
ALI SE PARADIGME SPREMINJAJO?

Mojca Ravnik

253

S tem naslovom in s podnaslovom *Zapiski o krizi etničnosti*, je v *Etnologu* 2/2, 1992 izšel članek izpod peresa Hermanna Bausingerja. Ko sem članek prebrala, sem imela izredno mešane občutke. Po eni strani sem se z njim strinjala, po drugi strani pa sploh ne, hkrati pa sem čutila, da je na članek treba odgovoriti. Saj nas je avtor z naslovom v obliki vprašanja takorekoč povabil, da se oglasimo.

Čim sem se lotila pisanja, sem spoznala, kako težko bom povedala, kaj mislim, ne da bi se zapletla v nesporazum. Hermann Bausinger je pisal na splošno, teoretično, iz oddaljenosti, jaz sem ga brala konkretno, politično in v kontekstu. V razdalji med tema ravnema se skriva nevarnost, da bi izpadlo, kot da Bausingerja nisem razumela, ker sem politično obremenjena in nesposobna razmišljati na drugi ravni. Zato moram najprej povedati, da Bausingerja delno razumem in mu dam prav, da pa sama nisem mogla brati članka, ne da bi ga preverjala z našimi razmerami. Glede na naš »teren« pa misli iz članka ne veljajo, oziroma jih je treba dopolniti.

Bausingerjev članek je kratek, a zgoščen. Tukaj ne morem drugače, kot da navajam nekatere odlomke. Upam, da ga ne bom prikazala enostransko. Sicer pa bralci, ki članka še niso prebrali, lahko to storijo zdaj.

Hermann Bausinger v svojem članku najprej govori o odnosu med državo in folkloristi, oziroma etnologi. »Ker je bila kompleksna organiziranost države eden izmed ključnih elementov modernizacije, bi lahko rekli, da je zanimanje za folkloro in folklorno življenje vedno pomenilo razhajanje z državo.« (*Etnolog* 2/2, str. 233) To razmerje se je v zgodovini zelo spreminjalo. Politika je manipulirala s folklorno tradicijo. Narodopisje je enkrat sodelovalo pri izgradnji političnih ideologij, drugič je bilo v opoziciji. »Nekateri ključni koncepti ljudstva in narodopisja so se razvili v opoziciji do obstoječih državnih struktur. V zgodnji fazi tega razvoja je pomembno vlogo v oblikovanju in širjenju narodopisnih študij odigrala ideja o 'Volksgeistu'. Pojem, ki ga je po vzoru francoskih predhodnikov skoval Herder, se na splošno prevaja kot 'ljudski duh', vendar ta prevod popolnoma spregleda značilno distanco do vseh državnih konotacij. 'Volksgeist' izvirno pomeni duh naroda in označuje vizijo novega političnega reda, v katerem bi različni narodi dosegli vsak svojo enotnost in se jasno ločili od drugih narodov. Dobro vemo, kako močan vpliv je imel ta koncept na nacionalna gibanja v Srednji in Vzhodni Evropi - ali, če govorimo manj idealistično: kako natančno je Herder v svoji teoriji predvideval dejanski razvoj. Prav tako nam je dobro znano, da je ideja o 'Volksgeistu' postala izziv in

spodbuda za folkloriste: začeli so zbirati reči, ki so jih imeli za ljudske starine, zato da bi novi organski koncept podpirali s tradicijami, ki so se menda razvijale tisočletja. V splošnem se nam zdi ta pogled danes zastarel.« (tudi tam, str. 234)

Bausinger je v nadaljevanju kritičen do tistih sestavin etničnosti, ki izhajajo iz domnevne duhovne enotnosti, krvi ali zemlje in ki vodijo v egocentrizem, samopoveličevanje in sovražstvo do drugih. Ugotavlja, da so etnologi in folkloristi na splošno »na strani šibkejšega, zagovarjajo čim večjo avtonomijo in nasprotujejo izenačevalnim ukrepom močnejšega, t.j.države. Zagovarjajo ali se vsaj implicitno zavzemajo za subjektivno razsežnost kulture in skušajo vsaki skupnosti zagotoviti življenje v skladu z njeno opredelitvijo. V zadnjih dveh desetletjih se je močno uveljavila beseda Eigen-Sinn, napisana z vezajem, ki poudarja lastni smisel in voljo. Poznamo pa tudi besedo Eigensinn (brez vezaja), ki pomeni samovoljo ali trmasto vztrajanje pri lastnih namenih in merilih. Zdi se mi, da se moramo vprašati, ali nismo pogosto spregledali tega drugega pomena. Z drugimi besedami: ali ne bi kazalo zgoraj omenjenih konceptov prilagoditi strukturam in zahtevam sodobne družbe ?« (tudi tam)

