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Title: "Serbian Mother" Before the Court of Nation: Milan Nedić and Rehabilitation of Collaboration in Postsocialist Serbia

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Issue: 2-3/2018

Citation style: Milivoj Bešlin. "'Serbian Mother" Before the Court of Nation: Milan Nedić and Rehabilitation of Collaboration in Postsocialist Serbia". LIMESplus 2-3:9-22.

<https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=842179>

"SERBIAN MOTHER" BEFORE THE COURT OF NATION: MILAN NEDIĆ AND REHABILITATION OF COLLABORATION IN POSTSOCIALIST SERBIA

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The paper presents a synthesized overview of the theory and practice of revisionist policies in the dominant parts of Serbian society and historiography. The paper focuses on the historical role of the president of the Quisling Government in occupied Serbia, Milan Nedic. Despite the unquestionable collaboration, which was not only political and institutional but also ideological and practical, which was manifested in the adoption and implementation of the "Aryan" racist ordinances and the Holocaust, social and media rehabilitation of Milan Nedic began in the first years after the breakdown of socialism. Different aspects of the society, from the church to the theater and the media, participated in these activities. The peak of the rehabilitation of the collaboration and of Milan Nedic in post-socialist Serbia took place in the first decade of the 21st century when the top of the state invited the public to honour the personification of Serbian quislings - as patriots and martyrs. The paper also analyzes the attempt of judicial rehabilitation of Milan Nedic.

Keywords: Historical revisionism, Milan Nedic, Serbia, nationalism, World War II, Holocaust, rehabilitation, collaboration.

* The article has been written as the part of the project Ethics and Environmental Politics: Institutions, Techniques and Norms in the Challenge of Changing the Natural Environment (43007) Financed by the Republic of Serbia Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.

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ONE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF CRITICAL HISTORIOGRAPHY, which is a clearly recognizable and widely accepted methodological basis of historical science, is the understanding that in the study of the past, there is no possibility of the finite truths, unchangeable, given once and for good, and eternally valid statements and interpretations. For this reason, it can also be said that a permanent review of identified findings and discoveries is one of the common occurrences in scientific engagement with events and processes in the past. However, at the same time, this does not mean that any interpretation and (re)evaluation of historical events is equally significant or worthy, or that it should be treated equally, since the explanations of historical processes and phenomena are very often determined by factors that are outside of science and rationality, because the understanding of the past has "political and ethical consequences in the present" (Pavlović 2010, 47–78). Despite all the factors that support the relativization of the notion of historical truth and the postmodernist challenges faced by the profession, the landmarks of a historian's pursuit are undeniable. Historiography cannot be considered a scientific discipline if it does not rest on sources, which means that the historian is limited in at least two determinants – historical sources and facts arising from them. Subsequently, the scientific objectivity of historians calls for the interpretation to arise necessarily from the analytical processing of available sources, that is, relevant documentary material (Bešlin 2013, 84–85).

The politics of historical revisionism in Serbia is characterized by "ignoring the scientific contribution of post-war Yugoslav historiography, demonizing of socialism, relativizing and ignoring the contribution of the Yugoslav anti-fascist movement, relativizing and normalizing quislingism and, the most radical manifestation of the fabrication of the past is apologia for quislingism and often victimization of the prominent collaborators who lost their lives in combat with Communists, or they were trialed in the post-war tribunals of socialist Yugoslavia" (Radanović 2011, 260). What we face here is more than a lonely case or one of the trends among others, it is a systematic phenomenon, a *locus communis* of the so-called research and easy interpretation of historical events in Serbia and Yugoslavia in the past decades, primarily during the Second World War (but not only exclusively then). Historical revisionism, as defined by Todor Kuljic, represents "the processing of the past with the clear or concealed intentions of justifying national or political goals." (Kuljić 2002, 9) In other words, in the case of historical

revisionism, not only revaluation is enacted, i.e. new or modified interpretation of the past, but direct rewriting (forgery, omission, fabrication, etc.) of historical facts and giving appropriate explanations, which have an utterly utilitarian value in a particular ideological context. Historical revisionism in this sense represents a political utilitarianization of historical dealing with the past and the findings that have arisen from it. (Katz 2007) Historical revisionism, as part of a broader notion of the culture of memory, and as a completely unequivocal paradigm of the use of the past, represents a clear reflection of the political culture in a society, as it talks about its dominant political values (Kuljić 2006, 7).

