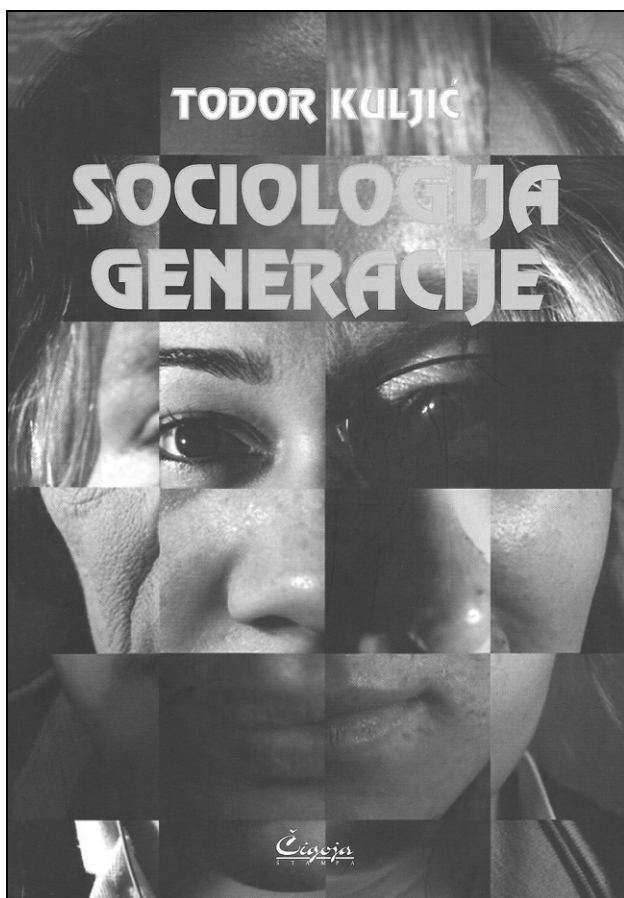


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REVIEWS

Todor Kuljić: SOCIOLOGIJA GENERACIJE  
(Sociology of Generation). Beograd,  
Čigoja štampa, 2009, 228 str.

In his most recently published study Todor Kuljić – author of the books: Fascism. A sociological-historical study (1978, 1987), Theories on Totalitarianism (1983), Bureaucracy and Cadre's Administration (1989), Forms of the Personal Power (1994), Tito. A sociological-historical study (1998, 2005), Mastering the Past. Causes and ways of changing the image of the history at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (2002), Memory Culture. Theoretical explanations of the use of the past (2006) – deals with *sociology of generation*.

In this book he analyses the generation as (1) a real social group, (2) a framework for self-description of an individual, and (3) as a category for arranging the past.



Though the book is not a catalogue of generations, it does deal with the issue of generational activities. When are the generations visible actors and when do they change the world quietly without taking over power? Generations are divided into political, cultural and generational memory communities. Family and the economic generations are not separated as special groups because they are thoroughly permeated with the previous ones. Different versions of generations needed to be defined and different scientific approaches to generations needed to be discussed in the book in order to reduce the chaos of real and construed generations. Considered synchronously, generations are classified according to the key formative factors (economic, technical, cultural), and considering ideologically and politically according to their main values (democracy, class and national equality). Diachronically, generations are classified historically, according to the manner in which they realized these values. The constructivist concept of generation as a horizon of meaning and community of discourse was useful when considering some cultural generation. The institutional approach was important when researching the role of institutions and organizations in the economy of life flow of a generation. A phenomenological approach was necessary for generation memory communities. All approaches have comparative sociological-historical perspective in common.

