

a historical-geographical method. Kaarle Krohn's publication on The Kalevala (five-part *Kalevalastudien*, 1926–1928) should be considered as a reference book not just for Lönnrot's original. It was Krohn who accurately captured the etiological and magical character of Finnish runes (*Magische Unsprungrunen der Finnen*, 1923). It would not be possible to carry out research on The Kalevala without these publications.

The presumed orality merits more attention since The Kalevala was performed as “loud” singing, and not “quiet” reading. Single chapters in The Kalevala are considered as runes which means a “song” relating to a single thematic plot. The Finnish term “runo” means “song” or “poem”. Obviously this is a case of hypothetical assumptions on the performance of runes by singers based on relatively scarce knowledge or comparison with other ethnic groups. Furthermore it is not possible for us today to precisely imagine a performance of The Kalevala or other epics, presumably the whole could not have been presented in one single performance due to the limitations of human memory.

In order to assist memory the so called Kalevala verse was used. Only professional or semi-professional singers would have been able to manage this rhythmic speech. I would like to point out that a very thought-provoking study was carried out by Anna-Leena Siikala into the singing, customs and physical practices of the singers (*Body, Performance and Agency in Kalevala Rune-Singing*, in: *Oral Tradition*, 15/2, 2000: 255–278).

It is also important to note that Elias Lönnrot brings up the serious scientific problem of the textualisation of oral tradition. This is also connected to contextualisation based on the impact of nationhood and nationalism. In short it is a question of transforming oral poetry and a heroic epic into a textual discourse on nationalism and representing orality in the written form.

On the whole the new edition of The Kalevala graphically illustrates its influence on Finnish culture in creating a Finnish-Ugric ethnic identity. Last but not least, the heroic epic Kalevala, undoubtedly fulfils the essential desiderata necessary to be considered, according to

Goethe's interpretation, as a supreme work of world literature.

Bohuslav Šalanda

**Dennis Smith v Ljubljani: s prispevki Avgusta Lešnika, Marka Kržana in Polone Fijavž / Dennis Smith in Ljubljana: with contributions by Avgust Lešnik, Marko Kržan and Polona Fijavž. Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani, 2014, 154 pages**

Dennis Smith develops a brilliant panoramic of the current financial crisis in the European Union which is far from over, arguing what he calls “humiliation” of all the countries – without exception – that form part of the EU. With the collaboration of Avgust Lešnik, Marko Kržan and Polona Fijavž, Smith also clarifies what is the role of historical sociologists in this important fact.

In the lecture given by him in Ljubljana in 2014; past, present and future of the EU are treated carefully. In Smith's words, the future of this crisis is being decided on the margins and the only recipe to the European Intellectuals who wants to take part in this process of decision-making is to face the European truth that is “lived” on the peripheries (mainly Greece and Ireland). He reminds us that, the Humiliation does not stem from our cultural incompatibility, it is spreading across the EU, in its core and on the borders, attached to the only true motor of the current progressive demise; the global dictate of the capital.

To understand better the situation of Europe and its financial crisis, Smith arises two main metaphors based in children's stories. The first one is the well known “Hansel and Gretel”. It is a story of a wicked witch who deceives and betrays two hapless infants. By “witch” he means bankers and financiers and instead of “hapless infants” he sees employers, workers, consumers and small investors. Hansel and Gretel pushed the witch into her over and made their escape. In this point, Smith argues that in reality, the bankers and the financiers have largely survived, with

a few bruises, mostly temporary. The second story is “The three little pigs”, in this case the pigs are countries such as Portugal, Spain, Greece and Ireland. Ravenous wolves in the global market destroyed their badly built dwellings. Smith is right saying; “these predators huffed and puffed and blew the pigs”.

The author talks about the struggles in Europe comparing the writers Jürgen Habermas and Ulrich Beck, who have both put their minds in this topic. In Beck’s thought, we baldly assert that what is good for Germany’s economy is right for the European economy as a whole and beyond. The austerity programmes have only intensified the economic crisis in Europe, leading to the opposite of what was intended. In short, Beck talks about the plague of German “euro-nationalism”. In this case, Habermas is not agreeing and prefer to talk about “executive federalism”. He thinks that political austerity in Europe is gradually becoming less brutal and hierarchical. He places great hopes on the learning being done by Europe’s political elites, as their constitutional lawyers educate them to be more cosmopolitan-minded. Nevertheless, both authors agree in that we need to factor two crucial agents of change: governments, who are able to deploy the massive military, judicial and tax-gathering power to the state and big business with enormous financial, technological and persuasive characteristics.

