

Book Reviews

Book Review

Dušan Bilandžić

*Povijest Izbliza: memoarski
zapsi 1945.-2005.*

(History Up Close: Memoirs)

Prometej, Zagreb, 2006, 735 pages

Dušan Bilandžić, a researcher and an exceptionally prolific author, does not provide a detailed account of the origins of his *Memoirs*. In places where he discontinues them (e.g. the first half of 1984 and almost the entire 1985, 1994, 1997 and 1998) he calls them “diaries”. And indeed, his notes are dated diary-style over a lengthy period of time between 1960 and 2005 (proper diary entries commenced only in 1966). This counters the claims of Bilandžić’s detractors that this book has been written in the “tittle-tattle” format. Diaries are always subjective as they record private observations and convictions, which are not supposed to be shared with a broad audience, especially in the form of such a lavishly produced book.

Nevertheless at some point Dušan Bilandžić did decide to share his diaries (most probably various notebooks in which he stored his impressions of people and times) with today’s and future generations. And just as well because his matchless choice of interlocutors and the situations enables us to step into the secret and even the intellectual life of our political class – both at the time of the twilight of Titoism and the former Yugoslavia and from the period of the creation of the Croatian state and the ensuing conflicts. Of course, once he had decided to make his diaries public, Bilandžić undoubtedly edited them. To what an ex-

tent, he does not divulge. But there is much indirect evidence of his tampering. We can only surmise which entries never made it into the book e.g. there is almost no mention of his engagement in the NGOs e.g. the HHO (the Croatian Helsinki Committee). There are other alterations. Occasionally a person is not mentioned by their name but only by their initials or just as “a journalist from Zagreb”. But then we read that this “journalist from Zagreb” in February of 1988 elaborated on “Šušvar’s thesis that (the weekly) *Danas (Today)* adopted the tenets of the Croatian spring mass movement” (p. 312), which means that Bilandžić is being merciful to a still active contemporary who might have problems because of this gaffe from 1988.

If we could all be sanctioned – and as a matter of fact we should – for our former political stupidity or moral obtuseness, our public life would look like the frescos of purgatory that one can see on the walls of our village churches in which a multitude of sinners simmer in fire and brimstone. Once we find ourselves in the former system, that of the crepuscular communism (the most important part of the book), which has defined us up to now and which Bilandžić meticulously analyzes, we become oblivious to the author’s contradictions that might lead straight to the Hades’ vestibule. This Caucasian chalk circle of Yugoslav “liberal communism” can be discerned in Bilandžić’s systematization of Bakarić’s theses of May 1964: “Science cannot be a servant to the (Communist) Party, but if somebody stands in the way of social progress, we will not flinch from arrests” (p. 40). The message is clear: you can be free in everything except the very flexible definition of the term “social progress”. This was the Achilles heel of the Yugoslav system: the high priests of communism knew all the quandaries of “social progress”; and not only that, they systematically and pub-

licly blasphemed but still did not allow pluralist solutions, multipartism and democracy. Thus Bilandžić's Kardelj explicitly claims that "Yugoslavia is a product of the imperialist epoch" and that it is the "project and dictate of the great powers, the winners of World War One, and not a product of centuries-long struggle of its peoples. As such, it is not and cannot become an organic and enduring community, but only a historical debacle" (p. 107).

"Presently", Kardelj said in 1971, six months before playing a central role in the suppression of the reformist movement in Croatia "we are creating a confederation. After the amendments, which will be adopted in a month, we will try to preserve Yugoslavia on such principles until the international constellation changes. If this does not work out, then we have to give up on the idea of Yugoslavia. This solution would require enormous changes in the world". According to Bilandžić, Kardelj was "the most radical partisan of the Croatian mass movement" (p. 107). He was, indeed, just like Bakarić, but both of them cultivated their sympathizers within the political apparatus and never by means of mobilization and democracy. Bilandžić is aware of this and that is why in some parts of his book his growing frustration bursts through: Kardelj "knows not where he is going and how to bring that about" (p. 128). Kardelj's theory is "hatched by a sick mind" (p. 134), while Bakarić's insistence on the factor of "time" makes him pathetic (p. 164), and so on.

Bilandžić's entry for 28 January 1980 is representative: "From 22 to 27 September 1980 I am participating in the international symposium "Socialism in the world". Hearing more or less ideologized stories. But as usual I am making use of the presence of a number of politicians and intellectuals and am writing down these tales" (p. 206). And this is the content of these *Memoirs*, with its boswellian plots from the buffets of so-

cialism's gurus – also an important job. The feuds Bakarić-Špiljak, or Špiljak-Šuvar, to mention only a couple, the debates about the Russian interest, daunting even when there is none (Boško Biljegović: "Tito always used to scare us with Russians", p. 219), the fear of nationalism yet its adoption as an ideological-political orientation as it was a much smaller threat for our political class than liberal democracy (Šiljegović is "afraid of the spread of nationalism that might misuse democratic initiatives", p. 220), are only a part of this rich collection, that evokes better than any book known to me (perhaps with the exception of Draža Marković's memoirs) the world of our former nomenclature.

