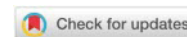


THE ROUNDABOUT OF BALKAN MULTICULTURALISM

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Abstract: From Thucydides to Machiavelli, from Ranke and Michelet to Toynbee and Braudel all sought to illustrate the final picture, the compelling and unifying concept of culture and its place in society. In any society, one can identify a dominant culture that is cherished by the majority of citizens and one or more cultures or subcultures that partially or not at all accept the dominant values. Multiculturalism as an idea has been present since the epoch of ancient Greece and the Roman Empire. Since antiquity, thinking about politics has been a question of living together: how to create a society, how to reconcile the unity and plurality of values and cultures? Should we even out or bring awareness to the differences? Long-standing debates that constantly refresh these questions. This is where the idea of multiculturalism, the project of fair recognition of different “cultures” in the public space, is put forward. Europe is a symbol of multiculturalism, although often this rich content has been abused. The Balkans as a multicultural microcosm is an example of the parallel existence of numerous cultures, ethnicities, nations, faiths and religions. What evolution did multiculturalism experience until the creation of the last independent state, the Republic of Kosovo?

Keywords: multiculturalism, Former Yougoslavia, Balkans, Macedonia, Kosovo The idea of Europe

1. INTRODUCTION

When researching the multicultural values of Europe, it is necessary to abandon the ideas about the perception of identity and citizenship in Greek and Roman antiquity exclusively through civil status. In these civilizations, extraordinary thoughts are developed on the question of the foundations, the existence of most cultures, and most languages, which existed in the foundations of European civilization. “All civilizations arise from one fact, from one idea” notes Guizot in *Histoire de la civilisation en Europe* (Guizot 1860). It can be concluded that society belonged to a single dominant principle that determined institutions, customs, religions, and the whole progress. In the case of Europe, the unity of civilization is presented in the form of a pluralism of traditions, values, and aspirations that are sometimes complementary but also contradictory. (Francois Guizot-1787-1874). With the end of the Thirty Years’ War in 1648 and the conclusion of the Westphalian Treaties, the principle of state sovereignty grew into a new form of geopolitical order. The French Revolution in 1789 and the “spring of nations” in the 19th century (1848) affect national identity as a founding element of the sovereignty of states. Europe is not a continent, neither because of its dimensions or structure nor because of its configuration and population. The borders that separate it from Asia are debatable and unclear. However, Europe is a spiritual continent. Europe exists thanks to the common desire of all those who live in this space. In essence, Europe is one idea or rather one consciousness. European man is defined neither by race nor by language or gender vocation. What cost Europe it was a spiritual temperature, a passion for adventure and organization, curiosity and doubts. The idea of Europe was created by numerous thinkers, individuals, legends, and projects, as well as the values inherited from the humanism of Ancient Greece, Roman law and the civil status of the Roman Empire, Christian universalism, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the great geographical discoveries, art and science, democracy and capitalism, industrialization, trade, military conflicts... But one should not exaggerate, and its history is not the result of saints and angels either. Both Napoleon and Hitler and Stalin were leaders with European pretensions according to their geopolitical projects and ideology (Bernard Voyenne 1964/2020, p.64) Between the principle of unitarity and the principle of pluralism, to this day the second principle is dominant. Unity in differences in modern societies implies pluralism of power, pluralism of ideas, of political parties, etc. At this point we can use the interpretations of Andre Reszler. “What does the invention of pluralism represent for Europe?”. Pluralism in a “united” society is manifested when it comes to culture, historical identities, the identity of ethnic, linguistic, religious political and social groups and rivals” In the 9th century, only individuals with a multicultural profile and identity, like the brothers St. Cyril and Methodius, could succeed in the missions of baptizing the Khazars and Slavs in Moravia with such different cultural characteristics. In the 10th century, Father Pierre Abelard

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was the watchword for the unification of the ancient, Spanish-Arabic heritage with Europe. He writes: Diversity does not mean enmity - *Diversa non adversa* ». “In the 9th century, only individuals with a multicultural profile, like the brothers St. Cyril and Methodius, could succeed in the missions of baptizing the Khazars and Slavs in Moravia with such different cultural characteristics. In the 10th century, Father Pierre Abelard was the watchword for the unification of the ancient, Spanish-Arabic heritage with Europe. Pluralism means plural. The expression refers to diversity, differences, multiplicity, particularities, taking into account identities... By definition, the manifestations of pluralism are diverse and can be found in a wide variety of domains and disciplines. We often talk about “social”, “religious”, “political”, “cultural”... “legal” pluralism. Identity and culture are inseparable, pluralism meets culture. Cultural pluralism is the consideration, within the same social group, of the plurality of identities, from which emerges a culture that is both common and plural, ie multicultural.