Smith highlights two keys to understand the development of the European Union. The first one is the triad that links together the state, big business and ordinary citizens, but the question is; which kind of citizenship will have priority in the programmes of government, will it be what might be called “market citizenship” or will be “social citizenship”? The second key is the relationship between European Union and United States. The present crisis and the future of the European Union are a mirror of the American Civil War and the development of the United States. In both cases there is a framework of governance struggling to contain two opposite forms of political economy, there is a clash between property rights and human rights, there is hypocrisy, corruption, and some fanaticism as well.

Dennis Smith narrates the “European story” as two sequences; the first one is established between 1939–89 and is defined by catharsis, genesis and sclerosis. “Catharsis” refers to the period between 1939 and 1945 where three different interests and ideologies (German Nazism, Russo-Chinese communism and American capitalist democracy) killed at least 60 million people, probably half of them from Europe. The war and its aftermath make a deep impact in the European population and after 1940 people were ready to build peace rather than violence. Coming up next, the author sees the “Genesis”, United States planted its tanks on west European land and turned Europe’s bloody warriors chiefs into servile courtiers, as Norbert Elias’s description, state formation in early modern Europe began with the establishment of strong centralizing royal courts. In 1951 The Coal and Steel Community led the European Community and therefore becomes a West European club giving its members a field of action that excluded ruthless economic protectionism. During these years the club’s membership doubled. Going back to the story, in 1945 the highpoint of America pride and European submission arrived with a US-led victory subsequently reinforced by French and British humiliation in Dien Bien Phu, Algeria and Suez between 1954 and 1962. The tables changed when the US was unable to enforce its will in Vietnam, and had to accept the delight of many European intellectuals. Ultimately the period of “Sclerosis”, during 1970s Europeans desired the peace at all costs and preferred to buy their way out of trouble rather than change their ways. As a result, they lost their flexibility and capacity to adapt. After that time, Brussels was knocked by two massive events; the “big bang” (1986), which opened up the City of London to American finance houses, developing the creation of a vast reservoir of public and private borrowing capacity, fuelling and funding the ambitious of politicians and consumers and second of all, the collapse of the Soviet Union, which meant the end of the Gold war and the re-unification of Germany.

The second sequence would be since 1989 and in this case the author splits it in hubris, nemesis and crisis. After 1989, business lobbyists

were promoting packages for providing health-care education, management services and other functions in order to help the vacuum left. In the other hand, the EU set itself a very ambitious target: to be a disciplined and dynamic business-friendly economy; to be a post-humiliation polity for citizens, not just for governments; to build appropriate structures and systems to achieve these objectives; and to do all this while expanding its memberships, bringing in as many as possible of the countries “released” by the crumbling of the “socialist bloc”, in Smith’s eyes we are talking about “Hubris”. The author follows his historical sequence with “Nemesis” in which the aftermath of the American-led wars plus Obama’s lack of track record and the collapse of Lehman brothers were major background factors that contributed to the loss of financial confidence in September 2008, triggering the precipitate collapse of the vast international mountain of debt and the Eurozone crisis. “Crisis” is the last step of this route; banks on both sides of the Atlantic stopped lending to each other, taking massive amounts of liquidity out of the system. In consequence, many mortgages were foreclosed and national governments stepped in where they could to recapitalize the banks, increasing the own national debts. The cuts in public sector were imminent. The creation of a large amount of unemployment, especially in young people was the main cause of many protests. They have experienced being victims of humiliation.