The big challenge for me as an outsider is a rather high level of cynicism of all these countless children of the revolution and the relatively negligible faith in the system's inherent strength. It seems as if nobody believed in socialism and Yugoslavia. The system subsisted on the eroded faith and the fear of pluralism. This makes the argument of the leftist intellectuals such as Leon Geršković even more painful to read: "Liberalism as a worldview has been restored in the form of the spread of self-management by means of the free association of workers in factories, the free association of factories into big systems, the free accommodation among the republics of the federation ... When a company creates its business policy, participates in cultural policy by financing culture, or is involved in health-care policy by financing health-care, in research policy by financially supporting science, and so on, isn't all this liberalism? Also, liberalism is when workers in their own factories can solve their housing problems and the education of their children, even at the level of high schools and faculties. The same applies to the assumption that workers may create high politics, from the local and the republican to the federal level. But this system is undermined by a mole called interest, a nightmare in which the power of technomanagers is

uncontrollably burgeoning, which means that on the basis of such commodity production capitalism is being restored” (p. 210). This sort of the fear of freedom is the deep root of our lagging, our populist paternalism and the rule of reactionary oligarchies – political, intellectual, religious – in the present-day Croatia.

The less important section of Bilandžić’s notes is about the period following the change of power in 1990, most probably because that period, despite all its entanglements, was nevertheless more open and transparent than the previous one. The loneliness of power holders is obvious here, too. It is clear that an array of people from Tudjman’s inner circle (Jarnjak, Valentić, Bobetko, Gregurić, Reljić) with whom Bilandžić communicated were not “toeing the line”. But even in this, the opportunistic line from the communist times is at work. At the beginning of January 1997, Reljić asked Bilandžić: “Based on your political experience, is it high time I distanced myself from that (Tudjman’s) coterie because, among other things, I expect the ruling party to lose the elections?” Bilandžić advised him not to get out of the structures because from his position he can be of the benefit to the society and recommended to Reljić to continue to talk and even communicate with the opposition (p. 487). In fact, Bilandžić praises the “Croatian tradition – better sit tight and not provoke an opponent, in this case the regime itself” (p. 523), which he calls the “Maček-Bakarić policy”, and condemns “the adventurous minority that provokes conflicts” (p. 524). Though in this context he mentions Tudjman and Veselica during communism, it is no coincidence that in his notes there is no mention of the extraparlimentary opposition of the 1990s (the HHO, the independent intellectuals, *The Feral Tribune*, etc).

At this point we should mention Bilandžić’ entries for April 1991 regarding the carving up of Bosnia, the entries that provoked so many comments, mostly of

the politicking kind. I do not believe that Bilandžić was instrumental in Tudjman’s policy of the division of Bosnia. On the contrary, people like him, always working from within “the structures”, to a certain extent try to prevent the worst aspects of all perverse politics – communist or Tudjman’s. Bilandžić played the role of Maxim Litvinov, the man who “subvert the mission” from within. Just as Litvinov from the Moscow Ministry of the Interior at the end of the war warned western diplomats that the Soviet boot would stop only when its advance is halted, Bilandžić also dragged his feet, both with Tudjman and with Kosta Mihačević. This cannot be called “stooping too low”. Pity he could not do much more.

Nevertheless, there is the other side to the coin. Bilandžić truly believes that one should not overdo things, either in good deeds or in good policies. He confesses that when giving testimony before the Hague Tribunal in September of 1998 he “withheld the information (...) that President Tudjman had instructed us how to work on the division of Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to extend the Croatian territorial borders saying that an agreement with Serbia on that was possible” (p. 492). That is why he has sympathy for Račan’s opportunist politics. “Račan thinks (10 December 1993) that it is still not wise to suggest to the masses to oppose (Tudjman’s) policy in BiH, though it is going to have disastrous consequences for Croatia. He thinks that his party (SDP) should not be drawn into the opposition to that politics; just the contrary, he has been ‘cooling down’ the hot heads in his party who have been advocating a more active involvement in this. Anyway, the HDZ should drain the ‘glass of poison’, and only after they have been completely discredited will it be possible to take some action” (p. 428). Perhaps “withholding” is easier “not doing”.

Finally, Bilandžić says: “Only desperate people, adventurers, risk-takers,

mythomanes, barbarians and bigoted anticommunists could in their folly assault the existing Yugoslav system and the world order" (p. 698). This invocation of the world order is the present-day form of the apology of Titoism. The irony lies in the fact that such thinking, with minimal modifications, would prevent the "desperate" and "adventurous" assault of a young man from Maljkovo and Feričanci who joined the partisan resistance movement in 1941. People, Julius Caesar said, always believe what suits them. The systems are just frames – better or worse. They facilitate or hinder the progress of honour. Perhaps it was not very easy to live honourably with Tito but it is much worse to live dishonourably in the soft times of pluralism. These semi-memoirs are an excellent source and subject of thinking about our time. They will teach the future generations much about these perplexing historical periods – luckily for us.

Ivo Banac

Book Review

Dragutin Lalović

Mogućnosti političkoga: preko građanina ka čovjeku
(*Possibilities of the Political. Via the Citizen towards the Man*)

Disput, Zagreb, 2006, 284 pages

The book *Possibilities of the Political* is the crown of many years of research carried out by the distinguished political scientist Dragutin Lalović, professor at the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb. The tackling of Rousseau's political thought lies in the focus of Lalović's scientific interest. Initially, a

professional engagement, it has long since evolved into a first-rate intellectual challenge. The outcome is a theoretical reconstruction of the general will as the central concept of Rousseau's political theory. In its genetic-diachronic aspect, the reconstruction examines the 17th and 18th century tradition of French political and ethical philosophy. The said tradition encompasses a gradual transformation of the general will from a theological idea into an operative concept of political theory. In its systematic-synchronic aspect, the issue of the general will's meaning is addressed within the framework of the conceptual field of Rousseau's theory of the State.