254

Bausinger opozarja na to, da »sedanji prizori konfliktov po vsem svetu, ki izvirajo iz teh 'naravnih' skupnosti, kličejo k iskanju novih perspektiv.« (tudi tam, str.235) Ugotavlja, da je v dinamičnih situacijah »etnična pripadnost pogosto le regresiven odziv na različne izzive družbe ter bolj rafinirane potrebe in zahteve posameznikov.« (tudi tam) V napetih časih in situacijah »so ljudje nagnjeni k temu, da sosedov ne sprejemajo zgolj kot soljudi, ampak jih vidijo kot pripadnike druge etnične skupine, in sicer z izrazito težnjo ločiti se in ograditi od njih.« Tako »se pogosto dogaja, da zaradi takih poskusov narodne manjšine trpijo hudo prikrajšanje, izgon ali celo vojno.« »Pa tudi regionalizem sam ni imun za neupravičen skupinski egoizem. Zanimiva je ugotovitev politologov, da so območja, ki se uprejo monopolističnim in odtujevalnim težnjam osrednje oblasti, le redko revna in zanemarjena. Ponavadi gre za razmeroma uspešna in dobro razvita območja. Ko neka država razpada, prvi težijo k neodvisnosti tiste regije ali deli države, ki so najbolj razviti. Neodvisnost pa jim pogosto pomeni konec solidarnosti s sosednjimi regijami.« (tudi tam)

Problematika je res zapletena in povsem možno je, da je od daleč, če nimaš podatkov in ne poznaš razmer v posameznih delih sveta, res videti, kot da gre povsod za isto iracionalno sovražstvo, etnocentrizem, ksenofobijo, samopoveličevanje. Eden redkih zahodnoevropskih izobražencev, ki se je potrudil podrobneje spoznati zgodovino in politične razmere v deželah bivše Jugoslavije, je Alain Finkielkraut, pri nas znan po tem, da je že zgodaj obsodil napad na Slovenijo in na Hrvaško. Zanimivo, da se ravno nanj sklicuje tudi Bausinger v edinem značilnem navedku: »Pred nekaj leti je Alain Finkielkraut o 'Volksgeistu' govoril kot o najbolj eksplozivnem pojmu 19. in 20. stoletja. Po njegovem mnenju se narodi s tem konceptom postavljajo na oltar in se izogibajo vrednostni razsodbi. To, čemur Finkielkraut pravi 'občutek za univerzalno', se izgublja zaradi pravičniškega vztrajanja na partikularnih normah.« (tudi tam, str. 232)

Francoski izobraženci so, tako kot njihova uradna državna politika, ki podpira centralizem, vojno v bivši Jugoslaviji obravnavali kot iracionalne etnične spopade, Alain Finkielkraut pa se temu ni uklonil.

Spomladi leta 1992, kmalu po posvetovanju evropskih izobražencev in politikov v Palais Chaillot v Parizu pod naslovom Plemena in Evropa, je nastopil na TV Ljubljana v pogovoru z Jaroslavom Skrušnyjem. Pogovor so nato objavili v 125. številki Nove revije

in dodali še prevod Finkielkrautovega pogovora z redakcijo *Politique internationale*, objavljenega v 55. številki te revije. (I) Bralcem, ki jih zadeva bolj zanima, svetujem, da preberejo te objave. Na na tem mestu sem izbrala samo nekaj odlomkov iz prevoda pogovora s *Politique internationale*:

