

That which soils the nation's body: discriminatory discourse of Slovenian academics on the Romany, foreigners and women

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Abstract

The historical nexus of Central Europe can be said to be crucially informed by a specific type of *blut-und-boden* ideologies of collective, national selves: in Slovenia, the history of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its demise following WWI left in their wake the mythology of the heroic national emergence from the “prison of nations”, the centrality of nation-building along “linguistic” lines, and a persistent public discourse on endangered national purity. This variant of the ideology of autochthony seems not only to permeate the public space, but also to persistently and coercively slant the basic, pre-theoretical stance in much of what is supposed to be the analytical discourse of local academics in the social sciences and historiography. The ideology of autochthony is based in the belief that cultural formations – nations, languages, cultural practices – do and must be based in some kind of pseudo-biological reality. This primordialist reification is so deeply ingrained that, on the one hand, a purely analytical stance is deemed immoral, unpopular and dangerous. On the other hand, in order to accommodate the dictates of autochthony, the very analytical apparatus of social science is bent towards domestication of meanings. These coercive traits combine in the public speech and writing of academics to produce a distinctly discriminatory discourse that is rarely if ever recognised as such by the public addressed. This article analyses some instances of such academic comportment.

KEYWORDS: autochthony, racist discourse, Romany, xenophobia, misogyny, homophobia

Racism – a “true social phenomenon” – inscribes itself in practices (forms of violence, contempt, intolerance, humiliation and exploitation), in discourses and representations which are so many intellectual elaborations of the phantasm of prophylaxis or segregation (the need to purify the social body, to preserve “one’s own” or “our” identity from all forms of mixing, interbreeding or invasion) and which are articulated around stigmata of otherness (name, skin colour, religious practices).

Etienne Balibar

Introduction: the coercive force of autochthony

Initially, we would like to make use of a recent proposition that Slovenian post-socialism can be viewed in terms of comparison with post-colony especially as regards the ‘anatomy of the ideology of collective self, and corresponding memory’ (Šumi 2011). The main shared symptom is the ideology of autochthony, the belief in an uncontaminated, pseudo-biological national essence that, in places like post-socialist Slovenia, manifests itself in the official history of gradual and growing national autonomy since the liberation from the “prison of nations” of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918 until national independence in 1992 on the one hand, and purportedly in a historically much older, but likewise gradually growing spiritual essence of Slovenianess, “Slovenian national consciousness”, that is postulated as existing before any variant of Slovenian spoken languages began its path towards standardisation with the Protestant movement and its politically subversive Bible translation project in late 16th century. The formation of the ideology of autochthony in any post-colony can be seen as a direct consequence of the colonial intervention that homogenised the colonised population into a single, undifferentiated social class. Upon emancipation, this class-turned-nation has little choice but to enforce its uniformity through a nationalist ideology, standardise a language, and expand the ideology of autochthony into a variant of perverted exclusivism which, in turn, inevitably relies on normalised racism and blood-and-soil pseudo-biological understanding of its own progeny and continuity (cf. Rotar 2007).

All manners of reductionism are needed in order to keep the ideology of autochthony alive and functional. As it is crucial to incessantly re-affirm the difference between *Us* and *non-Us*, one of the key reductions targets the collective memory in all its forms, including the official national history, and the scientist social science production on the nation. National history is subject to incessant retrospective pruning of all and everyone who was not “Us” and “Ours.” The effort is indispensable in drawing the moral boundaries of the present national community that is persistently seen as “endangered”, “vanishing”, “dying out” (cf. Kneževič-Hočevar 2004; 1011; Pušnik 2010), having its language and culture “corrupted”, primarily because of mixed marriages, immigrants, etc. Typically for the ideology of autochthony (cf. Janko Spreizer 2004; 2006), this discourse collapses the meanings of cultural, linguistic, historical, population entities into a single, (pseudo)biological one. Nation-builder academics are especially concerned with the problem of mixed marriages as they are:

pictured as morally problematic, since the national in these cases begins to connote the moral – and such theories suggest that to marry a Slovene is mo-

rally more appropriate than to marry an Austrian/German/Italian/Argentinean – while mixed marriages are characterised as factors of “coercive or silent assimilation” that have a denationalising character (Pušnik 2010: 11).

As a general rule, a person can be versed in the Slovenian language and cultural knowledge, but cannot be accepted as a Slovenian unless proven to be of “Slovenian origin”. Conversely, not being proficient in Slovenian cultural codes, but of Slovenian origin, makes a person a Slovenian (cf. Šumi 2000; 2004; 2011). Racist and xenophobic attitudes are thus indispensable, and entirely normalised, through the concern for this ever “endangered” and “dying nation”, as are, inevitably, accompanying discourses of, notably, misogyny and homophobia.

From the point of view of social cohesion, the production of social meaning, and the anatomy of social functioning, the Slovenian *Gemeinschaft* (community) with its pseudo-colonial history is constantly under pressure of the forces of social levelling, the obsessive rhetoric of the communal self, and the prominence of person-to-person relations that prevent it from diversifying into a modern, imagined national community to which it nevertheless, formally, aspires. Of central interest here is the way that the producers in the academia, who should, by definition, be the critical actors of social mirroring, are coerced into compliance with the ideology of autochthony, and how they internalise, and externalise it. The consequences will be addressed in the conclusions; first, through three examples below, we shall attempt to discern the contours of this comportment.

The Other inside: Romany

During the previous decade, there have been several public outbursts of both mob and state racism against the Romany in Slovenia. Frequent incidents involved armed mobs preventing Romany families from taking possession of the homes they bought in various villages; public protests against the state “tolerance” and “pampering” the Romany; instances of segregating Romany children in public schools; and instances of interpersonal violence against Romany persons (cf. Šumi & Josipovič, 2006; Janko Spreizer, 2009). Things escalated to the boiling point in 2006 with the so-called Ambrus incident¹ that even the New York Times thought worth reporting on in no less than five consecutive articles.² What developed into a long

¹ On 29 October 2006, the Strojans, a Romany family, were expelled from their land and moved to a detention centre in Postojna. A family of around 30 people, among them 14 children, was displaced on the demand of the local villagers of Ambrus. This happened as a consequence of the supposedly intolerable conflicts between Romany and the villagers of Ambrus, and with the support of the police and the then Minister of Internal Affairs and the then Prime Minister who were quick to accommodate the villagers’ unlawful demands. In two consecutive episodes, the villagers, who organised themselves into vigilante guards, even inspected, unobstructed, the police vehicles to make sure that no Romany were transported back into their county.