Historical revisionism is just one of the aspects of a nationalist ideology - one of the supporting pillars, because the past or an image of it, provides a legitimate basis for modernity. In 1993, during the wars that were brought to the ruins of Yugoslavia with the goal to achieve the long-standing ambitions of Serbian nationalism, the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts finalized and published its capital project “100 Most Famous Serbs” (*Sto najznamenitijih Srba*). In the harmony with the ideologically clearly profiled conception and the content that was supposed to show the “existence” and the centuries-long immutability of the so-called “national being”, a mythologized biography of the bishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church Nikolai Velimirovic, who will be proclaimed a saint later in the decade, was published. (Byford 2005; Bešlin 2013, 83). In line with their ideological orientation and political conception, the editorial board of the monograph omitted one of the key commanders of the anti-fascist Partisan movement, the Vice President of Yugoslavia and founder of Yugoslav diplomacy, Koča Popovic, under a morally and scientifically untenable excuse. On the other hand, with an even more controversial explanation, they included the fascist head of quisling administration in occupied Serbia - Milan Nedic. In the coming years, the book will have four editions in Serbian and one in the English language.

In the biography of anti-Semitic bishop Nikolai Velimirovic, as a specific hagiographic stance, untouched by rational knowledge of the past and free of critical thought, Velimirovic is glorified for the fact that, according to his own word, he prayed for Draza Mihailovic, Milan Nedic, and Dimitrije Ljotic till the end of his days. “Bishop’s personal correspondence ... shows that he prayed for the three Serbian martyrs for Draza, Milan and Dimitrije, the last day of his life.” (100 Most Famous Serbs, 521) The quote is the quintessence of nationalist ideology and its revisionist manifestation. It is precisely in this short and not particularly complex

quote that all the key points of the politics of historical revisionism in Serbia are crystallized, as one of the aspects of the nationalist ideology. The three representatives of the collaboration listed shoulder to shoulder, as history clustered them together because of their willing decisions during the war, and especially at its end. The cited sentence belonged to the right-wing and anti-Semitic bishop, on whose legacy the government and the opposition reached a national consensus in the wake of the epoch of wars, at the beginning of the 1990s. The positive connotation of Velimirovic and of the statement of his, can be found in a book created by the academics of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences and by certain bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church; this monograph was first published in the wake of the armed conflicts in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina; all the actors - those for whom the bishop praise, he who prays, and those who praise him for this prayers - merged radical anti-communism, anti-Yugoslavism, anti-Westernism, protection of collaboration and aggressive nationalism, emanated through a war waging to the purpose of which the mentioned monograph was supposed to serve. Due to of all this, the quoted sentence reveals the continual line of nationalistic temporality, the union of the ancestors and descendants, the battle that the dead begun the living are obliged to continue - the conceptual and personal continuity of the ideological conception that has penetrated all segments of society in an attempt to make its goals eternal and without an alternative. Science has made way for mythical irrationality. Violence over history as a scientific discipline has been normated, historical revisionism has triumphed. Right-wing extremism gained its ideological platform during this period, because of the fact that the links between political legitimacy and culture of memory are multiple and powerful. (Bešlin 2013, 83–84)

Already at the very beginning of the biography, the author euphemistically states that Milan Nedic will remain "in the historical memory of his people as a prominent but also controversial figure." By relativizing the divide between fascism and anti-fascism clearly set during World War II, it is said that Nedic is controversial "as much as the division of Serbian society". The author of the biography underlines that "Nedic was against provoking Germany and therefore, against the events like the one happened on March the 27th"; This is clearly a euphemism for saying that he was for collaboration with the fascist forces. Nedić's pre-war pro-axis orientation is concealed in the biography, and when the war is in ques-

