

# OSEMINDVAJSET LET POZNEJE

Tomaž Mastnak

**OSEMDESETA**  
THE EIGHTIES

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Tekst je del družbenopolitičnega komentarja, ki ga na razstavi predstavljajo naslovnice osrednjih dnevnikih časopisov iz jugoslovanskih republik. / The text is part of the socio-political commentary, presented by the exhibited front [pages](#) of the main daily newspapers from the constituent republics of Yugoslavia.

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Razstava *Jugoslovenska dokumenta '89* je bila odprta 1. julija 1989 v Sarajevu. Kaj se je dogajalo pol leta pred njenim odprtjem? Ne mislim na finaliziranje razstave in njeno postavitve, mislim na svet okoli nje: na ožjo in širšo domovino in na širni svet onkraj naših takratnih meja.

Kar se je dogajalo v prvi polovici leta 1989, je bilo kondenzirano in intenzivirano nadaljevanje dogodkov iz prejšnjega leta in kulminacija dogajanja v tistem desetletju. Kar je sledilo, je bil zlom socialističnih sistemov in razbitje večnacionalnih socialističnih držav, med njimi tudi Jugoslavije. Na vse skupaj lahko retrospektivno gledamo kot na nasilni konec hladne vojne. Prinesel je začetek razgradnje svetovne ureditve, postavljene po zmagi nad nacifašizmom med 2. svetovno vojno, in oblikovanja novega svetovnega reda. Šlo je za prelomno zgodovinsko dogajanje. Danes živimo s posledicami takratnih lomov in prelomov. Poučno je pogledati nazaj v čas, v katerem je današnji svet nastajal. Kaj bomo videli z današnje pozicije v takratnih dogodkih in kako takratno dogajanje razjasnjuje današnje? Kakšno preteklost si bomo ustvarili, da bi lahko bila naša prihodnost drugačna od tiste, ki smo si jo izbrali – ali nanjo pristali – takrat, pa se danes vse številnejšim ljudem ne zdi več tako privlačna, kot je bila videti nekoč?

Jugoslovanski časopisi, sodobniki razstave *Jugoslovenska dokumenta '89*, ki uokvirjajo ta naš *reenactment*, so presenetljivo dober vodič v takratno dogajanje. Presenečenje je izraz utopljenosti v predstave, ki so zavladale po zmagi liberalizma v hladni vojni. Te predstave nam namreč dopovedujejo, da mediji takrat niso bili svobodni, danes pa so. Prepoceni bi bilo odvrniti, da je v resnici ravno obratno, saj mediji danes so svobodni, takrat pa so jim bile postavljene določene meje. Toda za kakšno svobodo nam gre? Če ne sprejemamo brez zadržkov tistega pojmovanja svobode, ki se lepi na »svobodne« medije »svobodnega sveta«, v mejah ne bomo videli zanikanja svobode, temveč prej pogoj zanjo. Ampak pustimo svobodo ob strani. Bistveno tu je, da so mediji takrat poročali o dogajanju, danes pa to počnejo le še izjemoma. T. i. osrednji množični mediji na Zahodu so se preobrazili v velikanski propagandni stroj, ki ustvarja virtualne svetove, v katere zapira ljudi, drobce realnosti ali dejstva pa upošteva le toliko, da lahko nanje pripne specifične »perspektive«, ki tiste fragmente realnosti brž razžrejo. Pogled na svet, ki je zavezan dejstvu, ki, kot rečemo, temelji na realnosti, je bil načelno zavržen med vojno proti Iraku pod vladno republikanskega predsednika ZDA. Gledanje na svet, ki je odlepljeno od realnosti, pa je s kolaboracijo evropskih »zaveznikov« totalizirala demokratska ameriška vlada po državnem udaru v Ukrajini.

Branje starih časopisov je kot obisk v drugem svetu. Ne preprosto zato, ker je tisto pač bil drugačen svet, marveč in še bolj zato, ker smo bili do sveta v drugačnem odnosu – ne nazadnje tudi zato, ker je novinarsko poročanje v zadnjih letih večinoma šlo na drugi svet. Poročanje o notranjepolitičnem dogajanju je bilo leta 1989 v Jugoslaviji pretežno korektno. Še vedno smo imeli nekaj takega kot uradno linijo in ostanke uradne ideologije, ampak v nasprotju s postideološkim razkrojem uma in zasužnjenjem duha je ideološka indoktrinacija po strukturi svojega delovanja dopuščala miselno svobodo. Spoštovala je mišljenje. Merila je na obvladovanje misli, kar nikdar ne more biti tako učinkovito, kot je organiziranje dražljajev, ki zajema vse vidike posameznikovega življenja. Morda bi lahko rekli, da se nam je po zlomu socializma in zmagi liberalizma zgodila regresija od Hegla k Locku. Filozofska podlaga totalitarizma je Locke.

Takratni osrednji slovenski časnik ni bil glasilo opozicije – opozicijo smo takrat namreč imeli, močnejšo in

raznovrstnejšo kot danes –, je pa predstavil stališča uradne politike in njenih nasprotnikov tako, da sta bralka in bralec lahko brez večjih težav izvedela in razumela, kje kdo stoji in za kaj se zavzema in kakšne možnosti ima takšna ali drugačna politika. Da je leta 1989 bilo tako, ni bil izraz dobrohotnosti oblasti. To je bil rezultat dolgoletnih bojev novinarjev in javnosti za svobodo informiranja, spoštovanje novinarskega kodeksa in odgovorno rabo javne besede. Oblast je bila predisponirana za pristajanje na take zahteve, ker je, kolikor je pač bila zavezana ideologiji, imela racionalno ideologijo (ki je, kar je tudi vsaj malo pomembno, izviral iz evropskih emancipacijskih bojev) in ker je sodila v tisto kategorijo, ki so jo Američani na začetku vojne proti Iraku zaničljivo zavrnil kot *reality-based community*. Še bolj nenavadno z današnjega vidika je, da so naši časopisi takrat izčrpno poročali o dogajanju v svetu. Mediji so imeli kvalificirane dopisnike na tujem, ne le v Londonu, Berlinu in Washingtonu (Bruslja takrat še ni bilo), država pa je imela neodvisno, samostojno zunanjo politiko. Bila je dejavnik v svetovni politiki in njeni predstavniki so se, ne brez uspeha, zavzemali za nacionalne interese. Kdo bi si bil takrat mislil, da bodo naši mediji četrto stoletja pozneje v polkoloniji Sloveniji večinoma samo še reciklirali t. i. agencijske novice, proizvedene, malo grobo rečeno, po smernicah ameriškega zunanjega ministrstva in obveščevalnih služb?

Kaj torej razberemo iz teh časopisov? Kaj se je dogajalo od začetka januarja do konca junija 1989?