² Nicholas Wood published these articles between 7 October and 13 November 2006. The titles are: ‘Roma family’s forced move raises rights issue in Slovenia.’ <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/07/world/europe/07iht-gypsy.3427824.html>; ‘Roma family returns home, under Slovenian police escort.’ <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/01/world/europe/01iht-gypsy.3747589.html>; ‘Slovene villagers turn back Roma seeking to go home.’ <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/26/world/europe/26iht-gypsy.3675074.html>; ‘Roma family’s move raises rights questions.’ <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/06/world/europe/06iht-gypsy.3420285.html>; ‘Hounding of Gypsies Contradicts Slovenia’s Image.’ <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/13/world/europe/13slovenia.html?scp=5&sq=Slovenia%20Roma&st=cse>.

series of state and police capitulations under the pressure of mobs, the unlawful relocation of an extended Romany family, the Strojans, from their home to a guarded location, and their equally unlawful permanent removal from their legally owned land, even as the then President of the Republic personally pleaded with the non-Romany locals on the Strojans' behalf was, ironically, triggered by an act of violence between two non-Romany, whereby the homeless perpetrator lived in a Romany settlement. Not many local academics were able to call these developments with its proper name, i.e. as 'ethnoracial domination' (Wacquant 1997) or simply as *racism*. A month after the forced relocation of the Strojans, few media outlets started to paint the grim picture in its true colours,³ or were willing to publish the views of anthropologists and other social scientists who were finally able to publicly analyse the forced relocation and the violent acts of the locals and the state as an escalation of racism (cf. Šumi & Josipovič 2006; Dedić & Kogovšek 2006).

On the very day the relocation of the Strojans became a fact, 29 November 2006, the national TV network hosted an eminent assembly of Slovenian academics in prime evening time to hold a debate. This somewhat unaware demonstration of the discourse of power and control (cf. Richardson 2006: 79–82) showcased ideological entrapment with the reification of culture, the logic of 'differential racism' (Taguieff, in Balibar 1991), and the impenetrable position of 'racial domination' (Wacquant 1997) disguised in cultural racist wording. To put it in Bourdiean (1994: 66) terms, the TV debate was a prime example of a lingual exchange, which is in fact an economic exchange, 'established within a particular symbolic relation of power between a producer, endowed with certain linguistic capital and a consumer (or a market), and which is capable of procuring ... symbolic profit.'

In this sense, utterances are considered signs of wealth and signs of authority, intended to be believed and obeyed. Among the guests in the studio, there were no experts in Romany studies, much less any Romany persons.⁴ The main issue as presented by the host of the debate was whether, given the changes in the Slovenian society from independence on, one could truly characterise the forcible removal of the Strojans family and the reaction of the mobs as racist. The host wished the guests to reflect on the views of a handful of researchers, the then Slovenian ombudsman for human rights, the then Commissioner of the Council of Europe for Human Rights and some activists who reacted strongly, pointing out that the forced relocation of the Strojans was a case of racism, discrimination and violation of human rights, and therefore the end of state legalism. The guests in the studio unanimously agreed that racism is too strong a word, that things are more complex than that, starting with the irritable problem of politically correct ethnic names. The most senior and distinguished among the guests, France Bučar, explained:

³ For instance the contribution of journalist Ranka Ivelja: Grdi, umazani, zli ali zakaj je težko biti Rom: Cigani/Romi v antropološkem ogledalu [Ugly, filthy, mean, or, why is it difficult to be Romany: Gypsies/Romany in an anthropological mirror]. *Dnevnik*, 18 November.

⁴ The guests were: Vesna Vuk Godina, lecturer in cultural and social anthropology; Edvard Kovač, professor of ethics; Alenka Šelih, professor of law; Marjan Šturm, representative of the Union of Slovenian Organisations in Austria. The distinguished guest was France Bučar, Partisan of the Liberation front during WWII, professor emeritus of law, Speaker of the Parliament before independence and MP after independence, and an exemplary public moral authority.

I feel irritated by the fact that we avoid the term Gypsy ... Gypsy is a term ... it does not remind of ... for instance, nigger (*zamorc*) is highly offensive nowadays. ... But Prešeren [a Slovenian romanticist poet of 19th century] did not consider it strange to say nigger (*zamorc*). Today, it can't be nigger any more, and that's it. Today it is Black (*črnc*). In America, it can't even be Black anymore, but has to be Afro-American. Here it is again ... we want to *change an objective condition in the world*. No? Gypsies are Gypsies, no matter what sort they are! (emphases added).

After his authoritarian choice to label Romany as Gypsies,⁵ Bučar continued with the clarification of the problem:

The question of status of the Gypsies is not only a question of legal regulation, but also a question of a comprehensive social regulation, to arrange conditions for inclusion of this community into civil life. Because *they are nomads by nature, and do not recognise legal order, right, and the problem is how to include them in legal order; how to civilise them. Of course, if we civilise them then they are no longer what they are*. That's one thing. *Now, on the other hand, to say that any racism has been triggered in Slovenia, that's bluffing. It is a result of sensationalism* (emphases added).

Reducing the lifestyle of all Romany to naturalised nomadism is a display of racialised notions of sedentarism as culturally superior (cf. McVeigh 1999), and imagining the Romany as uncivilised peoples here echoes the tropes from Gypsy studies from the WWII Germany (cf. Willems 1997). Other participants in the debate avoided the question of racism, but instead dwelled on *multiculturalism*. It was the diagnosis of an anthropologist, Vesna Godina, that 'Slovenians view themselves as a monocultural society, and they hardly tolerate differences,' ostensibly a given that the Slovenian politics, sadly, ignored. She agreed with Bučar in that talking about racism was not entirely objective, and that there was also sensationalism at work, but concluded:

Now, however, we hear from abroad, that they all, that of course they have the right to go home, which is all nice and well, but what I want to say is that this is not a matter of rights [to return home], it is a question of *whether it is possible to exercise this right in reality*, this is what I want to say, and

⁵ Obviously, the term *Gypsy* is not necessarily racist per se, but this statement represents the appropriated symbolic power of naming. Several Gypsy groups in Slovenia call themselves Romi, Sinti and Cigani, whereas the majority of Romany activists insist that the politically correct term is Rom, pl. Romi (Romany). Also, Gypsies is not a label exclusively for Roma and Sinti, as Bučar proposed in his explanation; many diverse groups are denominated by these heteronyms. Furthermore, anthropological analysis showed that these terms are dynamic, and depend on situation and territorial belonging (Piasere 1985; Williams 1984; Marushiakova & Popov 2007). There are authors who propose other denominations, for instance Judith Okely (1983) suggests the name 'Traveller-Gypsies', etc. However, one needs to be aware that in Slovenian implicit social knowledge (Van de Port 1998: 97; cf. Janko Spreizer 2002:103), the term Gypsy is often used as racialist term, with pejorative connotations. Several Slovenian vocabularies and encyclopaedias (cf. Janko Spreizer 2002: 52) explicitly interpret the term Gypsy with reference to *blackness, criminal behavior, disorder, filthiness, membership in gangs, and poverty*.

it's now obvious that because – I am sorry, because of the behaviour of the majority population, it is no longer possible to do so. Now, in this sense, the behaviour of the majority population *could be legally questionable* (emphases added).