»Vprašanje: Vsem so znana vaša pogumna stališča v zvezi s konfliktom, ki že skoraj leto dni razkraja Jugoslavijo. Kateri moralni, intelektualni in politični razlogi so vam narekovali tako ognjevit angažma? Odgovor: (...) Moj angažma korenini v dvojni zgroženosti: v zgroženosti nad agresijo in v zgroženosti nad nebriznostjo. Vpričo sprege med neobčutljivostjo oblasti in intelektualcev sem se počutil zmedenega in osuplega. Vprašanje: Osuplega v kakšnem smislu? Odgovor: (...) Branil sem jih (Hrvate op.a.) še s toliko večjim žarom prav zato, ker preživljajo dvojno muko: po eni strani so žrtve agresije, po drugi strani pa doživljajo, da jim resnico njihovega trpljenja celo zanikujejo ali obrekujejo. Camus je nekoč dejal, da 'pomeni napak poimenovati stvari povečevati nesrečo sveta'. Mi, zahodnjaki, s proslavljanjem in čaščenjem naših zmagovitih vrednot povečujemo nesrečo Hrvaške(...). Vprašanje: Kako ločevati med dobrimi in slabimi nacionalnimi cilji? Obstaja kakšno merilo za razbor? Odgovor: Merilo je nadvse preprosto: demokracija. (...) Ali, z drugimi besedami, odločilna ločnica ne poteka med narodom in demokracijo, ampak, kot je ugotovil veliki madžarski politični mislec Istvan Bibo, med demokratično obliko nacionalnega čustva in protidemokratičnim nacionalizmom. (...) Vprašanje: Kako gledate na tezo, po kateri naj bi svoboden razmah nacionalizmov ogrožal evropski red? Odgovor: 'Deviška Evropa se je zaročila z milim duhom svobode; drug k drugemu prožita zaljubljeni dlani in okušata slasti prvega poljuba,' je leta 1844 zapisal Heine. Bo treba za vzpostavitev Evrope razdreti to zaroko ali bomo svobodo dopustili samo tistim evropskim narodom, ki že od nekdaj uživajo njene sadove? Vsekakor drži, da obrekljivci nacionalnih gibanj v vzhodni Evropi nimajo občutka, da zagovarjajo red na škodo narodov, ampak so prepričani, da se borijo zoper etnično regresijo ali, kakor imajo navado reči, zoper obsedenost z identiteto. Gre za znani klic: 'Primate tatu!'; vse te obtožbe zgovorno pričajo o provincializmu velikih narodov, o njihovem vrojenem egocentrizmu. (...) Pripadniki velikih narodov so svoje zgodovinsko znanje načrpali pretežno iz stripov. V skladu z njihovim pogledom na svet gre v primeru majhnih držav z evropskega obrobja za nekakšne folklorne, rahlo smešne entitete, katerih eksistenca nikakor ni nujna, saj nikoli niso sodelovale pri urejanju resnih zadev. (...) Vprašanje: Mar ni nenavadno, da naj bi nacionalizem teh majhnih držav pomenil klofuto napredku, zoporo za prostost duha? Odgovor: Zares, in še toliko bolj nenavadno ob dejstvu, da prva skrb teh malih narodov velja prizadevanjem, da bi si utrli vstop v svet: pridobitev nacionalne suverenosti je zanje pot k odprtosti in prostosti. V njihovem primeru je povsem razvidna vez med nacionalizmom in univerzalizmom, med 'polis' in 'cosmopolis'. (...) Vprašanje: Do kam pravzaprav seže tista zgodovinska in hkrati instinktivna solidarnost, ki ji pravimo 'evropska družina'? Odgovor: To je težko reči. Antitotalitarna inteligenca se tačas prepušča nekakšni protimejniški gorečnosti: ne le, da trpajo v isti koš napadalca in napadenega, napadeni velja celo za bolj krivega, zakaj on je bil tisti, ki je začel postavljati meje. Za pristaše tovrstnega preseganja meja je tudi sama Evropa zgolj etapa, le vmesna postaja. (...) Vprašanje: Padec komunizma je demokracije oropal za naslednje čvrsto oporišče: nič več nimajo opravka s sovražnikom. Je poslej mogoče živeti brez sovražnika? Odgovor: Sam bi vprašanje zastavil drugače. Demokracija ima še vedno opraviti s sovražniki, težava je v tem, da jih ne znamo več prepoznati. Kadar zdaj v post-imperialistični in posttotalitarni Evropi izbruhne konflikt, ga, namesto da bi mu ponižno

skušali odkriti pomen in razumeti zastavke, ki so v igri, pri priči 'psihologiziramo', 'tribaliziramo', v njem odkrivamo zgolj sovraštvo; in to sovraštvo potem brez odmerka pripišemo obema spopadajočima se stranema. Bolj ko je agresija kruta in krvava, bolj se nam zdi barbarska tudi sama žrtev. (...)« (Nova revija 125, str. 972-978)