Novo leto se je začelo z anarhijo. Bili smo brez vlade, ker je zvezna vlada odstopila in je nekaj časa trajalo, da je bila sestavljena nova in začela z delom. Zvezna partija, Zveza komunistov Jugoslavije kot enotna organizacija, je bila paralizirana. Še za sklic kongresa, rednega ali izrednega, ni mogla več zbrati moči. Zveza socialistične mladine Jugoslavije ni mogla ohraniti niti videza enotnosti. Slovenska delegacija je na koncu tega obdobja demonstrativno zapustila sejo zvezne mladinske organizacije. V Jugoslovanski ljudski armadi je primanjkovalo slovenskih častnikov, obenem pa je v posameznih republiških okoljih izgubljala legitimnost. Borčevska organizacija ni več našla skupnega jezika. Medtem ko so zvezne politične organizacije hromele in razpadale, so njihova vodstva, če so dobila priložnost, napadala »protisocialistične sile«. Predvsem pa so politične organizacije iz posameznih zveznih enot obtoževale druga drugo za nezavidljivo stanje in za razbijanje skupne države, obenem pa prisegale večno zvestobo Jugoslaviji. Federalna ureditev se je *de facto* spreminjala. Srbskemu partijskemu vodstvu je z zamenjavami na vodilnih položajih v Črni gori in Vojvodini in z eskalacijo napetosti na Kosovu, ki je pripeljala do razglasitve izrednih razmer, uspelo spremeniti razmerje sil na zvezni ravni sebi v prid. Bosna in Hercegovina je bila v podrejenem položaju, prisilni statist v takratni drami, ker ni bilo mogoče najti rešitve za Agrokomerc, ki je bil pogonski motor republiškega gospodarstva. Zlasti v Srbiji, na Kosovu in v Sloveniji se je mobiliziralo, ali je bilo mobilizirano, ljudstvo. Ljudje so stopili s političnimi zahtevami na ulice in trge. Nasprotja in konflikti v federaciji so se vse bolj artikulirala kot »nacionalna trenja«, čeprav je dejansko šlo za razpad nacije na etnične skupnosti. Faktične spremembe v razmerjih moči so začele spremljati priprave ustavnih sprememb in pisanje novih republiških ustav.

Ko so obstoječe politične organizacije vse bolj tonile v krizo, so se pojavljale nove. V tem oziru je prednjačila Slovenija. Samoreklamirani »prvi korak v politični pluralizem« je bila ustanovitev Slovenske demokratične zveze kmalu po novem letu. Vse tiste številne »korake«, ki so v osemdesetih letih odpirali družbeni in politični prostor, v katerem je ta Zveza sploh lahko naredila svojega, so se ti demokrati odločili z njim lastno ošabnostjo ignorirati,

nacionalno zgodovino so žaljivo odpisali kot »pogorišče zgodovine«, v zgodovinskem vakuumu, ki so ga ustvarili, pa so sklenili postaviti »ustrezen nacionalni program«. Ustrezen čemu, se lahko vprašamo danes; takrat si takih vprašanj ni nihče resno zastavljal. Veliko bolj udobno je bilo zavzemati se za »politično in gospodarsko demokracijo«.

Politično vodstvo na zvezni ravni je brž izrazilo zaskrbljenost zaradi »pojavnost legalizacije in vse močnejšega delovanja politične opozicije«. V teh procesih so videli grožnjo Jugoslaviji in jih skušali deligitimirati z argumentom, da se dogajajo »pod krinko poglobljanja demokratizacije«. Prava demokracija je bila namreč jugoslovanski model demokratičnega socializma. To, ta novi politični pluralizem, je bil lažna demokracija. Vendar ta argument ni prepričal. Takrat se nam je zdel komičen. Iz izraza »pod krinko« – in iz sorodnega »pod plaščem« – smo se norčevali. Nekaj zgodovinske tragike je bilo v tem, da je prav tisti element jugoslovanskega socializma, ki bi v takratnem času demokratične evforije moral govoriti njemu v prid, namreč njegova demokratičnost, postal njegova ranljiva točka. Jugoslovanski socializem je tako zlahka padel, ker je bil demokratičen, ne zato, ker je bil avtoritar. Vse takratno opozicijsko delovanje se je lahko odvijalo v okviru in pod varstvom obstoječih zakonov (ki so po drugi strani seveda tudi sankcionirali restriktivne in represivne ukrepe proti protidržavnemu delovanju). Opozicija je zahtevala dosledno spoštovanje obstoječe zakonodaje – in če je bilo treba tu in tam zakone interpretirati v prid t. i. demokratične opozicije, je ta lahko posegla po ostankih uradne ideologije in njene ideale uporabila v svoje dobro. Demokratična opozicija je imela vse argumente na svoji strani, tudi argumente obstoječega sistema, ta pa na opozicijske argumente ni imel učinkovitega odgovora. Če je opozicijo skušal zaustaviti, je bil obtožen avtoritarizma in totalitarizma (tu in tam tudi še stalinizma), in če je pristal na argument demokracije, se je znašel v ideološki in politični defenzivi.

Zgled ideološke in politične defenzive je bilo nastopanje slovenskega političnega vodstva. To je sicer pokazalo dobro mero zdravega realizma in tudi tolerance in fleksibilnosti, kar je vse prispevalo k nenasilnemu izhodu iz socializma v Sloveniji. Na ravni političnih biografij je bilo seveda tudi veliko oportunitizma in preračunljivosti, ki sta se proti koncu starega režima kazala kot naklonjenost opoziciji in tudi že prestopanje vanjo. Za take ljudi imajo Nemci lep izraz, *Konjunkturschwein*, in več o njih tu ni treba reči. Pri političnem delovanju vodstva pa je šlo, ob vsem hvalevrednem realizmu, za izhod iz socializma. Takrat se je govorilo o »sestopu z oblasti«, v resnici pa je šlo za spremembo narave oblasti.

Ko govorim o ideološki in politični defenzivi, me zanima prav to opuščanje – ali vsaj mehčanje – socialističnih pozicij. Slovensko politično vodstvo je bilo pod pritiskom »od zgoraj«, z zvezne ravni; »s strani«, pod pritiskom drugih republiških vodstvenih elit; in »od spodaj«, pod pritiskom demokratične opozicije, t. i. alternativne scene in javnosti na domačem terenu. Ko je branilo svoje politične odločitve pred kritikami in obtožbami »iz Jugoslavije«, je seveda branilo tudi slovensko opozicijo. Kar je bilo dobro zanj, je bilo dobro tudi za opozicijo. Kar je bilo dobro za opozicijo, pa ni bilo nujno dobro tudi zanj.

V razmerju do »Beograda« je Centralni komitej Zveze komunistov Slovenije artikuliral razpotje, na katerem se je znašel jugoslovanski socializem, kot nasprotje med »avtoritarnim populizmom« in »institucionalizacijo različnosti«. Identificiral se je z »razumom in različnostjo«. Za domačo javnost je bila alternativa artikulirana malo drugače. Slovenski politiki so socializem, kakršnega

da so si ljudje želeli, postavljali nasproti obstoječemu socializmu. Partijsko vodstvo je sporočilo, da potrebujemo »precej drugačen socializem«, tak, da nad »ustvarjalnim posameznikom« ne bo nobene »arbitraže«. Vodstvo Socialistične zveze delovnega ljudstva pa je izjavilo, da so ljudje za socializem z demokracijo in svobodo in da »s socializmom, kakršnega imamo zdaj, ne more biti nihče zadovoljen«. Logični sklep je bil, da obstoječemu socializmu manjka demokracija in svoboda. Demokracija in svoboda sta bili diskurzivno ločeni od socializma. Svoboda in demokracijo je predstavljal »politični pluralizem«. Ker slovenski politiki na taki idejni podlagi niso mogli zavrniti političnega pluralizma, so ga, da bi ga lažje sprejeli, imenovali »nestranski«. Opozicija je sprejela kompromisno formulacijo in se organizirala v »zveze«. Po Demokratični zvezi je bila ustanovljena Socialnodemokratska zveza. Zveza socialistične mladine Slovenije je zagovarjala obče svobodno politično združevanje, SZDL pa je spoznala, da »nekdANJI blišč Osvobodilne fronte« ne zadošča več.