The question of racism was then transposed to that of culture difference. Having described himself as 'a person who deals with questions of basic culture or basic ethical attitudes,' Edvard Kovač saw the conflicts in the case of the Strojans as a "culture problem", and as a new challenge of a "cultural encounter." The main problem was that Romany "traditional clan family" is vanishing:

The traditional family, the clan family, which we know from books, from the history of the Gypsy or Romany community, no matter how we name them, is slowly deteriorating. We see that the head of the family no longer possesses that powerful moral authority within the family, the clan family, and can't establish order. We used to, we know, come to an agreement with them on something, and that was that and there were no problems. On the one hand, as we can see, this tradition or lore is crumbling, and on the other hand, they haven't become part of our world. In my opinion, anyhow, we are two different civilisations ... Of course we need some scope of imagination, some initiative, some good will and perhaps, and this is a paradoxical claim, this conflict, complication, was necessary for a new start at a level of culture encounter (emphases added).

Another problem exposed was the alleged Romany propensity to criminality. Replying to Bučar's comment to the effect that Romany ignore the law and legal order, Godina escaped into culturalism:

Is there a state where the laws are in force for all its citizens equally? ... I think we should be realistic. In every state laws are enforced differently – more for some people, less for others ... It is the same in our state. And I want to say, now, that to regulate multi-ethnic community means asking ourselves, who wrote the acts? What kind of acts and legal standards do we have? Whose status and legal standards do they reflect? Are the Romani statutes and legal standards included? *If they are not included, how can we then expect them to respect the law?* ... We need to ask ourselves about who writes the laws and what standards, cultural standards, were taken into consideration. *Laws are always written ethnically...* (emphases added).

Bučar proceeded to speculate that genetics was the reason for Romani criminality: 'Isn't this genetically dependent?' When Alenka Šelih categorically rejected the idea, Bučar agreed that the reasons must be social, and continued:

Yes, maybe just a comment on our moaning about our xenophobia, etc. *Xenophobia, or so-called xenophobia, has a certain function in the biological world, because it means protection in order to safeguard identity.* Without it, the world would lose itself in entropy. All of us would be a single united

mass. The point is in differentiation and differentiation is protected precisely by this safety valve against foreignness. Why does an organic system defend itself against a foreign body? Because of the fear of losing its own identity ... which is a particular problem in medicine, how can one prevent ... such a rejection? But I do not wish to come across as trying to equate individual organisms with social community, which is, sociologically speaking, a great sin and the other way round, but the fact remains, without this ... *Slovenians would simply not have been able to preserve themselves without this, in inverted commas, xenophobia*, they would simply melt with the German majority and it is precisely this feeling of our own identity that preserved us for what we are, and I think that this should be taken into account, with a pinch of salt (emphases added).

It can be said with Balibar (1991: 17–8) that Bučar's discourse reflects 'the need to purify the social body, to preserve "one's own" or "our" identity from all forms of mixing, interbreeding or invasion' which is, aside to the stigma of otherness and the many practices of exclusion and violence, one of the trademarks of racism. The above quote is thus an unmitigated autochthony speaking in its most earnest. However, interbreeding, and intermixing might present as a problem also in reversed racist optics: namely, why would somebody who is biologically "Us" want to present themselves as "Them"?

In 2007, Slovenia passed the Law on Romany Community that was long in coming, having been announced in the Constitution of 1992 (art.: 65): 'The status, and special rights of the Romany community that lives in Slovenia are defined by law'. In accordance with the law's stipulations, the counties and municipalities with a substantial Romany presence had to appoint Romany members into their councils. In 2009 in Novo Mesto, the local Romany community elected Dušica Balažek, a non-Romany woman married to a Romany man, an official court translator for Romany language, and a non-Romany born woman activist in Romany pre-school education. This greatly upset one Miran Komac, a political scientist who, according to media sources,⁶ directed an open letter to the media expressing his conviction that Balažek's candidacy was questionable as she has 'declared herself a member of the Romany community just in the nick of time before the elections'. Citing the opinion of the Constitutional Court from 1998 pertaining to two other legally recognised "autochthonous" national minorities in Slovenia, the Italians and Hungarians, Komac called for an urgent action of the Constitutional Court in the Balažek case, as its quoted opinion stated that special rights granted to the two minorities pertain only to 'members of autochthonous Italian and Hungarian national community and not to all persons declaring themselves thus', which, to Komac, leaves 'no doubt that it [the Constitutional Court] would decide similarly also in the case of the Romany community'. The difference between being a true "autochthonous" member, and declaring oneself as one, Komac is reported to describe as 'the core principle of national minority representation.'

⁶ Cf. Dragana Stanković: Ni romske krvi, a jo imajo za svojo [She is not of Romany blood, but they treat her as their own]. Dnevnik, 7 October 2006: http://www.dnevnik.si/tiskane_izdaje/dnevnik/1042301404.

Various media faithfully followed the dispute, and several exchanges in the comments sections of the electronic media ensued. Balažek herself contributed by saying that her decision to declare herself a Romany person ‘was personal ... and not political, as some would have it. True, Romany blood is not in my veins, but I grew up among them and cultivated a special relationship, and they accept and respect me.’ However, the same source continues, Komac stressed that belonging to a national community is not just a matter of an individual’s decision, but of the national community itself that counts the person into their numbers, and enters their name in among the voters. Balažek agreed: ‘The Romany treat me as one of their own.’

Some days later, Balažek, in a lengthy reply to a reader in Romany-based internet media *Romske novice*,⁷ shared the following:

Days ago, Dr Komac even went as far as offering a personal apology, as he had had erroneous information about me, although he did cause me, with his writing on my belonging to the Romany community, great moral damage that he cannot repair, but I do not look back, I am driven by the will to work and to help solve the Romany problem both as a councillor, and the person Duška Balažek.

While Balažek refrained from the ambition of clearing up the issue theoretically, Robert Ivanc, identifying himself as a ‘volunteer Romany assistant’, did not. Partaking in an exchange with another forum writer, Ivanc expressed his dismay at media reports on Balažek’s candidacy:

How can blood tests be a parameter of defining ethnic affiliation? All of this points to overtly racist practices that the media openly endorse ... There is nothing dubious about Mrs. Dušica Balažek living since her birth in a Romany settlement, her feeling of belonging is here evident. To speak about her as not being Romany by origin is a fascist form of racism. In a democratic society, such views on “blood” origin should not be an obstacle to candidacy of a person. Despite all that, Dr Komac presents it as such.

Komac responded with a cryptically demeaning,⁸ defence of his actions, and aggressively accusatory, if also somewhat confused contribution that nevertheless stated, after expressing his opinion on Ivanc’s ‘technique that serves to blanket ignorance and consists of substituting the arguments by lies, prevarication, and turning around the words’:

⁷ Bogdan Miklič: Za romsko svetnico izvolili Dušico Balažek [Dušica Balažek elected Romany councillor]. *Romske novice*, 1 October 2009, <http://staro.romskenovice.si/blog/?p=6461>.

