, bl-ewwel drammi bi tliet atti *Vaganzi tas-Sajf*, li għalih inġhata l-ewwel premju fl-ewwel kompetizzjoni għad-drammi organizzati mill-Kumitat tat-Tmexxija tat-Teatru Manoel. Wara dan kien hemm għadd mhux hażin ta' drammi bi tliet atti: *Boulevard*, *Menz*, *Il-Ħadd Fuq il-Bejt* u *Karnival* fost oħrajn. Erbgħa minn dawn id-drammi għandhom x'jaqsmu ma' karattri Maltin u sitwazzjonijiet fis-sfond Malti. Aktar tard, l-ewwel erba' drammi li kiteb kienu tradotti għall-Inġliż mill-awtur stess.



Sadanittant, Francis Ebejer kiteb rumanzi bħal *In the Eye of the Sun* u drammi għat-televizzjoni bħal *Hemm barra*, *Morru Sejhu lill-Werrieta*, u tlettax-il episodju ta' *Id-Dartas-Soru*. Kiteb ukoll xi *plays* bl-Inġliż bħal *The Cliffhangers* (aktar tard maqlub għall-Malti fl-1974 bħala *L-Imwarrbin*). Fost l-aqwa xogħlijiet li kiteb insibu *Summer Holidays* li ġiet tradotta għall-Franċiż, Taljan u Ġermaniż. Xi drammi oħra ttellgħu barra minn Malta – nġhidu aħna *Menz* ġiet mtella' fi Spanja, Tokyo u Venezja.

Ebejer fl-istejjer u d-drammi tiegħu jirrifletti hafna fuq il-ħajja personali tiegħu, il-fatti u disfatti li għadda minnhom f'ħajtu, fuq l-ambjent li kiber fih u li serva bħala l-baži tal-personalità



tiegħu. Fil-fatt l-ossessjoni għall-għerūq tiegħu jinħassu fil-biċċa l-kbira tax-xogħlijiet ta' Ebejer.

Ebejer juza is-simboli tal-mara, mod speċjali l-mara tradizzjonali Maltija li, għal Ebejer, hija simbolu tal-ġabra. Din il-mara Maltija, li l-figura tagħha tidher ta' sikwit fix-xogħol tiegħu, toffri kuntrast qawwi mal-figuri femminili l-oħra, li jidhru fid-drammi tiegħu. Hemm, per eżempju, il-mara isterika li tirrappreżenta lill-klassi 'artifiċjali' u li tipprova ċċekken il-figura tar-raġel; din ukoll tagħmel parti mill-bijografija intima tal-awtur.

Insibu wkoll hafna burdati differenti fix-xogħlijiet ta' Ebejer. Kultant naraw burdata serja, drabi oħra sarkastika, drabi oħra xewqa kbira għat-tisfija mid-dnubiet. Hemm ukoll sens kontinwu ta' tftixija. Dan joħroġ mill-kuntrast li jagħmel l-awtur bejn il-mixi u l-waqfien li jbeżża'. Il-hajja tal-awtur tkompli toħroġ minn dawn il-kuntrasti u konflitti, parodiji u ironiji, li jagħmlu parti mit-teatru ta' Ebejer daqs kemm jagħmlu minn hajtu.

Ebejer rebaħ hafna unuri u premjijiet għax-xogħlijiet tiegħu kemm għat-televisin kif ukoll għall-palk. Fost dawn il-premjijiet rebaħ il-Premju tal-Letteratura Maltija għal erba' darbiet,

iċ-Cheyney Award for the Best Producer fl-1984, il-Phoenicia for Culture fl-1982 u l-1985, u l-premju Citta di Valletta fl-1989. Fl-1986 irċieva il-Medaille d'Honneur de la Ville d'Avigona fi Franza għal wieħed mid-drammi tiegħu li ġie tradott għall-Franċiż. Kien ukoll membru onorarju tal-Accademie de Vaucluse ta' Franza u membru tal-Akkademja tal-Malti mill-1984 u serva fil-kunsill fis-snin 1984-1988.

Francis Ebejer miet fid-dar tiegħu fis-Swieqi fl-10 ta' Ġunju 1993, u għall-funeral tiegħu f'Had-Dingli attendew hafna membri parlamentari, atturi, produttori tal-palk u pubblikaturi. Huwa jinsab midfun fiċ-ċimiterju ta' Had-Dingli. F'dan ir-rahall jinstab ukoll il-mafkar f'għiehu.

Maria Diacono
Hajr : Joseph P Borg.



