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Niš, Serbia

Centropa Summer Academy 2018

‘‘La Benevolencija – Survival in Sarajevo’’

Presentation scenario

(10-12 minutes)

INTRO – General idea of the presentation

Following given instructions, I tried to investigate the impact of respective film/exhibition on the students and teachers in Niš (Serbia). Unfortunately, I could not even find the photos of the opening of the exhibition, let alone to be able to investigate some kind of its global influence over the teacher’s/student’s community. BUT, and there is a truly big BUT in what I have realized investigating this matter: not long after the exhibition had taken place at the Cultural Center in Niš, a few events were organized in different schools that I consider to be a part of a direct influence of the respective event. Therefore, in order to explain and analyze the relevance of organizing an event such as the exhibition ‘‘La Benevolencija – Survival in Sarajevo’’ in Niš, I have labeled my presentation ‘‘Case Study’’.

In order to make the story concise and inspiring, I decided to put my personal and professional experience in focus. What was the story about? Well, for my students and me as well, visiting the exhibition ‘‘La Benevolencija – Survival in Sarajevo’’ was the first encounter with the Centropa organization, the notion of Jewish community and the totally different perspective when it comes to the war in Bosnia. We were all stunned for a moment. The whole thing was truly emotional and yet very inspiring. After that, we have undertaken a small extracurricular activity to explore the idea of Jewish community in Niš. There was not much left to find, but it was very interesting for all of us (the slide ‘‘The exhibition in Niš: A context’’ briefly speaks about our little educational adventure).

Later on, in October 2015, I have attended a Centropa seminar for teachers in Sarajevo, which was very important professional experience for me because I got a deeper insight into the history and cultural heritage of European Jews and to the concept of the Holocaust education (the slide with the timeline is about my personal growth in that matter).

The event of importance I wanted to focus in the last part of my presentation was the Hevruta Caravan which took place in my school, organized by Haver Serbia and supported by my students, some of my colleagues and myself. It was a great two days event (weekend!) attended by more than fifty students, their parents and teachers. The organization of Hevruta Caravan in my school was directly inspired by the organization of the exhibition ‘‘La Benevolencija – Survival in Sarajevo’’ ten months ago and, in that moment, that was a crown of my student’s and mine recent professional engagement in that field that I was so proud of.

That is why I have finished my presentation with the quotation: ‘‘Take action! You never know who you are inspiring...’’. Referring in that way to all of my teacher colleagues, I am also expressing a gratitude to ones who were brave and motivated enough to provide us with a privilege to be a part of such an extraordinary story.