Najraje bi tu prepisala kar vse Finkielkrautove izjave, ker se tako zelo vklaplajo v našo razpravo, pa še Bausinger sam ga je vanjo uvedel. Mislim, da Finkielkraut lepo prikaže, da se mnogi ljudje v Zahodni Evropi, ki nimajo znanja in ki so izgubili orientacijo, oprijemljejo nekih ideoloških šablon, ki jim popolnoma zamegljujejo pogled. Njegova misel, ki jo navaja Bausinger, o »Volksgeistu« in o tem, kako se »občutek za univerzalno izgublja zaradi pravičniškega vztrajanja na partikularnih normah«, zato nič manj ne drži.

256

Bausinger se najbrž sam sploh ni zavedal, da je napisal izrazito političen članek. Separatizem, regionalizem, avtonomija, nacionalizem, o katerih govori kar na splošno, na splošno sploh ne obstajajo; to so politične kategorije in se pojavljajo v konkretnih družbenih in zgodovinskih kontekstih. Za pisanje o politiki pa je treba poznati politiko. V našem primeru bi to bili notranje politični odnosi v bivši federalni državi vsaj deset let nazaj. Tu ne mislim razpravljati o vzrokih krize v bivši Jugoslaviji; omenim naj le dolgotrajno blokado predsedstva, onemogočanje predlogov za rešitev krize s konfederacijo, politične pritiske in vojaške grožnje s strani centralistične oblasti.

Separatizem, nacionalizem, nesolidarnost z nerazvitimi, vse to še odmeva po naših ušesih, saj je bilo vse to očitano »separatistični«, »nacionalistični«, »egoistični« Sloveniji s strani centralistične jugoslovanske politike in armade, pa tudi mednarodne diplomacije, ki je centralistično nasilje podpirala.

Zdi se mi, da Bausinger razpolaga s popačeno podobo o spopadih po svetu. Želim mu sporočiti, da glede naših razmer nima prav, verjamem pa, da se sam ni želel opredeliti do nobene konkretne politične situacije.

Žal pa mnogi drugi zahodnoevropski izobraženci, ki nimajo pojma o zgodovini in politiki, zelo poenostavljeno interpretirajo in sodijo o zapletenih situacijah, ki jih ne razumejo. Čeprav stvari ne poznajo, nočejo zgubiti avtoritete v svetu; ker so svetovljani, obsojajo nacionalizem; ker se nočejo politično opredeliti, se držijo interpretacij, kot da gre povsod za etnične spopade, državljanske vojne, plemenske strasti...V skladu s staro resnico, da je pravica na strani močnejšega, so »univerzalistični« izobraženci neizprosni predvsem do tako imenovanih »separatistov« in po pravilu ne napadajo nacionalizma »centralistov«, oboroženih s tanki in bombniki, ki rušijo in ubijajo pod geslom boja proti separatizmu, za ohranjanje države. Domišljajo si, da so njihove »nepolitične«, intelektualne razprave zunaj politike. Ne zavedajo se, da strežejo političnemu nasilju. Tisti, ki je vojno začel, ki ima še polne zaloge orožja, vedno laže izvršuje svoje cilje tudi z njihovo pomočjo.