12 | tion, a completely revisionist procedure of forgery and passing over the key facts is

applied. There is no mention of the undertaken Holocaust, there is no mention of the mass crimes of the police under Nedić's command, nothing about the camps; no mention is made on Nedić's speeches and public appearances, the racist and anti-Semitic decrees. On the other hand, the "new" biography of the most famous Serbian quisling reveals that he remained "remembered as a Serbian mother" (100 Most Famous Serbs, 493). If anyone thought that Milan Nedic was responsible for the crimes, the author of the biography, Mile Bjelajac remedied any doubt. "For his convictions," it is said, "Nedic paid the highest price" (idem, 494). This way a great number of crimes, tortures and, finally, a rarely effectively implemented Holocaust, as well as the realization of Milan Nedic, derived from his racist beliefs, are marked as mere disagreement in opinions and political convictions.

In parallel with this book, the nationalist playwright, Sinisa Kovachevic wrote a theater play entitled "Đeneral Milan Nedic," which was performed 205 times in the theater known for its revisionist repertoires, "Zvezdara teatar". It has become one of the most popular plays in the Belgrade's theaters. The play was advertised on national television for years. The play which evidently victimized Milad Nedic, representing him as a righteous martyr, was running from April 12, 1992, to December 11, 2001, with many broadcasts on national television. (<https://zvezdarateatar.rs/predstavave/deneral-milan-Nedić/?lng=lat>) This made an impact on a great number of spectators so that the head of Serbian quislingism was de facto rehabilitated. After the democratic changes in Serbia in 2000, there was no shift in the abuse of history. Following the regime change in October 2000 and the extradition of Slobodan Milosevic to the International Criminal Court, the essential characteristics of the ideology of his government and the dominant values of the society have not changed. On the contrary, the overturn of the October the 5th, 2000, was wrongly interpreted as the focal point of the demolition of communism, which, further on, paved the way for condensation and reaffirmation of the defeated Serbian nationalist project and for bringing the revisionist waves and total reinterpretation of defeated quislingism to its climax. The modus operandi of the "new", post-October-5th nationalism (Milosavljević 2007) aimed at the nationalization of the anti-fascism and at compromising of the entire People's Liberation Struggle of the Partisans. It boils down to an attempt to install anti-anti-fascism as a fundamental value of a society built on anti-communism, through negation and demonization of the entire historical experience of socialist Yugoslavia. Concealing the nationalist essence of the Milosevic regime, and thus the historical defeat

of this ideology in the wars of the nineties, the new regime created an ideological basis for bringing the revisionist course to the most prominent and ultimate manifestations. In accordance with the zeitgeist, by the year 2000, a new generation of historians was formed in Serbia who attempted to give a scientific halo to the glorifying interpretation of the Chetniks of Draza Mihailovic and of the "martyr" Milan Nedic. Their "original" and creative interpretations of the past entered the first post-October-5th history textbooks¹. The most important change occurred in the treatment of Chetniks and Partisans, with the addition of the evaluation of Milan Nedics collaborationist regime. General Milan Nedic, the president of the Serbian government under the occupation, was presented as a man of "great reputation among Serbs" who saved the "biological substance of the Serbian people" because "he thought that Germany was too powerful at the moment so that, in order to prevent the further sufferings of the Serbian people, it is ought to collaborate with the occupier. Because of the terrible reprisals against civilians, he opposed all the unreasonable movements against the occupying army" (Stojanovic 2008, 159). At the same time, certain ministers in the government publicly said people should stand in awe each time Nedics name was mentioned, thus asking people to honour the one who carried out the Holocaust in occupied Serbia. During the rule of Vojislav Kostunica's government, Milan Nedics picture was hung on the wall at the headquarters of the executive government, among other prime ministers of Serbia. Nedics photo was removed only in 2008 after Kostunica's stepped down from the position of the prime minister (<https://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=864529>).