Medtem ko so v slovenskem Centralnem komiteju in SZDL-ju iskali ideološko sprejemljive rešitve za politični pluralizem, drugi del oblasti (ki se je seveda deloma prekrival s tem bolj neposredno političnim) ni več dvomil o tem, kaj je bila *via et veritas et vita*. Ne v federaciji in ne v federalnih enotah oblast niti približno ni bila politični ali ideološki monolit. Če se je en del slovenske oblasti še imel za predstavnike ljudstva, je drugi predstavljal »gospodarstvo«. Njihov center moči je bil izvršni svet, vlada. Splošne smernice izvršnega sveta na začetku leta so bile: zdravo in samostojno podjetništvo, sprejetje delovanja tržnih zakonitosti in prilagajanje spremembam na trgu. Formula je bila »ekonomska reforma«. Nova jugoslovanska vlada v nastajanju je bila »reformna« vlada, predsedstvo republike Slovenije pa je hotelo ustanoviti tudi lastno »reformno komisijo«. Ekonomska reforma je pomenila, da mora biti »gospodarstvo pred politiko«, kar je bila seveda politična odločitev. Politika, ki jo je odločitev prinašala, pa se je lahko prikazovala kot nepolitična, kot delovanje po nareku nekakšne objektivne nujnosti, o čemer ni bilo kaj politično razpravljati. Dilema, ki je vseeno prišla do izraza, je bila dilema med podporo podjetništvu in zaščito pravic delavcev. Podpora podjetništvu je imela prednost. Bila je tako pomembna, da je slovensko politično vodstvo dopustilo, da novi zakon o podjetništvu ni bil usklajen z zvezno ustavo.

Dajanje prednosti gospodarstvu pred politiko je bilo politika odpovedovanja socialistični politiki. Še vedno je bilo mogoče naleteti na stališče, da »ko gre za zdravje, ni previsoka nobena cena«. Ampak tako mnenje je izrazil Svet za varstvo okolja pri Mestni konferenci SZDL, ki je od ljubljanske topline zahtevala, naj »uporablja le najkakovostnejše vrste premoga«, da ne bi zastrupljala zraka, ki ga dihajo ljudje. Na višjih ravneh je stopala v središče cena. Refren je bil, da je treba »gospodarstvo razbremeniti«. Izhod iz krize – ljudem neljube spremembe se vedno vsiljuje v imenu reševanja krize – so videli v deregulaciji sistema. Iz Gospodarske zbornice so razglašali, da »trg zahteva reforme zastarelega sistema«. V razpravi o ustavnih spremembah so zahtevali, da bi bil »bolj poudarjen tržni način gospodarjenja«, in zagovarjali enakopravnost vseh oblik lastnine ter »enakopravnost in samostojnost podjetij«. Odpraviti je bilo treba »ostanke dogovorne ekonomije«. Lik potrošnika je izpodrinil stari lik proizvajalca. Temeljna postavka neoliberalistične doktrine je, da je prav potrošnik, konzument, suveren. Druga konferenca organiziranih porabnikov Jugoslavije je klicala: »Porabniki, združite se!« Dotlej »porabniki« niso imeli svoje vloge, ker je ni imel niti trg. Milan Kučan, takrat še voditelj ZKS, je na pomisleke tistih članov, ki so videli v uvajanju tržnega gospodarstva

vračanje v kapitalizem, odgovoril takole: »Človeške civilizacije do zdaj še niso iznašle merila, ki bi bil boljše merilo zakon vrednosti, kot je trg. Vsi socialistični sistemi do zdaj niso našli pravega nadomestila za motivacijo ljudi, ki bi bilo boljše od profita in kapitala.« V civiliziranem socializmu, so sporočali iz Centralnega komiteja ZKS, nad »ustvarjalnim posameznikom« ne bo nobene »arbitraže«. Še bolj na splošno: »V središču novega socializma mora biti posameznik.« Ljudstvo, delovno ljudstvo, delavski razred in drugi kolektivni pojmi so bili odpisani.

Ta tranzicija pred tranzicijo se je dogajala pod naraščajočim zunanjim pritiskom. Eni so se mu uklanjali, drugi so ga izrabljali. Socialistični sistemi so se drobili ali drobljenje prelagali na poznejši čas s poseganjem po represiji. Na Čehoslovaškem so bile demonstracije. V Leipzigu so demonstrirali za »več pravic«. Na Poljskem so se začeli pogovori med oblastjo in opozicijo. Neodvisni sindikat Solidarnost je bil uzakonjen in zmagal na volitvah (na katerih pa je bila nizka udeležba). Na Madžarskem se je začel uveljavljati politični pluralizem, Janos Kadar je zapustil politično prizorišče, Imre Nagy pa je bil rehabilitiran. V Romuniji so popisali vse pisalne stroje. Kitajska oblast je z vojsko zatrla študentske demonstracije. V Moskvi je bil postboljševistični Jelcin izvoljen v Kongres ljudskih deputatov. O njegovi zmagi so zahodni mediji entuziastično poročali pred sovjetskimi. Komunistična stranka Italije se je odločila za »novo smer«. Vse to je zdravim socialističnim silam jemalo voljo do boja.

Konferenca za varnost in sodelovanje v Evropi je bila v ofenzivi s »človekovimi pravicami«. Medtem ko se je Sovjetska zveza bližala razpadu in so ZDA prevzele »svetovno voditeljstvo«, je gibanje neuvrščениh izgubljalo moč in vpliv. Uradno so začeli govoriti, da se »mora posodobiti«. Pritisk Nemčije na Jugoslavijo je bil bolj neposreden. Grozila je z uvedbo vizumov. Najtežji pa je bil na videz objektivni pritisk t. i. ekonomske logike. V ospredju, kot posebljenje tega brezosebnega pritiska, je bila evropska integracija, »Evropa«. Kakor je bila evropska integracija v svoji prvi fazi en temeljnih kamnov hladnovojne ofenzive proti socialistični polovici Evrope in Sovjetski zvezi, tako je ob bližajočem se koncu hladne vojne začela prehajati v novo, višjo fazo, da bi pomagala konsolidirati zmago liberalizma.

Za leto 1992 je bilo načrtovano lansiranje Evropske unije, kar se je formaliziralo s podpisom maastrichtske pogodbe. Slovenski politiki so bili najbolj zagreti za vključevanje v evropske integracijske procese. Izvršni svet je od neobstoječe zvezne vlade zahteval, naj »izpolni evropske zahteve«. Slovenija se je predstavila kot tista »ena republika«, ki »hoče skrbneje slediti premikom v Evropi« – za kar da bi jo bilo treba pohvaliti. Na slovenskem političnem vrhu se je začelo govoriti o »naši poti v Evropo«. Ko so se razmere v Jugoslaviji zaostrile in ko se je še posebej zaostrilo razmerje med Slovenijo in Srbijo, je Slobodan Milošević ostro napadel »tiste«, ki bi radi vstopili v Evropo kot lakaji, ki se prilizujejo Evropi in posmehujejo lastni državi in njenim institucijam. Kako prav je imel Milošević, ko je govoril o lakajstvu, se je pokazalo v letih, ki so bila takrat še prihodnost. Vendar je bil do svojih slovenskih kolegov krivičen. Ti seveda niso hoteli ali želeli »vstopiti v Evropo kot lakaji«. Jože Smole ga je v imenu najširše slovenske politične organizacije užaljeno zavrnil. Obenem pa je SZDL pod njegovim vodstvom postavila alternativo »evropska prihodnost ali prihodnost bede« in obžalovala, da »v Jugoslaviji« še niso dojeli nuje vključevanja v Evropo, v kateri bi »sodelovali kot enakopraven partner«.

