

PETAR SELEM: *HELENA U EGIPTU*,
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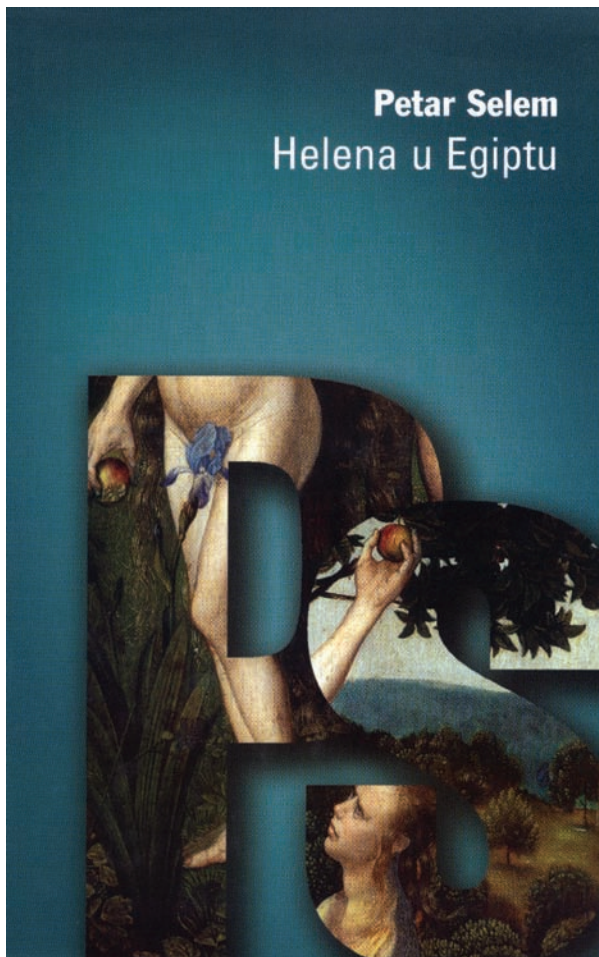
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U izdanju nakladničke kuće “ArTresor”, kao deveta knjiga u biblioteci “Oblutci”, pod uredništvom Bojana Marottija u Zagrebu je 2006. godine izašla knjiga Petra Selema *Helena u Egiptu*. Autora knjige teško je svrstati samo u jedan pretinac škrinje humanističkoga znanja. Njegov intelektualni eros i energija pršte daleko izvan granica pojedinih struka, koje često previše kruto sami postavljamo i određujemo. Takvim radom Selem već desetljećima živi i pronosi ideju transdisciplinarnosti, multidisciplinarnosti i interdisciplinarnosti, posebice u društvenim i humanističkim znanostima. Ideju koju tek u posljednje vrijeme, zasigurno i na njegovu tragu, sve više prihvaćaju mladi glasnici hrvatske znanosti i kulture te tako polako šire spoznajne obzore, razbijajući duboko ukorijenjene predrasude i pomičući granice znanja.

Živi dokaz te teze nova je Selemova knjiga, rezultat dugogodišnjega znanstvenog, nastavnog i kazališnog rada, promišljanja, istraživanja, poučavanja i traganja. Ona je zbir različitih eseja, neobjavljenih

Petar Selem's book *Helena u Egiptu* (Helen in Egypt) was published in Zagreb in 2006 by publishing company ArTresor as the ninth volume in its “Oblutci” (‘Pebbles’) series, edited by Bojan Marotti. The book's author is difficult to classify in just a single ‘drawer’ of the expansive ‘file cabinet’ of the humanities. His intellectual ardour and energy resonate far beyond the boundaries of any single field, which are often formulated and imposed too rigidly. For decades, Selem has lived and conveyed the idea of transdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary effort, particularly in the humanities and social sciences. It is an idea which has – following his lead, to be sure – gained increasing acceptance among the young heralds of Croatian scholarship and culture, and is thereby slowly expanding cognitive horizons, breaking down deeply entrenched prejudices and pushing forward the boundaries of knowledge.

Selem's latest book is vivid evidence of this trend; it is the result of many years of scholarly, professorial and theatrical work, and contemplation, research,



i nekih već objavljenih, ali dopunjenih i doradenih, koji prate čovjekov višetisućljetni hod od izlaska do zalaska sunca, stapajući tako u jednome ciklusu rane civilizacije starog Istoka, antički svijet Grčke i Rima, s modernim dobom umornog Zapada, njegovim dilemama i prijemorima.