Proti koncu članka Hermann Bausinger pravi: »Sprejemljivo in celo zaželeno je, da folkloristi in etnologi skrbijo za bolj tradicionalne kulturne običaje in predmete, vendar bi se morali izogniti pasti, da nanje gledajo kot na povsem avtonomne pojave, ki jih je elitna in množična kultura pustila nedotaknjene. In nikoli ne bi smeli poskušati kulturnih pogojev razširiti na politične načrte ne da bi obravnavali vse možne različice. Po mojem bi morali kulturna in politična identiteta ostati povsem ločeni. Gojenje in spodbujanje kulturne dediščine ni nujno povezano z dediščino neke obstoječe politične skupnosti. Obstoj posebnih kulturnih tradicij pa ne pomeni nujno pravice in dolžnosti, da se zaradi njih zahteva vzpostavitev posebne politične skupnosti. To je le logično dopolnilo pričakovani, da bo vsaka država priznala in spoštovala različne kulturne manifestacije in

tradicije znotraj svojih meja.« (Etnolog 2/2, str. 236)

Vendar je tudi načelo, da ni treba, da se državne meje ujemajo z etničnimi, dvorezen meč. Uporabi se lahko kot geslo nasilne centralistične moči, lahko pa na njem gradimo mirno sožitje.

Glede razumevanja državnih in etničnih ozemelj so Slovenci gotovo eden najbolj prosvetljenih narodov v Evropi. Njihovo etnično ozemlje je v štirih državah in je idealen teren za raziskovalce, ki bi morebiti želeli preučiti, ali demokratične države v Zahodni Evropi res omogočajo avtohtonim manjšinam uporabo materinega jezika v javnem življenju in šolstvu in druge temeljne ustanove kulturne samobitnosti.

Hermann Bausinger je opravil hvalevredno dejanje s tem, da je v etnoloških krogih odprl ta vprašanja. Vendar menim, da pripisuje etnološkim in folklorističnim paradigmam prevelik vpliv. Politično nasilje lahko zlorabi vsako ideološko razpravo, ne glede na to, ali odobrava nacionalizem, univerzalizem, separatizem, integracionizem, regionalizem, centralizem. Edini veljavni kriterij je uporaba orožja. Izobraženci, ki tega nočejo videti in obsoditi, z ideološkimi interpretacijami o nacionalizemih in separatizemih zamegljujejo jasna politična dejstva in s tem posredno pomagajo nasilju.

OPOMBA:

Glej:

- Entretien avec Alain Finkielkraut. *Politique internationale* 55, 1992, str.49-63
- Evropa med Homerjem in Harlekinom. Pogovor z Alainom Finkielkrautom. (Pogovor je vodil in za natis pripravil Jaroslav Skrušny. *Nova revija* 125, 1992, str. 963-971
- Prebujanje majhnih narodov. Odlomki iz pogovora Alaina Finkielkrauta z redakcijo revije *Politique internationale*, ki je bil objavljen v št. 55, spomladi 1992. *Nova revija* 125, 1992, str. 972-978 (Izbral in prevedel Jaroslav Skrušny)

CHANGE OF PARADIGMS?

258

Mojca Ravnik

Etnolog 2/2 (1992) published an article by Hermann Bausinger with the above title and subtitled "Comments on the crisis of ethnicity".

The article left me with mixed feelings. On the one hand I agreed with the author, but on the other hand not at all. And I also felt I had to react. After all, the interrogative form of the title so to say invites us to respond.

As soon as I had started writing, I became aware how hard it would be to make myself clear without provoking misunderstandings. Bausinger's article remains on a general, theoretical level and is written from a distance. But I had read it on a concrete, political level, and within a specific context. The risk (to be misunderstood) lies in the distance between these two levels. It might indeed appear that I did not understand Bausinger correctly because of my being politically predisposed and incapable of reflecting on a different (i.e. Bausinger's) level. That is why I would like to emphasize first of all that I do - at least partly - understand Bausinger and agree with him. I could not, however, read his article without referring to our specific circumstances. And when we read it in the light of our "setting", the notions it presents do not apply, resp. need to be complemented.

Bausinger's article is short and terse. In my response I can quote only some passages and hope not to represent his ideas partially. After all, those who have not read it yet, may do so now.