Pluralism is synonymous with diversity. Culture in ethnology is synonymous with civilization. However, this word must also be used in the plural since there is not just one civilization or just one culture. Culture can be defined as “a set of practices, customs, artistic, religious and intellectual manifestations that define and distinguish a group, society” or even as “a set of shared beliefs, ways of thinking and acting » Apart from referring to all knowledge acquired in one or more areas by the individual, culture is associated with the group. Culture is necessarily pluralistic, and cultural pluralism or multiculturalism is only a manifestation of pluralism. Cultural diversity can also correspond to multiculturalism, that is, to the “cultural dimension of pluralism in a society”

2. MULTICULTURALISM AS A EUROPEAN VALUE

Since 1980, the European Union had to position itself in relation to the idea of multiculturalism and devise its legalization and protection. The history of this idea is present in parallel from the time of the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (CECA) the European Economic Community (CEE) although it is not implicitly mentioned as in the Treaty of Lisbon (2009). The aim of the EU fathers of Schumann (La Declaration Schumann) and the ideas of Jean Monnet that laid the intellectual and legal foundations of the EU were manifested through the desire for the unification and rapprochement of the European peoples, according to their different cultural, geo-economic, linguistic and other types of characteristics. In the European context, the expression “values” associates a set of cultural, religious or historical elements that deeply design the European civilization. Lucien Febvre states: “Europe signifies two things, one organization and one civilization...it is not about racial purity and impurity, but about the mixing of blood.” In Copenhagen in 1973, the Declaration on European Identity was adopted, which highlights the difference between cultures within European civilization”. In 1975, the Report of the Prime Minister of Belgium, Léo Tindemans, stated that “Europe must create a society which will reflect the values derived from the heritage and the common creation of our peoples”. Multiculturalism has been established as a major framework for analyzing intergroup relations in the United States. The term frequently appears both in politics and in science, to the extent that its meaning becomes less and less clear. The expression multiculturalism is the source of numerous controversies both in terms of definition and in terms of its diversity. The exploitation of the term extends across several scientific fields as well as in national contexts. According to some authors such as Fred Stanley, “multiculturalism is a term whose boundaries are not easy to establish. According to others like Brian Fay it is a “trending word”. Ralph Grillo describes multiculturalism as a “catch-all term”, while the two multiculturalist authors take another step towards confusion. Joe Kincheloe (Joe Kincheloe) and Shirley Seiber (Shirley Steinberg) write “..Multiculturalism means everything and at the same time nothing” Today, multiculturalism is becoming an increasingly important topic in plural industrial societies that have to deal with cultural diversity. The common conclusion of all is that determining the definition of multiculturalism is complicated by the polymorphism and heterogeneity of multiculturalist discourses. The concept of multiculturalism was created in Canada, complemented by Charles Taylor’s “politics of recognition” which he defined as “the democratic defense of cultural diversity from a universalist perspective”. Charles Taylor, 2019, p.23) Multiculturalism is understood differently, according to the formation of the state and its policy regarding the recognition of regional and linguistic peculiarities. Some countries such as Italy and Spain institutionalized pluralism with the constitution of regions and decentralization, others such as Belgium and Switzerland were organized based on the linguistic pluralism of the cantons. In France, Germany, Austria... multiculturalism is accepted as in the USA, that is, by organizing and accepting immigrants by the community. In Western Europe, the use of the term “multiculturalism” refers to the shift from temporary economic immigration to a permanent presence of immigrant populations since the 1960s—especially those from Muslim countries