The author finds the underlying genealogy of the general will concept in Nicolas Malebranche's metaphysical system of rationalist theology. Malebranche's apprehension of the nature of divine justice is based on a strict general/particular dichotomy; he shows that activity through particular wills is not in harmony with the determination of God as an infinitely perfect being. Just as God maintains nature solely through his general wills in accordance with the general laws that he himself established, he can – in his grace – have but a general will to the salvation of all. The justice of God's activity, however, is not guaranteed by the formal generality of the law according to which he acts, but by the accord between God's general will and the universal laws of the eternal and immutable moral order.

It is Pierre Bayle's denial of aspirations of pure reason to establish speculative truths that introduced the possibility of secularizing Malebranche's notion of God's general will. Advocating the autonomy of spheres of the practical mind (i.e. history, morality and politics), Bayle played a key mediating role in the constitution of a new conceptual field of politico-juridical analysis (55).

This field was eventually established by Montesquieu, author of *L'esprit des lois*, which is "the first positive, anti-

metaphysical system of science of the political in the history of the French ethical and political theory” (56). Lalović meticulously analyses the distribution-of-power doctrine and shows that Montesquieu’s conceptual field does not transform the general will into a concept of political theory. In Montesquieu’s politico-juridical analysis, the general will of the State, defined as any will of the legislator, is reduced to a descriptive-analytical category. Such a status of the general will results from the absence of a conceptual definition of the State. The author, however, having scrupulously examined Montesquieu’s analysis of the English constitution, comes to the conclusion that it does in fact contain prescriptive judgments on political law, i.e. universal basic principles of the constitutional liberal State as a modern political order. Political freedom, as the purpose of the constitution of England, is ensured by the distribution of powers among various politico-social forces. The distribution of powers implies a separation of the judicial power from the legislative and executive powers, and the restriction of its function to the application of laws. Moreover, it implies co-operation and mutual connection between the legislative and executive powers (with strict superiority of the legislative power), as well as a division of the former. In his stylized outlining of the constitution of England, Montesquieu puts forward a request for “emancipation of the legislative power from both the judicial and the executive powers, and its instalment as the sovereign power of the State” (74). The general will of such a State is reasonable and just, for it is formulated by a body which holds the legislative power alone, and is an expression of the will of the principal politico-social forces which participate in the legislative process as partial legislators (210).

We find a direct secularization of Malebranche’s theory of justice as generality/universality in Denis Diderot’s *jusnaturalistic* conception of the general will. Diderot took over Malebranche’s

particular/general dichotomy, censured the individual as a subject of particular will, and set up the general will of the universal society of mankind as the criterion for justice. Diderot’s general will is not a politico-legal concept, but a regulative ethical norm, for it is the “ethical universal will of mankind”. In the political, its function is legitimitative; the legislative power of enlightened rulers must act as the will of all subjects (216).

Diderot’s article, *Natural Law* was published in the fifth volume of the *Encyclopaedia*. But the very same volume includes a refutation of the above-mentioned *jusnaturalistic* conception of the general will – namely, Rousseau’s contribution, the article *Political economy*, in which he formulated his early political theory (1755). Lalović is the first to distinguish Rousseau’s early and mature political theories. He bases this distinction on alterations in the conceptual status of the general will. In his early political theory, Rousseau differentiates between two general wills: the general will of the political body, of the State as a moral person – and the general will of mankind. For the citizen, only the general will of the State is a reliable criterion of justice. As opposed to the cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment, which rests on the illusion of the existence of a pre-social law as an ethical norm that would guarantee the rise of man into a member of the universal society of mankind, Rousseau defines justice in a legal-positivistic manner. The fundamental principles of justice are determined by laws, which are expressions of the general will as the will of each State, which, in turn, through its very generality, establishes and guarantees the citizens’ security and equality (97). The rule of law, which makes possible the establishment of the civil state and the transformation of man into citizen, is not brought about by the sham universalism of the Enlightenment, but by an orientation towards the republican ideal of “the rule of virtue, patriotism and public education” (106).

In his early political theory, Rousseau was unable to found a consistent new conceptual field of politico-legal analysis. Assessing Rousseau's early definition of the general will from the standpoint of his mature theory, Lalović argues that it comprises no conceptual definition of the general will, which, "*per definitionem*, must be the will of all citizens" (219). The general will is not defined as an expression of their empirical wills, but rather perceived as a "meta-empirical ethical principle". Obviously, the breach with the *jusnaturalistic* conception of the general will was not carried through consistently (103). The role of the people is reduced to compliance to the general will mediated by their leaders. Thus the general will is not an operative concept of political theory, but a criterion of legitimacy: the obligation to submit to it depends on the guarantee of the citizens' security (104).

