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Nationality and religion

For me very important question is relation between nationality and religion. I don't want to discuss about historical and theoretical relationship! I want to show dangerous when religion can be used as tool for nationalism.

Un article: "What is a nation", Renan wrote about so-called "State religion" which comes from analyze of Athens. The religion of Athens was cult of Athens itself. Those who refused to practice it were not Athenians. Religion was the equivalent as military service or national flag.

Nowadays the situation is perfectly clear, since masses no longer have any uniform belief. Everyone believes and practice religion in his own way according to his capacities and wishes. State religion has caused to exist; and a man can be an Frenchman, an Englishman, an German, and at the same time they are Catholic, Protestant or a Jew.

Religion has become a subject to be discussed by the individuals according to his conscience. Nations don't divide into Catholic and Protestants.

Despite that, Yugoslav experience shows that in current situation we can met so-called State religion, as basic for nationalism! Part of Serbian Church was tool of nationalists for nationality idea of Great Serbia.

It means that religion is not individual right, that religion is part of nationalism, it is closed society, it is not democratic society and in that society valid motto is: "You are related to us, you belong to us".

This approach make a very strong limitations for individual freedom.

Nationality is characteristic of individuals! The essence of nationality we must proceed not from the nation of individual. We must use ourselves what the nation aspect of individual person is good and what determine his belongings to participation in nation.

What lies behind individualistic idea of nationality? It is language! In the past all national struggles are language struggles, that they are waged about language.

What is specifically "national" lies in language.

In learning the language, the child absorbs a way of thinking and the expression of thought.

But our case in Yugoslavia with several nations who speak the same language. Croats and Serbs use the same language. The national difference between two of them is religion. One part of people belong to the Orthodox Church and another one to Catholic Church.

During the past, fight between those two nationalities was caused by the language. All of them want to become separate in terms of language from each other.

So, Croats, to present their nationality, have introduced new language, with which they have become different than Serbian. New language has been treated as important nationality attribute. Serbian understood that well.

Related with it, one joke was created: "Serbs decided to accept new Croatian language. Why? So Croats don't have their own language."

During the period of language nationalization, one important characteristic was created. Today, people from Bosnia speak Bosnian, people from Montenegro speak Montenegrin language.

I believe beyond nationality lie language. But, also religion and other political and historical factors are involved in creation of nations, with same language. Americans and British; Danish and Norway; Serbs and Montenegrin!

I wonder what will happen with nations in future if we have in mind dominant position of English language in the world? Should national feelings become lower or some people will belong to more than one nations?

In any case, language theory of nation beginning is very close with my personal approach in explanation of any problems in reality.

Nationalism is usually followed by stereotype opinion about other nations. If national separation appears, after that usually other nations are seen as enemies. That is experience from decomposition of Yugoslavia.

Those stereotypes cause decomposition. We are good, other is bad. Nationalistic opinion is always the same, whatever or whenever it happens.

Stereotypes are arguments, which are accepted without any arguments. They have not been discussed, there is no any opinion about that, and it is unthinkable item.

So, nationalistic stereotypes become way for presentation of national opinion, and intellectuals are those who spread ideas. Similar stereotypes are presented in well known Memorandum of Serbian academy of science.

There is no nationalism without stereotypes about others, because without those stereotypes there are no stereotypes about us. Only with “Wilde Arnaut”, “Crafty Moslem”, “Bloodthirsty Bulgarian”, “Twofaced Croatian”, “Quarrelsome Serb”, we can believe we are good, upright, and democratic. But we are always in dangerous from the other.

Analyze of stereotypes at the territory of Yugoslavia shown that in last hundred years those stereotypes are the same, unchanged; always are spread by intellectuals, politically motivated and cause a wars.

Main problem resulted by stereotype way of thinking is making a closed circle around the “nation” and “enemies”.

Nationalistic belief that only personal identity as autochthony, personal national and its past and history, and belief all other is enemies as nations without past, result with dividedness in two groups: “WE” and “THEY” which make going out from circle impossible. “Spirit nationalism” to avoid nationalism.

I wanted to tell that whenever in public are presented stereotypes of other nations, from them comes nationalism and conflict. At the same way conflict in Yugoslavia arisen.

History of nation beginning at the Yugoslav area shows that not only inside, authentic interests of people who live at this territory define their national position, but also interests of great power. Conflict between West and East always influenced this territory. Ideas of national expansion have been encouraged. So, at one small area we have ambitions for big national interests. According to this, there is idea of Great Croatia, Great Serbia, Great Bulgaria, Great Albania, If all those ambitions should be satisfies, we would need whole Europe territory. This is constant potential tension.

Communist party of Yugoslavia succeeds to push out this ideas. But whenever any conflict in Yugoslavia had started, it was visible as enormous problem. As a result of this, in Yugoslavia was present large discussions about allocations of income. Everyone exploited everyone and everyone was exploited. I got task publicly from Parliament to prove that Montenegro is more exploitive than other, from Slovenian! I told I don't know how to calculate it with data I have, because development funds go from Slovenia to Montenegro, not in opposite direction.

