

Divided God Project: Summary

Divided God Project (as I expected) was a good opportunity to meet new people, to visit different cities, learn something new about different cultures (more than religions) and different ways of thinking. And I think that project had more or less justified all of my expectations.

My knowledge about general topic was pretty good, but it simply can't be enough. I have learned something new in theoretical level, especially during exchange in Istanbul. From the other side, movie making was totally new field for me, so for one of the biggest benefits from this project I find new knowledge about filming. But the most interesting I find exchanging of ideas and simple conversations with lots of different people. It's quite interesting to see way of thinking, logic and argumentation of different people from different cultural backgrounds on the one single field, area of religion, religiousness, cultures and other social topics. I will especially remember few discussions in Ljubljana between participants of project: I am not thinking about last evening discussion, which was senseless from the beginning and which was, in many ways, complete bullshit for me, even if the many people think opposite. I am thinking more on several non-official discussions, which were held in relaxed atmosphere and developed in very interesting ways, and also have lasted for some hours.

It was interesting to see different levels of knowledge about general topic: some of the people did not know so much about it, some of them knew something, some of them lots of it, but its interesting to notice how most of them knows (or can see) only one side of it. I think that this project was definitely very educating for those people. For me it was mostly confirmation of the things, which I already knew before, and filling with new and interesting details.

I did not become believer after this project (and I think that was not a intention of project!). Quite opposite, I am convinced that there is no much need for religion, especially in its rigid forms, in contemporary world. There is so many other interesting things, world itself is one interesting thing, and as you learn more and more about it, you find out that religious and national boundaries are irrelevant and stupid. And it will be the best for this same world to overcome them as soon as possible!

I am not sure what to say actually about concept of "intercultural dialogue" from the project description. If this phrase means dialogue between cultures, mutual influences and improving of cultures in general, their progress toward some new, richer and better forms, than I can support it. And I think that this kind of projects can play important role in this process (on micro level). On the other hand, I can't accept point of view that "everything is equally good", no matter because something like that was motto of this project also. Simply, I can't accept fact that any point of view, any cultural or national or religious tradition, no matter how rigid, primitive, stupid or un-human, is the same, equally good and should be respected and not criticized. That concept, which is, I believe, called "multiculturalism", is essentially wrong because it hides many traps. It can be good excuse for racism and concept of "not doing nothing about some wrong thing". I mean, if it's true that "everything is equally good", than burning of widows together with their husband bodies in India is just one nice and exotic custom and we should not do anything to prevent it. Because, who are we to brake someone else's "cultural tradition"? If everything is equally good, than it's the same to be racist and antiracist, to be fascist and antifascist and so on...

There were lots of good and not so good lectures and good and not so good excursions during project exchanges. Lectures of two sociologists from Istanbul, lecture from Rajko Muršič in Ljubljana and discussion in Münz Salon in Berlin (even if it was too long and became exhausting at the end) were the best “theoretical inputs” in the project. Lectures of Želimir Žilnik are always special, so they also have been very interesting. Filming activities have been very interesting experience, especially in Mostar, and later in Ljubljana it was interesting to follow the work of director and editor from Serbian team: both of this work-processes were new, interesting and useful for me.

Socializing during exchanges was more than satisfying: maybe participants from ex-Yugoslavia had one advantage over the participants from Germany and Turkey because they can easily (or easier) understand each other. Also it was interesting to watch how the people from different countries are facing their prejudices about others (if they had prejudices, and some of them definitely had some prejudices). So, I am not mentioning prejudices together with sentence “participants from ex-Yugoslavia” without reason...

New knowledge, new experiences, visits to new and different places and so were very important parts of this project, but most important was new contacts, connections with new people. I am mentioning this “human factor” because I find future cooperation as crucial result of entire project. Namely, this project will be worthless if everything stays only on “good experiences and new knowledge” and some “NGO tourism”. Simply, project biggest value is possibility to make new contacts, to born new ideas and then to use new connections for their implementation. Divided God, from my point of view, should be repeated all the time in some other shapes, in different areas and with new persons, because projects like this one make real intercultural dialogue possible. Only in this way phrases like “connecting people”, “cultural cooperation”, “dialogue”, “new ideas”, “exchanging experiences”... can have good practical results and can overcome level of “good god-fearing wishes”.

Everything previously said, worth twice more for societies commonly seen as “gun-powder barrels of Europe” and for people who are coming from those societies. So I can conclude in very simple way: participating in this project was one of the best things, which happened to me in the last 5 or I don’t know how many years. Hopefully, I will not wait another five or I don’t know how many years for another opportunity like this one...

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