History of Moorish Spain

The word Moors derives from the Latin *mauri*, a name for the Berber tribes living in Roman Mauretania (modern day Algeria and Morocco). It has no ethnographic meaning but can be used to refer to all Muslims, Berber or Arab, who conquered the Iberian Peninsula. These Moors, who were religious fanatics, arrived in Spain in the year 711 and thus began a period of history which would shape Iberia differently than the rest of Europe as the land adapted to a new religion, language and culture. Hispania became a part of the caliph of Damascus which was the capital of the Muslim world.

This Moorish land was known as Al-Andalus and included all of the Iberian Peninsula except for the extreme north-west from where the Christian reconquest would originate.

Strangely Moorish Spain wasn't really ruled by Arabs. It is true that many high positions

were taken by Arabs but most of the Moors were Berbers. Later Muwallads (converted Christians) together with the offspring of the first invaders became dominant in Moorish Spain. The invaders brought no women so the second generation of Moors were already half Hispanic!

The first 40 years of Moorish rule was volatile and Al-Andalus needed order and unity which came in the form of Abd-er-Rahman who arrived in Almuñecar on the coast of Granada in 755. Within a year he became Emir of Al-Andalus and during his 32 year reign he would transform this land into an independent state which was the cultural light of Europe.

In Cordoba Abd-er-Rahman I founded the Mezquita in 785 when he purchased the Christian section of the San Vicente Church, a place the two faiths had shared for 50 years. The Mosque was expanded to its final glory over the next two centuries. This became the second most important place of worship in the Muslim world after Mecca. The Moors expanded and improved Roman irrigation systems to help develop a strong



Alhambra Palace (Granada)



Mezquits (Cordoba)

agricultural sector. They introduced many new crops including the orange, lemon, peach, apricot, fig and pomegranate as well as saffron, sugar cane, cotton, silk and rice which remain some of Spain's main products today.

The death of Al Mansur in 1010 led to the crisis in which Medina Azahara, the city palace of Abd ar-Rahman III, was destroyed by rampaging Berbers. Moorish Spain deteriorated rapidly into violent turmoil. The caliphate ceased to exist and Al Andalus broke up into 20 small kingdoms and unified rule came to an end. Seville and Granada were the most powerful of these small kingdoms followed by Cordoba, Almeria, Zaragoza, Badajoz and Toledo. The tolerant society of the caliphate and the taifas disappeared as the Almoravids persecuted Christians and Jews. Another fanatical group, the Almohades, came from the Atlas mountains of Morocco and were natural enemies of the Almoravid desert tribes. They conquered Marrakesh then invaded Al-Andalus to again unite the region under one Muslim regime. These Almohades ordered the destruction of all churches and synagogues forcing Christians and Jews to swarm to the north.

In spite of this fanaticism, a period of great cultural achievement occurred under the Almohades which was the brightest period

between the caliphate and the glories of Granada centuries later. The minaret of the Seville mosque, La Giralda, was built during this period with wide ramps all the way up the tower which allowed the sultan to ride his horse to the top.

Many writers refer to Moorish rule over Spain spanning the 800 years from 711 to 1492 yet this is a misconception. The reality is that the Berber-Hispanic Muslims inhabited two-thirds of the peninsula for 375 years, about half of it for another 160 years and finally the kingdom of Granada for the remaining 244 years.

The kingdom of Granada included modern day Granada, Almeria and Malaga. Its rulers, the Nasrid dynasty, had retired to a pleasure seeking existence within the confines of the Alhambra palace. Jealousies stemming from the harem were the source of instability of Moorish Spain and would ultimately be influential in the fall of Granada..

Rather than attack, Fernando chose to blockade Granada. After months of stalemate and negotiations Boabdil surrendered, in return for 30,000 gold coins, part of the Alpujarras mountains to the south of Granada and political and religious freedom for his subjects. On January 2nd 1492 Los Reyes Católicos marched into Granada and the last stronghold of Moorish Spain came to an end.

Dell u Dawl

Mary Montebello

Dell u dawl dan l-għabex saġfi
Dija tlellex u x-xemx inħbiet
Qabel għebet biex issellem
Xenxiet raġġi fuq l-għolijiet.

Fl-orizzont marret tinħeba
Xena rikka l-bogħod mil-bejt
Żiffa ħelwa friska tmelles
B'holm tal-muza msahħra ntlejt

Min jaf li kieku l-kwiekeb
Jistiednu l-oħthom ix-xemx
Kull lejla toħroġ magħhom
'L hinn fuq l-ibħra fejn dawl m'hemmx

Kull għodwa mbagħad l-istillel
Ma jistennewx iż-żernieq
Biex qajla qajla jogħsfu
Fl-immens beraħ ta'smewwiet

Il-qamar jibqa jitlajja
Jilgħab noli hemm fuq nett
Min wara s-shab jissajja
Mitluf jisfen f'nofs desert

Sabiha l-fantażija
Mogħdija misterjuża
Bħat-tajra li tivjaġġa
Taf tkun avventuruża