Slovinci se seveda niso hoteli odločiti za »prihodnost bede«. Le kdo bi se? Lepa prihodnost pa je

terjala, »da podremo plotove in se otresemo posebnosti, ki so nas, o tem se pač ni treba prepričevati, oddaljile od sveta in privedle v krizo.« Socializem je postal »posebnost«, ki je Slovenijo odtujila od »sveta«. Ta retorika seveda ni pomenila nič drugega, kot da se je politično vodstvo odpovedalo enemu svetu in se odločilo za drugega. Republiška skupščina je sledila tako zarisani perspektivi in razglasila, da si »želimo polnopravno vključitev v Evropo«. Potem ko je bila v Sloveniji »bitka« za politični pluralizem idejno dobljena, je postala osrednja tema »Evropa«. Slovenci so odkrili svojo evropsko identiteto.

Vendar zavzemanje za vključevanje v Evropo ni bilo omejeno na Slovenijo. Zanj so se zavzemale vse tiste politične sile v skupni državi, ki so se želele izkupati iz socializma. Za vključitev v evropsko integracijo je bilo namreč treba izpolniti določene pogoje, ki niso zahtevali nič manj od izpeljave sistemskih političnih in ekonomskih sprememb. Kdor je želel v Evropo, je moral vzeti to v zakup. Pogosteje se je zgodilo, da so tisti, ki so si želeli takih sprememb, zagovarjali vključevanje v Evropo, da bi potem zelene spremembe zahtevala instances, ki je bila postavljena nad politično voljo jugoslovanskih političnih sil in, konec koncev, ljudstva. Grobo rečeno, Jugoslavija bi se morala odpovedati samostojni notranji in zunanji politiki. Da bi se lahko vključila v evropske integracijske procese in preživela v »poostreni konkurenci na enotnem trgu«, je bilo treba odpraviti »ostanke dogovorne ekonomije«. Pozitivno formulirano: morala bi odpreti trg za evropske izdelke, omogočiti tuje naložbe in v celoti uresničiti tržno gospodarstvo. Prilagoditev evropski standardizaciji je bilo v primerjavi s tem tehnično vprašanje. Kako je kazalo zunanji politiki, je jugoslovanskim mladincem pojasnil takratni zunanji minister Lončar. Jugoslavija je pretirano povelečevala neuvrščeno dimenzijo svoje zunanje politike, je dejal, zanemarila pa »integracijske tokove z razvitim svetom«.

Da bi ulovili korak z razvitim svetom, so, denimo, v Leskovcu zahtevali prehod na »evropski delovni čas«, kar bi pomagalo opraviti »naravno selekcijo« delovne sile (ker bi delavci po ših tu ne mogli več kmetovati). Bolj uglajeno je nastopila Poslovna skupnost za svetovanje. Pripravila je srečanje najvišjih predstavnikov slovenske države s svetovalno firmo Price Waterhouse o reformi javne uprave, »da bi slovenske načrtovalce družbenih reform čim boljše seznanili z načinom razmišljanja, ki je v razvitim svetu domač, mi pa se ga bomo morali naučiti na novo.« Price Waterhouse je izrabil priložnost in brž začel prodajati elaborate. Prihajali so ameriški poslovneži in razdajali svojo modrost. V Beograd so povabili poslovneže jugoslovanskega rodu iz tujine. Nagovoril jih je predsednik Gospodarske zbornice Jugoslavije in se dotaknil slabih izkušenj, ki so jih potencialni tuji investitorji imeli v preteklosti, ko je »sistem ... podpiral povprečnost in omejeval konkurenco«. Tokratna gospodarska reforma, je sporočil, pa je ustvarjala »popolno tržno usmeritev našega gospodarskega sistema«. Deregulacija je bila radikalna. Število zakonskih aktov se je zmanjšalo za 70%. OECD je ugodno ocenila nove jugoslovanske predpise o tujih vlaganjih. Po njihovi oceni bo »sprostitvev pri tujih vlaganjih ,pospešila preobrazbo jugoslovanskega gospodarstva v tržno gospodarstvo«, to pa ja pomembno zagotovilo uspeha jugoslovanskih reform.« Novo »reformno« jugoslovansko vlado je bila pripravljena podpreti tudi vlada ZDA, ameriški bančniki pa so ponujali denar »za razvoj«. Potekala so pogajanja z Mednarodnim denarnim skladom, v katerih jugoslovanska stran gotovo ni narekovala pogojev. Ko je bilo prvomajsko *Delo* natisnjeno z rdečo prvo stranjo, je to izražalo bolj zavezanost tradiciji kot politični duh časa. Tisto leto je bila stota obletnica prvega praznovanja 1. maja.

Po svetu so bile nekatere stvari take, kot so še danes. ZDA so sestrelile dve libijski vojaški letali in potem v Varnostnem svetu OZN z vetom preprečile obsodbo tega dejanja. Vojaško so intervenirale v Panami. Evropska skupnost se je upirala prodoru njihove hormonsko obogatene hrane na evropsko tržišče. Izraelci so na začetku tega obdobja vsak dan ubili po enega Palestinca, proti njegovemu koncu pa se je začela njihova represija stopnjevati. Sovjetska zveza je umaknila vojsko iz Afganistana, ameriški predsednik in pakistanska premierka Benazir Buto pa sta se zaobljubila, da ne bosta dopustila, da bi afganistanski predsednik Nadžibulah ostal na oblasti. Sledili so napadi islamskih terorističnih »borcev za svobodo« na Kabul, ki so prerasli v vojaško ofenzivo. Medtem ko so ZDA bodisi z lastno vojsko bodisi z uporabo terorističnih oboroženih formacij uveljavljale svojo voljo po svetu, pa so pritiskale na Sovjetsko zvezo, naj preneha s podporo Nikaragvi, ker da tam nima kaj iskati.

Dediščina Reaganovega predsednikovanja je bila »svetovno voditeljstvo ZDA«. Bush I. je to politično usmeritev vzela za svojo. Njegovega zunanjega ministra Jamesa Bakerja je skrb za »trdnost zavezniške obrambne črte« hitro napotila na evropsko turnejo, da bi utrdil NATO – četudi je Sovjetska zveza umikala podmornice z zahoda in je Gorbačov začel občutno zmanjševati vojsko in oborožitev. Sovjetska zveza je enostransko zmanjšala tudi jedrsko oborožitev in ponujala pogajanja o nadaljnjem razoroževanju. Zahodni voditelji so možnost popuščanja napetosti in zmanjševanja oboroževanja zavrnili. Velika Britanija in ZDA sta se postavili proti Zvezni republiki Nemčiji, ki je nasprotovala posodobitvi raket kratkega dosega v Evropi. Prizadevanja za omejevanje kemičnega in jedrskega orožja niso pripeljala nikamor. Globalna elita je v Davosu začrtovala »pot za devetdeseta leta«. ZDA so nasprotovale odpisu dolgov državam v razvoju. Redka svetla točka je bila britanska premierka Thatcherjeva, mitska mati sodobnega neoliberalizma, ko je v Londonu odprla svetovno konferenco o izgubljanju zaščitnega ozonskega sloja in jo tudi podprla. Liberalistični fundamentalisti in ekstremisti, ki vladajo današnjemu svetu, od katerega Slovenije ne ločujejo več nobeni plotovi in posebnosti, ji žal prav v tem pogledu niso sledili.

Kaj se je torej dogajalo pol leta pred odprtjem sarajevske razstave *Jugoslovenska dokumenta '89*? Kaj razberemo iz časopisnih naslovnice, ki tečejo skozi njeno ponovno uprizoritev?