In the wake of the crisis, a sharp distinction in EU between two types of political economy was clear, one of them operating in the “market” (Germany and UK) and another one oriented to serve “the people” (Greece and Italy). To understand better this period Smith designs one more classification in which as a chessboard he describes the struggles and collaborative relationships in the EU (after 2008) through 4 types of elites; “High priests” which represent the European Commission; “Puritans” or in other words, ordo-liberals mainly in Frankfurt and Berlin; “Cavaliers” formed by political clientelism in countries such as Italy, Romania and Hungary; and “Buccaneers” with neo-liberals in London. His point of view is clear, four political

struggles are currently under way within the EU, in this point Smith raises the following question; so where that leave us? In his opinion, the EU is stuck in a rut due to the visceral conflict and pragmatic cooperation between elites. He argues that, the continuing low level of trust between member states inhibits serious movement towards internal reforms that would sharply increase economic growth, reduce high unemployment, improve wage levels and restore lost ground in the realm of social rights. The most effective way forward would be to overcome the structural incongruities between the EU’s two political economies, one focussed on the rights of property in the market place, the other promising to protect human rights within a democratic polity.

Prof. Smith continues his speech now talking about America. Two bank panics (1857 and 2008) were instigated by the banks themselves, trying to protect their capital in the wake of a speculative boom fed by easy credit. This situation led to a sharpening of socio-political decisions, a spasm of uncertainty, as implications for the existing balance of power were considered. The United States added twenty-one new states in the seventy years after 1791, increasing the number of “voices” in the council. As in the Europe’s case, the author uses the same characters but now applied in antebellum America; now “High priests” are southern planter elites; the “Puritans” would be northern abolitionists; the “Cavaliers” represented by fire-eaters or in other words, lawyers with military background; and “Buccaneers” defined by northern big business.

In conclusion, Dennis Smith proposes three possible future scenarios. The first option in which the EU will become an arena of resentment and revenge that could lead to a process of secession and fragmentation. Smith point out that in the hypothetical case that SYRIZA may enter government a very sizeable minority would be ready to consider leaving the Eurozone. We can add the fact that in January 2015, the head of SYRIZA, Alexis Tsipras, reached the prime minister position being the most voted party. Meanwhile the UK, between a third and half of MPs in the Conservative party would support Britain

leaving the EU as well. This is not that far from reality if popular hostility to immigrants became so great that throughout Europe voters demand a return to strong national border controls. The second scenario argues that the wake of austerity business lobbyists in national capitalists and in Brussels will press hard to ease the way for corporate capital to invest heavily in services traditionally provided by governments in the public sector. At the same time, they are likely to lobby for a lowering of standards (less bureaucracy), which still mean lower costs and higher profits but worse services and a dilution of social rights. The last forecast says that citizens may be brought to recognize that big business is acquiring increasing influence and control over their lives while their own influence through the workings of national parliamentary democracy is being gradually reduced. The author sees this idea as a serious challenge but a positive move in the direction of reducing the structural contradictions between big government and big business that are a major cause of sclerosis within the European economy.

In the second chapter of the book, the main concept switches from European Crisis to Historical Sociology. Avgust Lešnik performs a short view of Dennis Smith and his role in this field of study. Smith is considered one of the most renowned names of historical sociology and one of its founders. His work is an indispensable reference for scientists and researchers but, what is historical sociology for him? Smith believes that, this discipline tries to make sense of the past (and present) by investigating how societies work and change. He defines the interest of historical sociologists as exploration and investigation of the mechanisms that could be subject to change in certain societies or their reproduction.

Smith develops a classification with two waves in historical sociology. The first wave began in the mid-eighteenth century in Britain and France. It was driven by the need to make sense of contemporary political events. This wave finally crashed against the wall of totalitarianism in the late 1920s (Montesquieu, Hume, Tocqueville, Marx, Durkheim and Weber). Smith divides the second wave in three phases;

the first one, before the mid-1960s, was built by the battle with totalitarianism (Talcott Parson and T. H. Marshall); the second one, from 1960 to 1980, is a period that contributed to protest movements for student rights, Black power, the end to the Vietnam War, inequality and resistance movements and women's rights (Marc Bloch, Norbert Elias, Barrington Moore, E. P. Thompson, Tilly and Skocpol); and the last phase that began in the mid-1970s and is developed under the impact of the fragmentation of the stable bi-polar world of the Cold War (Anderson and Wallerstein).

After this classification Smith emphasize that historical sociologists have the chance to give their fellow citizens knowledge and skills that may help them to assess competing views about what is "possible" or "impossible". In brief, historical sociology can be a positive force for democratic citizenship.