⁸ For reasons that remain unclear, Komac accuses Ivanc of being a person with an assumed, false public identity, namely, as one obscuring an unknown female person. To this, Ivanc replies: ‘You tell me I am a liar! Do you know that such name-calling without proof is punishable by law in Slovenia? You are hinting that I have stolen my own identity and “effeminate” myself? Do you not know that these are explicit racisms of the worst kind?’ Despite this reprimand, more personal attacks followed. Readers’ comments to the Stanković article (ftn. 5): http://www.dnevnik.si/tiskane_izdaje/dnevnik/1042301404.

Only a perverse, sick mind can translate my doubts about the candidacy of a 'newly-made' Romany woman into a 'fascist form of racism', 'overt forms of racist practices', etc. Strong words are needed so that the author can consciously divert the reader from the true purpose of my interventions I have voiced my serious doubts about the forming of a 'special voters' register for the members of Romany nation without clear criteria⁹ (emphases added).

The exchange later on moved to the weekly Mladina where Ivanc expressed rather heart-felt objections to the fact that Komac and his team, employees of a public research institution, given the described public display of their "scientific" views and poorly defined project ambitions, won the national call for a project in 'building the social capital in the environs where Romany minority lives' with finances awarded in excess of 3.5 million euros from European Structural Funds through the national Ministry of Education.¹⁰ Komac's reply was again acerbic and extremely personal, denying Ivanc any competence in the subject matter, and refuting what he perceived as an insinuation that the result of the call was earmarked, but identified with 'those individuals who for decades long *invested unselfish efforts towards the amelioration of the situation of the Romany*, and precisely because of people like these, the life in many a Romany settlement changed for the better'¹¹ (emphases added).

With the absolute belief in blood and origin, not only is the discourse of radical difference produced, but also transposed into an attitude of patronising the Other who, never equal to Us, can only be benevolently "helped". These excerpts show that the primordialist "reification" of cultural phenomena, such as an "ethnic group", supersedes its unflattering definition within the abode of autochtonist ideologies. Rather than an epistemological error of commonsensical organisation of perspective, reification of cultural formations within autochthony is, even in the realm of local social science, a matter of core beliefs that behave akin to a religious dogma: to transgress them is immoral rather than non-scientific. Just as a Slovenian cannot be accepted as one unless by origin, so too a true Romany is only that who is Romany by blood.

Let us add in passing that the Slovenian legal system did not, to time, produce a valid definition of autochthony when it comes to the three legally protected minorities. Rather, the Constitutional Court delegated this task to these minorities themselves in the

⁹ This exchange, originally appearing in Romske novice and other media, was reproduced by Robert Ivanc in Readers' Comments in the daily electronic issue of Dnevnik under the Stanković article (ftn. 5). http://www.dnevnik.si/tiskane_izdaje/dnevnik/1042301404.

¹⁰ The Ministry of Education and Sport published its call on 6 June 2010, at: http://www.mss.gov.si/si/okroznice_razpisi_in_javna_narocila/javni_razpisi/?tx_t3javnirazpis_pi1%5Bshow_single%5D=1065. The results were published on 20 August 2010, see: http://www.mss.gov.si/si/okroznice_razpisi_in_javna_narocila/javni_razpisi/?tx_t3javnirazpis_pi1%5Bshow_single%5D=1086.

¹¹ Komac's printed letter to the editor appeared in Mladina of 6 April 2011. Ivanc's reply in the same weekly was delayed, but he reproduced it in online commentaries to: Bojan Rajšek: Regijska civilna iniciativa: Poročilo Amnesty International je zavajajoče in blati državo [Regional civil initiative: Amnesty International report is misleading and defames the state]. Delo, 17 May 2011. <http://www.delo.si/novice/slovenija/regijska-civilna-iniciativa-porocilo-amnesty-international-je-zavajajoce-in-blati-drzavo.html>.

cases of Italians and Hungarians, which are self-managing by the constitutional definition. The Romany case, however, evolved into a legal battle over autochthony between the Human Rights Ombudsman, the Government, and the Constitutional Court: the latter finally decided that only the political representatives in municipalities and counties where there is legally sufficient Romany presence among the population need be “autochthonous”, while the provisions of the Law on protection of Romany Community encompass all Romany citizens. The Constitutional Court annulled the original provision in the Law on Local Self-management that authorised the Government to decide what the criteria for autochthony are; however, their opinion did not provide them, nor did it decide on who should have done so, or how.¹²

The Other at the border: Italians

When Slovenia joined the EU in 2004, its real estate market opened unconditionally to all citizens of Member States of the EU.¹³ In early 2011, the Slovenian media were flooded by urgent appeals to save the Slovenian coastal region from an impending doom of “national erosion.” Journalists, civil initiatives, and panicked individuals identified the nature of the danger: namely, legions of Italians from across the border started to massively invest into buying Slovenian land, houses, and real estate in the coastal region, continued to work and pay taxes in Italy, refused to learn Slovenian language and to merge with the local population, and even demanded bilingual public signs, Slovenian and Italian. The data of the national Statistics Bureau confirmed that since 2005, the number of Italian citizens living in Slovenia increased by 65 percent: from ‘less than 400’ in 2005 to ‘almost 740 in the beginning of 2010,’ comprised of ‘predominantly men ... between 15 and 64 years of age.’¹⁴ Other statistics quoted 3,466 foreigners buying real estate in Slovenia between 2004 and 2010, most of them ‘(1198) British and Italians (980), and far behind them all

¹² In the Decision of the Constitutional Court no. U-I-176/08-10 from 27 October 2010 (*Official Gazette* 84/2010), it is stated that ‘Romany in Slovenia enjoy all rights as citizens, and all special rights in accord with the laws adopted on basis of Article 65 of the Constitution. The criterion of autochthonous settlement is only invoked in regard to the special right according to which the Roma have their representative in the county council that they themselves elect ... It follows from the legal materials pertaining to the endorsement of the Law on Local Self-management, and the opinion of the Government, that further study demonstrated that, because of diverse historical development of individual Roma communities on the territory of Slovenia, it is impossible to determine unified and concrete criteria to define this concept, and that consequently, informed definition or informed understanding delineates this concept as “traditional or historical settlement.” The link between the territory and the population, stipulated by the Law on Local Self-management ... had to be found in order to establish the political representation in county councils ... regardless of the culturological distinctiveness of the Romany as migrating peoples without their own state as their own territory.’ In this vein, the Constitutional Court both evaded the definition of autochthony and invoked the myth of Romany as migrants when describing the impossibility of such a definition. Electronic source at: <http://www.uradni-list.si/1/objava.jsp?urlid=201084&stevilka=4523>.

¹³ Pertinent documentation, the Accession Treaty with the EU, and related national legislation can be found at: http://www.mp.gov.si/si/delovna_podrocja/mednarodno_sodelovanje_in_mednarodna_pravna_pomoc/nakup_nepremicnin_s_strani_tujih_drzavljanov/.