Sporočilo bi težko bilo jasnejše: Jugoslavija je razpadala in svet okrog nje se je korenito spreminjal. Nasprotja v Jugoslaviji so tako narasla, da ni bilo nobene politične ali družbene sile več, ki bi jih mogla produktivno razrešiti. Nobenega dejavnika z zadostno močjo, ki bi to hotel, ki bi imel voljo za kaj takega, niti ni bilo več. Nasprotja so se tako zaostрила, ker so jih politične organizacije, ki bi jih morale reševati, v resnici ustvarjale. V širšem svetu se je pospešeno odvijala radikalna redistribucija moči. Hladna vojna je prešla v zadnjo liberalistično ofenzivo. Nasprotnik je bil že premagan, šlo je le še za to, da se ga čim popolneje uniči. Oblikovale so se nove oblike gospostva in nove odvisnosti.

Veliko vprašanje, ki se ob tem postavlja, je, zakaj sarajevska razstava tega vrenja in lomljenja, agonije na eni strani in zmagovalske pijanosti na drugi (*vae victis!*), ni registrirala, zakaj se na to ni odzvala. Zakaj se to ni vpisalo v razstavo ali zakaj ta ni skušala intervenirati v to dogajanje? Del odgovora na to vprašanje bosta morda lahko dali umetnostna zgodovina in kritika. Tu bi rad opozoril na nekaj drugega.

Ne čudimo se kustosom in umetnikom, ki so leta 1989 v Sarajevu postavili zadnjo jugoslovansko razstavo. Nihče takrat ni prav dobro razumel, kaj se dogaja. Ker nismo živeli v tretjem svetu, kjer je bila hladna vojna krvava, smo nanjo večinoma gledali kot na metaforo. Pa je bila vojna, in to vojna do uničenja in iztrebljenja nasprotnika. Podcenjevali smo odločnost in neizprosnost, s katero so liberalci od konca 1. svetovne vojne naprej nastopali proti kakršni koli alternativi kapitalizmu. (Če se danes kapitalizem seseda v degenerirano roparsko ekonomijo, to ni zaradi opozicije temu sistemu, temveč zato, ker se je prenapel in prenažrl.) Podcenjevali smo resnost dogajanja in dolgoročnost njegovih posledic. Kakor smo se z neznosno lahkoto odpovedovali socializmu, tako smo z enako neznosno lahkovernostjo sprejemali liberalizem. Liberalizem je privlačen, ker daje svobodo najslabšemu v človeku. Liberalizem prija, ker lahko tudi človek brez prepričanja postane prepričan liberallec. Liberalizem je všečen zaradi preproščine, s katero ponuja rešitve za tosvetne probleme. Zanj je še zdravi razum skoraj dialektika.

Slovenski politiki so na resne probleme odgovarjali z liberalističnimi publicami o ustvarjalnem posamezniku, ki mu ne sme vezati rok nobena arbitraž, o pravici do različnosti, o tem, da mora biti v središču novega sistema posameznik, o konkurenci, svobodnem podjetništvu in tržni ekonomiji, v kateri bo ekonomija ločena od politike. Vse to se dobro sliši, pomeni pa nič, ker je oprano konkretnosti, izvzeto iz refleksije razmerij moči. Ampak ker je lahko v take publike vsakdo projiciral svoje želje, so prepričale. Ločevanje ekonomije od politike je padec pod raven moderne misli, je onemogočanje političnega mišljenja. Moderni svet je zgrajen na preseku med politiko in ekonomijo. Ne politike in ne ekonomije v današnjem svetu ni mogoče misliti, če ne mislimo hkrati ekonomije in politike. In če se odpovemo mišljenju, nam ostane vera. Niti ne vera v teološkem smislu, temveč v liberalističnem: vera v svobodnega in ustvarjalnega posameznika in racionalnost trga. O družbi, politiki, državi in skupnem dobrem si ni treba beliti glave.

Tudi opozicija je na resne družbene in politične probleme odgovarjala z liberalističnimi publicami. Zdi se mi, da nas je kar nekaj, ki smo bili takrat zraven, imelo utvare, da bomo, če bomo napredovali v liberalno demokracijo, ohranili, kar nam je dobrega dal socializem, in dodali nekaj svoboščin, blišča in potrošniške suverenosti. Pa se stvari seveda niso tako odvrtle. Odprli smo vrata grabežu in ropanju nacionalnega bogastva, ki se še ni končalo, vladavini mediokritet (v najboljšem primeru), ki se odlikujejo kvečjemu po brezskrupuloznosti, politični razlastitvi ljudstva, diktatom iz tujih centrov moči, siromašenju večine prebivalstva, demoralizaciji in izgubi prihodnosti. O teh rečeh nismo razmišljali, niti na misel nam niso prišle, smo pa toliko govorili in bili tako aktivistični, da tega še opazili nismo. Sarajevska razstava je vsaj dostojno molčala. O tem, o čemer smo takrat govorili, in o tistem, o čemer je sarajevska razstava molčala, lahko zdaj začnemo razmišljati.

# TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS LATER

Tomaž Mastnak

**OSEMDESETA**  
THE EIGHTIES

The *Yugoslav Documents '89* exhibition opened in Sarajevo on 1 July 1989. But what was the context? What happened in the six months leading to the exhibition? I don't mean in terms of the final preparations for the exhibition or its installation. The question I'm asking is what happened in the world: in our country – in Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Yugoslavia – and in the wide world beyond our borders of the time.

What happened in the first half of 1989 was a condensed and intensified continuation of the developments of the year before, and a culmination of the events of the entire decade. What followed was the breakdown of the socialist systems and the destruction of multiethnic socialist states, Yugoslavia included. Taken together, these events can in retrospect be seen as the violent end of the Cold War, bringing in its wake the beginning of the deconstruction of the world order established with the victory over Nazi-fascism during World War II and the framing of a new world order. It was a watershed moment in history. Today we are living the consequences of the breakdowns and ruptures of that time. It is instructive to look back upon the time in which the world of today began to take shape. What will we see in the erstwhile events from the present-day perspective, and what light will the developments of that time cast on those today? What kind of past will we create such that our future might be different from the one we chose – or assented to – back then, with fewer and fewer people now finding it as attractive as it once seemed?

The Yugoslav newspapers from the time of the *Yugoslav Documents '89* exhibition that frame our exhibition reenactment serve as a surprisingly good guide to the affairs of the time. Surprising, because we've been inundated with certain notions that took over after liberalism won the Cold War. One such notion is that back in the day the media wasn't free, whereas today it is. It would be facile to retort that just the opposite is the case, since the media today *is* free, and back then it did have certain boundaries. But what kind of freedom are we after? If we don't accept without reservation the notion of freedom attached to the "free" media of the "free world," then boundaries do not represent a denial of freedom, but rather its precondition. Leaving freedom aside, the main point is this: back then the media reported on the events, whereas today it does so only as an exception. The so-called mainstream media in the West has mutated into a giant propaganda machine creating virtual worlds in which to lock people up, taking nuggets of reality or facts into consideration only insofar as specific "perspectives" can be attached to them, which then quickly eat away the fragments of reality. A view of the world based on facts, bound to reality, was discarded on principle during the war against Iraq under the administration of a Republican President of the United States. A view of the world freed from reality was totalized with the collaboration of European "allies" under a Democratic American administration after the coup d'état in Ukraine.

