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# **National, Cultural and Ethnic Identities: Harmony beyond Conflict**

**Czech Philosophical Studies, IV**

Edited by  
*Jaroslav Hroch, David Hollan, George F. McLean*

The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

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# Introduction

*George F. Mclean*

This volume on “Cultural and Ethnic Identities: Harmony Beyond Conflict” is part of an ongoing worldwide project on “cultural Heritage and Contemporary Change.” In the aftermath of the dramatic changes in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 a set of eight teams in that region took up a study of the values in their cultural heritage. They saw this as having been interrupted by World War II and the Cold War that followed. If they were to rebuild it was necessary to rediscover the philosophical bases of their national life. During the early 90s eight volumes were written and published from the work of those teams. This accomplished, the academies of science and universities of the region decided to point their work toward the future in terms of: “Building Democratic Societies: Values and Rights.” With this volume, some 16 work now begin to come to publication from this second phase of the project.

But all has not been positive in this last decade. As people have moved beyond an abstract and ideological universalism they have uncovered deep foundations for personal and social life. But there has emerged as well differences between the identities of many groups which easily can turn into conflictual relations, especially under the stimulus of the competition for political power. Hence, beyond the positive process rebuilding an intellectual and cultural life, an economy and a political structure, in some areas there have been significant tensions between groups within a country. In some instances these have degenerated into violence, atrocity and genocide.

It is to this underside of the emergence of the peoples of the region that the present joint study is directed. In part this reflects the call of Professor Zagorka Golubovic of Belgrade for attention to the issue of cultural conflict. The present study, for which scholars came together at Masaryk University in Brno in the Czech Republic, was followed by a parallel conference in Belgrade which will be the burden of another volume.

The studies in the present volume are grouped into four parts. The first is the importance of identities: cultural, ethnic and national; the second is the issue of ethnic tensions, especially in Central and Eastern Europe; the third is the principles of unity and communication; and the fourth is the approaches which can contribute to tolerance or the willingness to rebuild mutual bonds and to live in harmony.

In Part I Chapter I by George F. McLean, “Ethnic and National Tensions,” attempts to go to the roots of cultural and ethnic identities in a way that unveils their importance and hence the seriousness of any related tension. It situates cultural values in the basic struggle of peoples to avoid non being and to build a way of life that enables them to flourish as persons and as peoples. Over time, this set of values and corresponding virtues, hammered out in facing crises and striving for human fulfillment, comes to constitute a culture by which human life can be cultivated. It is also a tradition, for this is passed on and adapted to the succeeding generations. In this light cultural identity can be seen as the cumulative wisdom and freedom of a people, indeed the very purchase that a people has on life. It can be expected then that this will be held to, promoted and, where necessary, defended at all costs. There is nothing of greater importance to a people, because this is the issue of the basic value of their life itself. In this light any approach by way of compromising or diminishing the importance of a people’s cultural identity would appear simply to miss the issue, indeed to exacerbate the problem while looking for a response. In *National Identity as an Issue of*

*Knowledge and Morality* in this series Ghia Nodia has described the way in which this also provides the substantive basis of democracy.

Chapter II by Klaus Zapotozcky, “New Challenges of Community Formation,” points out the historical and dynamic character of the development of national identities and their determination along territorial lines as a principle of order. This again points to the emerging internal importance of the third sector or civil society and the external dynamics of globalization.

Chapter III by Heinz Holley, “The Emergence of Nationalism, Ethnic Clashes and Fundamentalist Movements in the Light of Globalization,” attends especially to the challenge of globalization. If seen in economic, rather than cultural, terms this could be a dehumanizing rather than a humanizing force generating a pervasive anomie.

Chapter IV by Byaruhanga Rukooko Archangel, “Social Identity and Conflict: A Positive Approach,” sets out on a fascinating experiment by asserting that identities as such are conflictual and then looking for principles of convergence. In the process he draws richly upon the African experience. It might be asked whether there are not more resources in his paper than he deploys, for he distinguishes between identities based upon matter and those based in spirit. The latter, which indeed is characteristic of the human as conscious and intelligent, is a principle of openness and hence relational rather than conflictual. He concludes “On this basis it is possible to conceive and work toward an harmonious union of several identities in a commonwealth based on individual freedom”. If so the Trinity may be a better model to think with than Cartesian collisions between extended bodies with impetus.

Part II “Conflict” turns from identities to the fact of conflict between multiple groups. Chapter V by Zagorka Golubovic, “National Conflicts and the Problem of Democracy in Post-communist Societies,” draws from depth psychology in order to identify ways in which a national identity can be a matter of basic security and hence is threatened by others who are different. Especially, however, her chapter is an outstanding articulation of the Enlightenment liberal position. This focuses upon free choice by the individual so that any national identity is seen as a choice of allegiance to a politico-cultural unit, and does not engage the language, religion or cultural traditions of the people. In contrast, any national identity which is not neutral before such choices is described negatively as tribal, ascriptive and aggressive, and hence is to be rejected. This appears to miss the hermeneutic fact that one is born within a language community, a symbol system and set of myths, i.e., within a culture on the basis of which such a choice of national identity is framed and in terms of whose values such a decision can be made.

The second part of this paper treats the manipulation of national identity by and for political power. The situation is not hopeful, for in rejecting attention to the basic cultural identifiers of a people as unworthy of free persons the liberal position of arbitrary choice abandons this to politicians as an instrument in their search for coercive power. In sum, the chapter is a description of the development of the present crisis in terms not only of the basis in national identity for political power, but of the removal of the cultural well springs of substantive human dignity in favor of political processes bereft of motivation or norm.

Chapter VI by Miloslav Bednár, “Post Communist Nationalism as a New Version of Totalitarianism and Its Spiritual Democratic Alternative,” traces the reality of conflict to the communist totalitarian mentality and its survivals in these post-communist times.

Chapter VII by Miroslav Milovic, “Individual and Communication the Case of Yugoslavia,” continues this theme which it extends deeply into the history and tradition of the region, brilliantly illustrating the complexity of the issues and thereby uncovering the motivation of present leaders.

Chapter VIII by Jana Balázová, “Internal Causes of National Tensions,” also analyses the causes of present tensions, focusing especially on nationalism and the way in which internal tensions have led to its manipulation by military power for political advantage.

Chapter IX by Jurate Morkuniene, “Social Freedom in Contemporary Thought,” describes the set of threats to social life following the communist era and the importance of active participation by all if positive progress is to be made. In this light there emerges the special need and challenge of developing civil society in post totalitarian times.

Chapter X by Jelona Djuric, “The Value Context of Ethnic and National Tensions,” looks especially at recent philosophical trends, but finds there a more critical and deconstructive orientation unsuited to taking up the positive task of building unity between people. “It screens out the possibilities of complementarity between people and leaves instead conflicting relationships between cultures, individuals and peoples.”

Part III “Principles of Unity and Communication” begins to look for ways to proceed in the face of these difficulties. As this is not merely a question of social modelling but of concrete relations between peoples, it is not possible to abstract from the deepest human concerns; rather, it is these which need to be dealt with.

Chapter XI by Miloslav Bednár, “The Phenomenon of Human Dignity after Totalitarianism,” takes up the hint suggested but not developed in Chapter IV of Professor Byarhuhanga, namely, the need to understand identity on a deeper level if it is to be harmonious rather than conflictual. For this he draws upon the thought of J. Patocka and T.G. Masaryk which he elaborates in terms of a phenomenology of appearing according to which the essentially relational character of persons can be appreciated. In contrast, to attempt to solve a problem, e.g. of justice, by a technology of redistribution rather than of responsibility would be miss the personal character of those involved and to promote conflict.

Chapter XII by Janus Kuczynski, “The Universalism of John Paul II and the United Nations: Towards a New Intellectual-Ethical Environment,” is a most extraordinary document. First its author, long editor of *Dialectics and Humanism*, is unsurpassed in effective devotion to the cause of human interchange and peace. Second, while coming from a Marxist commitment, he writes with the greatest enthusiasm about Pope John Paul’s second speech to the United Nations and details its message of the importance of cultures and their religious roots precisely as principles not of conflict, but of convergence. Third Professor Kuczynski relates this to his own effort to develop the theme of universalism, which indeed has become almost synonymous with his name. In this the author is careful to note that this is not an abstract universal which would eviscerate the person and its uniqueness. Further exploration of the writing of John Paul II would reveal the rich Christian tradition of diversity in unity and the way in which he has enriched his traditional scholastic philosophy of being by calling on the philosophy of consciousness or phenomenology in our day.

Chapter XIII by Plamen Makariev, “Power Relations and Multiculturalism in the Balkans,” takes up the challenge of relations between cultures. He provides historical context and theoretical axes, but especially he develops an exceptionally helpful analysis and evaluation of the various forms of inter-cultural relationships. One is a constitutional approach which divides all benefits and responsibilities between ethnic groups; but today this is difficult to regulate “from above”. Another approach is the liberal separation of intercultural relations from the mechanisms of political power; but this amounts to the marginalization of one’s original culture -- this is exactly what is being rejected: it is the problem rather than the solution. Professor Makariev suggests

instead Habermas's notion of "horizontal" communication between cultures. This would restore a voice to the cultures which the liberal view would suppress and look for recognition of equal voice to each culture by all others. This is a promising direction, but Habermas provides only a formal system describing the ideal dialogical situation. It is necessary to go further in order to find the actual principles for this in the values of each lived culture and indeed to develop a metaphysics of open communication between all.