¹⁴ Let us add that the population total in Slovenia is around two million. Maruša Opeka: Slovenski Kras je postal ‘spalnica’ Italijanov [The Slovenian Karst became the ‘bedroom’ for Italians]. *Demokracija*, 17 February 2011. <http://www.demokracija.si/v-fokusu/politika/5243-slovenski-kras-je-postal-rspalnica-italijanov>.

the others.¹⁵ However, official statistics were said to be misleading: in one of the villages, Lokev, which has 270 houses, the locals told the journalists that 80 houses are owned by Italians, ‘although the official statistics enumerate less than 20.’¹⁶

Even as the core of the problem was gradually exposed as one not so much of a hostile offensive, a subversive plan of the Italian state to push its northern border into Slovenian territory, or otherwise organised and purposeful Italianisation of the coastal region, but rather one of unscrupulous land sales, a real estate price bubble, and exploitation of agricultural lands for purposes of wild construction fever, the matter did not simmer down before xenophobic sentiment peaked, the mayors of local counties calling for the ‘development of our own autochthonism,’¹⁷ and a prominent academic voice was heard that coined the very definition of *national erosion*. In a highly sentimental contribution to the daily Delo’s Saturday supplement Sobotna priloga,¹⁸ philosopher Spomenka Hribar¹⁹ first explained the historic nature of peoplehood, the ethnically pure nation:

To simplify, we can say that (all!) peoples are represented by persons of one culture derived from its very own language and the territory where these people live (as a majority). And although of course without people who speak their own language and feel their belonging to their one nation, this nation as nation does not exist, it is also true that people remain – while the nations vanish. And it is so also today when not only there are peoples not yet formed as nations that are vanishing, but also nations, that is to say, certain distinct cultures. Nations are nations because of their culture, are therefore historic phenomena that either survive, or do not survive. *If we were to do genetic research, we would probably discover the offspring of Illyrians, Lombards and other peoples living among us as (“pure-blooded”) Slovenians*, but those peoples as peoples, as cultures of their own languages, are no more. If and when a national community loses (or whatever) its territory, and the people on this territory no longer speak their original language, then this nation on this territory vanishes. Or vanishes slowly – one day this becomes a whole new world! (emphases added).

¹⁵ Ofenziva Italijanov na kraški zemlji [The Italian offensive on Karst soil]. Nedeljski dnevnik, 22 February 2011. http://www.dnevnik.si/tiskane_izdaje/nedeljski/1042426136.

¹⁶ Sebastjan Ozmec: Bo Kras kmalu italijanski? [Will the Karst soon be Italian?]. Slovenske novice, 18 February 2011. <http://www.slovenskenovice.si/clanek/140807>.

¹⁷ Tina Čič: Na kocki sta zemlja in slovenstvo [The land and Slovenianess are at stake]. Primorske novice. Published on the site of the Karst [Civil Initiative Civilna iniciativa Kras]. <http://civilnainiciativakras.com/node/28>.

¹⁸ Spomenka Hribar: Primorska, kdo bo tebe ljubil? [Primorska, who shall love thee?]. Delo, Sobotna priloga, 26 February 2011. Published on the site of Karst Civil Initiative [Civilna iniciativa Kras]. <http://civilnainiciativakras.com/node/937>.

¹⁹ Spomenka Hribar, philosopher, sociologist, earned her national fame in the late 1980s with promoting the idea of “national reconciliation” (narodna sprava) concerning several thousand victims of extrajudicial killings of collaborators and members of the pro-Nazi Home Guard in the hands of the Communist regime after WWII. While not advocating in favour of collaboration, she called for the then regime to face and reveal this crime, and for the Slovenian nation, to forgive and interiorise the tragedy of fratricide. The reconciliation debate has substantially defined the political polarisation in Slovenia since 1992, the pro and contra views defining the difference between the political right and left. Together with her husband, the philosopher Tine Hribar, Spomenka Hribar widely enjoys the status of a national moral authority.

Following this indeed much simplified *theoretical* exposé, collapsing, as we said in the introduction, culture, language, territory, history, state and the nation in one single category of essentially biological continuity, the author states in no uncertain terms that buying real estate in Slovenia on the part of Italian citizens is in fact not spontaneous, but firmly and obviously ‘in the context of official Italian politics’. Not just that: Hribar’s key argument is that Italians are in fact fascists with undying pretensions towards Slovenian territory: ‘Italy did not go through defascistification, much less a catharsis! ... Their denial of their own culpability they pushed so far that an outright anecdotal “mistake” happened to them.’ This *mistake* happened – apparently to all 60 plus million Italians – in the form of an unidentified placard by unidentified authors in an unidentified space and time:

On the placard that invited people to a commemoration at the occasion of a “memorial day” for the “victims of foibe”^[20] there are clearly visible the soldiers shooting prisoners. The placard suggests it was [Yugoslav] partisans shooting Italian civilians. In fact, this is a photograph of Italians’ Slovenian prisoners ... Shooting them are of course Italian soldiers. If it were not for such a serious thing as shooting civilians, the whole Europe could laugh in the Italians’ faces! ... *This “mistake” is a symptom of Italian denial of their own culpability which, dangerously, makes possible the growth of new fascism, and expansion into our territory* (emphases added).

But, having decided to ‘leave the Italian culture to Italians,’ Hribar identifies the state of Slovenia not only as ‘our own state that we have authorised to safeguard the national integrity,’ but goes on to assert: ‘The state, its administration, has the duty to preserve the cultural identity and dignity of the nation.’ Regrettably, all Slovenian governments after independence were ‘pragmatic,’ ‘short-sighted’ rather than nationally minded, the local authorities ‘primitivist’ and ‘pragmatically nonchalant,’ especially in the coastal region that is, according to Hribar, the locus of special historical memory of Slovenianess that should be preserved.

²⁰ The term *foibe* pertains to the sinkholes common in Karst terrain that became the mass burial sites of extrajudicial killings after WWII in the coastal region. This being the sore point in Italian-Slovenian bilateral relations for decades, the joint Historical Commission was established in 1993, which (in a report issued a decade later) stated: ‘The liberation movement spread particularly among the Slovene population; the Italian population was held back by the fear of Slovenes assuming the leading role in the partisan movement, since their national claims were unacceptable to the majority of the Italian population. They were also deterred by the news of the killings of Italians in the autumn of 1943 in Istria where the Croatian liberation movement was active (the so-called “Istrian foibe”). The killings were motivated not only by national and social factors, but also by a wish to strike at the local ruling class; therefore, the majority of the Italians living in this area were concerned whether they would survive as a nation and whether their personal safety was in danger.’ After the war, ‘the population of Venezia Giulia in favour of Italy experienced Yugoslav occupation as the darkest moment in their history, due to the fact that in the areas of Trieste, Gorizia and Koper, it was accompanied by a wave of violence, manifested in the arrests of several thousands, mostly Italians, and also the Slovenes who opposed the Yugoslav communist political plan. Some of the arrested were released at intervals; the violence was further manifested in hundreds of summary executions – victims were mostly thrown into the Karst chasms (foibe) – and in the deportation of a great number of soldiers and civilians, who either wasted away or were killed during the deportation; in prisons and in the prisoner-of-war camps in various parts of Yugoslavia.’ <http://www.kozina.com/premik/poreng4.htm>.

