

NATION AS A PROBLEM OR A SOLUTION & HISTORICAL REVISIONISM IN SERBIA

Youth Center CK13 (Novi Sad)

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In Serbia there have been, during the last 18 years, a series of political and social excesses based on nationality and mutual intolerance, which have significantly defined the present living environment, especially for young people. The atmosphere of tolerance of cultural, national and religious diversity, typical for Vojvodina, changed drastically, directly contributing to the growing number of ethnic, political and religious incidents. All these changes had a significant influence on the young population in Serbia on the level of an uncritical adoption of nationalistic tendencies and patterns of violent behavior. Today in Serbia, the young generation is increasingly liable to adopting different kind of retrograde ideologies, being raised in times of wars, hatred and poverty, where prejudices have become prevalent.

The project *Nation as Problem or Solution* was started with the purpose of finding answers to questions about the role of nations and nationalism in contemporary Europe, especially in the post-Yugoslav region and to see what insight they can offer, especially with regard to a young generation raised in an environment marked by the domination of prejudices, national exclusivity and intolerance.

The project examines in different ways questions of nations, nationalism, their definitions and historical development, their role in contemporary Serbian society and perspectives concerning modern globalization processes, as well as the perception of young people today and how concepts of nations and nationalism influence the formation of their opinions, behavior and actions.

Research will be carried out through a series of public debates, individual and group studies, and in cooperation with high-school students who will be given questionnaires, and whose answers will be used as key examples for initiating discussions.

Historical Revisionism in Serbia

We are presently witnessing drastic changes in the public discourse of different historical and political topics, mostly as a result of the identity crisis in contemporary Serbia. The problem of re-validation and reinterpretation of the close and distant Past is becoming one of the most important problems. It is a well known fact that the needs of political elites have been dominant in the phenomena of the re-validation of history, because they try to separate »useful« from »useless« history. This is very important because of another well known fact, that whoever controls the Present controls the Past, and can create the Future. There is a parallel existence of at least two different versions of the same historical events, the rehabilitation of *četnik's* movement and that of the followers of Dimitrije Ljotić and Milan Nedić. The revision of historical schoolbooks is only a part of this phenomena, and because of that detail research with a scientific objectivity is really important and needed.

The project *Historical Revisionism in Serbia* is searching for answers to questions dealing with the role of revisionist tendencies in the modern Serbian society, its influence on the general development of Serbia, its ideological meaning and influence on a new and different interpretation, which is mostly populist and fallacious, in the making of a »new Serbian man«, that mostly influences young generations.

The project takes a multidisciplinary approach to the research of the historical revisionist phenomena, its definitions, precedents in other countries, its manifestations, concrete examples of the phenomena and its role in contemporary Serbian society, as well as its influences on the younger generations and their opinions.

Research projects include experts in different topics, including young not yet affirmed researchers, a multidisciplinary approach on two general topics, a series of public discussions, seminar, the publication of research results, and a series of promotions in different cities in Vojvodina and Serbia