Reading old newspapers is like visiting another world. Not simply because it *was* a different world, but because our attitude to the world was different – and last but not least, because in recent years, newspaper reporting has gone, for the most part, to the other world. The reports on the domestic affairs in Yugoslavia in 1989 were largely accurate. There was still something like "the official line" and some remnants of official state ideology, but unlike the post-ideological decomposition of the mind and enslavement of the spirit, ideological indoctrination in the very structure of its operation allowed for the freedom of thought. It respected thought. Its aim was to control thinking, which can never be as effective as the full spectrum organization of our sensory experience. We might even say that after the breakdown of

socialism and the victory of liberalism, a regression from Hegel to Locke took place. Locke, not Hegel, provides the philosophical foundation of totalitarianism.

The main Slovene daily newspaper of the time was not a platform for the (political) opposition – for we did have an opposition back then, and it was stronger and more varied than today –, but it presented the views of the official politics and its opponents in a way that made it easy for readers to work out who stood on which side, what they argued for, and what the chances of the various policies were. Such a state of affairs in 1989 was not a reflection of the leniency and broadmindedness of the authorities. Rather, it was the result of long years of struggle on the part of both journalists and the public for the freedom of information, adherence to the ethical code of journalism, and responsible use of the public discussion. The authorities were predisposed to agree to such demands, because to the extent that they were still committed to ideology, this ideology was rational (and on top of that deriving from European emancipatory struggles), and they belonged to the "reality-based community," which the American power elites rejected with disdain at the outset of the war against Iraq. Even more unusually (from the present-day perspective), our newspapers brought extensive and detailed reports on what was going on around the globe. Our media had qualified foreign correspondents abroad, and not only in London, Berlin, and Washington (Brussels wasn't on the map back then), and our country had an independent, sovereign foreign policy. It was a factor in world politics and its representatives championed national interests – and not without success. Who back then would have thought that a quarter-century later our media in the semi-colony of Slovenia would simply recycle the so-called agency news, produced, to put it a tad roughly, along the lines prepared by the US State Department and intelligence services?

So what can we glean from these newspapers? What happened between the beginning of January and the end of June 1989?

The new year started with anarchy. We had no government; the federal government had resigned and it took a while before a new one formed and started working. The federal party, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia as a unified organization, was paralyzed. It could no longer summon enough strength even to convene a congress, either regular or extraordinary. The League of Socialist Youth of Yugoslavia could not as much as keep up the appearance of unity. At the end of this period, the Slovene delegation demonstratively walked out of a meeting of the federal youth organization. There was a shortage of Slovene officers in the Yugoslav People's Army, which was losing its legitimacy in certain republics. The war veterans' organization could no longer find common ground. And while the federal political organizations were losing ground and coming apart at the seams, their leaderships spewed venom against the "anti-socialist forces" every chance they got. Most of all, political organizations in the respective federal units laid the blame for the unenviable state of affairs and the unraveling of the common state on each other, while at the same time pledging undying allegiance to Yugoslavia. The federal system was de facto transforming. By changing some people in the leading positions in Montenegro and Vojvodina, and by escalating the tension in Kosovo until a state of emergency was declared, the Serbian party leadership managed to tip the balance of power on the federal level in its favor. Bosnia and Herzegovina was in a subordinate position, perforce an extra in the drama playing out as no solution could be found for the Agrokomerc corporation, which was the driving force of the economy in the republic. Especially in Serbia, Kosovo, and Slovenia, the people mobilized or were mobilized, and took their political



demands to the streets and squares. The disagreements and conflicts in the federation were increasingly articulated as “nationalist frictions,” although the reality of the situation was the disintegration of the nation into ethnic communities. The factual changes in the relations of power began to be accompanied by preparations for constitutional changes and drafting of new republican constitutions.

As the existing political organizations kept sinking deeper and deeper into crises, new ones emerged. Slovenia was at the leading edge of this process. The forming of the Slovene Democratic Union soon after the new year was a self-proclaimed “first step toward political pluralism.” With characteristic arrogance, these new democrats decided to ignore all the numerous “steps” taken throughout the 1980s that had opened up the social and political space in which the Union was then able to take its own. They offensively described the national history as the “ash heap of history” and decided to set up an “appropriate national program” in the historical vacuum of their making. “Appropriate” for what, we might ask today; back then, no one seriously posed such questions. It was far more comfortable to advocate “political and economic democracy.”

The federal political leadership was quick to express concern over the “occurrences of legitimating the political opposition and its increasing activities.” Seeing these processes as a threat to Yugoslavia, it tried to delegitimize them with the argument that they were happening “in the guise of enhancing democratization.” Because true democracy in their view was the Yugoslav model of democratic socialism; this thing, this new political pluralism, was false democracy. The argument failed to convince. Back then, we found it comical, making fun of the expression “in the guise of” or the similar “under the cloak of.” It seems that the tragic element in that story is that the very characteristic of Yugoslav socialism that should have played to its advantage in those days of democratic euphoria, namely its democratic nature, became its vulnerable point. The reason Yugoslav socialism succumbed so easily was because it was democratic, not because it was authoritarian. All oppositional activities could and did happen within the frame of the law and were protected by it (which, on the other hand, also sanctioned restrictive and repressive measures against anti-state activities). The opposition demanded strict adherence to the existing legislation – and if the laws needed to be interpreted in favor of the so-called democratic opposition now and then, the said opposition could avail itself of the remnants of the official ideology and use its ideals to its benefit. The democratic opposition had all the arguments on its side, including the arguments of the existing system in power, which, in turn, had no effective response to counter the opposition’s arguments. If it tried to stop the opposition, it was accused of authoritarianism and totalitarianism (and Stalinism to boot now and then); if it acquiesced to the argument of democracy, it found itself on the ideological and political defensive.

An example of the ideological and political defensive was the actions of the Slovene political leadership. Generally speaking, it showed a good measure of sound realism as well as tolerance and flexibility, which contributed to the non-violent way out of socialism in Slovenia. At the level of political biographies, there was of course also a lot of opportunism and self-interest, apparent toward the end of the old regime in favoring the opposition and also going over to its side. (The Germans have a word for people like that, *Konjunkturschwein*, and that’s all the mention they deserve here.) However, what the political actions of the leadership were about, all the praiseworthy realism notwithstanding, was a way out of socialism. The words used in political debates

were “stepping down” and “ceding power”; in reality, it was a change in the nature of power.

What I’m interested in when I speak of the ideological and political defensive is precisely this abandoning – or at least mitigating – of socialist positions. The Slovene political leadership was under pressure from all sides: “from above,” at the federal level; “from the side” – under the pressure of other republican leading elites; and “from below” – pressured by the democratic opposition, the so-called alternative scene and the public on their home turf. Defending its political decisions against the criticism and accusations “from Yugoslavia” it automatically also defended the Slovene opposition. What was good for the Slovene leadership was also good for the opposition. But what was good for the opposition was not necessarily good for the Slovene political leadership.

In relation to “Belgrade,” the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Slovenia articulated the crossroads that it saw Yugoslav socialism was approaching, as the conflict, or alternative, between “authoritarian populism” and “institutionalization of differences.” It itself identified with “reason and difference.” The alternative was articulated slightly differently for the Slovene public. Slovene politicians contrasted the existing socialism with the kind of socialism the people allegedly wanted. The Party leadership announced that we needed a “considerably different socialism,” a kind of socialism where there is no “arbitration” over “the creative individual.” And the leadership of the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Slovenia declared that the people were for socialism with democracy and freedom and that “no one can be satisfied with the kind of socialism we have now.” The logical conclusion was that the existing socialism lacked democracy and freedom. Democracy and freedom were discursively separated from socialism. What represented freedom and democracy was “political pluralism.” Unable to reject political pluralism on such a conceptual basis, Slovene politicians called it “non-party” to make it more palatable. The opposition accepted this compromise formulation and organized in “unions.” After the Democratic Union a Social Democratic Union, too, was formed. The League of Socialist Youth of Slovenia advocated general freedom of political association, and the Socialist Alliance of Working People declared that the “former glory of the Liberation Front” was no longer a strong enough model and source of legitimacy.