In the first chapter T. Kuljić analyses Karl Mannheim's concept of generation as presented in his essay *The Problems of Generations* (1928). The origins, content and actuality of his essay was discussed. Mannheim played the decisive role in the development of the (new) concept of generation in the twentieth century. To understand the problem of social and historical generations and to evaluate Mannheim's standing within development of the concept, a history of the concept of "generations", the relationship between class and generation and how ideas about the formation of generations help us understand the over-time dynamics of society were discussed. In doing so we assume that the origin of Mannheim's lecture lies in the generational experience of Hungarian intellectuals (George Lukacs's circle) during the collapse of the old order of the Dual Monarchy and the Revolution of 1918–1919. The intellectual life in Budapest was important for Mannheim's *Problems of Generations*, but also the heritage of Wilhelm Dilthey's sociology and influence of Alfred Weber's cultural sociology. The author analyses the migration of generational concept from one culture (Germany) to another (the United States), and from one discipline (sociology) to another (memory culture).

In the second chapter, the author deals with political generations. It is conceived as a biopolitical concept. Its unique group feeling is not a mere search for time fatherland. It is bonded by a special feeling of common

historical position, rather than by class or national solidarity. An active political generation is present when common experience exists as well as common interpretation of historical developments, manifested in the will to change the political framework. It is an age-homogeneous group which is, at the same time, the product of biological and socialization processes, but is also a vehicle of change. The essence of a political generation is usually not an ordinary collective memory of an age group, but a hegemonic interpretation of the crucial historical and political experience shared by a large group of young people during their lifetime. Political generation belongs to a wider genus of the historical (revolutionary, war) generation, defined by traumatic experience and a new vision of social change. It is different from subcultural generations which can be recognized by unique, but transitory symbolic rituals of lifestyles. A political generation consists of those members of an age cohort who, faced with some crucial events, deal with the dominant ideas and values of the political system they are growing up in in a similar way. In the politically formative life phase, this position creates a long-term stable direction of basic political attitudes. Nevertheless, political generations are not always fixed but also specifically flexible groups, not always real but often constructed categories, affirms T. Kuljić.

He continues to present an outline of the theoretical framework for the political generation research dealing with the following issues: the concept of political generation, the role of real and ascribed experience in the formation of political generations, the role of generation symbols, historical and generation time as a basis for distinction between qualitative generations and quantitative cohorts, historical and subcultural generations. Different political generations are included in the comparative historical framework: the generations from different European states (Germany, France, Serbia, Croatia) and outside Europe (the USA and China), and from different historical eras (between the two World Wars, the Cold War period, socialism and post-socialism). The original values and differences between *Baby-boomers* and *Generation X* as well as the generation of 1968 and the generation of 1989 have been researched on the examples of different countries. Special attention is paid to the Yugoslav left antifascist generation and to the later nationalist post-socialistic generations: the Croatian generation from the "Motherland war 1991-1995" to the wave of Serbian protest generations from the 1990s. The problem of the generation conversion is also considered. Tensions between different generations usually appear as a result of different layers of experience which influence the vision of the world. Empirical research showed a different stability of generational consciousness and different generations' strength in different states. The Second World War was more fruitful in terms of the generation studies than the First World War.

The values of monarchy and capitalism were pulled down in 1945 and a socialist political generation was maintained in the mobile condition through the planned similar memories for almost half a century. For almost half a century, no essentially new political generation different from the 1945 generation was created in Yugoslav socialism, but only a range of consumer and media generation. Yugoslav socialism created similar socialist generations, but the younger ones were more consumer and media generations, while the older ones were heroic partisan generations.

At first glance, the political generation formed between 1990 and 1995 was a radical new alternative. However, if one looks closer at the values of this generation, it is not difficult to see that the turning point was, in essence, restorative; capitalism, religion and nationalism were renewed. The heroic generations are discussed as the purest form of political generations. Therefore, the heroic generations were often a product of construction. They were formed during war and revolution. The author analyses Serbian and Croatian historical generations which were heroized. Companions with their own constructed and fudged past often join the heroic generations. Heroes occurred in the Balkans one more time at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This was not the case in the rest of Europe. The generation of floating utopia replaced the consumer generation, stresses T. Kuljić.