The book ends with two interviews done by Marko Kržan and Polona Fijavž in which Dennis Smith accentuates, one more time, the concept of humiliation in the European Union. In his opinion, the politics of the EU over the next decade are almost going to be influenced by the humiliating experiences that have been endured by all populations. He points out two main factors regarding this "humiliating experiences". The first one is about the widespread political effects of powerful emotions such as anger, fear and sorrow, these emotions can conclude in aggressive measures by different groups. The second factor says that the population that have become cynical about Brussels may be vulnerable to ethno-nationalist programmes proclaimed by demagogic politicians.

In his speech, Smith remarks that humiliation is a shared emotion and we are all experiencing it, we need collectively analyze what is happening to us to begin to talk about the problem openly. Smith argues that, this is not a problem that Brussels can solve for us; this is a problem that we have to solve for ourselves. In the last question of Polona Fijavž, Smith underscores the obligations of all populations saying that people have to be careful if they do not take themselves strong, dynamic, civilized, democratic and with a sense of purpose again. If

they do not remember that they are about something more than economics, more than individual profit. He ends up by reminding that we are about creating communities that are committed to making life worth living for all their members.

To conclude this review, I consider this short book as a brilliant and concentrates description of the current situation of the European Union explaining the past and present and even giving future scenarios of what can be the EU in a few years. The author plays all over the text with metaphors that make easier and understandable for the reader to follow his arguments. His clear view shows us a problematic situation (humiliation) where in his opinion all countries have been affected and therefore they play an essential role in order to solve it. We can perceive how Smith invites the lector to make a personal reflexion in order to understand the gravity of the situation. We are being humiliated and this is the time to do something in respect, something to revive the initial essence of the European Union.

*Esther Martos*

**Jacques Le Goff: *Must We Divide History Into Periods?* Columbia University Press, 2015, 184 pages**

Many basic aspects of human culture are closely related to the fact that people have to live their lives in time. In fact, the very act of colonizing time is amongst the foundations of all modern civilizations and societies. We are struggling to make sense of the endless time-flow, that we have no choice but to inhabit, in order to interpret the changes and continuities, and to attach meanings and interpretations to events in our shared and private pasts. Dividing time and history into different periods is amongst the most crucial activities in this sense-making effort.

Eminent French historian Jacques Le Goff (1924–2014) dedicated his 2013 essay precisely to the topic of periodization of history. This text had to become the very last work that he was able to prepare for publication himself. It

is not very long, but highly inspirational, neat and sharp, filled with expertise, and not far from being even provocative. The essay is composed of seven chapters and aims to answer a simple but important question: “Is history really divided into parts?”

In order to provide his answer, Le Goff starts with ancient periodizations of the Old Testament and early Christianity. In his approach to periodization of history, Saint Augustine uses six ages of human individual development, from infancy to the old age. According to Le Goff, the world of the Middle Ages is therefore filled with pessimism, stemming from the phrase *mundus senescit* – world is getting old. In this worldview, there was no place for any explicit notion of progress, until the middle of 18th century. However, Le Goff dedicates much of his effort to show that there were some signs of the “progressivist” interpretation of historical development already present in the Middle Ages.

In the second chapter, Le Goff discusses the birth of the concept of “Middle Ages” in the 14th century. It was used to delimit certain distance from the previous age, which was seen as somehow a “middle” epoch between the idealized antiquity and a new era, which had yet to come. Any historical periodization, the author reminds us, is very often ideological, as it provides an interpretation and evaluation of the historical development. Periodization is inherently artificial and provisional, for it also changes itself in time.

The need for historical periodization, in Le Goff’s perspective, results from the establishment of historical education at schools and universities, and he provides a review of these processes in the third chapter. Surprisingly, teaching history is quite a late achievement, and the subject of history was not widely taught until the end of 18th century. Then, during the 19th century, Jules Michelet’s work gave birth to the contemporary conception of the Middle Ages as a dark age, defined in contrast with the later period of “Renaissance”, being (supposedly) the time of growing enlightenment, reason and humanism.

From the fourth chapter onwards, Le Goff proceeds to one specific aim of the essay,