“But Slovenians sell their products here and take a money from us”. I have to admit I didn’t understand point. Later I saw people became nationalists, or all economics discussion are reflection of our national conflicts and national pressures.

Feeling of economic exploitation from the other became part of national conscience of all Yugoslav nationalities. Slovenians had contributed to Federal Budget and Fund for Undeveloped the most of all. On the other side, undeveloped regions believed price control exposed their economic position. For example, price control of electricity and raw materials in Bosnia and Herzegovina; aluminum and steel in Montenegro, tobacco in Macedonia, coal in Kosovo, agricultural products in Vojvodina.

Memorandum of Serbian Academy of Science presented idea of economic backwardness and exploitation of Serbia, which is publicly printed and published in newsletters from Belgrade.

It is obviously that any our problem couldn’t be solved in economic system from that period, system without market principles and economy. In that system, everyone was exploited.

I would remind on Hayek’s words:” Market is mechanism which transfer enemy into friend”.

I believe if economic system can not be reproduced, there are no any ideas, which can save it from decomposition.

For me it has been still understandable how many communists have become nationalists!

But, I have to ask myself one question: “Are current events in Montenegro and relations with Serbia, continuation of nationalistic wave and finishing the nationalistic decomposition actual Yugoslavia.

If this is history, is history repeats, what can be done in Balkan which can change it.

National questions haven’t been answered. Not even questions of Serbs, Macedonians, Albanians,...

What is going to happened in 2020. when Albanians become the most numerous nation at Balkan, with 8,2 millions.

Do we can see end of the nationalism in Balkan? Is it barrel of gunpowder (bomb) in Europe forever?

Have past been continued: each nation has its own protector and as a result of conflict between East and West nationalism is stronger and stronger?

It seems to me that nationalism is destiny of this territory from two reasons:

1. Undeveloped institutional infrastructures
2. Unsolved interest of bog countries, which claim their selves as great sponsors and donors of some nations.

Experience from Yugoslav decomposition and from new Yugoslav countries, which has been decomposited because nationalism, opens important question:

1. should we build state of nations or state of citizens?

What is base for souverenity: souverenity of nations or souverenity of individuals?

Example from Croatia, Bosnia, FR Yugoslavia and now Macedonia, answers on this question.

In my answer on this question I will use only one criteria: economic efficiency. Is higher economic efficiency characteristic of “Country of nations” or “Country of citizens”?

We should start from basic definition of individuals, citizen and nation.

For a citizen is exactly known who is he, which rights and obligation he has, how to practice it. If we analyze state of nation, we will see that in state we don't enter individually, as citizens, but trough groups, minority or majority people. In state of national individualism is replaced by collectivism.

Instead communists collectivism becomes nationalistic collectivisms.

Every collectivism needs an leader. Leader has his own people and that is the way for creation of elite. Interests of leader and elite become interests of nation. All of them tell:” This is in nation's interest” but basically, it is in interest of small group of people, nationals elite. Is it good example situation in Croatia? Tomorrow we will see that in Serbia when Milosevic fall. Democracy, or elections can not solve this problem. Democracy itself isn't guaranty of individual freedom.

Many dictators got the power trough democratic elections – for example Hitler. If I understand well functioning of democratic society on the West, deficiency of

political democracy is corrected by economic efficiency. Every politics has to be approved every day at the market. Market organize free elections every day. The greatest power and souverenity belongs to individuals, to consumers. "Consumer is the King".

But, consumer can be a King only in State of citizens. Why he can not be the same in State of nations.

In "State of nations" all main economic decisions are made by the state and state administration. State always claim that every single decision is in interest of nation. In socialism, it was in interest of working force.

In such system the most efficient are individuals who are the biggest nationalists. That is the reason why they claim: "This is in interest of Serbian nation, not in Croatian, in interest of Montenegrin nation. It is system of nationalism. Result of this is low economic efficiency.

If the base of society is souverenity of consumers, than the most successful will be those individuals and companies which provide the best results in market competition; or; the biggest success will make those for whom consumers vote, buying their products.

So, in State of nation loyalty to society is important.

In State of citizens important is confidence from market.

Based on that, in society have been formed social stratums and social structures which decide the most in Society.

Also, here is important difference how people get to the top:

- a) through State-bureaucratic system, or
- b) through market competition.

Which of these two souverenities is economic efficiently and which one provide higher living standards to nation?

If I understand well American, British and westeuropian experience than it is clear that for every nation the best system is system which developed democracy on market capitalism, which separated as well as possible economy from politics.

But, no one definitions or democracy, no nations or market can not guarantee individual freedom.

Ludwig von Mises says: "Any Constitution or Laws of Human Rights can not create freedom, they can only protect it from political power, protect that freedom which is given to individuals by competition, market economy, freedom based on property rights.

From this I will make conclusion:

"All countries from former Yugoslavia, Soviet Union, which used their independency to create national societies and national economies – don't have any economic future. Until base of those new states doesn't become replaced from "Nation" to "Citizens" and "Consumers", there won't be any economic and democracy prosperity. That is the most risky point in transition in those countries.