Chapter XIV by Vajislav Stanovic, "Constitutions and the Rule of Law in Ethically Divided Societies," stresses the importance of the development of a clear and strong legal framework for the proper interaction of national or ethnic groups within a society. He describes the reemergence of these senses of identity and the need for their recognition in constitutions. This suggests a constitutional approach as a solution. The chapter of Professor Makariev, however, questions the feasibility of such a solution for the Balkans at this time.

Chapter XV by Jaroslav Krejci, "Human Rights in a Divided World," explores the liberal response to the challenge outlined in chapter I. He clarifies the diversity which exists between civilizations and points to two modern orientations. One favors intellectual and moral constructs, such as the general will and laws of history in a social engineering approach such as that of Marx; the other stresses equality and self-assertion. These were the poles of the cold war. Krejci would extend the former to the Orthodox and the Confucian contexts, while relating the latter to a general neglect of responsibility by the state. The orientation early in this century toward a coincidence of political with ethnic borders, and more recently the reversal of this through immigration transformed the problem of ethnic tensions from an external problem between different parts of the world to the inner heart of the many nations due to the fact of immigration.

Chapter XVI by Belianskas Zilvinas, "The Origin and Purpose of Alyirdas Julien Greimas' Structured Semiotics," at first would seem to be remote from our theme. However, the author shows the great range of the mind of Greimas and how he proceeded from field to field to integrate the broadest range of meaning into his structural semiotics. Not least of his work was that on myth, especially of Lithuania, as a key to a people's culture. This could be translated semiotically to other levels of knowledge and, one suspects, to other patterns of myth and culture in a way that would enable convergence to be not only a hope, but a scientific product. The author points to a way beyond the surface interplay of power to the deep structure of language in an attempt to understand how peoples can interrelate. Drawing inspiration from Saussure, he took up a structural study of the myths of a culture. This is precisely what is rejected by the liberal position as unworthy and destructive of human sociality, which brings into clearer light the destructive character of ignoring the cultural roots of a people and abandonment to political manipulation. In contrast, Greimas identifies cultural myths as the very wellspring of social identity and relationship. It is precisely in these cultural roots that any serious response to national and ethnic tension must begin.

Part IV turns from theory to the practice of unity in terms of "tolerance" not as in abstract theory, but as a willingness to live together.

Chapter XVII by Basia Nikiforova, "Otherness and Tolerance," leads off with a study of peoples who have retained their identity and how they coexist with others. This attends especially to the Jewish experience in Lithuania.

Chapter XVIII by Cristal Huang, "Tolerance and the Interpretative Whole: Cultures and Difference," brings the hermeneutic work of H.-G. Gadamer to the search for the principles of tolerance. By locating these within the interpretative whole the opens the way to attending to the



unique reality of freedom as this is exercised within the entirety of a nation and a world. This takes the issue beyond political power to a recognition of the human dignity of all.

Chapter XIX by Dalia Marija Stanciene, "The Historical Roots of Tolerance and Liberalism in Lithuania," finds in the Lithuanian cultural tradition the elements for a philosophy of tolerance. This goes far back into its myths; it was practiced in its history as welcoming peoples from many different backgrounds; and it was provided with a reflective base by the Christian philosophy of the person. She identifies difficulties in assimilating the more recent existential currents, though much remarkable work has been carried out in this direction.

Chapter XX by Magadalena Dumitrana, "The Orthodox Church and Ethno-Religious Tolerance in Romania," brings to the issue some of the rich Orthodox Church resources in Romanian culture especially related to its tradition of tolerance and even of hospitality. By noting that this is characteristic not only of Romanian culture, but of most others she suggests that cultures, rather than being in principle antithetic and conflictual, are in principle open and welcoming to others. This suggests then not an abstractive universalism which rejects the identity of the various peoples, but cultural traditions as the resource from which principles of inter-ethnic harmony are to be sought. Her particular attention to the traditions of the Orthodox church in this regard may be of special interest to the Yugoslav situation.

Chapter XXI by Aviezer Tucker, "The Home of Man," responds to the tendency to reject others as alien. Instead he develops the notion of home and of hospitality, engaging ideas of V. Havel and others.

Chapter XXII by Stjepan Gredelj, "Democracy from the Grassroots: Learning by Doing," describes data from some sociological surveys which show the great dangers to which youth and their social sense are subjected. This data indicates an alarming development of nationalist and ethnocentric orientations. In response he describes two failed efforts to work concretely on the ground level with small groups to overcome suspicions and develop harmony. One was abandoned due to lack of community support and to governmental hostility. The other was abandoned when NGO funding from outside ceased. This may suggest that progress on these issues cannot be generated from without or managed by formal techniques of group dynamics, but must emerge from the concrete neighborhood groups of a civil society. This is true especially where these engage concrete common concerns such as health or environment and work with the value bases of the culture, as in education and religion.

In sum, the work reflects an exceptional range of insight and approaches. These point to cultures and modern political structures as resources for a solution to present conflicts. But they indicate also how these have failed effectively to respond to the challenge and may even be part of the problem. From this there emerges a better sense of the challenge and of the resources which can play a role in the development of a response. How these two can effectively be brought together remains a task for the future.



## Chapter I

# Ethnic and National Tensions

*George F. Mclean*

There is a body of opinion which looks at the emergence of national and ethnic tensions after the end of communist rule as a regression to earlier, less complex times. Seen in that light the answer to such tensions is simply to take up the modern Enlightenment project, omit all attention to the differentiated character of peoples and proceed according to their common humanity.

This, however, may be vainly to say that people should not have these problems or, even more vainly, simply to wish them away. It does not take up the differences, consider whether they be necessarily destructive and what can be done to enable them to be constructive.

Indeed, attention to cultural identities seems to have been an important element in breaking through the prior totalitarian uniformization, and to be an essential component of the cultural changes at this transition of the millennia. If so, then to seek harmony through ignoring group distinctiveness promises to be futile -- or worse, dangerously destructive.

### **From Enlightenment Reason to Aesthetic Awareness**

#### *Limitations of Enlightenment Rationalism*

Today, as much is said of a post-modern global culture, there is an emerging consensus that philosophy may have overreached itself in the Enlightenment in requiring that all be subjected solely to the technical requirements of clarity before human reason. It should have been noted sooner that this requirement led almost immediately to the two contrary results of Anglo-Saxon empiricism and Continental intellectualism. Together these constituted a Kantian antinomy manifesting rationalism to be reductionist, and to that degree dehumanizing.

It is essential to diagnose not the symptoms, but the illness in order to undertake the truly new project of the coming millennium. If the Enlightenment in its achievements has in the end come to prove insufficient, what did it omit which now has emerged as essential -- and what new dimension of philosophy must now be developed.

To see this let us return to the birth of modern rationalism. Something philosophically new took place at that time. Attention moved from a concern with things in themselves, whether these be considered forms (ideas) as in Plato or physical realities as in Aristotle. Instead attention focused upon subjectivity in the sense of human awareness and in particular upon ideas in the mind of the one who knows. What we are concerned about when thinking is ideas, notes Locke.<sup>1</sup>

Critical distance is an essential element and requires analysis by the social sciences of the historical social structures as a basis for liberation from determination and dependence upon unjust interests. The concrete psycho- and socio-pathology deriving from such dependencies and the corresponding steps toward liberation are the subject of the chapters by J. Loiacono and H. Ferrand de Piazza in *The Social Context and Values: Perspectives of the Americas*.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, II, 1.

<sup>2</sup> G. McLean and O. Pegoraro, eds. (Washington: Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1988), Chs. III and IV.

Moreover, we find a new approach common to philosophers of the period. They thought it not possible to build upon the foundations laid by the millennia of human experience in its multiple forms. Instead, each feels it necessary to remove all previously content of human awareness in order to build a central construct with clear and distinct ideas. Hence, we live the heritage of the great projects of: (a) Descartes, in submitting all to doubt except and in as much as it could be established in terms of clear, distinct and indubitable ideas; (b) Bacon, in smashing all the idols which bore the long acquired wisdom of the tradition and the broad range of human sensibilities; and (c) Locke, in erasing all until there remained but the mind and that as a blank tablet.

In this aseptic laboratory there was allowed to enter only the clear and distinct ideas coming alternately in the Anglo Saxon tradition from the senses, or in the continental tradition from the intellect. The task of the mind was to construct new self-understandings in terms exclusively of these materials. These new laboratory humanoids were fascinating and in many ways useful instruments. However, as became evident in the Cold War the products of these two traditions were unable to comprehend each other, not to mention peoples from non Western cultures. Possessed of great, but less than fully human powers, their potential for destruction is symbolized in their mutual threat to annihilate not only each other, but all human kind. What G.B. Vico saw 70 years after Descartes -- namely, that this would generate an intellectual brute -- we have come to experience bitterly in the hot and cold ideological wars of the last century.