The fourth and central chapter deals with Rousseau's mature political theory. It is derived from a parallel scrutiny of his main systemic works: *On the Social Contract*, *Principles of Political Law*, and *Emile or On Education* (both 1762). In order to arrive at a conceptual definition of the general will, the author had to face the problem of grasping the structure of exposition of the *Social Contract*, i.e. the logic of the conceptual field of Rousseau's theory of the State. Interpreting the *Social Contract's* logic of exposition as a processual logic of differentiation and equalization of the general will and the will of all, Lalović alters Rousseau's exposition order according to "three logically related moments (the formation, the mode of activity and the meaning of the general will)", on which the exposition of the general will theory is based (122).

The first moment of exposition is focused on the social contract whereby the political body is formed. In its passive aspect, the political body is termed "the State", and in its active aspect – "the sovereign". The State consists of indi-

viduals who submit themselves as subjects to the laws brought by the sovereign, of which they are members as citizens. By means of the social contract, wherein the identity of the sovereign's general will and the will of each and every citizen is realized for the first time, a procedural type of legitimacy is established: a legitimate political body is one in which subjects obey only the laws that – through being an expression of the sovereign's general will – are also the expression of the will of all citizens. It is the above mentioned identity that guarantees the full freedom of the individual in the civil state. Moreover, the social contract is a "legal principle according to which the nation as an organic community (*ethnos*) constitutes itself into a sovereign political body (*demos*)" (134). This self-constitution process of the people as sovereign is made possible by the Legislator, who, acting as advisor to the sovereign people in the stage of constitution-making legislation, substantially determines the sovereign's will by proposing to him the fundamental or political laws.

The second moment of exposition, i.e. the mode of activity of the general will, is linked with the concept of sovereignty. Since the general will can be expressed solely through the vote of all citizens on a proposed law, and the law is but an act of the general will, it is the legislative power which can belong only to the people. Since, however, sovereignty is limited by its legal nature to the implementation of the general will, it is, by the same token, the only power which belongs to the people that can "operate legitimately *exclusively through laws*" (141). A law is not a command of the sovereign, but a contract between the sovereign as the entirety of citizens and the State as the entirety of subjects – in other words, a contract into which the people enter with themselves. This double generality of a law (both in terms of the will which creates it and in terms of its object) is the guarantee of its justice.

The limits of sovereign power – which, being the source of the political body's laws, is absolute – are determined by the limits of generalization. The citizen is the one who decides on the limits of public regulation in the legislative process, in full mutuality with his fellow citizens. This results in a simultaneous establishment of a public/political sphere of freedom, in which man exists as a free citizen, and a private/non-political sphere, in which he enjoys his natural rights as a legal person.

The author's key contribution to the comprehension of Rousseau's political theory is the analysis of the third moment of exposition of the general will theory. Engaged in a critical dialogue with the most prominent interpretations of the general will (Bosanquet, Durkheim, Gurvitch, Masters, Philonenko, Gildin, Groffman/Feld), Lalović uncovers the meaning of the general will by interpreting the logic of the political process as a processual logic which simultaneously encompasses the conceptual *differentiation* between the general will (*volonté générale*) and the will of all (*volonté de tous*), and their *equalization*.

Lalović sums up the meaning of Rousseau's remark on qualitative differentiation and the possibility of quantitative equalization of the two wills with the thesis that the "authentically constituted general will is *always* the will of all, while the will of all is *not always* the general will" (167). Building upon Philonenko's interpretation of the general will as integration in the mathematical sense (162), the author shows that there is a fundamental precondition for the ability of the will of all, as the will of the majority, to express the general will: the citizens must vote as individuals. Only then are the differences between their individual standpoints (i.e. their individual wills) small enough to be integrated into the collective decision as in a large sum of small differences. If, on the contrary, the individuals vote as members of partial associations (estates), the differences

are too substantial to be integrated. Consequently, the will of all, as the will of the majority, merely expresses the interest of the strongest particular association.

Thus, the meaning of the political process is revealed as the logic of simultaneous generalization and individualization of the will, whereby the citizen constitutes himself through his capability of recognising the general will as his genuine individual will. "As the fundamental treatise on *public or political education*, the *Social Contract* establishes and develops the logic of the political process on the idea of *democratic self-formation* of the 'given' man (such as he is) into a citizen" (191). The conceptual differentiation/equalization of the general will and the will of all sets the process's coordinates. When one views it from a diachronic perspective, it becomes clear that, inside the process, as a result of the interiorization of generality in the democratic learning process (191), a "dynamic of transformation of the will of all" is in operation (192). There is a great deal of difference between the will of all at the beginning of the political process, and the will of all at the end of it. While initially the will of all is nothing more than the sum of particular wills focused on private interests, finally it is transformed into the sum of wills of authentic citizens capable of distinguishing between their public and private wills, and, as such, it expresses the general will of the people (192).

Lalović concludes that Rousseau's conception of the general will can ultimately be interpreted as a theory of "legitimacy of political authority in the democratic State" (11). In contrast to the emancipatory project of the constitution of a legitimate constitutional and democratic State, all existing governments are denounced as the natural state of despotism (227).

The author discovers the emancipatory potential of the political at the pinnacle of the political process: generality realized in the political is a necessary

prerequisite for the constitution of man as an autonomous moral individual, a subject of *volonté universelle* as a moral will to just conduct among men. Instead of stressing a certain cosmopolitanism which cannot be immediately realised, Rousseau points to the potential of reduced universality of the political (222) – “it is the citizen that is the mediator between man as he is and man as he ought to be” (233). The possibilities of the political become manifest in the unfolding of the tendency to overcome the economically determined particularity and gradual attainment of moral universality.