Nevertheless, the intentions towards the rehabilitation of Serbian quislingism appear even during socialist Yugoslavia, country based on the premises of the anti-fascist consensus. Certainly, long before the first revisionist achievements were made in the country, nationalist and revisionist attempts were made in the monographs printed in the West in the circles of the so-called emigrant historiography. However, this revanchist pseudo-science, not based on historical sources, had

1 In the 2000s in Serbia, the school textbooks, which are by default methodologically conservative because they hold uncontested facts and interpretations verified by science, have become a testing ground for experiments and space for presenting unconfirmed and scientifically highly controversial theses. Therefore, the appearance of such textbooks and their approval by the competent institutions have caused sharp public controversy. "Assault of the New Truths", *Vreme*, no. 622, December 5, 2002 <http://www.vreme.com/cms/view.php?id=328672>

not significantly influenced the scientific interpretation of the war, until the early 1990s. Especially since the most valuable accomplishments in the West did not essentially differ from the understanding of the history of WW Two in the country.² However, with the onset of the 1991 conflict and the break-up of Yugoslavia (1992), the war politics of Serbian nationalism favoured the widespread rehabilitation of Milan Nedic in post-socialist Serbia. By the end of the 80s, the ideological basis for the war waging politics was the national homogenization. The fundamental assumption of national homogenizing intentions was the narrative of the so-called “the national reconciliation” of the protagonists of the conflict in World War II. This idea was first brought up by emigrant pro-Ljotic writer, Stanislav Krakov,³ in his novel-apology of Milan Nedic.⁴ *National reconciliation*, founded on discredit and devastation of the supra-national and cosmopolitan heritage of socialist Yugoslavia, was proven not to be achievable without political rehabilitation of the entire quislingism, interpreted as the “national power.”⁵ Indeed, national reconciliation for the purpose of homogenization wasn’t achievable without radical revision and reinterpretation of the past. This attempt of Serbian national reconciliation based on the anti-antifascist positions (Kuljić 2005, 171–184), didn’t differ as much from the similar attempts of the nationalist ideology in Croatia in the 1990s (Bing 2008, 327–340). The national reconciliation manifested through the common burial of dead fascists and antifascists, as an attempt to abolish the ideological plurality in the society, had as the aim to legitimize fascism and to suppress the anti-fascist left. The Spanish dictator Francesco Franco (1939–1975) was actually the originator

2 First of all, we refer here to the most valuable scientific achievement in the West - the book of Joze Tomasevic, *Chetniks*, originally published in the United States. *Jozo Tomasevic, War and Revolution in Yugoslavia 1941-1945. The Chetniks, Stanford, 1975. Yugoslav Edition - Jozo Tomasevic, Četnici u Drugom svjetskom ratu, Zagreb, 1979.*

3 Krakov was the leading fascist propagator in Belgrade in the 1930s and one of the most prominent protagonists of Serbian collaborationism during the occupation of 1941–1945. He was also the head of propaganda for the fascist organization of Dimitrije Ljotic, *Zbor. Srpski biografski rečnik*, 325–326.

4 As examples of national reconciliation Krakov lists the relations between Draza Mihailović and Milan Nedić, who, after all the “coming together and growing apart... finally realized, before the biggest commune danger, that the Serbian people could be saved only if all the Serbian national forces unite and come together. Unfortunately, this knowledge came too late in August 1944...”, Krakow 1963, 5–9.

5 Interesting enough, Krakov's formulation of “national force” used for the protagonists of Serbian Quislingism, is borrowed by revisionist historians and publicists.

of this idea, memorized through the construction of the monumental Valley of the Fallen, on the slopes of Guadarrama (Bešlin 2014, 199-233).