### *Aesthetic Awareness as a Further Dimension of the Human Spirit*

All of this, together with the existential and postmodern critiques of rationalism, suggest that the task of developing a more adequate notion of civil society must be taken up, but on a new, more open and inclusive basis. To do so will require a richer notion of reason and of freedom capable of integrating the personal dimensions of moral sensitivity in a broader sense of human life and meaning such as is suggested by the new call for civil society. But if this is to be more than a replay of the past the effort to redevelop the notion of civil society must be moved to a new level of freedom: neither to that of mere choice between alternate objects, nor to that of the Kantian effort to will as one ought, but to the freedom "to be able, by a power inherent in human nature, to change one's own character creatively by deciding for oneself what one shall do or shall become."<sup>3</sup> It is in these terms, rather than at the proceeding two levels of freedom, that Adler situates political liberty and collective freedom.

In initiating the decade in which he wrote his three critiques, Kant did not have the third critique in view. He wrote the first critique in order to provide methodologically for the universality and necessity of the categories found in scientific knowledge. He developed the second critique to provide for the reality of human freedom. But when both of these had been written he could see that in order to protect and promote the exercise of freedom within a material world there was need for a third set of categories, namely, those of aesthetic judgement. These integrate the realms of matter and spirit in a harmony which can be appreciated in terms not of a science of nature as in the first critique, nor of personal freedom as worked out in the second critique, but of human creativity working with all elements to create life and meaning as an expanding and enriching reality.

Kant was facing squarely a root dilemma of modern times, namely: how the newly uncovered freedom of the second critique can survive when confronted with the necessity and universality of

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<sup>3</sup> Mortimer J. Adler, *The Idea of Freedom: A Dialectical Examination of the Conceptions of Freedom* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1958), p. 187.

the realm of science as understood in the *Critique of Pure Reason*? In terms of the first two critiques alone he faced the following challenge.

- Will the scientific interpretation of nature restrict freedom to the inner realm of each person's heart, where it is reduced at best to good intentions or to feelings towards others?
- When we attempt to act in this world or to reach out to others, must all our categories be universal and hence insensitive to that which marks others as unique and personal?
- Must they be necessary, and, hence, leave no room for creative freedom, which would be entrapped and then entombed in the human mind? If so, then public life can be only impersonal, necessitated, repetitive and stagnant.
- Or must the human spirit be reduced to the sterile content of empirical facts or to the necessitated modes of scientific laws? If so, then philosophers cannot escape forcing upon wisdom a suicidal choice between either being traffic directors in the jungle of un-fettered competition or being tragically complicit in setting a predetermined order for the human spirit.

Freedom then would, indeed, have been killed; it would pulse no more as the heart of mankind.

Before these alternatives, Kant's answer is a resounding, No! Taking as his basis the reality of freedom -- so passionately and often tragically affirmed in our lifetime by Ghandi and Martin Luther King -- Kant proceeded to develop his third *Critique of the Faculty of Judgment* as a context within which freedom and scientific necessity could coexist, indeed, in which necessity would be the support and instrument of freedom.

To provide for this, Kant found it necessary to distinguish two issues, reflected in the two parts of his third *Critique*. In the "Critique of Teleological Judgment",<sup>4</sup> he acknowledges that nature and all reality must be teleological. This was a basic component of the classical view which enabled all to be integrated within the context of a society of free people working according to a developed order of reason. For Kant, if there is to be room for human freedom in a cosmos in which man can make use of necessary laws, if science is to contribute to the exercise of human freedom, then nature too must be directed toward a transcendent goal and manifest throughout a teleology within which free human purpose can be integrated. In these terms, nature, even in its necessary and universal laws, is no longer alien to freedom, but expresses divine freedom and is conciliable with human freedom. The same might be said of the economic order and its "hidden hand." The structure of his first *Critique* will not allow Kant to affirm this teleological character as an absolute and self-sufficient metaphysical reality, but he recognizes that we must proceed "as if" all reality is teleological precisely because of the undeniable reality of human freedom in an ordered universe.

If, however, teleology, in principle, provides the needed space, there remains a second issue of how freedom is exercised, namely, what mediates it to the necessary and universal laws of science? This is the task of his "Critique of the Aesthetic Judgment",<sup>5</sup> and it is here that the imagination reemerges to play its key integrating role in human life. From the point of view of the human person, the task is to explain how one can live in freedom with nature for which the first critique had discovered only laws of universality and necessity, and especially with structures of society in a way that is neither necessitated nor necessitating?

There is something similar here to the *Critique of Pure Reason* where, under the rule of unity, the imagination orders and reorders the multiple phenomena until they are ready to be informed

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<sup>4</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. J.H. Bernard (New York: Hafner, 1968), pp. 205-339.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 37-200.

by a unifying principle which was one of the abstract and universal categories of the intellect.<sup>6</sup> In *Critique of the Aesthetic Judgment*, the imagination has a similar task of constructing the object, but not in a manner necessitated by universal categories or concepts. In contrast, here the imagination, in working toward an integrating unity, is not confined by the necessitating structures of categories and concepts, but ranges freely over the full sweep of reality in all its dimensions to see whether and wherein relatedness and purposiveness or teleology can emerge and the world and our personal and social life can achieve its meaning and value. Hence, in standing before a work of nature or of art, the imagination might focus upon light or form, sound or word, economic or interpersonal relations -- or, indeed, upon any combination of these in a natural environment or a society, whether encountered concretely or expressed in symbols.

Throughout all of this, the ordering and reordering by the imagination can bring about numberless unities. Unrestricted by any *a priori* categories, it can nevertheless integrate necessary dialectical patterns within its own free and, therefore, creative production, as well as scientific universals within its unique concrete harmonies. This is properly creative work. More than merely evaluating all according to a set pattern in one's culture, it chooses the values and orders reality accordingly. This is the very constitution and ongoing development of the culture itself; it is the productive rather than merely reproductive work of the human person as living in his or her physical world. Here, I use the possessive form advisedly. Without this capacity one would exist in the physical universe as another object, not only subject to its laws but restricted and possessed by them. One would be not a free citizen of the material world, but its mere function or servant. In his third Critique Kant unfolds how human persons can truly be masters of their life in this world, not in an arbitrary and destructive manner, but precisely as creative artists bringing being to realization in new harmonies which make possible further growth in freedom.

In order for the realm of human freedom to be extended to the whole of reality, this harmony must be able to be appreciated, not purely intellectually in relation to a concept (for then we would be reduced to the universal and necessary as in the first critique), but aesthetically by the pleasure or displeasure, the attraction or repulsion of the free response it generates. It is our contemplation or reflection upon this pleasure or displeasure which shows whether a proper and authentic ordering has or has not been achieved. This is not a concept,<sup>7</sup> but the pleasure or displeasure, the elation at the beautiful and sublime or the disgust at the ugly and revolting, which flows from our contemplation or reflection. In this the human person as a whole, fully and freely alive, becomes the norm, expression and fulfillment of being.

## Culture

These questions point to the new hermeneutic sensibility opened by the work of Husserl, and developed by Heidegger and especially Gadamer (to cite the key figures over three generations) as a new road to the appreciation of civil society for our time.

This phenomenologically based approach would take account of the free and creative work of social cooperation. Working on the aesthetic level of Kant's third critique it promises to harmonize and direct social cooperation, integrating rather than omitting the natural basis and the political

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<sup>6</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. N.K. Smith (London: Macmillan, 1929), A112, 121, 192-193. Donald W. Crawford, *Kant's Aesthetic Theory* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1974), pp. 83-84, 87-90.

<sup>7</sup> See Kant's development and solution to the problem of the autonomy of taste, *Critique of Judgment*, nn. 57-58, pp. 182-192, where he treats the need for a concept; Crawford, pp. 63-66.

dimensions of social life. This points to a hermeneutic reading of the creativity of social life though time.

I have developed this at some length in a set of lectures delivered at Fudan University and published under the title: *Tradition, Harmony and Transcendence*,<sup>8</sup> especially lectures I “Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Creativity” and III “Harmony as a Contemporary Metaphysics of Freedom: Kant and Confucius”. Here, I would recall the following with regard to values and virtues, cultural tradition and its application.

### *Values*

For the drama of self-determination and the development of persons and of civil society one must look to their relation to the good in search of which we live, survive and thrive. The good is manifest in experience as the object of desire, namely, as that which is sought when absent. Basically, it is what completes life; it is the “per-fect”, understood in its etymological sense as that which is completed or realized through and through; once achieved, it is no longer desired or sought, but enjoyed. This is reflected in the manner in which each thing, even a stone, retains the being or reality it has and resists reduction to non-being or nothing: the most that we can do is to change or transform a thing into something else, but we cannot annihilate it. Similarly, a plant or tree, given the right conditions, grows to full stature and fruition. Finally, an animal protects its life -- fiercely, if necessary -- and seeks out the food needed for its strength. This, in turn, as capable of contributing to animal’s realization or perfection, is for the animal an auxiliary good or means.

In this manner, things as good, that is, as actually realizing some degree of perfection and able to contribute to the wellbeing of others, are the bases for an interlocking set of relations. As these relations are based upon both the actual perfection things possess and the potential perfection to which they are thereby directed, the good is perfection both as attracting when it has not yet been attained and as constituting one’s fulfillment upon its achievement. Goods, then, are not arbitrary or simply a matter of wishful thinking; they are rather the full development of things and all that contributes thereto. In this ontological or objective sense, all beings are good to the extent that they exist and can contribute to the perfection of others.