The new categorical field of political theory developed by Rousseau in the final text of the *Social Contract* is based on a differentiated identity of the general will and the will of all. Since the categorical framework of the secularizational logic – within which the general will was defined either as a transcendental entity extraneous to individuals, or as the individuals’ will determined by a superior regulative ethical norm – was unsuitable for the expression of specific features of the political, Rousseau abandoned it. The general will cannot become an operative concept unless the political process is conceived as a process of “democratic self-formation wherein individuals themselves realize the general will through their legislative activity” (200).

Through a critical examination of the classical text, the book *Possibilities of the Political* confronts us with the problem of the political in modernity. Lalović approaches the text with faith, although refusing to interpret it literally. Seemingly unsolvable difficulties of interpretation are successfully met by relying on the adequate comprehension of the conceptual field of Rousseau’s political theory. As a result, the maze of Rousseau’s conception of the general will is turned into a signpost enabling us to fathom the reach, limitations and *possibilities of political modernity*. Lalović clarifies the meaning of differentiated identity of the general will and the will of all as a theory

of legitimacy of political authority in the democratic State, and, in so doing, he draws our attention to the cognitively challenging possibility of interpreting Rousseau’s political theory as a synthesis of two great lines of thought in modernity – republican humanism and the *jus-naturalistic* doctrine of the State (230).

(Translated from Croatian by
Damjan Lalović)

Luka Ribarević

Book Review

Enes Kulenović

*Sloboda, pluralizam i
nacionalizam: politička teorija
Isaiaha Berlina
(Freedom, Pluralism and
Nationalism: The Political
Theory of Isaiah Berlin)*

Biblioteka Hrvatska politologija,
Zagreb, 2006, 152 pages

The political theory of Isaiah Berlin has been a lasting inspiration for many of the finest contemporary political thinkers, such as John Gray and Joseph Raz, as well as for Stuart Hampshire and John Rawls. Berlin’s writing on liberty and value pluralism set the stage for two of the biggest discussions in political philosophy going on since the middle of the 20th century – the relationship between liberty and social justice, and the justification of liberal political order when faced with the diversity of incommensurable moral and religious doctrines and ways of life. Therefore, Enes Kulenović’s book on Isaiah Berlin’s key ideas – liberty, pluralism and nationalism is most welcome for the Croatian intellectual community.

As the title – *Liberty, Pluralism and Nationalism* – suggests, the book is divided into three main parts. The first part, on liberty, explores and points out the most important issues surrounding Berlin's distinction between negative and positive liberty. The first chapter discusses the value of liberty, the justification for the limits of liberty, the relationship between liberty and determinism, and positive liberty or autonomy. Many of the issues are discussed through a well chosen illustration – the novel and the movie *A Clockwork Orange*, and its main character Alex, who undergoes a special treatment in prison and is transformed from a person who enjoys violence into a person who cannot physically stand it.

Negative freedom is mainly defined by a lack of coercion. In that sense, the realm in which the people can do what they want without interference from others, or from the government is the realm of negative freedom. No matter whether we prevent people from or punish them for doing some truly horrible things; or we prevent them from doing benign and even worthy things, we limit their negative freedom. Naturally, such a starting point immediately opens the question: how and under what conditions should negative freedom be limited. After considering some of the most common answers to that question, such as “the golden rule”, “the harm principle”, “Constants’ holly freedoms” and finding them inconclusive, Kulenović sets the stage for Berlin's response. How the boundary between freedom and political authority should be drawn is “a matter of argument”. Still, as Kulenović rightly observes, Berlin “does not say that the value of freedom is relative”, on the contrary, he warns that every limit we put on freedom should be justified with a very good reason (21). The discussion on the limits of freedom, thus, anticipates the arguments on value pluralism from the second part of the book.

Namely, freedom, although a great value, cannot encompass all the other

valuable things in life, such as justice, equality, security, solidarity, happiness, truth, etc. Furthermore, freedom cannot be understood as a sole precondition for achieving other valuable things. This important idea of Berlin's is instructively discussed through an analysis of John Stuart Mill's arguments about freedom as a path to human creativity and flourishing. The freedom to choose how we live without interference from others is what makes us human. Kulenović thus concludes that if we came across somebody like Alex who has been deprived of this freedom, our reaction would not be condemnation, but pity, even though Alex has been only deprived of his choice to use physical violence. Thus, negative freedom can be exercised in monstrous ways, but it is freedom all the same. This last point is also mediated by the discussion of the idea of value pluralism. Freedom to choose definitely is something that makes us human, but so are many other characteristically human values. So, the conclusion of the discussion on the limits of freedom is that some limits of our freedom are readily accepted, but there is also a sphere of personal freedom that should not be crossed except in the direst circumstances when other great human values are at stake.