U prvome stavku, naslovljenome *Uzlet sokola*, nalazimo dva veća teksta. Prvi je posvećen analizi i interpretaciji predmetnih i slikovnih vrela ranih razdoblja egipatske povijesti. "Izgubljena paleta" (paleta s lavom), "paleta iz Louvrea" (paleta s bikom), toljaga kralja Škorpiona, Narmerova paleta i druga vrela svjedoče povijesna zbivanja prije svega svojim vizualnim jezikom i porukama. Jezikom koji također treba znati pročitati i dešifrirati. Selem, osim razumijevanjem egipatskih hijeroglifa, suvereno vlada i jezikom slike. Zahvaljujući tome približava nam vrijeme nastanka prvih kraljevstava, stvaranja civiliziranog urbanog i ruralnog uređenog svijeta, gradnje kanala, nastanka pisma, razgranate trgovine i razmjene među najudaljenijim područjima. Za rana razdoblja ovakva predmetna i slikovna vrela predstavljaju osnovni, a za kasnija razdoblja (unatoč brojnim pisanim vrelima) i dalje izuzetno važan izvor dragocjenih podataka. Iz njih možemo pročitati ideološke poruke, način na koji su Egipćani

study and investigation. It is a collection of different essays, some previously unpublished and some already published, although supplemented and refined, which follow humankind's march over the millennia from sunrise to sunset, thus melding in a single cycle the early civilizations of the Ancient East, the world of Greek and Roman Antiquity and the enervated West of the modern era, with its dilemmas and controversies.

The first section, entitled "Ascent of the Falcon" consists of two large texts. The first is dedicated to an analysis and interpretation of artefacts and pictorial sources of the early periods of Egyptian history. The "Lost Palette" (palette with lion), the "Louvre Palette" (palette with bull), the Scorpion King Macehead, the Narmer Palette, and other sources testify to historical events primarily with their visual language and messages. It is a language which one must know how to read and interpret. Selem, besides understanding Egyptian hieroglyphics, also has a sound command of pictorial language. Thanks to this knowledge, he brings us close to the time of emergence of the first kingdoms, the creation of a civilized urban and rural ordered world, the construction of canals, the beginnings of literacy and trade networks and exchanges with the remotest regions. For early periods, such artefacts and pictorial evidence are the fundamental sources, while even for subsequent periods (despite numerous written sources) they remain an exceptionally important source of valuable data. From them, one can read ideological messages, the manner in which the Egyptians experienced the world around them, and also the ways in which they ordered and changed this same world (the environment and society).

The second text in the first section, under the title "Celestial Comradery: The Texts of the Pyramids", features a translation of the formulas and ritual texts which accompany the deceased king in the critical phase of the transition from this to the next plane of existence. The exceptional value of this chapter lies in the fact that the text of the original appears in Croatian translation for the first time.

The second section, "Tearful Eyes", features a considerably altered and supplemented Croatian translation of the *Lamentation of Ipuwer*, as well as an analysis of the text itself ("Nefarious Times: Ipuwer and Texts of Despair"). This section also contains the text "Sand Tree: The Symbols of Samuel Beckett". Here Selem compares the Ancient Egyptian cosmic framework with the world of Beckett's works (*Waiting for Godot*, *Endgame* and others). In the blink of an eye, Selem takes us from the dark stage of the downfall of Ipuwer's everyday life to the "extreme and tragic truths" of the stage in Beckett's (and our own) time.

doživljavali svijet oko sebe, ali i način na koji su taj isti svijet (okolis i društvo) uređivali i mijenjali.

Drugi tekst prvoga stavka, "Nebeska drugovanja: Tekstovi piramida", donosi prijevod formula i obrednih tekstova koji prate umrloga kralja u kritičnoj fazi prijelaza iz ovog u drugo postojanje. Izuzetna vrijednost toga poglavlja krije se u činjenici da se tekstovi prvi put pojavljuju u hrvatskom prijevodu izvornika.

Drugi stavak, *Suzne oči*, donosi bitno promijenjen i dopunjen hrvatski prijevod žalopojke Ipu-ura, ali i analizu samog teksta ("Zla vremena: Ipu-ur i tekstovi beznađa"). U tom je stavku i tekst "Pijesak stablo: Simboli Samuela Becketta". Ovdje Selem uspoređuje staroegipatsku sliku kozmičkog rasporeda sa svijetom Beckettovih djela (*U očekivanju Godota*, *Svršetak igre* i dr.). Autor nas u trenu prenosi putem od mračne pozornice rasapa Ipu-urove svakodnevice do "krajnjih i tragičkih istina" pozornice Beckettova i našeg vremena.

Treći stavak, *Doba egzila*, donosi tekstove "Sin osvetnik: Hor – Orest – Hamlet", "Koraci uljudbe: Eshil – Goethe – Euripid" i "Prostor metafora: Pozornica grčke drame". I ovdje Selem maestralno prepleće svijet egipatskih i antičkih mitova, Shakespeareove drame i Goetheova djela sa svim prijevorima i pitanjima današnjeg svijeta.