The moral good is a more narrow field, for it concerns only one’s free and responsible actions. This has the objective reality of the ontological good noted above, for it concerns real actions which stand in distinctive relation to our own perfection and to that of others -- and, indeed, to the physical universe and to God as well. Hence, many possible patterns of actions could be objectively right because they promote the good of those involved, while others, precisely as inconsistent with the real good of persons or things, are objectively disordered or misordered. This constitutes the objective basis for values and disvalues.

Nevertheless, because the realm of objective relations is almost numberless, whereas our actions are single, it is necessary not only to choose in general between the good and the bad, but in each case to choose which of the often innumerable possibilities one will render concrete. However broad or limited the options, as responsible and moral an act is essentially dependent upon its being willed by a subject. Therefore, in order to follow the emergence of the field of concrete moral action, it is not sufficient to examine only the objective aspect, namely, the nature of the persons, actions and things involved. In addition, one must consider the action in relation to the subject, namely, to the person who, in the context of his/her society and culture, appreciates

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<sup>8</sup> (Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1994).

and values the good of this action, chooses it over its alternatives, and eventually wills its actualization.

The term 'value' here is of special note. It was derived from the economic sphere where it meant the amount of a commodity sufficient to attain a certain worth. This is reflected also in the term 'axiology' whose root means "weighing as much" or "worth as much." It requires an objective content -- the good must really "weigh in" and make a real difference; but the term 'value' expresses this good especially as related to wills which actually acknowledge it as a good and as desirable.<sup>9</sup> Thus, different individuals or groups of persons and at different periods have distinct sets of values. A people or community is sensitive to and prizes a distinct set of goods or, more likely, it establishes a distinctive ranking in the degree to which it prizes various goods. By so doing, it delineates among limitless objective goods a certain pattern of values which in a more stable fashion mirrors their corporate free choices.

This constitutes the basic topology of a culture; as repeatedly reaffirmed through time, it builds a tradition or heritage about which we shall speak below. It constitutes, as well, the prime pattern and gradation of goods which persons experience from their earliest years and in terms of which they interpret their developing relations. Young persons peer out at the world through a lens formed, as it were, by their family and culture and configured according to the pattern of choices made by that community throughout its history -- often in its most trying circumstances. Like a pair of glasses it does not create the object; but it focuses attention upon certain goods, rather than upon others. This becomes the basic orienting factor for the affective and emotive life described by the Scotts as the heart of civil society. In time, it encourages and reinforces certain patterns of action which, in turn, reinforce the pattern of values.

Through this process, a group constitutes its moral concern in terms of which it struggles to advance or at least endure, mourns its failures, and celebrates its successes. This is our world of hopes and fears, in terms of which, as Plato wrote in the *Laches*, our lives have moral meaning.<sup>10</sup> It is varied according to the many concerns and the groups which coalesce around them. As these are interlocking and interdependent a pattern of social ends and concerns develops which guides action. In turn corresponding capacities for action or virtue are developed.

On the part of a people this is the aesthetic process described by Kant wherein the resonance of a way of life in the hearts and minds, in the deepest sensibilities of a people, tunes, adjusts and perfects the engagement of that people in being. This is the constitution of the culture of a people, into which one is born and by which one is enabled to live fully.

### *Virtues*

Martin Heidegger describes a process by which the self emerges as a person in the field of moral action. It consists in transcending oneself or breaking beyond mere self-concern and projecting outward as a being whose very nature is to share with others for whom one cares and about whom one is concerned. In this process, one identifies new purposes or goals for the sake of which action is to be undertaken. In relation to these goals, certain combinations of possibilities, with their natures and norms, take on particular importance and begin thereby to enter into the

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<sup>9</sup> Karol Wojtyla, *The Acting Person* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1979), pp. 48-50; "The Person: Subject and Community," *Review of Metaphysics*, 33 (1979-80), 273-308; and "The Task of Christian Philosophy Today," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, 53 (1979), 3-4.

<sup>10</sup> *Laches*, 198-201.



makeup of one's world of meaning.<sup>11</sup> Freedom then becomes more than mere spontaneity, more than choice, and more even than self-determination in the sense of causing oneself to act as described above. It shapes -- the phenomenologist would say even that it constitutes -- one's world as the ambit or sphere of human decisions and dynamic action. This is the making of the complex social ordering of social groups which constitute society.

This process of deliberate choice and decision transcends the somatic and psychic dynamisms. Whereas the somatic dimension is extensively reactive, the psychic dynamisms of affection or appetite are fundamentally oriented to the good and positively attracted by a set of values which evoke an active response from the emotions in the context of responsible freedom. But it is in the dimension of responsibility that one encounters the properly moral and social dimension of life. For, in order to live with others, one must be able to know, to choose and finally to realize what is truly conducive to one's good and to that of others. Thus, persons and groups must be able to judge the true value of what is to be chosen, that is, its objective worth both in itself and in relation to others. This is moral truth: the judgment regarding whether the act makes the person and society good in the sense of bringing authentic individual and social fulfillment, or the contrary.

In this, deliberation and voluntary choice are required in order to exercise proper self-awareness and self-governance. By determining to follow this judgment I am able to overcome determination by stimuli and even by culturally ingrained values and to turn these, instead, into openings for free action in concert with others in order to shape my community as well as my physical surroundings. This can be for good or for ill, depending on the character of my actions. By definition, only morally good actions contribute to personal and social fulfillment, that is, to the development and perfection of persons with others in community. When this is exercised or lived, patterns of action develop which are habitual in the sense of being repeated. These are the modes of activity with which we are familiar; in their exercise, along with the coordinated natural dynamisms they require, we are practiced, and with practice comes facility and spontaneity. Such patterns constitute the basic, continuing and pervasive shaping influence of our life. For this reason, they have been considered classically to be the basic indicators of what our life as a whole will add up to, or, as is often said, "amount to". Since Socrates, the technical term used for these specially developed capabilities is 'virtues'.

### *Cultural Tradition and Community*

Together, these values and virtues of a people set the pattern of social life through which freedom is developed and exercised. This is called a "culture". On the one hand, the term is derived from the Latin word for tilling or cultivating the land. Cicero and other Latin authors used it for the cultivation of the soul or mind (*cultura animi*), for just as even good land, when left without cultivation, will produce only disordered vegetation of little value, so the human spirit will not achieve its proper results unless trained.<sup>12</sup> This sense of culture corresponds most closely to the

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<sup>11</sup> J.L. Mehta, *Martin Heidegger: The Way and the Vision* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1976), pp. 90-91.

<sup>12</sup> V. Mathieu, "Cultura" in *Enciclopedia Filosofica* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1967), II, 207-210; and Raymond Williams, "Culture and Civilization," *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), II, 273-276, and *Culture and Society* (London, 1958).

Greek term for education (*paideia*) as the development of character, taste and judgment, and to the German term “formation” (*Bildung*).<sup>13</sup>

Here, the focus is upon the creative capacity of the spirit of a people and their ability to work as artist, not only in the restricted sense of producing purely aesthetic objects, but in the more involved sense of shaping all dimensions of life, material and spiritual, economic and political. The result is a whole life, characterized by unity and truth, goodness and beauty, and, thereby, sharing deeply in meaning and value. The capacity to do so cannot be taught, although it may be enhanced by education. More recent phenomenological and hermeneutic inquiries suggest that, at its base, culture is a renewal, a reliving of origins in an attitude of profound appreciation.<sup>14</sup> This leads us beyond self and other, beyond identity and diversity, in order to comprehend both.

On the other hand, “culture” can be traced to the term *civis* as the roots for citizen, civil society and civilization.<sup>15</sup> These reflect the need for a person to belong to a social group or community in order for the human spirit to produce its proper results. By bringing to the person the resources of the tradition, the *tradita* or past wisdom produced by the human spirit the community facilitates comprehension. By enriching the mind with examples of values which have been identified in the past, it teaches and inspires one to produce something analogous. For G.F. Klemm, this more objective sense of culture is composite in character.<sup>16</sup> Tyler defined this classically for the social sciences as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits required by man as a member of society.”<sup>17</sup>

In contrast, Geertz came to focus on the meaning of all this for a people and on how a people’s intentional action went about shaping its world. Thus he contrasts the analysis of culture to an experimental science in search of law; he sees culture rather as an interpretative science in search of meaning.<sup>18</sup> What is sought is the import of artifacts and actions, that is, whether “it is ridicule or challenge, irony or anger, snobbery or pride, that, in their occurrence and through their agency, is getting said.”<sup>19</sup> For this there is need to be aware “of the imaginative universe within which their acts are signs.”<sup>20</sup> In this light, Geertz defines culture rather as “an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of intended conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life.”<sup>21</sup> Culture, as this cumulative product of the creative human imagination, is the aesthetic level of human life.

The development of values and virtues and their integration as a culture of any depth or richness takes time and, hence, depends upon the experience and creativity of many generations. The culture which is handed on, or *tradita*, comes to be called a cultural tradition; as such it reflects the cumulative achievement of a people in discovering, mirroring and transmitting the deepest meanings of life. This is tradition in its synchronic sense as a body of wisdom.