The article opens with Bausinger's reflections on the relationship between the state and folklorists, resp. ethnologists. "... as the elaborated organisation of the state has been one of the crucial elements of modernization one might even say that the interest in folklore and folk-life has always implied a departure from state." (*Etnolog* 2/2, p. 229). In the course of history this relationship often changed considerably. Folklore traditions were often politically manipulated; at times folklore(-ists) collaborated in constructing ideological concepts, at times they opposed them. "Several key concepts of folk and folklore have been developed in opposition to existing stately structures. In their early stage the idea of "Volksgeist" played an important part in the construction and extension of folklore studies. The term was coined, following French forerunners, by Herder. In general, it is translated as "national spirit", but this translation misses the characteristic distance from all stately configurations. "Volksgeist" meant the spirit of the people and was aiming at the vision of a new political order in which different people would get to their unity and

to clear demarcations against other people. It is well known how influential this idea was for the national struggles in Central and Eastern Europe - or to put it in a less idealistic way: how precisely Herder anticipated the real development in this theory. And it is also well known that this idea of 'Volksgeist' became a challenge and an incentive for folklorists: they started to collect what they looked at as popular antiquities in order to support the new organic concept by traditions allegedly having evolved over the millennia. By and large, this seems to be an outdated view." (ibid., p. 230).

Bausinger then criticizes those elements of ethnicity which stem from an alleged spiritual unity, blood or place, and lead to egocentricity, self-conceit and xenophobia. Ethnologists and folklorists, says Bausinger, in general "stand by the side of the weaker groups; they plead for as much autonomy as possible and they oppose the levelling out measures of the powerful - the representatives of the state. They speak up or at least implicitly stand for the subjective dimension of culture, and they try to guarantee every group a life in accordance with its own principles; the word *Eigen-Sinn* has gained ground during the last two decades - written with a hyphen and thus indicating a sense and will of its own. But one can write that word *Eigensinn* without a hyphen, and in this case it means stubbornness, a narrow-minded insisting on one's own intentions and measures. And it seems to me that the question should be raised whether this other side of the coin has not been ignored too often. Or to put it in another way: Should the concepts mentioned above not be adapted to the structures and needs of modern society?" (ibid., p. 230)

Bausinger then warns us that "the scenery of world-wide conflicts originating in those "natural" configurations, calls for new perspectives. (ibid., p. 231), continuing that in dynamic situations "ethnic identity is often only a regressive answer to the differentiated challenges of society and the more refined needs and wants of the individuals." (ibid., p.231). In stages and situations of high tension "there is an inclination not to accept people just as human beings and neighbours but to look at them as members of an other ethnic group with a clear tendency to fencing off and demarcation". And "quite often exactly by this attempt minority groups are exposed to grave deprivations if not deportation or war. Not even regionalism is immune to unjustified group egoisms. Interesting enough, political scientists have found out that it are rarely very poor and neglected areas which stand up against the monopolizing and alienating tendencies of the central power but often relatively prosperous and well developed regions. In states falling apart the most well-to-do regions or sub-states are generally the first striving for independence - which sometimes means also independence from solidarity with neighbouring regions". (ibid., p. 231)

The issues Bausinger mentions are certainly complex and it is quite possible that to those who are far away and do not have (sufficient) information or knowledge about the conditions in individual parts of the world, it actually appears that the same irrational hatred, ethnocentricity, xenophobia and self-conceit rage everywhere. Among West-European intellectuals, Alain Finkelkraut is one of those very few who actually undertook to understand in detail the history and political conditions in the countries which were part of the former Yugoslavia. Finkelkraut is well known in our country for his early condemnation of the aggression on Slovenia and Croatia. It is quite interesting to see that Bausinger's one and only particular quotation refers to Finkelkraut: "A few years ago Alain Finkelkraut called the idea of 'Volksgeist' the most dangerous explosive of the 19th and 20th centuries. He took the view that by this idea people idolize themselves and

avoid the court of values; what Finkelkraut calls 'the feeling for the universal' gets withered by the self-righteous sticking to particularized norms. (ibid., p. 231). Most French intellectuals looked upon the war in the former Yugoslavia as on irrational ethnic clashes, all along the lines of the official policy of their (centralism-supporting) government. Alain Finkelkraut, however, did not comply with this general tendency.

In the spring of 1992, shortly after European intellectuals and politicians had held a conference in Palais Chaillot (Paris) under the title "Tribes and Europe", Finkelkraut was interviewed on TV Ljubljana by Jaroslav Skrušny. The interview was later published in the 125th issue of *Nova Revija*, supplemented with Finkelkraut's interview given to the editors of *Politique internationale* (published in its 55th issue). Readers who have a deeper interest in the matter are referred to this publication.