Nevertheless, the breadth of the scale of collaboration in Serbia should not be reduced to Milan Nedic or his associates. It's a much wider concept. The most active members of the Serbian Cultural Club, the leading ideological-nationalist organization, collaborated or fervently supported the quislings, as did the entire influential People's Defense, the summit of the largest party, the Radical Party, who remained in the country. Dozens of journalists in Belgrade agreed to edit quisling newspapers knowing that the German military commander in Serbia had announced a Press Release on May 24, 1941 saying that "the permission to work as editor would only be issued to the person who was not Jewish or Gypsy, nor married to a Jew or a Gypsy woman" (Milosavljević 2006, 138). Hence, these journalists accepted to prove their "Aryan lineage". Some of them even printed the parole "Victoria! Victory of Germany - the victory of Europe!" in the headlines of their daily papers. As the research of Olivera Milosavljevic yields, in the first year of the racist and anti-Semitic *Nasa Borba* 170 associates (professors, lawyers, journalists, students, priests etc.) gave their contribution to the paper, while 533 intellectuals signed the Appeal to the Serbian people in 1941, which was calling for the collaboration and destruction of anti-fascism (ca. 100 university professors, 40 former ministers and deputies, 35 doctors etc.) (Milosavljević 2006, 162). Given this wide circle of collaboration, it can be said that an important part of the ideological protagonists of the Serbian nationalism both ideologically and personally ended in collaboration. Therefore, the motives behind the necessity to establish a continuity with the pre-war period and to exculpate the nationalists of the stigma of collaboration and crime after the breakdown of socialism and the prevailing of nationalist ideological paradigm in Serbian society, are pretty clear. That's why it was necessary to disguise and reverse the whole history of the Second World War in Yugoslavia.

One of the most commonly used revisionist narratives, used by historians as well, is the thesis that the collaboration was made to "preserve the biological substance of the people" - the terminology used by Nedic in his public appearances. However, it was Nedic who said about Partisans, who were predominantly of Serbian stock: "These are degenerates, Communists! Crush them! Crush down this traitor's seed so that our people may live! Crush them! Kill them! You weed this darnel out of the Serbian cornfield! Your hands will become sacred, and your name

will be immortalized...embroil them, report them to the authorities and seek help. We will weed the red pest merciless, non-stop to complete extermination.” At the same time, he argued in numerous speeches that “we owe gratitude to the Great German Reich, which enabled us to live, which (...) gave us the honour of associating in the construction of the new world” (Milosavljević 2006). The attitude of Milan Nedic and his associates towards Jews and Roma people is written in the most dishonourable pages of the history of these territories. Their entire activity was public, known and accessible to every literate person in the occupied Serbia and, nowadays, to every historian: Dozens of Nedić’s regulations on the prohibition of work for Jews and Roma, banishment from university for those groups; job ads for the positions at the state institutions that all contained a compulsory clause on eligibility: “the applicant is ought to be of Serbian nationality and of purely Aryan origin, with the evidence of racial provenience (that there hasn’t been no one of Jewish or Roma stock in the wider family, their own or their spouses)”. These sources, which modern historiography mostly hushes up, bear witness to the functioning of organized Serbian fascism. Finally, Nedić’s propaganda published hundreds of articles about the “great” Adolf Hitler, but none of the shooting of civilians in Kraljevo and Kragujevac in October 1941. The assassination of students was not a reason for Milan Nedic or his Minister of Education to resign and to stop the collaboration.

From the first day of his appointment, Milan Nedic and the Serbian quisling authority were convinced in the victory of Hitler’s “new order”, because of which they uncritically copied the central Nazi idea of the protection and purity of “blood and race,” of the blood purity as the essential premise of a nation and of the necessity of extermination of all opposing ideas - Jewry, communism, masonry, and democracy. Nedic strongly advocated for the preservation of the Serbian people from “irregular mixes”, his propaganda frequently used terms from the categorical apparatus of Nazism, such are “pure race”, “white race”, “Aryanism”, etc. (Milosavljević 2006, 25) In this context, Nedics government passed a series of regulations that implemented the policies of the Nazi authorities’ regarding the deprivation of the right to the work for the Jewish and Roma population. Nedics politics of total discrimination was followed by various professional associations and business subjects. Further on, by extending the implementation of such notions to all strata of the society, the stigmatized groups were deprived of the right to elementary existence. By its decrees, Nedics government explicitly banned Jews and Roma