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<sup>13</sup> Tonnelat, “Kultur” in *Civilisation, le mot et l’idée* (Paris: Centre International de Synthèse), II.

<sup>14</sup> V. Mathieu, *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> V. Mathieu, “Civilta,” *ibid.*, I, 1437-1439.

<sup>16</sup> G.F. Klemm, *Allgemein Culturgeschichte de Menschheit* (Leipzig, 1843-52), x.

<sup>17</sup> E.B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (London, 1871), VII, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (London: Hutchinson, 1973), p. 5.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

This sense of tradition is very vivid in premodern and village communities. It would appear to be much less so in modern urban centers, undoubtedly in part due to the difficulty in forming active community life in large urban centers.

### *Hermeneutics and Relations between Cultures*

However, the cumulative process of transmitting, adjusting and applying the values of a culture through time is not only heritage or what is received, but new creation as we pass this on in new ways. Attending to tradition, taken in this active sense, allows us not only to uncover the permanent and universal truths which Socrates sought, but to perceive the importance of the values we receive from the tradition for to creativity mobilizing our own life project actively toward the future.

In this active process tradition transforms what is received, lives it in a creative manner and passes it on as a leaven for the future. Let us turn then from the cumulative meaning and value in tradition, its synchronic aspect, to its diachronic or particular meaning for each new time in receiving from the past, ordering the present and constructing the future. This is a matter, first of all, of taking time seriously, that is, of recognizing that reality includes authentic novelty. This contrasts to the perspective of Plato for whom the real is the ideal and unchangeable forms or ideas transcending matter and time, and of which physical things and temporal events are but shadows. It also goes beyond rationalism's search for clear and distinct knowledge of eternal and simple natures and their relations in terms of which all might be controlled, and beyond romanticism's attention to a primordial unchanging nature hidden in the dimly sensed past. *A fortiori*, it goes beyond method alone without content.

In contrast to all these, the notion of application<sup>22</sup> is based upon an awareness that "reality is temporal and unfolding". This means that tradition, with its inherent authority or normative force, achieves its perfection in the temporal unfolding of reality. Secondly, it shows human persons and peoples, not as detached intellects, but as incarnate and, hence, enabled by and formative of, their changing physical and social universe. Thirdly, in the area of socio-political values and action, it expresses directly the striving of persons to realize their lives and the development of this striving into attitudes (*hexis*) and institutions. Hence, as distinct from the physical order, human action is a situation neither of law nor of lawlessness, but of human and, therefore, developing institutions and attitudes which do not determine and, hence, do not destroy human freedom, but regulate and promote its exercise.<sup>23</sup>

Certain broad guidelines for the area of ethics and politics serve in the application of tradition as a guide for historical practice and vice-versa. The concrete exercise of human freedom as unique decisions lived with others through time constitutes a distinctive and ongoing process. Historicity means that responses to the good are made always in concrete and everchanging circumstances. Hence, the general principles of ethics and politics as a philosophic science of action cannot be purely theoretical knowledge or a simple accounting from the past. Instead, they must help people consciously exercise their freedom in concrete historical circumstances which are ever changing and new.

Here, an important distinction must be made from *techné* where action is governed by an idea as an exemplary cause that is fully determined and known by objective theoretical knowledge (*epistéme*). As in the case of an architect's blueprints, skill, such as that of the engineer, consists

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<sup>22</sup> H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroads, 1982), pp. 281-286.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 278-279.

in knowing how to act according to that idea or plan; when it cannot be carried out perfectly, some parts of it are simply omitted in the execution. In contrast, ethics and politics, though similar in the possession of a practical guide and its application to a particular task, differ in important ways. First, in moral action subjects -- whether a person or a people -- constitute themselves, as much as they produce an object: agents are differentiated by their action. Hence, moral knowledge, as an understanding of the appropriateness of human action, cannot be fully determined independently of the subjects in their situation and in action.

Secondly, adaptation by moral agents in their application of the law does not diminish, but rather corrects and perfects the law. In relation to a world which is less ordered, the law is imperfect, for it cannot contain in any explicit manner the response to the concrete possibilities which arise in history. It is precisely here that freedom and creativity are located. They do not consist in arbitrariness, for Kant is right in saying that without law freedom has no meaning; nor do they consist in an automatic response determined by the historical situation, for then determinism and relativism would compete for the crown in undermining human freedom. Freedom consists, rather, in shaping the present according to the sense of what is just and good which we have from our cultural tradition, and in a way which manifests and indeed creates for the first time more of what justice and goodness mean. This again is an aesthetic process which includes, sublimates and transcends the truths of the sciences and their related technologies.

The law is not diminished by its application in the circumstances, but corrected and enriched. *Epoché* and equity do not diminish, but perfect the law; without them the law would be simply a mechanical replication doing the work not of justice, but of injustice. Ethics or politics is not only knowledge of what is right in general, but the search for what is right in the situation and the choice of the right means for this situation. Knowledge about the means is not then a matter of mere expediency; it is the essence of the search for a more perfect application of the law in the given situation. In this the aesthetic is the fulfillment not only of science and technology, but of ethics and moral knowledge.<sup>24</sup>

#### *Application of Tradition and Human Concern*

It is important to note that this rule of the concrete (of what the situation is asking of us) is not known by sense knowledge which simply registers a set of concrete facts on the horizontal level. In order to know what is morally required, the situation must be understood in the light of what is right, that is, in the light of what has been discovered vertically through tradition with its normative character about appropriate human action. Only in this light can moral consciousness as the work of intellect (*nous*), rather than of sensation, go about its job of choosing the right means.

Therefore, to proceed simply in reaction to concrete injustices, rather than in the light of one's tradition, is ultimately destructive. It inverts the order just mentioned and results in manipulation of our hopes for the good. Destructive or repressive structures would lead us to the use of correspondingly evil means, suited only to producing evil results. The true response to evil can be worked out only in terms of the good appreciated by the highest aesthetic human sensibilities passed on in tradition and applied by us in our times.

The importance of application implies a central role for the virtue of prudence (*phronesis*) or thoughtful reflection which enables one to discover the appropriate means for the circumstances. This must include, also, the virtue of sagacity (*sunesis*), that is, of understanding or concern for the other. For what is required as a guide for the agent is not only technical knowledge of an

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 281-286.

abstract ideal, but knowledge that takes account of the agent in relation to other persons. One can assess the situation adequately only inasmuch as one, in a sense, undergoes the situation with the affected parties, living and suffering with them. Aristotle rightly describes as “terrible” the one who is capable of manipulating the situation, but is without orientation towards moral ends and without concern for the good of others in their concrete situations.

In sum, application is not a subsequent or accidental part of understanding, added on after perfect understanding has been achieved; rather it codetermines this understanding from the beginning. Moral consciousness must seek to understand the good, not as an ideal to be known and then applied, but rather through discerning the good for concrete peoples in their relations with others.

Here, the real issue regards one’s metaphysics: what is the nature of being, what does it mean to be? If the answer, as the Confucian sense of community would be the first to suggest, is not that reality is reductively matter trapped in time, but at least the human spirit living through time, then to look for meaning in terms of the reaches of the spirit as it works creatively across time is not to lose but to find meaning. This is the sense of being emerging through the consciousness of Heidegger’s person as *dasein*. Being is not merely what was or is, but what is blossoming ever fresh in the human heart.

### *Democracy as Dialogue between Cultures*

In regard to our cultural tradition and values, we develop a prior conception of its content. This anticipation of meaning is not simply of the tradition as an objective past or fixed content to which we come; it is rather what we produce as we participate in the evolution of the tradition and, thereby, further determine ourselves. This is a creative stance reflecting the content, not only of the past, but of the time in which I stand and of the life project in which I am engaged. It is a creative unveiling of the content of the tradition as this comes progressively and historically into the present, and through the present, passes into the future.

In this light, time is not a barrier, separation or abyss, but rather a bridge and opportunity for the process of understanding, a fertile ground filled with experience, custom and tradition. The importance of the historical distance it provides is not that it enables the subjective reality of persons to disappear so that the objectivity of the situation can emerge. On the contrary, it makes possible a more complete meaning of the tradition, less by removing falsifying factors than by opening new sources of self-understanding which reveal in the tradition unsuspected implications and ever new dimensions of meaning.<sup>25</sup>

### *Tradition and Discovery: Openness to Being Questioned*

Of course, not all our acts of understanding about the meaning of a text from another culture, a dimension of a shared tradition, a set of goals or a plan for future action are sufficient. Hence, it becomes particularly important that they not be adhered to fixedly, but be put at risk in dialogue with others.

In this, the basic elements remain the substances or persons which Aristotle described in terms of autonomy and, by implication, of identity. Hermeneutics would expand this to reflect as well the historical and hermeneutic situation of each person in the dialogue, that is, their horizon or particular possibility for understanding. As an horizon is all that can be seen from one’s vantage

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 263-264.

point(s), in dialogue with others it is necessary to be aware of our horizon, as well as that of others. For it is precisely when our initial projection of their meaning will not bear up under the progressive dialogue that we are able to make needed adjustments in our projection of their meaning.