Here are some passages from the interview: *

Question: Everybody knows about your courageous standpoints regard the conflict which, for almost a year now, is tearing up Yugoslavia. Which are the moral, intellectual and political reasons behind your passionate commitment?

Answer: (...) My commitment was provoked by a double disgrace: the disgrace of the aggression and that of the indifference towards it. Confronted with the combined insensibility of both our authorities and intellectuals I felt confused and amazed.

Question: Amazed in what sense?

Answer: (...) I defended them (the Croats) with even more passion because they were undergoing a double torment: on the one hand they were the victims of the aggression and, on the other hand, the truth about their suffering was either rejected or denigrated. Camus once said that 'to call things by their wrong names means to increase the misfortunes of the world.' The victory our West-European values have won has increased Croatia's suffering. (...)

Question: How can we discriminate between good and bad nationalist causes? Is there a criterion to sort them out?

Answer: The criterion is a simple one: democracy. (...) Or, in other words, the real opposites are not nation and democracy but, as the great Hungarian political thinker Istvan Bibo saw it, between democratic forms of national feeling and antidemocratic nationalism. (...)

Question: What is your opinion on the thesis that the free expression of nationalisms threatens the European order?

Answer: In 1844 Heine wrote: "Virgin Europe has become engaged to the guardian angel of freedom; their loving arms are around each other and they are relishing their first kiss." Will it be necessary - in order to establish Europe - to break this engagement and let freedom be the privilege of those European nations who have been enjoying it for a very long time? It is true that those who denounce the national movements in East Europe do not have the feeling that they are upholding the established order against the peoples. They are convinced that they are fighting ethnic regression or, as they often put it, the twitches of an identity. In the case in hand, this comes down to accusing the accuser; and this accusation is eloquent of the provincialism of big nations and their innate egocentricity. (...) The citizens of big nations receive, as far as history is concerned, an education in the way of a comic strip. In their view of the world these little countries on

* Translator's note: - The passages from *Politique Internationale* are translated from the French original.

Europe's periphery are folklorist, slightly ridiculous entities. They need not exist since serious matters have always been arranged without them. (...)

Question: Is it not a strange notion that the nationalism of these little countries presents an affront to progress, to the idea of freedom of the mind?

Answer: The notion is all the more bizarre because, actually, the first thing these little countries worry about is to enter the world: to them acquiring national sovereignty is part of the road to freedom of the mind. There is an evident connection linking nationalism and universalism, "polis" and "cosmopolis" (...)

Question: How far goes the historical as well as instinctive solidarity of what we like to call "the European family"?

Answer: That is hard to say. Nowadays, a kind of "frontier" syndrome has taken hold of anti-totalitarian intellectuals: not only do they equate the aggressor and his victim, but those under attack are even held to more responsible because it were they who wanted to draw frontiers. To the adherents of such transcendence of frontiers Europe is just a stage, a intermediate station. (...)

Question: The fall of communism has bereaved democracy of another stronghold: there is no enemy left. Will it be possible to live without enemies in the future?

Answer: I would like to paraphrase your question. Democracy is not out of the wood yet. The problem is that we no longer know how to identify its enemies. Whenever a conflict breaks out in present-day post-imperialist and post-totalitarian Europe we immediately have a go at "tribal psychology" instead of being modest and trying to understand its real meaning and origin. All we see is hatred, hatred we then ascribe to all parties involved without exception. The more cruel and bloody the aggression is, the more barbarian the victim, too, appears to us. (...) (Nova Revija 125, 1992, p. 963-971.

Because Finkielkraut's reflections are so much part of our discussion, and because Bausinger himself introduced him to the subject, I regret I cannot quote both interviews at full length. In my opinion, Finkielkraut shows very clearly, that many people in Western Europe, lacking the necessary knowledge and disorientated, prefer to cling to ideological stereotypes which obscure their view completely. This means, however, that Finkielkraut's notion, quoted by Bausinger, about "Volksgeist" and about how "the feeling for the universal withers because of self-righteous sticking to particularized norms" is all the more true.