The third chapter deals with the cultural generations. The author first considers the relationship to death as a philosophical basis for generation's identity, and then he analyses various mechanisms of succession of cultural generations. Thereafter he describes various economic, media, technical, musical and scientific generations. The evidence was provided by the empirical research from various countries, paying special attention to the Yugoslav and new Serbian and Croatian cultural generations and generations of academic sociologists in Yugoslavia and Germany. This chapter deals also with consumption as a symbol of an alternative life style, and even as a basis of self-description for the young generation. Yugoslav socialism proved that authoritarian modernisation could exist simultaneously with Western fashion. Consumer values and lifestyle, as an expression of youth identity, coexisted with the official values of self-management. Statecentric and static understanding of socialism as command economy or as totalitarian state can comprehend neither variety of generations nor the youth values in socialism. Therefore, one should abandon false presumptions of the political values priority in generational identities of the youth in the everyday life of Yugoslav socialism. On the contrary, the consumer values, Western fashion, and the Western film idols presented an important part of the youth self-description.

In the fourth chapter, the author examines the generational memory communities in the family and in

politics. Memory communities are considered as important ideological core for the homogenization of generations. Generation is detected as a factor of selective memory, and special attention is paid to the generation's memory of the war in several European countries' families and to the memory community within Serbian 1968 protest generation. The role of generation as a factor in changing of memory, and as a mechanism to maintain generations community memories are considered. The purpose was to investigate the interplay between intergenerational relations and generational memories among family and politics. For each generation, the historical inheritance from the previous generation is added to the objective current conditions. Different research (in Germany, Croatia, Serbia etc.) show that each generation makes its own sense of the stories passed down from one generation to the next in their families. The families denied that their members committed atrocities, even though historical records indicated otherwise.

In conclusion, the author summarizes several ambivalences of a generation. Generation is a specific relation between continuity (in the genealogical series) and discontinuity (especially in the generational experience). Relationships between generations constituted personal identity and structure of society, and both are related to one another. The same relationships can strengthen solidarity, and provoke conflict. In sociological terms, it is about reproduction and innovation. This is a tension between old and new, family and culture, autonomy and solidarity, imagination about real freedom and helplessness. The generational conflicts are not only conflicts between parents and children, they are also cultural, political and technical distances between generations and differences between the generation memory communities. The overlapping of different aspects of crisis as well as new international conflicts can always be an incentive for a new generation protest. The author points out and at the same time questions regarding whether the occurrence and mutual enhancement of the different aspects of a crisis will create a new historical generation. Prof. Todor Kuljić (Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade). concludes his study by stating that it is hard to say whether the heroic political generations belong to the past and whether the future belongs exclusively to the apolitical subcultural consumer generations. Undoubtedly, this book is a fundamental work, not only for research into the sociology of generation, but also for sociology of knowledge, of science, of culture, and political sociology.

**Avrust Lešnik**

**Zdravko Mlinar: ŽIVLJENJSKO OKOLJE V GLOBALNI INFORMACIJSKI DOBI. PROSTORSKO-ČASOVNA ORGANIZACIJA BIVANJA: RAZISKOVANJA NA KOPRSKEM IN V SVETU.** Ljubljana, Fakulteta za družbene vede – Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti, 2008, 485 strani.

Ob koncu leta 2008 je izšla prva knjiga trilogije Življenjsko okolje v globalni informacijski dobi z naslovom *Prostorsko-časovna organizacija bivanja: raziskovanja na Koprskem in v svetu* avtorja akademika dr. Zdravka Mlinarja. Vsebina knjige je neke vrste nadaljevanje multidisciplinarnega projekta Mestne občine Koper z naslovom *Koper 2020*, njegov izvajalec je bil Center za prostorsko sociologijo Fakultete za družbene vede, katerega predstojnik je bil dr. Zdravko Mlinar, potekal pa je v devetdesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja.

Osrednja tema, s katero se v knjigi ukvarja Mlinar, so sociološka spoznanja o dolgoročnih trendih sprememb v vsakdanjem ožjem in širšem življenjskem okolju, ki jih prinaša vse bolj intenzivna (uporaba informacijsko-komunikacijskih tehnologij). Tovrstne tehnologije imajo dvojni učinek, in sicer po eni strani uporabnikom omogočajo sproščanje prostorske in časovne vezanosti ter vnaprejšnje določenosti, po drugi strani pa posredno,