This enables one to adjust one's prior understanding not only of the horizon of the other with whom one is in dialogue, but especially of one's own horizon. Hence, one need not fear being trapped; horizons are vantage points of a mind which in principle is open and mobile, capable of being aware of its own limits and of transcending them through acknowledging the horizons of others. The flow of history implies that we are not bound by our horizons, but move in and out of them. It is in making us aware of our horizons that hermeneutic consciousness accomplishes our liberation.<sup>26</sup>

For this, we must maintain a questioning attitude. Rather than simply following through with our previous ideas until a change is forced upon us, we must remain sensitive to new meanings in true openness. This is neither neutrality as regards the meaning of the tradition, nor an extinction of passionate concerns regarding action towards the future. Rather, being aware of our own biases or prejudices and adjusting them in dialogue with others implies rejecting what impedes our understanding of others or of traditions. Our attitude in approaching dialogue must be one of willingness continually to revise our initial projection or expectation of meaning.

The way out of the hermeneutic circle is not then by ignoring or denying our horizons, our initial judgments or prejudices. Rather it is by recognizing them as inevitable and making them work for us in drawing out, not the meaning of the text for its author, but its application for the present. Through this process of application we serve as midwife for culture as historical or as tradition, enabling it to give birth to the future.<sup>27</sup>

The logical structure of this process is the exchange of question and answer. A question is required in order to determine just what issue we are engaging -- whether it is this issue or that -- so that we might give direction to our attention. Without this, no meaningful answer can be given or received. As a question, however, it requires that the answer not be settled or determined. In sum, progress or discovery requires openness. This, however, is not simple indeterminacy, but a question which gives specific direction to our attention and enables us to consider significant evidence.

If discovery depends upon the question, then the art of discovery is the art of questioning. Consequently, in working in conjunction with others, the heart of the democratic process is not to suppress, but to reinforce and unfold the questions of others. To the degree that these probabilities are built up and intensified they can serve as a searchlight. This is the opposite of both opinion which tends to suppress questions, and of arguing which searches out the weakness in the position of others. Instead, in democracy understood as conversation and dialogue, one enters upon a mutual search to maximize the possibilities of the question, even by speaking at cross purposes, for it is by mutually eliminating errors and working out a common meaning that we discover truth.<sup>28</sup>

### *Pluralism and Progress*

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 235-242, 267-271.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 235-332.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 225-332.

Further, it should not be presupposed that a text, such as a tradition, law or constitution, will hold the answer to but one question or can have but one horizon which must be identified by the reader. On the contrary, the full horizon of the authors is never available to the reader, nor can it be expected that there is but one question to which a tradition or document holds an answer. The sense of the text reaches beyond what the author intended because the dynamic character of being as it emerges in time means that the horizon is never fixed but is continually opening. This constitutes the effective historical element in understanding a text or a tradition. At each step new dimensions of its potentialities open to understanding, so that the meaning of a text or tradition lives with the consciousness and hence the horizons -- not of its author -- but of people in dialogue with others through time and history. This is the essence of democracy as a process. Broadening horizons, through fusion with the horizons of others in dialogue, makes it possible to receive from one's own cultural tradition and its values answers which are ever new.<sup>29</sup>

In this, one's personal attitudes and interests remain important. If our interest in developing new horizons is simply the promotion of our own understanding in contrast to others then we could be interested solely in achieving knowledge, and thereby domination over others. This would lock one into an absoluteness of one's prejudices; being fixed or closed in the past, it would disallow new life in the present. In this manner, powerful new insights can become with time deadening pre-judgments which suppress freedom.

In contrast, an attitude of authentic democratic openness appreciates the nature of one's own finiteness and the importance of the horizons of others in enabling us to transcend our present limits. On this basis, it respects the past, is open to the experience and discoveries of others, and is concerned with discerning the future. Such openness is a matter, not merely of new information, but of recognizing human nature as perched between its historicity and its basis in an absolute that transcends and grounds time. Thus, interchange with others enables us to escape what had deceived us and held us captive and to learn deep truths through new experiences.<sup>30</sup>

This suggests that democratic openness does not consist in surveying others objectively, obeying them in a slavish and unquestioning manner or simply juxtaposing their ideas and traditions to our own. Rather, it is directed primarily to ourselves, for our ability to listen to others is correlatively our ability to assimilate the implications of their answers for delving more deeply into the meaning of our own traditions and drawing out new and even more rich insights. In other words, it is an acknowledgement that our cultural heritage has something new to say to us.

The characteristic hermeneutic attitude of effective historical consciousness is, then, not methodological sureness, readiness for new compromises or new techniques of social organization, for these are subject to manipulation and social critique on the horizontal level. Instead, it is readiness to draw out in democratic dialogue new meaning from our tradition.<sup>31</sup> Seen in these terms our heritage of culture and values is not closed or dead, but, through democratic interchange, remains ever new by becoming more inclusive and more rich.

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 336-340.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 327-324.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 324-325.





## Chapter II

# New Challenges of Community Formation

*Klaus Zapotoczky*

On the basis of the theses outlined below, I wish in this paper to consider how suggestions for a reconstruction of the societies in the East and West can be developed. To this end, theoretical concepts as well as practical experiences and applications will be considered.

### **The Contribution of History to Future Reconstruction: The First Thesis**

The so-called modern societies were built on the basis of principles of construction derived from the transition from the middle ages to modern times. These principles came more or less to an end in the last decades, and new construction principles are not really established.

Not only was the transition from the middle ages to the modern times influenced by the life styles of the people, but it also established the existence of the state along territorial lines. Moreover, this transition contributed to the development of human rights and international law, provided as a new perspective an independent and multivarious social, scientific and economic form, and at least led to the division of the world into the two block of the Cold War.

The well-known Austrian scientist, theorist and philosopher, Karl Popper<sup>1</sup> showed in his famous study *The Open Society and Its Enemies (Die offene Gesellschaft und ihre Feinde)* that since the Greek achievement, European society found itself in a revolutionary transformation process from a closed to an open society. Popper described his treatise, which he wrote during the war while in exile in New Zealand, as a critical introduction to the philosophy of politics and society and as a study of some principles for social reconstruction. For the reformation, reconstruction and development of Europe these fundamental reflections should serve as stimulants.

Despite the fact that the two forms of society -- closed and open -- cannot be found anywhere in their pure form, and that at most they can be understood only as ideal types.<sup>2</sup> It is however, useful to pinpoint the principal differences between static and dynamic life perceptions and social forms.<sup>3</sup>

Following the Swiss sociologist Richard Behrendt, the static life style can be characterized as follows:

The purpose of this society believes in the creation and sustenance of the universe by transcendental powers and accepts their living situation as good -- predetermined, their behavior is influenced, above all, by tradition and routine conduct is predominant; the economy is built on the satisfaction of needs and not on success and profit; relations and consciousness circles are restricted to the extent that foreigners are treated at least with skepticism and the structure of this

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<sup>1</sup> Karl R. Popper, *Die offene Gesellschaft und ihre Feinde: I. Der Zauber Platons, II. Falsche Propheten: Hegel, Marx und die Folgen* (Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 6. Aufl., 1980).

<sup>2</sup> Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundriß einer verstehenden Soziologie* (Tübingen: Verlag J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 5. Aufl. 1990).

<sup>3</sup> Richard F. Behrendt, *Soziale Strategie für Entwicklung-sländer. Entwurf einer Entwicklungssoziologie* (Frankfurt/Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1965).

society is monistic, sacred, oligarchic, closed and of a stable order. By contrast, the dynamic life-setting can be characterized as follows.

The people take pleasure in what is new and believe in their ability to solve even great problems; they want to apply a rational analysis when dealing with all social affairs, and show great readiness for innovative actions; they have courage to venture new things and try their chances; they have a new economic perspective which has profit an objective; the circles of relationship in this society are very extensive; people are never satisfied with their past achievement, but instead put effort into mobilizing their potentials for maximum achievement at any conceivable cost; the social structure is pluralistic, democratic, open, “*verweltlichte*” (secularized) and socially dynamic.

Europe has experienced a decisive step towards an open society in the transition from the middle ages to modern times, characterized in general by the following two conditions and events.<sup>4</sup>

*The Beginning of Modern Capitalism and the Proletariat:* A new cost-benefit oriented economic outlook began to evolve initially in the coal, iron, and other industries; it extended to cover more economic areas; finally it reached the area of interpersonal relationships where in its applicability it is of less importance. The cost-benefit conceptual consideration was applied also in areas where such imagination led to criminal behavior, for example, in the case of the 23 persons, of whom 13 (12 male medical doctors and one female medical doctor) were tried by the first American Martial Court in Nürnberg for criminal acts against humanity, namely, exterminating “unworthy life”.

However, such deeds were prepared by medical doctors and an economist before and after the first World War. For example, in 1921 the well renowned physiologist, Emil Abterhalden, wrote: “As long as the state is compelled to waste millions on mentally handicapped individuals, then what remains for those, who are physically and spiritually healthy becomes an insignificant fraction of the total amount spent. “The lawyer Karl Bending and the psychiatrist Alfred Hoche in their work *Die Freigabe der Vernichtung lebensun-werten Lebens* subscribe to the following opinion: “Perhaps one day we will mature enough to entertain the idea that the elimination of the mentally handicapped is not a felony, nor is it an immoral act or a lack of feeling, but rather is useful and permitted.”