from working in state institutions, attending higher education, participating in the National Labour Office, while all their assets were confiscated and granted to Serbia without compensation (Milosavljević 2006, 244). Throughout all the spheres of public life, decrees passed by Nedics government required of the citizens to show written proof that they had "Serbian nationality", "Aryan origins" and no "Jewish or gypsy blood" in the family. These certificates were issued by the local authorities of the quisling administrations in different municipalities of occupied Serbia according to the so-called "Aryan paragraphs" of Nedics government. In addition, Nedics propaganda stirred up hatred against the stigmatized national and religious groups daily, repeating that the war was caused by the "Jewish plot"; it was a product of "hellish Jewish thoughts". Anti-Semitism in Nedić's press reached the summit in the conspiracy theories proving that the Jews had always sought to rule the world and that all the evils of capitalism, from the French Revolution to Marxism, were the result of "Judeo-masonic" efforts and conspiracies. This press shamelessly quoted the words of Adolf Hitler without any hesitation and found in them inspiration and the basis for their own claims. Finally, Milan Nedic and his propaganda believed that the biological survival of the Serbian people was only possible if the "death of international Jewry and Judeo-dominated Masonry" occurred, which required for their absolute "not only physical but also spiritual annihilation". If this would not happen, survival of the Serbs is threatened because, as Nedić's propaganda claimed, "the interest of international Jewry is that the Serbian people disappear" (Milosavljević 2006, 26).

The first initiative for judicial rehabilitation of Milan Nedic was submitted in 1992 by a group MPs belonging to Party of Serbian Renewal (Srpski pokret obnove), as the largest parliamentary group of the opposition to Milosevic's government. This initiative had a sort of media and political significance but did not result in court proceedings. However, in 2008, the non-parliamentary Serbian Liberal Party submitted another rehabilitation initiative, which, this time, had a judicial epilogue. By the decision of the Higher Court in Belgrade from 2014, the request for judicial rehabilitation Nedic was denied. However, on July 24, 2015, the Higher Court ordered a lower instance court to begin the rehabilitation process of Milan Nedic (<http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/334075/Registered-Application-for-reaching-Milana-Nedića>). When the lower court rejected this initiative as unfounded, this time the procedure was initiated and the first hearing was

18 held on December 7, 2015 (<http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/344935/Drustvo/>)

Rehabilitacija-Milana-Nedića-po-drugo-pred-sredom). Tendentiously, for all further hearings, the court had called in targeted witnesses who spoke in favour of rehabilitation of Milan Nedic, witnessed falsely and reinterpreted the interwar period and the WWII in Yugoslavia in a revisionist manner. The judicial procedure that was unilateral, according to the law, and during which the court could come to a decision but not to a verdict on the rehabilitation, got more complicated when the Jewish community in Belgrade demanded to take part in the trial. The Jewish community claimed their role in the trail on the grounds that Nedic had actively contributed to Holocaust on the territory of occupied Serbia against members of the Jewish community, primarily through the identification and arrest of the Jewish population and confiscation of their property.⁶ Due to the participation of the Jewish community, which made the unilateral procedure a bilateral dispute, as well as to the pressure of international institutions and political protagonists, the Higher Court in Belgrade issued a decision on July 11, 2018, rejecting the request for judicial rehabilitation of Milan Nedic as ungrounded. (<https://www.bg.vi.sud.rs/vest/1439/odbijen-zahtev-za-rehabilitaciju-milana-Nedića.php>)

Without entering into legal norms, the initial problem with the request for the rehabilitation of Milan Nedic is the fact that he was never judicially convicted. During the adoption of the Rehabilitation Act, it was emphasized that it should serve primarily to review the court proceedings, i.e. to “prosecute the court proceedings”. The basic idea of the Act was to examine whether the convicted person had a fair trial. Milan Nedic had no trial, he committed suicide in February 1946 at the beginning of the investigation process. However, judicial rehabilitation, even if it was carried out, would not really change much, because the social rehabilitation of Milan Nedic and Serbian collaboration had already taken place. Since it is clear that the motives of Nedic’s rehabilitation are not of legal nature, they could be sought in the ideological and political sphere. The key goal is to unload Nedic of historical stigma and rehabilitate the ideology he belonged to and disseminated