U četvrtome stavku, *Lice maske*, donosi tekstove "Edip Farmakos: Tragedije i karneval" i "Pokus Edip: Moravia prema Sofoklu". U tim tekstovima analizom Sofoklova *Kralja Edipa* i Moravijine drame *Bog Kurt* u svezremenskom teatru života Selem promišlja i istražuje ritualno i tragičko, čovjeka, kulturu, moral, društvo.

Peti stavak, *Ročište*, sadrži samo jedno poglavlje – "Tjeskobe južnih zvijezda". Na pozornici svijeta, u sasvim konkretnom vremenu i prostoru, u kolopletu zločina, krivnje, očišćenja i mogućeg oslobođenja, prepleću se mitovi starog Sredozemlja s pitanjima koja postavlja moderni svijet.

Knjiga *Helena u Egiptu* čvrsta je cjelina, od početka do kraja. Ona je mnogo više od "obične" zbirke eseja. Sve tekstove povezuje jedna nit koja se provlači cjelinom knjige. Nit koja odmotavajući se otvara uvijek neka nova neodgovorena pitanja i probleme. Slikovni su prilozi jasni, pregledni i lijepo uklopljeni u cjelinu knjige. Ukupan vizualni dojam odiše decentnom i elegantnom jednostavnošću. On je tako u potpunom skladu s autorovim načinom izražavanja i stilom pisanja. Na kraju knjige nalazi se popis knjiga i režija s potpisom Petra Selema. Šteta što urednik nije odlučio donijeti i barem izbor ostalih radova iz Selemove bogate bibliografije. U istom trenutku esejistički pitka i znanstveno utemeljena

The third section, "Time of Exile", contains the articles "The Avenging Son: Horus, Orestes, Hamlet", "Steps of Civility: Aeschylus, Goethe, Euripides" and "Metaphoric Space: The Stage of Greek Drama". Here as well, Selem masterfully interweaves the worlds of Egyptian and Classical myths, Shakespeare's plays and Goethe's works with all of the controversies and issues of today's world.

In the fourth section, "The Face of the Mask", he presents the texts "Oedipus Pharmakos: Tragedies and the Carneval" and "The Oedipus Experiment: Moravia According to Sophocles". In these texts, Selem uses an analysis of *Oedipus the King* by Sophocles and Moravia's play *The God Kurt* in the contemporary theatre of life to simultaneously contemplate and investigate the ritual and tragic, man, culture, morality and society.

The fifth section, "The Hearing" (*Ročište*), only has a single chapter: "Anxieties of the Southern Stars". The myths of the old Mediterranean become entwined with the questions posed by the modern world on the global stage, in an entirely concrete time and space, in a knot of crime, culpability, catharsis and possible deliverance.

The book *Helena u Egiptu* is a solid whole, from beginning to end. It is much more than an "ordinary" collection of essays. All of the texts are connected by a thread which runs through the entire book. A thread which, as it unravels, continually opens some new unanswered questions and problems. The illustrations are clear, easy to view and nicely incorporated into the entire book. The overall visual impression exudes a decent yet elegant simplicity. It is therefore in complete harmony with the author's manner of expression and writing style. At the end of the book there is a list of books and theatre productions undersigned by Petar Selem. It is a pity that the editor did not opt to provide at least a selection of the remaining works in Selem's abundant bibliography. Containing essays which are at once easy-to-read yet scientifically grounded, this book is a novelty in Croatian publishing with the breadth of its approach, its writing style and methods, and the problems into which it delves.

This book has a potentially wide, admiring audience. Students of history, archaeology, art history and similar fields will find much of use here. It will also be quite useful to any lover of literary and theatrical history. Thus we should welcome this book, so lovely in every sense of the word, as it shall certainly arouse interest and debate at the most diverse levels of Croatian culture and scholarship for a long time to come.

širinom pristupa, stilom i načinom pisanja, problemima koje je otvorila, ova je knjiga novost u hrvatskom nakladništvu.

Mogućih štovatelja ove knjige vrlo je mnogo. Student povijesti, arheologije, povijesti umjetnosti i srodnih struka naći će ovdje mnoštvo korisnih podataka. Ona će biti vrlo korisna i svakom ljubitelju povijesti književnosti i kazališta. Pozdravimo stoga pojavu ove u svakom pogledu lijepe knjige, uvjereni da će ona još dugo pobuđivati zanimanje i raspravu na najrazličitijim razinama hrvatske kulture i znanosti.