These examples show how important it is to consider the limitations of this powerful economic development of the life-form, and to set up clear borders to mere economic considerations.

*The Formation of Nation States on Territorial Lines as an Orderly Principle:* The middle ages were essentially determined by a system of royalty and personal dependency, direct as well as indirect affiliation to the community and ruling personalities. Uncertainties came into existence due to its multiple applications and varied hierarchical relations. The increasing importance of religions in the middle ages and the growing influence of a territorial way of thinking that arose essentially due to the increasing importance of Roman law led to the establishment of centralized states which acquired its international significance through the Augsburger Regulations of Religious Peace of 1555: “*Cuius regio eius religio*”.

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<sup>4</sup> Walter Goetz (Editor), Propyläen Weltgeschichte. *Der Werdegang der Menschheit in Gesellschaft und Staat, Wirtschaft und Geistesleben. 4. Band: Das Zeitalter der Gotik und Renaissance 1250 - 1500* (Berlin: Propyläen-Verlag, 1932).

Kant argued in his popular paper “Zum ewigen Frieden”<sup>5</sup> (“Toward Eternal Peace”) that states could not, on the one hand, renounce the maintenance and protection of the freedom of their people and, on the other hand, express the practicability (objective reality) of the idea of federalism. Today, on the one hand, the tendencies of independence and freedom of (small) nations are questioned and, on the other hand, consciousness grows that every state finds itself in relation to the community of states in a hopeless minority situation.<sup>6</sup> Hence, it appears that a federalism of different independent states or communities is to be a further step in modern industrial societies first developed in the transition of the middle ages into modern times is an intellectual movement throughout Europe. The movement was promoted by people of different cultural orientations expelled from the center of the Roman Empire after the conquest of Constantinople who eventually found their settlements in different cities of Europe, thus spreading their languages and way of life which was very much influenced by the Greek co-Roman culture.

The transition period was also determined by discoveries and inventions, the significance of which partly was not fully realized until centuries later. Interaction with foreign countries, customs, beliefs and economic knowledge stimulated and developed a consciousness of the practicability of social, economic and political institutions which consequently promoted a further opening of the societies.

Last, but not least, with regard to this transition is the influence of the Reformation on the transition period, which disrupted the former unity of religious ideology. The popular work of the sociologist Max Weber: *Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*<sup>7</sup> (“The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism”) tried to show that this new religious ideological way of life had an important influence also on the formation of modern economic systems. Moreover, it provides an example of the link between religious ideological convictions and practical concrete actions.<sup>8</sup>

## **Tendencies of Change in Modern Societies: Second Thesis**

The above world reconstruction and reformation relates to a great extent to the explanation of past social development. New values, living standards, principles and economic possibilities changed essentially the mode of social cooperation and consequently brought about new challenges.

In modern industrialized societies in particular a certain retreat from a mere economic way of perception is to be observed. Ronald Inglehart reported from various authors that currently a tendency to a comprehensive change in values in the societies can be well traced,<sup>9</sup> i.e. tendencies

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<sup>5</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Zum ewigen Frieden. Ein philosophischer Entwurf*, in: Immanuel Kant: Schriften zur Anthropologie, Geschichtsphilosophie, Politik und Pädagogik 1, Wilhelm Weischedel (Editor): Werksausgabe Band XI (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977), S. 191 ff.

<sup>6</sup> Karl W. Deutsch, *Analyse der internationalen Beziehungen. Konzeptionen und Probleme der Friedensforschung* (Frankfurt, 1968).

<sup>7</sup> Max Weber, *Die protestantische Ethik: Eine Aufsatzsammlung* (München: Siebenstern Taschenbuch Verlag, 1965).

<sup>8</sup> Volker Heins, *Max Weber zur Einführung*. Edition SOAK (Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 1990).

<sup>9</sup> Helmut Klages, *Traditionsbruch als Herausforderung. Perspektiven der Wertwandelsgesellschaft* (Frankfurt/Main: Campus Verlag, 1993).

toward post-materialist values. Following the values-pyramid of Maslow,<sup>10</sup> it can be said that in modern societies the basic human and security needs (perhaps because they appear to be greatly secured) are still considered, as was the case before, as prerequisites for human life. However, they are not considered to be the most important, but are ranked below the needs for love and attention from others, recognition and self-realization. These gain increasingly in importance.

In sociology, authors like Daniel Bell or Alain Tourraine pointed out even much earlier corresponding social changes and, in the most current sociologists, in particular Amitai Etzioni concerns himself with new developments in the economic, political and social areas.<sup>11</sup> In this connection attention must be drawn to the great importance attached to the so-called Third Sector, besides politics and economy. The significance of voluntary activities has also to be worked out.<sup>12</sup>

It is clear that also in the area of politics the national state which for a long time has been dominated by the territorial principle, experiences reconstructing. State building is no longer a result of wars, for instance the First and Second World Wars; it is rather the result of internal social movements in various forms which lead to new state communities (*Staatengemeinschaften*) on the one hand and federal states on the other. Moreover, there come into existence regional as well as cultural and political institutions which cater to the needs and interests of society beyond national levels. Such institutions emphasize and represent joint actions in the respective areas and are not confined to specific territories.

Global dangers caused by atomic reactors, air pollution, water contamination and various radiation effects have led to the renouncement of individual state interests on these issues, on the one hand, and to collective action of all states through the recognition that these dangers concern the world as a whole, and that accordingly the problem can be efficiently solved via the efforts of all states or the community of states. About 200 years after the first Declaration of the General Human and Citizen Rights came into effect, a new worldwide concrete implementation of these rights began to take shape. People also became very conscious of children's rights.

In an era of discoveries and inventions, some principle innovations are also to be noted. In the micro-cosmos fields, knowledge has advanced beyond its limits. For instance, in the field of micro-cosmos the smallest thing (atom) which in the past was believed to be indivisible proved divisible. In the macro-cosmos a multitude of new theoretical applications are currently in use for the exploration of far off solar systems and new phenomena of the macro-cosmos.

In the area of world politics after the downfall of the USSR, the ideological bipolarity between the Western and Eastern world is thought by many theorists to have come to its historical end. For the first time a single world view, though formed in a pluralistic perspective, has become dominant.

I subscribe, however, to the opinion that this tendency will, no doubt, be ruinous when the USA, which can be seen as the major representative of the new world reform, puts aside the cardinal rule postulated by Karl Deutsch in the 1960s and no longer acts according to the interests of the world community. But it is not something new, even in this area, that pluralism comes into existence no longer on the basis of power polarity and bipolar world ideological positions, but on the basis of voluntary or reasonable self-restriction of power according to the "Realutopie" (real utopia) of Kant's Eternal Peace.

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<sup>10</sup> Oswald Neuberger, *Theorien der Arbeitszufriedenheit* (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1974), S. 102 ff.

<sup>11</sup> Amitai Etzioni, *The World Dimension. Towards A New Economics* (New York: The Free Press 1988).

<sup>12</sup> Klaus Zapotoczky, Margit Pirklbauer, Claudia Pass, *Gesellschaftliche Bedeutung von Ehrenamtlichkeit* (Linz 1996).

### New Challenges of the World Social Formation: Thesis No. 3

“Connected to those changes are new challenges which must all be overcome in the medium term, even if in the short term one or other task cannot be fully or satisfactorily perceived.” These challenges concern the following areas.<sup>13</sup>

*Self-thinking:* It is important that a corresponding self-constructive power and independence be made possible and promoted at the level of the individual as well as of groups, individual states, regions and the world community in general. As is the case with other areas of challenge, the tasks have to be accomplished in connection with changes in the socio-demographic area, with the environment as the natural framework, new technical and economic possibilities and in particular in consideration of the background of the corresponding socio-cultural general conditions.

It must be ensured that these tasks be accomplished at all five levels. This can be done, for instance, at the level of the individual by providing inviolable spheres of self-decision and self-authority. At the group level there must be freedom of association and a corresponding protection and promotion of minorities. On the level of the individual states there must be at least non-interference in internal affairs by other states and other higher institutions. Organs like the European Union (EU) and other unions have to develop rules for the self-governing of collective affairs whereby the extent and content of affairs falling under such rules must always be reconsidered so as to ensure their significance. Correspondingly, the validity of the collective rules in this area and perhaps also in all other areas must have correspondingly a time limit at the end of which they must be revised and reconsidered. One can imagine in this case, for example, a period of seven to ten years.

Also the world community has to make deliberate efforts to establish collective principles for the individual spheres of life, for instance, health through the World Health Organization (WHO), food through the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) or industrial areas with other organizations for other spheres of life. Such collective principles must be so formulated that their applicability will vary in intensity, speed and perhaps in methods of implementation from one member to another, but are driven and established by the same fundamentals. An example is provided by the WHO-program “Health for All up to the Year 2000;” although its concrete implementation varies from one region to another, it emanated from the same agreed fundamentals.<sup>14</sup>

It is however important in this case to develop long-term measures that will be put in use when a state which has declared its readiness and willingness to realize the agreed principles fails to do so, as happened in Austria with regard of the WHO-program “Health for All for the Year 2000”. The program was of course signed, but it was executed using completely different principles. Perhaps in this connection regular reporting, responsibility and accountability as is the case with the “Program for the Protection of Children Rights” may be helpful.

