

CIVIC

## Mythical and European times

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**We are quick to talk about others' negative myths and prejudices, as much as we are unwilling to broach the topic of our own complexes and weaknesses**

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Does Montenegro have a systematised documentation testifying to development of its political parties? Do we need one? Do the parties themselves know about their opponents' programmes and organizational structures? Do we learn enough from others, as a society, or are we too quick to reject anything coming from those who think differently? To what extent is the dominant political language in line with programmatic principles? What is European about all this?

These were some of the questions that motivated several months of work on a recently published publication "*Parliamentary Elections 2009 – contribution to development of political memory in Montenegro*", published by Centre for Civic Education with support of Heinrich Boll foundation.

This publication is something of a "neutral mirror" for the actors of 2009 parliamentary elections, but it also offers substantial initial material to open up the process of meticulous and insightful analysis of political party elites which after decades of multi-party system remain essentially hidden from the citizens for Montenegro in various ways. At the same time, the publication offers two possibilities: to parties themselves to dedicate more effort to the development of their own capacities and to all active citizens, irrespective of their position in the society, to hold hostage to their own words and promises all those actors of the entire party spectrum who feign the rules they themselves have established.

We are quick to talk about others' negative myths and prejudices, as much as we are unwilling to broach the topic of our own complexes and weaknesses. This is what defines our relationship to our memory and given word. Deep inside, we all carry the entrenched belief that here people stick to their history and their word. Still, many of us know little about this categories, superficially or selectively.

Thus, the mirror in which we see our reflection resembles the one from the "Snowwhite and the Seven Dwarves" which the evil queen asks every morning who the most beautiful woman in the world is. As long as the answer flattered her, there was no problem. The problem arose when the mirror gave her a truthful image of reality.

Insufficient knowledge of political reality is an obstacle which is inseparable from the process of state and democracy building. As such, it significantly slowed down the development of culture of political memory, without which we cannot have a sober view on the future. Montenegrin public is neither sufficiently acquainted with the basic, nor often with the electoral programmes and statutes of political parties, and the parties themselves are not too eager to focus on their proclaimed political orientations, but rather focus on the daily political bickering aimed at animating the widest public.

I believe that documentation of these processes and recording of comprehensive information about the carriers of these processes, frequently reminding them of their promises and proclaimed principles must have an impact on raising the level of our political culture and accountability, our immediate needs.

Naturally, this will sound abstract and distant to many, but it is certainly not unattainable. The proof is in all the young people who are diligent and intelligent, able and ready to take responsibility and release from that evidently unbearable burden so called 3C politicians – controversial, criminal and compromised.

Only such people can give an honest answer to one of the questions, or rather requirements, from the by now famous Questionnaire which states: "Please describe efforts to strengthen implementation of anti-corruption measures and provide concrete results related to the fight against corruption."

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