Bausinger probably is not aware that he wrote a distinctly political article. Separatism, regionalism, autonomy and nationalism are mentioned in general, but these do not exist in general forms; they are political categories and arise in concrete social and historical contexts. In order to write about politics one should know about it. As far as our country is concerned, one should know the internal political relations in the former federal state for at least some ten years back. I do not intend, to discuss here the causes for the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, but allow me to mention the following facts: the centralist authorities wilfully and persistently blocked the presidency, they throttled every proposal to solve the crisis with a confederal system, exerted political pressures and never stopped threatening with military intervention.

Separatism, nationalism, lack of solidarity with less developed areas, all these reproaches are still ringing in our ears. We have heard them from both the centralist Yugoslav authorities and army as from international diplomacy which supported the

centralists' violence. It seems to me that Bausinger's view of the world's conflicts is a distorted one. And I would like him to know that he errs as far as our condition is concerned. I do believe, however, that it was not his intention to take side in any specific and concrete political situation.

Unfortunately, many other West-European intellectuals who have no idea about our history and politics, stick to highly simplified interpretations and judgments of very complex situations they do not really understand. Although they are poorly informed about the specific items at stake, they are afraid of losing face or their authority as opinion-makers. Being cosmopolitans, nationalism is something they feel they have to denounce; and because they do not want to take a political position, they cling to interpretations seeing ethnical clashes, civil wars, tribal passions everywhere.... In accordance with the old truth that might is above right, these "universalist" intellectuals are inexorable towards so-called "separatists" but, as a rule, do not oppose the nationalism of the "centralists" armed with tanks and bombers, sowing death and destruction under the banner of fighting separatism and preserving the country's integrity. They fancy their "unpolitical", intellectual discussions to be beyond politics and are not aware that they indirectly enhance political violence. Those who started the war and still possess plenty of arms, find it even easier to accomplish their goals thanks to such reflections.

Towards the end of his article Hermann Bausinger writes: *"It is acceptable and even desirable that folklorists and ethnologists take care of the more traditional ways and items of culture, but they should avoid the trap to look at them as totally autonomous and untouched by elite or mass culture and they should never try to extrapolate cultural conditions to political designs without any discussion of intervening variables. In my opinion cultural identity and political identity should be decidedly uncoupled. Saving or fostering cultural heritage does not necessarily refer to the heritage of an existing political unit, and the existence of special cultural traditions is neither a licence nor an obligation to demand the establishment of a political unit around these traditions. This is the logical complement of the expectation that every state will acknowledge and respect different cultural manifestations and traditions within its boundaries."* (*Etnolog* 2/2, p. 232).

However, the principle that state frontiers need not necessarily match ethnic units cuts both ways. It can be the war-cry of a violent centralist power or the basis of peaceful coexistence. In terms of understanding state frontiers and ethnic territories the Slovenes certainly rank among the most enlightened peoples in Europe. Their ethnic territory is divided over four separate states and is perfectly suited for research. I dare suggest that researchers examine whether the democratic states of West-Europe actually facilitate to their autochthonous minorities the use of their mother tongue in public life, education and other basic institutions which are part of an intrinsic, autonomous culture.

Hermann Bausinger's merit is that he has tackled these question in ethnologic circles. I think, however, that he over-estimates the influence of ethnologic and folklorist paradigms. Political violence is liable to abuse whatsoever ideological discussion, whether it approves of nationalism, universalism, separatism, integrationism, regionalism or centralism. The only valid criterion remains the use of armed force. Intellectuals who do not want to accept this criterion, who refuse to denounce the use of violence, ignore the fact that their ideological interpretations of nationalisms and separatisms obscure obvious political facts and, indirectly, sanction violence.

SOURCES

- Entretien avec Alain Finkielkraut. *Politique internationale*, 55, Spring 1992, pp. 49-63, Paris.
- Evropa med Homerjem in Harlekinom. Pogovor z Alainom Finkielkrautom. (Pogovor je vodil in za natis pripravil Jaroslav Skrušny) ("Europe between Homer and Harlequin. Interview with Alain Finkielkraut, edited by Jaroslav Skrušny") *Nova revija* 125, 1992, pp. 963-971, Ljubljana.