Kulenović manages to show convincingly that Berlin was aware of the evils that negative freedom can lead to, especially when used to defend a *laissez-faire* market system without safety nets, educational opportunities and health care. It is also clear that the fact that someone is ignorant, uneducated, untalented and, in general, incapable of fulfilling his or her goals, does not mean that he or she lacks freedom. Still, it is not clear whether a person trapped on a desert island after a plane crash like Tom Hanks (as Chuck Noland) is in *Cast Away* is a free person. Kulenović suggests that negative freedom is defined not through the actual situation that we are in, but by the means through which we got into such a situation in the first place (14). It is not obvious that our judgement on whether Tom

Hanks is free on that desert island really depends on who flew the plane and whether the pilot was responsible for the plane crash or not. In the movie Hanks manages to get off the island, but in case he did not and died there, would we say he died as a free man? Another answer that Kulenović offers would be that Hanks was free, but that freedom was of no value to him since he did not have the means to make use of it. He was free to leave the island but had neither a ship nor a plane to do so. As Kulenović rightly observes, Berlin himself admits that the level of freedom in society depends on the number and quality of options open to us, as well as the importance of those options in fulfilling our life plans (22). Thus, negative freedom is an issue only in a society and not in Robinson Crusoe-type of situations, but the question about the relationship between freedom and the opportunities to use it is again left to arguments about the relative weight of different values in society.

The distinction and the relationship between positive and negative freedom also includes a discussion on Rousseau and Kant. Here Kulenović presents one of the main points on Berlin's distinction between negative and positive freedom as two different values that cannot be reduced to the same notion. No matter how impressive Rousseau's and Kant's attempts to show that the realisation of autonomy and self-government does not imply a loss of freedom are, Kulenović demonstrates that it is important to keep the analytical distinction between the two kinds of freedom, since it helps us recognize when freedom is perverted and turned into its own opposite. The upshot of this discussion is that being free to choose only if the choice can be equally good for everybody does not seem like real freedom at all (55).

As noted, pluralism seems to be the key idea in Berlin's political thought. Pluralism illuminates the distinction between negative and positive freedom, as well as the discussion on nationalism.

The second chapter is thus central in getting "the big picture" of Berlin's political theory. Again, through very well chosen examples from the movie *Mission* and Sophocles's plays, a distinction is made among the different tragic choices that humans are making when faced with a clash of different values. The chapter also demonstrates the influence of Vico, Machiavelli and Herder on Berlin's thought, as well as Berlin's debt to Romanticism. As Kulenović shows, Berlin did define himself as an heir of the Enlightenment, but as one ready to learn from its opponents, the Romantics. Beside the intellectual origins of Berlin's value pluralism, the chapter explores the problematic issues of objectivity of values, the pluralist critique of monism, the dangers of value relativism and the relationship of pluralism and liberalism.

As it was predicted in the discussion of freedom, Berlin's claim is that values do conflict and it might not be possible to reduce one into another or to find an overarching principle or value that might help us solve a conflict. After the discussion of Berlin's idea that the plurality and conflict of values are firmly grounded in our ethical experience (88), Kulenović gives an account of Berlin's rejection of monism as a doctrine that presupposes the possibility of a unique and universal solution to the problem of value pluralism. But, as the author shows, Berlin does not reject the possibility of rational solutions to the moral and political problems, nor does he reject the value of moral and political theorizing about those problems. Beside their role in the analysis of the coherence and logical consistency of our moral and political concepts, philosophers (together with scientists and artists) are the main creators of our "concepts and categories" (93). In that sense, Kulenović sees the contribution of Berlin's value pluralism to our awareness of and openness to values and worldviews different than our own. "The crux of Berlin's pluralism", writes Kulenović "is that there is nothing wrong with advocating our system of values, and at the

same time accepting a different system of values as one that it is not less rational than ours” (94).

Conversely, the section on the relationship between pluralism and relativism shows that Berlin’s pluralism does not deny the objectivity of values. Even though philosophers have a lot to learn from ethnologists and cultural anthropologists and from their insight that different societies might have different views on right and wrong (99), the author concludes, together with Berlin, that values are grounded in the different needs that humans have in common. “The argument that a great number of basic values exists in societies removed in time and space stems from the fact that certain basic characteristics and needs – physiological, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual – are common to all humans” (101). It is, thus, possible to conclude that the upshot of Berlin’s value pluralism is not so much that different people value different things, but that all people have different human needs the satisfaction of which gives rise to a conflict of values.

Since there is not one best way to solve these conflicts, it is reasonable to leave as much room as possible for individual freedom of choice, as is shown in the concluding parts of the chapter on pluralism (112). The preferred political arrangement for Berlin is liberalism, even though liberalism also comes in some monistic varieties, as its Enlightenment version shows. For Berlin, liberalism, “as ideology and as a system of ... institutions can best cope with the challenges of value pluralism” (108). Still, in the last part of the chapter, Kulenović clearly demonstrates that the affinity of pluralism and liberalism does not erase the ever present possibility of tragic political choices (119).