6 "Our Community is responsible to its members, citizens of Serbia, the institutions of the Republic and to the international Jewish community, to get involved in the rehabilitation process. Nedic and his government directly participated in the confiscation of Jewish immovable property, as well as in the identification and arrest of Jews on the territory of entire occupied Serbia," said Dr Haris Dajc, a member of the Jewish Community in Belgrade and coordinator of historical research for the Jewish property confiscated in the Holocaust. <http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/naslovna/drustvo/aktuelno.290.html:630915-Jevrejska-opstina-protiv-Nedica>

during his reign. Nevertheless, historically, he was not only a quisling. Nedic was responsible for the prominent role he had in the Holocaust in Serbia during World War II. His terror apparatus, the special police, alongside with the German occupying authorities, were the pillars of extermination of the Jewish, Roma and anti-fascists population (Pisari 2014). In the first half of 1942, Serbia became the second territory in occupied Europe, after Estonia, which was formally declared "cleansed" of the Jews, and the first outside the Soviet region where the murders of the Jews were the most intense. The head of the Department for Jews in the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Fritz Rademacher, said that "the Jewish question is no longer an issue in Serbia". The only problem was the question of the inheritance of their property. Later, the head of the German security forces in Serbia, Emanuel Scheffer, said that Belgrade was "the only major European city to be freed from the Jews". In August 1942, Harold Turner officially informed Berlin that the "Jewish issue" in Serbia had been resolved (Bayford 2011, 42). The facts that Belgrade had been "cleansed" of Jews before Vienna or Berlin, the occupying authorities owed to the "efficiency" of Milan Nedic and his apparatus of terror, which had the task to arrest the Jewish population and confiscate their properties. However, these segments of history have been abstracted for the dominant culture of memory in Serbian society.

However, history can not be changed seven decades after the end of the Second World War. Knowledge and interpretation are being changed, but only under the influence of newly found sources, which did not happen in the case of Milan Nedic. By negation of Yugoslav anti-fascism, demonization and criminalization of Partisan winners, the proclamation the occupiers to be liberators, calling quislings patriots, rehabilitation and victimization of nationalist and fascist collaboration - the society in Serbia a posteriori puts itself on the side defeated in the Second World War. Although the failure of the judicial rehabilitation of Milan Nedic did not close the circle, the social and ideological rehabilitation of the key person of the quisling apparatus represents violation and destruction of the anti-fascist consensus and relativization of responsibility for the Holocaust in occupied Serbia. The paradigm of Milan Nedic and his rehabilitation in post-socialist Serbia represents a combination of negationism and illegitimate revisionism, where the past has been changed primarily due to particular ideological and political interests, and the entire process is supported by the state, its institutions and various political structures that have changed during the observed period. The denial of

historical responsibility of Milan Nedić and quisling criminal authorities and request for justification of the collaboration was undertaken systematically, while in the background of this process the nationalistic motives lie, as ideological models that are dominant in Serbia nearly three decades since the breakup of Yugoslavia and the entry into the era of the post-socialist transition.

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„Srpska majka” pred sudom nacije: Milan Nedić i rehabilitacija kolaboracije u postsocijalističkoj Srbiji

U radu se daje sintetizovan pregled teorije i prakse revizionističkih politika u dominantnim delovima srpskog društva i historiografije. Rad se fokusira na istorijsku ulogu predsednika kvislinške vlade u okupiranoj Srbiji, Milana Nedića. Uprkos nesumnjivoj kolaboraciji, koja nije bila samo politička i institucionalna, već i ideološka i praktična, što se manifestovalo u donošenju i sprovođenju „arijevskih” rasističkih uredbi i sprovedenom Holokaustu – društvena i medijska rehabilitacija Milana Nedića počela je prvih godina nakon sloma socijalizma. Različiti aspekti društva, od crkve do pozorišta i medija, učestvovali su u navedenim aktivnostima. Vrhunac rehabilitacije kolaboracije i Milana Nedića u postsocijalističkoj Srbiji odigrao se u prvoj deceniji 21. veka, kada je iz vrha države pozivano da se odaje počast personifikaciji srpskog kvislinštva – kao patrioti i mučeniku. U radu se analizira i pokušaj sudske rehabilitacije Milana Nedića.

Ključne reči: Istorijski revizionizam, Milan Nedić, Srbija, nacionalizam, Drugi svetski rat, Holokaust, rehabilitacija, kolaboracija.

rad prijavljen: 14. VI 2018.
rad recenziran: 26. VI 2018.
rad prihvaćen: 10. VII 2018.