These and the like problems are those that various civil initiatives are cautioning about. As to the problem of Italian “appropriation” of our territory, only the locals in the Primorska and Karst and their civil initiatives care, holding meetings, writing warnings, letters of protest, *but the authorities never respond! The authorities do not notice the territorial and national erosion of Karst and Primorska!* (emphases added).²¹

Territorial erosion, however, is to be understood also in geological and ecological terms that again collapse into the ethnonationalist agenda:

It is also the question of territorial erosion, the senseless construction in disregard of the karstic terrain. Spatial politics is in the hands of county elites who oftentimes *irresponsibly compose their urbanisation plans – saying it's about development. What kind of development is it, if you are selling your land, your habitus?* Those responsible for all these events minimise the problem or even *hide its true proportions and its effect on the ethnic composition of the border area* (emphases added).

Having thus provided a classic example of how blood and soil are one and the same thing, Hribar concludes with an urgent appeal to the state authorities to make use of Annex XIII of Accession Treaty to EU which determines a seven-year period after accession during which a Member State may implement restrictions to the principle of free flow of capital, in order to prevent purchases of real estate to foreigners, ‘as Denmark did against excess purchases of real estate of German citizens.’ This urging was flatly rejected by the Minister of Justice, Aleš Zalar, on 19 April 2011, stating that Slovenia has no basis for requesting a protection clause, has not requested one during the accession negotiations, and has its own legal means to properly manage its real estate, territorial and ownership matters.²² Characteristically for a community of autochthony, the whole issue rapidly waned from public and media interest following this statement, instead of addressing the underlying problem of ecology and the wild-market real-estate bubble in the coastal area. This would require realistic exposure and analysis of the problem, which (again) cannot be addressed (other than in the guise of an endangered national “essence”) because both are by definition immoral.

Hribar’s intervention illustrates yet another aspect of behaviour of the autochthony ideology: its linear, vectorised (cf. Rotar 2007; Kramberger 2007) understanding of the human past, and national histories, as not only a qualitative development, but also as suffused by absolute values that project backwards in time even as they are deemed sacrosanct in the present: thus, the Lombards of the first centuries A.D., and Illyrians of the 5th century B.C.,

²¹ The term national erosion, as well as previous mentions of the nation in Hribar’s cited wording, does not pertain to the state/nation, but to the body of nationals, ethnic Slovenians, and their national consciousness. The term *narod*, although a direct translation of Latin *natio*, means a people, not their political organisation in a state, or a state as political formation per se.

²² Zalar: Slovenija nima osnove za uveljavitev zaščitne klavzule [Zalar: Slovenia has no basis to implement the protection clause]. Primorske novice, 19 April 2011. <http://www.primorske.si/Slovenija-in-svet/Zalar--Slovenija-nima-osnove-za-uveljavitev-zascit.aspx>.

were either unconscious of the value of their peoplehood, or too primitive to possess one. As a consequence, the rather frightening notion that a few hundred Italian citizens, owners of real estate in Slovenia, are hostiles who should be prevented from settling in Slovenia due to the Italian fascist era and the atrocities of its army perpetrated on Slovenian territory is topped only by the likewise frightening notion that Slovenians, their doctrinal cultural and linguistic uniformity and uniqueness, and biological purity, are to be safeguarded by their own state of Slovenia, and its bureaucrats,²³ no less. Collapsing state and citizenship into peoplehood is not strictly constitutional even in Slovenia, although the Constitution itself, somewhat contradictorily, conflates citizenry with the Slovenian peoplehood to the extent that citizenry that are ethnic Slovenians, and non-citizens of presumed Slovenian origin, rather than the body of citizens, are population categories of special constitutional protection (Šumi & Toplak 2011).

The Other Half: women (and effeminate men)

Between October and December 2009, the bulletin of the Slovenian Bar Association *Pravnik* (Lawyer) published in its 3rd and 4th annual issue a supplement in two parts, entitled *Legal Order as Symbolic Order*, written by Boštjan M. Zupančič, professor of law and long-term judge at European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.²⁴ This lengthy treatise addresses all the themes that Zupančič persistently brings up in his numerous interviews, books, essays and contributions in the media: the phenomenon of chemical effeminacy of human (and other species') males due to endocrine disruptors in the ecosystem and the food chain. This no doubt alarming problem, according to Zupančič, resulted in massive, hormone imbalance induced effeminacy of numerous generations of human males since the mid-1940s.

Complicit and/or consequential, however, to this polluting (bio)chemical process is the all-prevalent pre-oedipalisation of society: since effeminate men cannot or will not act as the embodiment of the psychoanalytical (Feudian/Lacanian) Law in their role as fathers, the process of oedipalisation of boys is increasingly absent, which leads to the moral decay of society, and with it, the absence or suppression of the “feeling for justice” which is, according to Zupančič, the elusive, but essential quality of successful legal and judicial system wherein logic, knowledge, etc. do not suffice for the process of transubstantiation of legality into justice. Apparently, women are inherently incapable of attaining this feeling for justice, as was discovered by Lawrence Kohlberg,²⁵ says Zupančič:

²³ In Slovenian, *administration* is not a term pertaining to the current government (like in the US), but rather to the permanent bureaucratic body of the local variant of *civil servants*, i.e. the bureaucratic public service system of a state.

²⁴ Boštjan M. Zupančič studied law in Ljubljana, Harvard (US) and Montreal, and taught law in Ljubljana and various US universities. His term as a judge of the European Court started in 1998. A prolific writer, he is widely deemed one of the most prominent Slovenian intellectuals.

²⁵ Lawrence Kohlberg is famous for his psychological studies of moral development which, as his collaborator, and later critic, feminist and psychologist Carol Gilligan argued, were styled in the typical empiricist manner of post-WWII social science with its urgent explanatory ambitions and poorly recognised judgemental and biased pre-theoretical assumptions. For many of these producers in the social sciences, WWII with its barely intelligible record and monstrous consequences was the trigger of the moral imperative to produce explanatory and reparative thinking that resulted in grandiose, categoric and holistic theorising.

The European Convention explicitly demands that European judges possess, aside to professional excellence, certain moral qualities. In the time when the fathers of the Convention were only just conceptualising its text, it was not yet clear what Lawrence Kohlberg *discovered* later on. Kohlberg *discovered* different stages of moral autonomy, and, *very surprisingly, demonstrated also that in his post-conventional stages, women lag behind in their moral development*. This was contested by Gilligan, arguing that female variety of moral judgement is based more on empathy, compassion, etc.; however, Kohlberg's assertions are in full accord with Freud's who did not ascribe the feeling for justice to women (emphases added).