While the Slovene Central Committee and the Socialist Alliance of Working People sought ideologically acceptable solutions for political pluralism, another faction of the power elite (which of course partly overlapped with the former, more directly political one) no longer had any doubts about what was the right *via et veritas et vita*. The authorities were far from monolithic in political or ideological terms, both at the level of the federation and the federal units. While one part of the Slovene authorities still considered themselves the representatives of the people, the other part thought of itself as representing “the economy.” The latter’s center of power was the Executive Council, i.e. the government. The general guidelines of the Executive Council at the beginning of the year were: sound and independent enterprise, accepting the laws of the market, and adapting to the changes on the market. The formula was “economic reform.” The new Yugoslav government in-becoming was a “reform” government, but the Presidency of the Republic of Slovenia wanted to establish as well its own “reform commission.” Economic reform meant that “economy has to come before politics,” which was, of course, a political decision. But the politics this decision brought about could be presented as apolitical, as dictated by some objective necessity that made political discussion redundant. The dilemma that nonetheless

came to the fore was the dilemma between supporting enterprise and protecting labor rights. Supporting enterprise was given priority. It was so important that the Slovene political leadership allowed the new law on enterprise not to be harmonized with the federal constitution.

Prioritizing the economy over politics was a policy of relinquishing socialist politics. It was still possible to encounter standpoints such as “no price is too high when it comes to [people’s] health.” But this was an opinion voiced by the marginal Council for the Protection of the Environment at the Municipal Conference of the Socialist Alliance of Working People, demanding that the Ljubljana heating plant use “only the best quality coal” so as not to poison the air people breathed. At higher levels, “price” took center stage. The leitmotif was “lifting the burden off the economy.” Deregulation of the system was advertised as the way out of the crisis – unpopular changes are always imposed in the name of crisis solving. The Chamber of Commerce proclaimed that “the market demands a reform of the obsolete system.” In the discussion about constitutional reforms, it demanded “more emphasis on a market-oriented economy” and advocated the equality of all forms of property and “the equality and independence of enterprises.” The “remnants of consensus economics” had to be eradicated. The old figure of the producer was ousted by the figure of the consumer. The fundamental premise of the neoliberal doctrine is the sovereignty of the consumer. The battle cry of the second conference of the organized consumers of Yugoslavia was: “Consumers, unite!” Up until that time, the conference declared, “consumers” had had no particular role, because the market had no role either. Milan Kučan, at the time still the head of the League of Communists of Slovenia, responded to the reservations of those party members who feared the introduction of the market economy meant reverting back to capitalism, as follows: “Human civilizations have thus far not found a measure that would be a better measure of value than the market. All the socialist systems to date have not found a suitable replacement for motivating people that would surpass profit and capital.” The message of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Slovenia was that in civilized socialism, there would be no “arbitration” over “the creative individual.” Or more generally: “The individual must be at the center of new socialism.” The people, the working people, the working class, and other collective notions, were history.

This transition before the transition unfolded under growing pressure from the outside. Some succumbed to it, others used it to their advantage. Socialist systems crumbled or postponed the crumbling by resorting to repression. In Czechoslovakia there were protests. In Leipzig, protesters demanded “more rights.” In Poland, talks between the authorities and the opposition commenced. The independent union Solidarity was legalized and won the election (although voter turnout was low). In Hungary, political pluralism began gaining ground, Janos Kadar left the political arena, and Imre Nagy was rehabilitated. In Romania, a census of all the country’s typewriters was taken. Chinese authorities sent the troops in to quell the student-led demonstrations. In Moscow, the post-Bolshevik Yeltsin was elected to the Congress of People’s Deputies. Western media enthusiastically reported on his victory before the Soviet media even mentioned it. The Communist Party of Italy opted for a “new direction.” All of this took the fight out of the remaining sound forces of socialism.

The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe was on the offensive with “human rights.” While the Soviet Union was edging closer and closer to dissolution and the United States took over the “world leadership,” the Non-Aligned Movement was losing power and influence; it

officially admitted it “needed to modernize.” The pressure Germany put on Yugoslavia was more direct – it threatened to introduce entry visas. But the worst pressure of all was the seemingly objective pressure of so-called “economic logic.” In the forefront, as the personification of this impersonal pressure, was European integration, or “Europe.” In its early stages, European integration had been one of the cornerstones of the Cold War offensive against the socialist half of Europe and the Soviet Union. By the same token, it shifted into a new, higher stage toward the end of the Cold War, to help consolidate the victory of liberalism.

The launching of the European Union was planned for 1992; this was formalized by the signing of the Maastricht Treaty. Slovene politicians were the most eager to take part in the European integration processes. The Executive Council demanded that the nonexistent federal government “meet the European demands.” Slovenia presented itself as “the one republic” that wanted to “better stay abreast of the shifts in Europe” – ostensibly a commendable thing. The upper echelons of Slovene politics began speaking of “our way into Europe.” As the situation in Yugoslavia became further aggravated, with relations between Slovenia and Serbia becoming particularly strained, Slobodan Milošević lashed out against “those” who wanted to enter Europe as lackeys, who tried to ingratiate themselves with Europe and in the process made a mockery of their own state and its institutions. How accurate Milošević’s choice of the word *lackeys* really was would only become apparent in the years still to come. Nevertheless, he was unfair to his Slovene colleagues. They certainly did not *wish* or *want* to “enter Europe as lackeys.” On behalf of the broadest Slovene political organization, the Socialist Alliance of Working People, an offended Jože Smole repudiated Milošević’s words. At the same time, it was the Socialist Alliance of Working People under Smole’s leadership that formulated the alternative “a European future or a future of poverty” and regretted that “Yugoslavia” had not yet fathomed the necessity of acceding to Europe and “participating in it as an equal partner.”

Naturally, the Slovenes were not keen on “a future of poverty.” Who would be? A rosy future, however, came with the demand that “we tear down our fences and get rid of our peculiarities that have distanced us from the world and led us into crisis.” Socialism became a “peculiarity” that had estranged Slovenia from “the world.” Clearly, this kind of rhetoric only meant that the political leadership had renounced one world and opted for another. The Slovene assembly followed the perspective thus outlined and announced that “we want a full-fledged inclusion in Europe.” After the “battle” for political pluralism had been conceptually won in Slovenia, “Europe” became the central topic. The Slovenes had discovered their (our) European identity.

Of course, the aspirations for integration into Europe were not limited to Slovenia. This was the goal of all those political forces in the common Yugoslav state that wanted to wiggle out of socialism. Because, to become part of the European integration process, certain preconditions had to be met, and these included no less than carrying out systemic political and economic changes. Whoever wanted to join Europe had to accept this. On the other hand, it frequently happened that those desirous of such systemic changes advocated integrating into Europe, so that these changes would then be demanded by the higher European authority, which was above the political will of the Yugoslav political forces and, ultimately, the people. In order to “join Europe,” Yugoslavia would have to renounce independent domestic and foreign policies. In order to be included in the European integration processes and survive the “fierce competition

on the common market” it would have to do away with the “remnants of consensus economics.” Formulated positively: it would have to open its market to European products, allow foreign investment, and implement a free market economy in full. Compared to this, adapting to European standardization was a mere technicality. The then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Budimir Lončar, explained what this meant for Yugoslavia’s foreign policy in an address to the Yugoslav youth: Yugoslavia overemphasized and glorified the non-aligned dimension of its foreign policy, he said, thereby neglecting “the trends of integration with the developed world.”