The chapter on nationalism contributes to a better understanding of the relationship of liberalism, especially the idea of individual freedom and human rights, and nationalism. The values of commu-

nity and national belonging, as well as the values embodied in certain cultures, especially non-liberal cultures, are clearly in tension with the values of freedom and individual choice. Kulenović discusses relevant issues, such as the importance of cultural belonging and national identity for personal identity and the relationship of cultural belonging and political dissent, but the most interesting issue is the justification of different nationalist claims. Kulenović points out that Berlin, as one of the rare liberals who engaged with the problems of nationalism, was well aware that national humiliation and ideas of cultural superiority can produce powerful illiberal reactions on the part of the humiliated and oppressed. “In the same way that an individual seeks recognition of her identity and authenticity, the members of a nation seek recognition of the uniqueness of their culture and a right to govern themselves. Military defeat, suffering injustice, cultural hegemony or a patronising disparagement coming from neighbouring nations or colonial masters lead to nationalist political movements” (126). Kulenović somewhat disagrees with this “bent twig theory” and argues that we know of nationalist movements (Catalan, Basque, etc.) that cannot be undeniably connected to a major injustice or humiliation (140). Therefore, in the author’s opinion, Berlin’s ideas on nationalism leave too many important questions open. However, Berlin’s thought in general, as the author warns us, is at its strongest in its questioning and rethinking our “concepts and categories”. In the conclusion, we are once again reminded that Berlin questioned the ideas that somewhere, at the end of Time or History, at Plato’s heaven or in some other utopian place, all values can be realised; that human nature has “a lower” and “a higher” part and that the “higher part” (however defined) should dominate; the idea that there are timeless, certain and universal rational principles that can tell us how to live our lives without moral loss. (146-47)

Kulenović's book gives us a well-written overview of Berlin's life and political thought. The author thoughtfully and lucidly discusses the main theoretical and political issues opened by Berlin and shows impressive insight into the questions opened. It is, thus, a valuable contribution to the study of contemporary liberal theory in Croatia as well as a welcome addition to the ongoing discussion of the issues opened by Berlin and the authors inspired by him.

Ana Matan

Review

*European Union, Nation-state
and Future of Democracy*

Hrvatski politološki razgovori
(Croatian political science talks),
Zagreb, 27-29 October 2006

Under the auspices of the government of the Republic of Croatia and the German political foundation *Hanns Seidel*, attached to the conservative Christian-social Union (CSU), the Croatian political science talks were held from 27 to 29 October 2006 in Zagreb, sponsored by the Croatian Political Science Society (HPD), to mark the 40th anniversary of this Society, which today has almost 400 members. This international conference was a part of the joint project of the Foundation and the HPD under the title *European political parties in the European parliament*.

The topics covered by the conference can be gathered from its title: *The European Union, the nation-state and the future of democracy*. The conference inaugurated as its central topic the subject of the debates from one of the six round tables of the previous political science

talks that marked fifteen years of democracy in Croatia. Making the European Union the focus of political science talks hardly needs explanation. The European Union, as a politically and scientifically by far the most intriguing politico-economic integrative project today, which by its combination of international and supranational elements eludes classifications of the classical theories about the state and the international law, as it is usually labelled a regime *sui generis*, has always been an interesting topic for political science discussions. However, the negative outcomes of last year's referendum in France and Holland on the constitutional contract for the EU once more highlighted the problems besetting the Union from its beginnings. Apart from the oft-mentioned democratic deficit and the feeble legitimacy of the existing EU institutions, the more serious issues which the project of a supranational governance such as the EU opens for the classical political theory are undoubtedly also the problems of the relationship between the Union and the nation-state and the functioning of democracy within a multilingual and multinational context. How does the nation-state, with its traditional prerogatives of sovereignty, fit into or should fit into the project of supranational political and economic integration such as the EU? Does it make sense to apply to the EU the concept of the constitution, traditionally applied to the state entities in the pluralism of states? What are the prospects of the creation of the European citizenry and the European political *demos* regarding the existing and deeply-rooted national-state loyalties? In short, has the failure of the Constitution been only a temporary logjam in the European integration or has the nation-state "struck back"? These issues were hotly and extensively debated in this conference. Perhaps – as Carl Schmitt argued and later revoked – the age of statehood is definitely over, but the participants did not heed his injunction that one should not waste words on that.

The conference was divided into two sections. The first, ceremonial, took place on the first day at the Faculty of Political Science, and included the guest appearances of the highest Croatian executive official and one highly-positioned European official, with all the trappings that go with such events: security detail and mass attendance. The guests and the participants were greeted by Tihomir Cipek, President of the HPD, Ms Smiljana Leinert-Novosel, Dean of the Faculty of Political Science, and by Hans-Friedrich von Solemacher, the representative of the Hanns Seidel Foundation for Hungary, Croatia and Slovakia. The speakers on that day were Zvonko Posavec, member of the Academy, Ivo Sanader, Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia, and Ingo Friedrich, vice-president of the European Parliament and the CSU. While the prime minister and the vice-president of the European Parliament expectedly professed their faith in the inevitability and the smooth progress of the European integration, as well as the similar optimism regarding Croatia's EU membership, Posavec's speech on the causes and the consequences of the non-passage of the European constitution represented a breath of scientific air even in this ceremonial part.

The second, or the working part of the conference (two remaining days) took place in the recently redecorated "Tomislav's Lodge" on Sljeme, Zagreb's hiker paradise. There were the opening and the closing plenaries, plus four thematic panels and the sessions of the HPD sections. Though more than thirty interesting papers were read, the scope of this brief account does not allow for all of them to be reviewed. Instead, the papers will only be listed and some of the issues dealt with by the participants briefly outlined as all the papers will be published in the journal *Anali Hrvatskog politološkog društva* (The Annals of the Croatian Political Science Society) for 2006.