The problem therefore is present-day, historic coinciding of chemical emasculation agents with consequential/corroborative psychological effects of the failed installation of the Law in the process of socialisation:

The big question that Kohlberg did not have the ambition to answer is: how do the differences in the stages of moral development occur in people? *The subordinate question here is why women are not attributed with this feeling [for justice]. This subordinate question is interesting because the so-called process of oedipalisation in a female child unfolds without the trauma that a boy has to live through if he is, and does, in the end identify with the father. We should add here that it is anthropologically and in general proven that the oedipal triangle (father, mother, son) is universal. The effects of this basic psychodynamic the essence of which is in the prohibition of incest between mother and son, is analogous in any tribe of Papua New Guinea, and in "highly developed" Western societies (emphases added).*

The authoritative – and grossly misleading – pronouncement of the universality of oedipal situation in human societies across space and time notwithstanding, Zupančič, after explaining the castration trauma in a male infant which installs the Lacanian place d'exception that is in an adult (male) 'the foundation for any respect for anything,' points out the recurring errors in this process:

It is interesting to note that the so-called Superego does not spring from identification with the father, but the source of problems here is oftentimes the mother's father whose Superego (and all the rest of problems!) the mother transfers to her son ... *It is established that it is the mother's position in the triangle, that is, the question of how seriously she takes the father that decides on the father's Superego moral influence on the son. To put it differently, in societies wherein the wives do not take their husbands seriously, the formation of this moral DOS, the foundation to any kind of moral formation in later stages of development, is blocked.*

Following this audaciously, if unintentionally, humorous assertion of the husband's dependence on his wife's respect of him in view of rather complex and controversial ongoing developments and precision in psychoanalysis, Zupančič continues with a lengthy assessment of the ultimate reach of Lacan's theorising, noting that law was not one of his

interests, and consequently, that he fell short of upgrading his famous dictum of the unconscious ‘structured as language’ with any debate on moral judgement and justice. Luckily for Lacan, one could say, as it is, in turn, obvious to Zupančič that:

That which we observe massively today is that in the culture and civilisation, the process of oedipalisation failed. Because of this problem, there is in essence an epidemic of the so-called *pre-oedipality characterised by the fact that the pathological narcissist, or psychotic, remains in the dyad with (is spoiled by) the mother*, that is, fails to diverge from the primary identification with the mother and does not develop the secondary identification with the father who is the carrier of the moral norm ... Pre-oedipality is like a moth dancing around the flame and therefore breaks and transgresses the basic prohibition (incest), in order to prove to itself that the Law in fact is invalid (emphases added).

These and many other seething problems of human contemporaneity Zupančič addressed also, among other, in one of his recent books, naturally in a generously expanded version. Two reactions to this book are noteworthy: in the online publication Narobe, author Mihael Topolovec²⁶ shared his impressions that:

The perversity of all this “scientific inquisition” against effeminate men, emancipated women, and other “freaks” who will not abide to “naturally” determined boundaries of biological sex is in its seeming political correctness. Under the guise of scientific argumentation, the subject discussed is never explicated. The effeminate man is never once called a homosexual ... We are again witnessing a populist abuse of psychoanalytical discourse which is, as of late, a normal practice in spreading intolerance.

On a more light-hearted note, another reviewer of Zupančič’s book, Urban Vovk,²⁷ ventured to note that:

Many a reader will probably find it difficult to agree with, as need be said, quite generalising assertions about eunuch-making of men and their halved libidinal energy [as reasons why] there are no new symphonies or good novels, or radical scientific innovations, while social institutions everywhere are in recess. No less questionable is citing the number of Nobel Prizes that went to women, or to members of less testosterone-endowed oriental race ... Despite these reservations, let me conclude by wishing that the book would not prove prophetic in something else: namely, in preventing the author to publish it in a few years due to political incorrectness.

²⁶ Topolovec Mihael. 2010. Zastrupljena moškost: mačizem in homofobija v znanstveni preobleki [Poisoned manhood: machismo and homophobia in scientific guise]. Narobe, 30 March 2010. <http://www.narobe.si/stevilka-13/zastrupljena-moskost>.

²⁷ Urban Vovk. 2010. Pristop s pastmi [An approach with traps]. Pogledi.si, 16 June 2010. <http://www.pogledi.si/knjiga/pristop-s-pastmi>.

Conclusions

The fact that prominent Slovenian academics who are uniformly seen by the Slovenian public as not only top professionals in their respective academic fields, but as public moral authorities (France Bučar, Spomenka Hribar, Boštjan M. Zupančič), openly parade their discriminatory and prejudiced views obviously has a lot to do with the anatomy of the Slovenian post-colony (Šumi 2011): the status of a moral authority in such a community is reserved to those who do explicitly affirm the ideational perimeter of autochthony (even to the point of serving as 'legitimiser[s] of populist politics.') (Pušnik 2010: 21). Diagnostic here are the standpoints on issues that go, in any folk theory, as primordial, predetermined, natural, and are naturalised as givens outside the social world of humans, such as race, ethnicity, and gender. As Judith Butler (2007) put it, the categories of race and gender 'always work as background for one another, and they often find their most powerful articulation through one another.' While not mutually analogous, 'racial presumptions invariably underwrite the discourse on gender.' Within autochthony, the two categories are mutually entrapping: one cannot expel the Other without either disciplining the Other half within into corroborative silence, or into symbolic eviction into unproductiveness/irrelevance to the Us community. In other words, in autochthony, racial Othering cannot sidestep gender Othering, a relationship that underlies the aetiology, and structure of autochthonist ideology. This mutual entrapment produces the illegitimacy of analytical discourse: anyone and anything that criticises autochthony is by definition immoral.

In terms of the key question addressed here, namely, how is it that discriminatory "scientific" discourse is not only naturalised, but also a marker of a distinguished, authoritative academic persona, the ideology of autochthony perhaps unexpectedly reveals the locus of elasticity in its anatomy. The key observation here is that social analysis from any point of view outside the abode of autochthonist moral boundary is not, strictly speaking, denied its legitimacy, or even formal validation, in terms of privileged, scientific knowledge, but is deemed immoral by way of transgression of the community's essence (Pušnik 2010; Šumi 2011). Producers of analytical knowledge are therefore rarely disputed as being *wrong*, but are instead consistently presented as (hostile, disruptive) non-Us, and their views as irrelevant/hostile to the Us community. Because the Us community and its historical narrative are sacrosanct and unquestionable, autochthony allows for pluralism and relativism of precisely those assumptions that should be unquestionable within the humanist framework that the autochthony claims as its basis. In this manner, the victimised, tragic, underdog, endangered, vanishing post-colony discourse of the autochthonous Self is elevated into, and revealed as (perverted, upside down), supremacist racial exclusivism.