perceived as “farthest from Western culture.” The complexity of multiculturalism and all the imperatives set by its content led to the expression of the impotence of European leaders in its implementation. Thus, in October 2010, Angela Merkel pointed out that “multiculturalism in Germany has failed.. Does this mean that multiculturalism has become the new enemy of the EU? What is the identity of Europe that is opposed to other cultures? Should we, like Merkel and Sarkozy, appeal to Christian values? To assume that the excessive insistence on the inclusion of Christian values found in Christian traditions can be interpreted as a clear opposition to Islam. After all, even in the proposal for the European Constitution in France, Christian values were not accepted under the pretext that they were in conflict with republican values. However, Christianity presupposes respect for Islamic enclaves in Europe and cohabitation with Islamic culture in the Mediterranean. In 1815 multicultural empires dominated Eastern Europe. The three great empires were the Russian Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the Ottoman Empire. They were broad territorial constructions behind which rested a universal project of a political or religious nature. For the first time since the fall of Byzantium, all the peoples of the Balkans became part of one big multicultural community

3. THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND MULTICULTURALISM

The Ottoman Empire was dominated by Islam, while the Austro-Hungarian Empire was aimed at defending Christianity, primarily Catholicism. Unlike nation-states, empires relied on universal projects. Nations were structured around some particularistic expression. In that way, a kind of sports placement of the national (particularist) logic is affirmed, against the imperial (universalist) logic. Unlike the Ottoman Empire, which arose through conquests and military conflicts, the Austro-Hungarian Empire arose through inheritance of territories (adjonction hereditaire) or by concluding marriage alliances. National movements in these empires referred to “the nations that existed before”. However, this issue was complex because most of the time in these territories they had to speak the common language of the empire. The great reality is that the empire tried at all costs to homogenize the population by mixing populations, deporting, and imposing appropriate iconographies. In the majority of territories speaking from a cultural aspect, the peoples were mixed (linguistically and religiously). With the emergence of the first nation-states comes the awareness of national minorities. Considering the historical context, it can be stated that the multicultural model in the empires functioned flawlessly. For a relatively long time, a stable political organization based on an ethnically and culturally mixed composition functioned in the empires. In the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans, except for Islamization in Albania (70%) and Bosnia (40% of the population), there was no forced Islamization of people. Christians and Jews living under Ottoman rule paid a certain tax and were called dhimmis and were an integral part of the inferior religious group millet. Each religious community had its own rules of operation, its own judgments, and way of thinking. Towards the end of the 19th century, there is a gradual weakening of multicultural empires. The stability of empires rested on the legitimacy of dynasties. The emperor represented the personification of unity. However, with the political modernization according to which “the state is an emanation of the people, of the society, it was understandable that instead of the dynastic logic, the state will be governed by the representatives of the people, i.e. the parliament. Such political evolution goes in the direction of liberal claims (political freedoms, representative system) and is a symbol of deep modernization. Within the Ottoman Empire, Balkan nationalism played a major role in the creation of new states. After 11 years of war for independence, in 1832 Greece gained independence. The independence of Bulgaria (1878), Romania (1885), and Serbia (1878) was followed, by Albania (1912) and other countries. (Stevan K.Pavlovic, 2020, p.288)

4. MULTICULTURALISM IN THE BALKAN AREAS

On 1.12.1918, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was proclaimed by the regent Aleksandar Karađorđević. Although it did not resolve the national issue and the status of the other ethnic communities (Montenegros, Macedonians, Bosniaks, Kosovar Albanians) in the Constitution of the Kingdom of June 28, 1921, in Article 4 the kingdom was declared a “nation-state” with a single nationality - citizenship. The same provision is repeated in the Constitution of September 3, 1931, when the Kingdom of SCS changed the name of the state to “Kingdom of Yugoslavia”. Such a provision is understandable because Yugoslavia was a multicultural mosaic of peoples derived from the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Slovenes, Croats, Bosniaks) with the Catholic faith and Latin script and those from the Ottoman Empire (Serbs, Montenegrins, Bosnian Serbs, Macedonians) with the Orthodox faith and Cyrillic letter as well as other smaller ethnic communities (Albanians, Slovaks, Hungarians..) After World War II, the Socialist Federal

Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ) was formed, inheriting the multicultural character of the previous kingdom. According to the Constitutions of the SFRY (1946, 1963, 1974), each of the Slavic peoples gained a republic in the federation, while the large national minorities Kosovo Albanians and Hungarians received autonomous provinces (Kosovo Metohija and Vojvodina) within the Republic of Serbia. The multiculturalism of Yugoslavia was supplemented by national minorities: Kosovar Albanians, Hungarians from Vojvodina, Czechs, Vlachs, Romanians, Italians, Turks, Bulgarians, Roma... Regarding the languages and writings of the peoples of Yugoslavia, according to Art. 42 of the 1963 Constitution, all languages were declared equal. Only the Yugoslav People's Army used the Serbian-Croatian language in the command and training exercises. In the 1974 Constitution, no language is specified as official while Article 243 states that "one of the languages of the Yugoslav peoples may be used in the command and training activities of the Army". Tito's Yugoslavia lived its own multiculturalism, striving to homogenize Yugoslav society through iconographic symbols (brotherhood and unity, Yugoslav anti-fascism and partisan heroism, Yugoslavism, non-alignment, self-reliance, togetherness, the Army, the Yugoslav dinar, Titoism,) while enabling the republics and autonomous provinces to upgrade their own economic, political and cultural identity to the maximum through the principle of multiculturalism. It can be stated that precisely the multicultural basis on which Yugoslavia was created was the motive for the disintegration of the Yugoslav Federation, just as the multiculturalist basis of the great empires was the main motive for their disintegration. The second common element in the collapse of large or small multicultural entities is that the political, economic, and social pluralism that was characteristic of totalitarian regimes did not exist and was not recognized.

5. MULTICULTURALISM AFTER THE IMPLOSION OF YUGOSLAVIA

After the implosion of the Yugoslav Federation, North Macedonia became independent on September 8, 1991. On September 17 of the same year, the Constitution of the new state was adopted, which in the Preamble defines the state as "the national state of the Macedonian people, within which full civil equality and permanent coexistence of the Macedonian people with the Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Roma and other nationalities living in North Macedonia" (Preamble). After the inter-ethnic crisis of 2001 and with the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the Albanian community received guarantees for the enjoyment of rights related primarily to language, symbols, and decentralization. Based on this agreement, the preamble was also amended, which reads: "...the Macedonian people.. as well as the citizens who are part of the Albanian, Turkish, Wallachian, Serbian, Roma, Bosniak people and others, decided to create the Republic of Macedonia..". This provision significantly strengthens the multi-ethnic and multicultural conception of the state. Article 7 of the Constitution states that "the official language is the Macedonian language and the Cyrillic script" and an amendment is added which establishes that "in the units of local self-government in which members of the nationalities live as the majority, in official use, in addition to Macedonian, the language and script of the nationalities, in a manner established by law." In a work dedicated to the Basic Freedoms and Rights of Man and Citizen, in Art. 9 "equal freedoms and rights are guaranteed regardless of gender, race, skin color, national and social origin, political and religious conviction.." while in Art. 19 freedom of religion is guaranteed." In Art. 48 "Members of nationalities have the right to freely express, nurture and develop their identity and national personalities... the state guarantees the protection of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity.. to be educated in their own language.." The Ohrid Framework Agreement August 13, 2001) is formally composed of four parts: Basic principles and three annexes. Annex "A" contains the constitutional amendments, Annex "B" highlights the changes in the legislation and the most important laws that will be passed, and "C" incorporates confidence building measures and the process of implementing the Agreement. Today every organization is multicultural. Enterprises, associations, and states comprise above all the dominant culture which may be different from that of their partners, allies, or enemies. At the same time, every trade, company, municipality, and region is characterized by its own culture, religion, rituals, customs, dialects, languages, and traditions that are often difficult to understand for others. Finally, a citizen of the same country can differ from a fellow citizen according to social rank and values that are immanent in another microcosm. (Hamza Karcic, 2021, p.1)

6. KOSOVO AND MULTICULTURALISM

Kosovo covers an area of 10,000 km² and has approximately 2 million inhabitants. Its population is very young: 50% of the population is under 27 years old! It is the youngest population in Europe. This demographic phenomenon is very different from neighboring countries like Croatia, Serbia or Macedonia.