The opening session, *The European constitution and European democracy*,

dealt with the topics such as the EU democratic deficit, the possible solutions and the prospects of creating the European citizenry, and the various concepts of democracy within the EU. The speakers were: Davor Rodin (*Future democracy*), Vladimir Vujčić (*Nationalism, citizenry and strategies of EU integration*), Damir Grubiša (*Democracy in Europe*), and the political science tandem from Slovenia Maja Babor and Andrej Lukšič (*Concepts of democracy in the EU*). Tihomir Cipek (*The EU institutional design and democratic deficit*) analyzed the concrete solutions of the institutional design for the EU, from bolstering the European parliament via the consensus-building of the corporative actors in the European Commission to the presidentialist solution and the creation of a powerful personalized executive at the European level. Also mentioned were the concrete blunders of the European elites that in the process of the creation of the constitution demonstrated a lack of wisdom of the American "Founding Fathers" (Robert Podolnjak: *Causes of the failure of the European constitution*).

In the panel *The European Union in the media communication* the topics were: informing the citizens about the EU and their perception of the EU within the context of the Croatian government's Communicational strategy for informing, with the special focus on the role of the media in that process. The speakers were Zoran Tomić and Damir Jugo (*The analysis of the communicational strategies for the admission to the European Union by Croatia and the countries of the region*), Marijana Grbeša, Damir Jug, Tomislav Staničić and Igor Vukasović (*Media, communicational strategy and shaping the attitudes of Croatian citizens regarding the EU accession*), Domagoj Bebić (*Role of the on line media in informing the Croatian public on the EU accession*), Božo Skoko (*Perception of the European Union in the Croatian public*) and Monija Ivanković (*Agenda-*

setting concerning the European Union and Croatia's integrational process).

The panel *Negotiations and process of EU accession* among other things dealt with the role of the civil society in the process of the EU accession, and particularly the activities of the German political foundations in transitional countries and the policy regarding the national minorities in Croatia in the context of the accession process. The speakers were Jasmina Božić (*Democratic monitoring of the accession talks with the European Union and the role of the civil society*), Emanuel Galić (*The Accession of the Republic of Croatia to the EU from the perspective of the policy concerning national minorities*) and Aleksandra Markić Boban (*The role of German political foundations in the process of the integration of Central-, East- and Southeast European countries into the EU*).

The panel *European policies* focused on individual European public policies: the European educational policy, the EU "language" policies (particularly the analysis of the adjudication of the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg in the so-called "linguistic" cases), and the EU regional and the fiscal policies. The speakers were Ivo Žanić (*EU emergence from the language stalemate*), Tihomir Žiljak (*European framework for national educational policies*), Eva Klemenčić (*Education for democracy – civic education in the EU*), Vladislav Hinšt (*EU budget*), Marko Trnski (*EU's regional policy*) and Irena Bačlija (*The Comparison of Competences of Slovenian and Croatian Regions*).

In the panel *National identity, Euroscepticism and democracy*, the speakers focused on the issues of identity and borders in Europe. The marked regional perspective of this session was underlined by a thorough analysis of Euroscepticism in Croatia and Serbia. The speakers were Ljubomir Antić (*NO to the European Constitution as the national renewal*), Branko Dubravica (*Borders of the 'new states' in the future borderless Europe*),

Uroš Pinterič and Nina Benda (*National identity in the EU*), and Nebojša Blanuša (*Euroscepticism – the moral majority discourse*), Đorđe Pavičević (*Euroscepticism and criticism of democracy in Serbia*) and Milan Podunavac, Dean of the Faculty of Political Science in Belgrade, who stood in for the absent Ivo Visković with his impromptu speech on the democratization in Serbia.

The closing plenary – *Political science and the Europeization* – had a somewhat more esoteric scientific character. The speakers spoke about the Europeization of public policy, various theories of integration, the place of the state in the political science discourse, as well as the difficulties in the implementation of European policies in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The speakers were Lars Johannsen (*Europeization and Implementation Difficulties in CEE*), Zdravko Petak (*Is the creation of the EU policy becoming a 'normal science'?*), Mitja Durnik and Primož Ben Belak (*From genesis to a complex system: a comparative analysis of the integrational processes of the EU, NAFTA, ASEAN and MERCOSUR*), Luka Brkić (*Decision-making and power relationships: the continuous building of the European constitution*), Ante Barišić (*Using the concept of the state in the political science discourse on the EU and democracy*) and Mario Sošić (*Europeization of national policies: the concept and the research approach*).

The Croatian political science talks of 2006 offered a number of informative and topical debates, some more general and theoretical (as mentioned in the introduction), some more thorough and technical, providing a detailed insight into certain individual *policy*-areas in the EU, its member countries and the candidate countries, giving a well-rounded political science account of the European Union, the nation-state and the future of democracy. All the speakers approached their subjects from today unavoidable comparative perspective, which was

manifested in the guest appearances of experts from abroad which gave to this conference an international dimension. The guest speakers were mainly from Slovenia and Serbia, the proof of commendable communication and cooperation of the political science communities in the region.

And finally, the conference was expertly organized. The organizers invited many eminent guests, e.g. the prime minister, and also chose an appropriate venue. Also worth mentioning is pleasant and friendly atmosphere, and socializing after the end of the official proceedings, the proof that political scientists in Croatia exist not only as an epistemic community, sharing their scientific interests, but also as a Dionysian community, united in their desire for good cheer and companionship, as can be seen on the photographs available on the web site of the Croatian Political Science Society <http://www.politologija.hr>.

Krešimir Petković