To catch up with the developed world, the management of a factory in Leskovac, Serbia, for instance, demanded a transition to “European working hours,” which would help with the “natural selection” of the work force (since workers could no longer run a farm after the end of their shift). The Business Consultation Association took a more refined approach, organizing a meeting between the highest representatives of the Slovene republic and the consulting firm Price Waterhouse on reform of the public administration in order to “familiarize the Slovene architects of social reform with the mentality prevalent in the developed world, a mentality we too shall have to develop.” Price Waterhouse made the most of the opportunity and quickly began selling its expert studies. American businessmen came to impart their wisdom. Yugoslav-born entrepreneurs from abroad were invited to Belgrade. There they were addressed by the President of the Chamber of Commerce of Yugoslavia, who mentioned the bad experiences would-be foreign investors had had in the past, when “the system... worked in favor of mediocrity, hindering competition.” But the current economic reform, he assured them, meant “our economic system [would be] completely market-oriented.” The process of deregulation was radical. The number of legislative acts was cut back by 70 percent. The OECD delivered a favorable opinion on the new Yugoslav regulations concerning foreign investment. It estimated that “liberalization related to foreign investments would ‘speed up the transformation of the Yugoslav economy into a market economy,’ which importantly warrants the success of Yugoslav reforms.” The US administration was also willing to support the new “reform” Yugoslav government, and American bankers offered money for “development.” Negotiations with the IMF got underway, in which the Yugoslav side was surely not dictating any conditions. When the May 1<sup>st</sup> issue of *Delo* was printed with a red cover page, this was rather a reflection of the tradition than the political spirit of the time. The year marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first celebration of 1 May.

Around the globe, some things were the same as they are today. The United States shot down two Libyan fighter aircraft and then vetoed the UN Security Council’s condemnation of said act. US troops intervened in Panama. The European Communion resisted the invasion of American hormone-enriched food on the European market. At the beginning of the year, Israelis were killing one Palestinian a day; toward the end of the year, Israeli repression began to escalate. The Soviet Union withdrew its troops from Afghanistan, upon which the American President Ronald Reagan and the Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto pledged not to allow the President of Afghanistan Najibullah to remain in power. What followed was the Islamic terrorist “freedom fighters” attacks on Kabul, which grew into a full-fledged military offensive. While the United States asserted their will worldwide either by deploying their own troops or employing armed terrorist organizations, they pressured the Soviet Union to stop supporting Nicaragua on the grounds that it had no business getting involved there.

The legacy of Reagan’s terms in office was “America’s world leadership.” Bush the 1<sup>st</sup> embraced this political orientation with both hands. Concerned about the “solidity of the allied defensive line,” his State Department Secretary James Baker quickly went on a European tour to strengthen NATO, despite the fact that the Soviet Union was withdrawing its submarines from the West and Gorbachev had begun to substantially cut both troops and the armaments back. The Soviet Union also unilaterally reduced its nuclear arsenal and proposed negotiations on further disarmament. Western leaders rejected the opportunity to ease both tensions and the arms race. Great Britain and the United States took a stand against the Federal Republic of Germany, which opposed the modernization of short-range ballistic missiles in Europe. Efforts to limit chemical and nuclear arms and warfare led nowhere. The global elite traced out the “path for the 1990s” in Davos, Switzerland. The United States opposed cancelling the debt of developing countries. One of the rare brighter points on the horizon came when British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the mythical mother of neoliberalism, opened a global conference in London on the quickly thinning protective ozone layer, and also supported the cause. Unfortunately, this was the one aspect in which the liberal fundamentalists and extremists (that today rule the world – a world from which Slovenia is no longer separated by any fences or peculiarities) —chose not to follow her lead.

So what happened in the six months leading up to the opening of the *Yugoslav Documents ’89* exhibition in Sarajevo? What can we read on the front pages of the newspapers that serve as part of its reenactment?

The message could hardly be clearer: Yugoslavia was falling apart, and the world around it was drastically changing. The conflicts in Yugoslavia had grown to the point where no political or social force could productively resolve them any longer. These conflicts had grown so acute because the political organizations that should have been solving them were in reality creating them. In the world at large, a radical redistribution of power was occurring at an accelerated pace. The Cold War saw its final, liberal offensive. The opponent was already beaten; all that was left was to totally annihilate it. New forms of domination took shape, and with it new forms of dependence.

The big question that poses itself then is this: Why didn’t the Sarajevo exhibition register any of this turmoil and havoc, the agony of the one side and the drunken triumphalism of the other (*vae victis!*)? Why didn’t it react to that? Why isn’t this incorporated into the exhibition, why didn’t the show try to intervene in these events? In part, these questions may be answered by art history and critique. What I would like to point out here is something different.

We shouldn’t wonder too much at the curators and artists staging the last Yugoslav exhibition in Sarajevo in 1989. At the time, nobody fully understood what was going on. Not living in the Third World, where the Cold War was bloody, we tended to view it as a metaphor. But it *was* a war, a war to the bitter end and the extermination of the opponent. We underestimated the relentless and merciless resolve the liberals had brought, from the end of World War I onwards, in their opposition to any kind of alternative to capitalism . (If today capitalism is collapsing into a degenerate predatory economics, this is not due to any opposition to the system, but rather to the fact it has overreached itself.) We underestimated the gravity of the events, and how far-reaching their consequences would be. Just as we renounced socialism with unbearable ease, we accepted liberalism with equally unbearable naivety. Liberalism is attractive because

it liberates the worst in humans. Liberalism makes one feel good because even a person with no conviction can become a convinced liberal. Liberalism is pleasing for and by virtue of the simplicity of the solutions it offers to the problems of this world. For liberalism, even common sense is almost dialectic.

Slovene politicians responded to serious problems with liberal platitudes about the creative individual, whose hands should not be tied by any arbitration, about the right to be different, about the need for the individual to be at the center of the new system, about competition, free enterprise, and market economy, where economy is separate from politics. All of this may sound well and good but means nothing, because it is entirely divested of any specificity, taken out of concrete context, and separated from any reflection on power relations. Such platitudes managed nonetheless to persuade, because everyone could project their own desires in and onto them. Separating economy from politics is tantamount to falling below the level of modern thought; it disables political thinking. The modern world is built on the intersection between politics and economy. In the world of today, we cannot productively think about either politics or economy unless we think about them in conjunction. And if we give up thinking, all we have left is faith. Not even faith in the theological sense, but in the liberal sense: faith in the free and creative individual and in the rationality of the market. There is no need then to worry our pretty little heads with society, politics, the state, and the common good.

Just like those in power, the opposition responded to serious social and political problems with liberal platitudes. I think there were quite a few of us involved back then who harbored the illusion that, if we progressed into a liberal democracy, we would manage to preserve all the good we had got from socialism, and add to that some liberties, glamour, and sovereignty as consumers. Needless to say, things did not play out that way. We opened the floodgates to predation and the plunder of national wealth (still going strong), to the rule of (at best) mediocrities who only stand out for their unscrupulousness, to the political dispossession of the people, to dictates from foreign centers of power, to the impoverishment of a majority of the population, to demoralization and a lost future. We did not think about these things, they never even occurred to us; we were too busy talking and talking and being activists to even notice. At least the Sarajevo exhibition had the decency to remain silent. Now, however, it is time to start thinking about what we talked about back then, and about what the Sarajevo exhibition kept ever so quiet about.