It is also an undeniable economic asset for Kosovo. Since independence, development programs have created employment: there are more jobs than before independence. About 60,000 people work in the public service, and especially many young people, employed in the new public administration. There is also work in the field of construction. Those who visit Kosovo from time to time can realize that there are many new constructions. The areas that should create the most jobs in our country are agriculture, tourism and our mineral resources. The entire territory is really covered with lignite (lignite is coal composed of carbon with a maximum of 75%. It is used for the production of heating and electricity). This represents a great economic advantage for Kosovo. It also has high amounts of zinc. Moreover, agricultural land is very fertile, even if we do not have enough investment in this area. Kosovo is a multicultural society. The political practice of Second Yugoslavia (the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, from 1948 to 1992) enabled the use of several languages in the public and daily life of Kosovars: Albanian, Serbian, Romani, and Turkish. The television was showing programs in 4 or 5 languages! They were present in cultural life thanks to the publication of bilingual magazines in the field of law and economics. In the past, numerous articles by professors from Belgrade or Ljubljana, for example, were also published in Albanian, and this practice of translation was never a problem. Some even asked to be translated into Serbian. There was intense communication between the communities of Yugoslavia at that time. This aspect is not well known; When we think of the former Yugoslavia, we always think back to the conflict between Serbs and Albanians, but before that communication was not as bad as it is claimed. In certain periods of coexistence between Serbs and Kosovo Albanians, there was no conflict. At the university, care for balance was nurtured. Observed both Serbian and Albanian professors and university leaders came from both communities. According to the mandates, if the president of the university was Albanian, there was an automatic change to the next mandate. Anaïs Delbarre, 2012 It was not a law but a political meaning of living in Kosovo. The issue was sensitive and needed to be handled tactfully and seek consensus. Today we can see the continuity of this multiculturalism. (Mamer Fusha Davor Marko, RTV Besa:2022) The same languages are present on television, as well as translations, so as not to harm any community. The concern for balance and harmony has not disappeared. (Ibid) In Kosovo, Serbian is the second official language. All documents produced by various Kosovo ministries must be translated into Serbian. This multiculturalism is a political experience in itself. This diverse, cultural and linguistic coexistence is today a good foundation between the Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian, Montenegrin, and Kosovar communities. And in the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, great importance is given to multiculturalism. Now in the Preamble, it is pointed out that Kosovo will strive to build "a free, democratic country of peace that will be a homeland for all its citizens; In addition to the creation of a state of free citizens who guarantee the rights of every citizen, civil liberties and the equality of all citizens before the law." Article 3 of the constitution states that Kosovo is a multi-ethnic society consisting of Albanians and other communities ..which are equal before the law" (Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, 2008). However, the period after the independence of Kosovo was filled with disappointments. The permanent migration of young people to developed countries continued. Kosovo is not yet a beneficiary of the visa liberalization status in the EU. The EU-Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) has been in force since April 2016. The European Reform Agenda (ERA) has continued to serve as a useful tool to guide the implementation of EU-related reforms in the SAA context. In July 2018, the Commission confirmed that Kosovo has fulfilled all visa liberalization benchmarks endorsed by the Council. The Commission continues to stand behind this assessment. The European Parliament confirmed its support for the Commission's proposal for visa liberalization. The proposal is pending in the Council and should be treated as a matter of urgency.

7. CONCLUSION

The circular journey of multiculturalism throughout the history of Europe has shown great leaps, but also sad and criminal, and catastrophic moments. From ancient history through the Ottoman Empire, the creation of Yugoslavia to its implosion, then the creation of the new post-communist states, multiculturalism was everywhere marked. Sometimes this paradigm was an example of homogeneity and sometimes a factor of emancipation and inter-ethnic tensions. Today, all the countries of the Western Balkans have made it official in their constitutions that they are building multi-ethnic societies. (EU Commission Report, 2020,4)

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