Ideologies, however, exert realistic, political consequences on the lives of real people. Since the doctrine of perverse pseudo-biological exclusivism is both legally and historiographically/ideologically enshrined in autochthony, taxpayers' money pours into its "scientific" reproduction of the ideology, thus effectively excommunicating social analysis: in this vein, parochial, peripheral, post-colony autochthony community acts as the precursor to metropolitan, global, universal perverse ideologies of hegemonic power (Šumi 2011; Wedel 2009). On a more personal level, however, this is not to say that all

producers in social science and historiography in Slovenia blindly adopt, and advocate these boundaries. While some are true believers, apologists and therefore eminent reproducers of this discourse (and some are not that blind, but just practical), as is apparently the case with the moral authorities under discussion here, many more are wary of openly challenging it. To say that this stance is merely opportunistic or submissive is to ignore the true power of autochthonist ideology and practice. Because it is communicated, and received as dogma, and because observing the dogma dictates the very conditions of life and career survival, the coercive nature of autochthony ideology can be metaphorically likened to oxygen in relation to animal life: it sustains life and makes it possible, but it also ultimately corrodes life to death: despite that, oxygen is not a choice. This brings us to our final reflection of the ideological perimeters of autochthony.

Calling for an ‘analytic of racial domination,’ Wacquant (2011; cf. 1997: 230) identified the five elementary forms of racial domination that the above-described cases all conveyed, and normalised into “scientific” truths, through the utterances of locally indisputably authoritative conveyors:

 categorisation (prejudice and stigma), discrimination (differential treatment based on imputed group membership), segregation (differential allocation in physical and social space), ghettoisation (the forced development of parallel institutions), and exclusionary violence (ranging from interpersonal intimidation and aggression, to lynching and pogroms, and climaxing with racial warfare and extermination).

In 2006, the Strojjan family was confronted with a particular profile of racial domination. The scholars at the round table discussion described above somehow missed the fact that they have contributed to the power relations of racial subordination: while they did not in principle agree with discrimination as a practice per se, they at the same time conceded that differential treatment was inevitable, thus suggesting that racial difference is real, a fact of life, a given that cannot be done away with, especially not by analysis. Some of them were aware that there was violent mob escalation under discussion that the police and the state did not curb, but censored themselves to diagnose, e.g. “legal questionability” rather than racist rioting. As a result, there was a unanimous agreement that Romany belong to a different historical “culture” or different civilisation, that they are, in terms of vectorised history, an anomaly in time and space: an escapist racist notion that was, years later, turned upside down by one “expert” who sought to disqualify, and deny the right to political engagement to, a Romany woman based on a strictly racial understanding of ethnicity, citing (under-defined) legal parameters of autochthony, and the underlying racist premise of “origins” as the unquestionable “truth,” while in fact, questioning and analysing these very legal parameters would be the proper job of a social scientist. While the 2006 round-table discussants masked the problems of ethnoracial domination into culture talk, Balažek’s case provoked public exposure of an open, reductive autochthonous blood racism masked in science and legality instead of calling both into analytical scrutiny. This paying-out of the same notion in two different senses testifies to how autochthony promotes the coercive forms of thinking, while Romany studies in Slovenia remain firmly in the grip of ‘the gypsy lumber room’ (Piasere 1994: 21; cf. Janko Spreizer 2004) of Slovenian Romology.

The case of “Italian invasion” used the meta-history of post-colony liberation as its unquestionable frame of reference, and transposed fascist wartime history and its historic agents, and a single incident of purportedly deliberately mistaken graphic depiction of this history, into an openly paranoid insinuation of orchestrated, hostile intents of private Italian citizens, backed by their state politics, in interpreting their legal right, and motivations, to buy real estate in Slovenia. The hostility-building trick here is obvious and classical and hardly calls for further comments except for the breath-taking fact that this propaganda was actually sold, and bought, as an authoritative scientific view. Equally obvious is the case of disqualification of women and “pre-Oedipal men” wrapped in populist reinterpretation of 1950s-styled psychological testing and speculations into “scientific discoveries,” topped with the conjuring trick of presenting a very vulgarised variety of a time-honoured theoretical speculation on the process of genotypical socialisation as interfered with by a supra-human, chemical agents which are, purportedly, all on their own capable of essentially dehumanising living people.

Wacquant (1997: 222) further commented years ago on the problem of the uncontrolled conflation of social and sociological understandings of race: ‘I propose that the persistent “quest of origins” betrays the tenacious hold of the *logic of the trial* which impels investigators to seek out victims and culprits rather than identify mechanisms’ (original emphases).

This simple epistemological demand, alas, is not a message universally received in a community of autochthony such as Slovenia. Rather, the “logic of trial” as a distinguished *modus operandi*, and “quest of origins” as the singular preoccupation, are the organising, coercive principles of legalistic, historiographical, and “scientifist” gaze on the communal Self. What this gaze discerns are entities of blood and origin and essence that are understood not only as absolutely, biologically natural in a way that both pre-dates and precludes human intervention: because of their extra-human nature, they condition the very survival. Within the latter, there is no boundary between the biological and the cultural, because the two are seen as, ultimately, conflated in such a way that the former is a given, and the second the proper consciousness of this given. The notions to the effect that biological continuities in human societies are themselves socially constructed are seen as eminently non-scientific because of their inherent immorality: they deny the reality of the community’s essence. This ideational constellation of autochthony supersedes the classical notions of primordialism in terms of commonsensical folk theory: rather, its symptoms reveal what we would name a form of ideological creationism that builds on an assembly of traits generative of the post-colonial symptomatology.

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POVZETEK

Historično vozlišče Srednje Evrope je mogoče gledati kot prostor, ki ga kritično informirajo specifične rodingrudovske ideologije kolektivnega, nacionalnega sebstva: zgodovina Avstro-Ogrske in njen razpad po prvi svetovni vojni sta v Sloveniji za seboj pustila mitologizacije junaške osvoboditve iz "ječe narodov", povzdigovanje "jezikovnega" narodotvorja in vztrajne javne govore o venomer ogroženi narodovi čistosti. Ta različica ideologije avtohtonizma ne preveva le javnega prostora, temveč vztrajno in prisilno ukrivlja tudi bazični, predteoretski pogled velikega dela tistega, kar bi moralo biti analitski diskurz v lokalni akademiji v družboslovju in zgodovinopisju. Ideologija avtohtonizma temelji v verjetju, da kulturne formacije – nacija, jezik, kulturne prakse – morajo temeljiti v nekažni psevdobiološki realiteti. Tovrstno primordialiistično postvarjenje je po eni strani tako ukoreninjeno, da je analitska drža dojeta kot amoralna, nepopularna in nevarna. Na drugi strani se celoten analitski aparat družboslovja prisilno ukrivlja tako, da skozi udomačevanje pomenov sledi diktatu avtohtonizma. Rezultat sta akademski javni govor in pisanje, ki sta izrazito diskriminatorna, vendar kot taka zelo redko razpoznanata. Članek analizira nekaj primerov takega akademskega zadržanja.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: avtohtonizem, rasistični govor, Romi, ksenofobija, mizoginija, homofobija

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