*Challenges of Legitimacy:* These challenges come as a result of changed basic values. It is important to note that nothing can endanger legitimacy so much as legality, i.e. through regulations which are not supported or backed up by tradition, beliefs in a recognized personal figure and

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<sup>13</sup> Stein Rokkan, *Die vergleichende Analyse der Staaten und Nationenbildung: Modelle und Methoden*, in Wolfgang Zapf (Editor), *Theorien des sozialen Wandels* (Köln: Verlag Kiepenheuer und Witsch, 1969), S. 228 ff.

<sup>14</sup> World Health Organization, Regional Office for Europe (Editor), *Priority Research for Health for All* (Copenhagen 1988).

rational value beliefs.<sup>15</sup> Law makers who are legal positivists in orientation and not prepared to recognize social, cultural and emotional links and the importance of historical development destroy such legitimacy in the same way as does a legislative body which enacts bad laws, i.e., laws that are not in a clear and unequivocal form for application by all those who are concerned with them.

*Challenges of Penetration and Participation:* Of great importance especially in democratic oriented states is the challenge of penetration and the corresponding cooperation and participation of all possible interested persons. Intermediary structures, mediation organs between political, economic and social leading groups, and common members of the society also acquire paramount importance. Civil society, organized as a rule in many unions and voluntary organizations, plays a big role in many industrialized modern countries and will be of great importance in the central European states too. With regard to the quality of democracy of countries this is something that needs to be promoted and supported.

*Challenges of Cooperation or Integration:* Cooperation and integration, especially in pluralistic societies, is not an easy task, in particular due to the fact that for a long time the term integration has been confused with uniformity and unity models in various forms and hence have been neither systematically tried nor promoted. There is work still to be done in this respect.

*Challenges of Production, Distribution and Consumption of Goods and Values:* Production, distribution and consumption of values have to be taken care of not only in material areas, but also in the areas of power, education and influence. It can be said that currently in modern societies there is wastage of values as far as the use of both material and immaterial values is concerned.

*Challenges of Continuous Replacement (Innovations):* Innovation of social regulations and forms acquires significant importance in particular in times of rapid change, which results in permanent reconsideration of social institutions. On the one hand, one needs to have continuous reflection on the social institutions. On the other hand, as Helmut Schelsky pointed out, one needs also to be aware of how problematic is the institutionalization of permanent reflection.<sup>16</sup> Perhaps the newly developed scenario may provide a significant contribution for the needed innovation.

*Challenges of Internationalization and Globalization:* A special challenge which can be pointed out here is the specific modern form of internationalization, namely, the tendencies to globalization which can be observed currently especially in the modern industrial societies and is now partly considered as a problem. Globalization needs must be studied and put into shape in all other spheres of life, politics, society and culture. The various arts and social sciences have practical significance in this connection, and development possibilities should not be viewed only from an economic perspective.

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<sup>15</sup> Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundriß der verstehenden Soziologie* (Tübingen: Verlag J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 5. Aufl. , 1980), S. 19.

<sup>16</sup> Helmut Schelsky, *Ist Dauerflexion institutionen-lisierbar?* In René König (Ed.), *Soziologische Orientierungen* (Köln-Berlin: Vorträge und Aufsätze, 1965).

**Chapter III**  
**The Emergence of Nationalism, Ethnic Clashes and Fundamentalist  
Movements in the Light of Globalization:  
Some Reflections for Ethical Principles**

*Heinz Holley*

**Remembering the Change**

The collapse of communism in the year 1989 was an epochal event, which not only concerned the earlier communist states, but had effects on the political world system as a whole. The dramatic changes caused by the structural collapse of the Soviet Union effected not only the East-West relationship, but simultaneously triggered far-reaching changes for North-South relations and for the political world system as a whole. For some commentators, with the collapse of communism the so-called “Second World” ceased to exist. Such voices were soon followed by those who thought that it is no longer meaningful to speak of the Third World because the Second World (the earlier eastern bloc) has already disappeared.<sup>1</sup>

Within the first days and weeks after the fall of the Berlin wall, the removal of the “iron curtain” and the collapse of the Soviet empire, the so-called Eastern-experts commented on the unexpected collapse of the communist states as a victory of the doctrines of freedom and liberty in the light of an inhuman totalitarian system. The expressions of delight and joy about the end of the totalitarian power system were justifiable and understandable because millions had suffered from it for too long. To a certain extent it was also understandable, when, within the first post-communist weeks and months many people behaved in a manner which could be termed ‘capitalism euphoria’. In the former communist countries many people hoped that by introducing a capitalist system it would be possible for them to enjoy their lives in a style and standard reminiscent of their Western counterparts. In the Western countries entrepreneurs were already hatching plans for the conquest of Eastern markets.

Also some scientists, particularly political scientists, interpreted the collapse of the Soviet empire as the “final victory of capitalism”. One of the most prominent representatives of such opinions is the American Francis Fukuyama, who in his bestseller *The End of History -- The Last Man* considers the capitalist model for society and economy as the end product of the dialectical process of history.<sup>2</sup> Fukuyama’s speculative and therefore very weak extrapolation of Hegel’s philosophy of history was not criticized, but intensely appreciated, first in the USA and sometime later also in Europe. Fukuyama’s bestseller was seen as a scientific proof of the correctness of capitalism by many politicians and economists: To have arrived, by a historical process of selection, at the end of history as the ideal form of society was an excellent self-justification for those who understand capitalism as the “religion of modernity”, with the World Bank as its cathedral, the International Monetary Fund as its chapel and World Bank officials as the new missionaries.

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<sup>1</sup> For example U. Menzel, “Das Ende der Dritten Welt und das Scheitern der großen Theorie. Zur Soziologie einer Disziplin in auch selbstkritischer Absicht”, *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* (1991), no. 1, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> F. Fukuyama, *The End of History. The Last Man* (New York 1992).

Of the two super-powers who competed in advancing models of society and economy, only one survived, namely, capitalist world development. Communism can be seen now as a “service accident of modernity” which caused tremendous past damages so that the present challenge is to repair its continuing long-time damage. Now, at the end of history, when the disturbing communist influence for world development has disappeared, there is a need to expand the capitalist model of development on a worldwide level. Capitalism should be established not only in the former communist states, but also in the developing countries of the South.

In this context it should be remembered that the belief in the “capitalist credo” was not only shared by politicians, scientists and economists but also by many people in the East- and Central-European countries. In the meantime, many people in these countries have become aware that the form of capitalism they now experience differs from the market economy they hoped for. The liberty with which they have to cope today is of a different order from the type of freedom they experienced only a few years ago.

In his satire, “Tibor Goes West, or a Hungarian Comes into Paradise”, which appeared in 1992, Georg Kövöry caricatured the disillusionment of many people by telling a story about a therapeutic conversation in Vienna between an Hungarian student, Tibor, and his Austrian psychiatrist:

The psychiatrist: “Yes, it’s over. Your compatriots have won the truth, they live in liberty again. Don’t you want to return again to your home country?”

Tibor: “I would like to do so, but unfortunately I don’t want to. There is still chaos over there. It is better that I stay here a little longer in order to study democracy; perhaps I can teach than something of this at home.”

The psychiatrist: “Does that mean that you are satisfied with democracy?”

Tibor: “I am satisfied with democracy, but I am not filled with enthusiasm by capitalism. Why it is not possible to make democracy without capitalism?”

The psychiatrist: “What do you have against the capitalism?”

Tibor: “All of them only run after money. They all dance around a golden calf. I wonder how much golden calve Schnitzel can be eaten by a single person?”<sup>3</sup>

This short episode from the satire of Georg Kövöry raises a series of important questions:

- Can we really accept that, with the collapse of communism, we have already arrived at the ideal form of cooperative human life? Have we actually arrived, according to Fukuyama, “at the end of history”?
- Is capitalism, in its untamed and uncontrolled form, really the *conditio sine qua non* or *ultima ratio* of a prosperous world development?
- Can we put up with structural adjustment programs that, not by accident but by planned economic and political options, destroy natural, social, cultural and value -- environments all over the world? Are we aware of the question of what has to be adjusted, to whom and for whose advantage are such adjustments?
- What about humanity? Do we feel quite comfortable in the niches of our economized, technologized and digitalized world, or is there still enough commitment to respond to the challenges of a world in transition?

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<sup>3</sup> Georg Kövöry, *Tibor Goes West oder Ein Ungar kommt ins Paradies* (Graz/Wien/Köln: Verlag Styria, 1992), p. 17 (Translation by the author).



## Globalization: A Shining or a Shooting Star?

We need to remind ourselves that approximately at the time communism came to its end, the concept of globalization gained growing acceptance in the international language of economists, diplomats and politicians. This neoliberal concept had already appeared during the Reagan administration, when Milton Friedman and others propounded “scientific” arguments for a free trade world and the need to reduce the economic influence of state and parastatal organizations in the economic field. The notion of globalization suggested to many people that this could be the new formula for homogeneous and equal world development.

After the collapse of Communism there was great hope for the beginning of a new era of peace. The Cold War era was over and at the very beginning of this new age many people all over the world expected that everywhere on this globe people would begin to forge swords into plough shares. Indeed, the notion of globalization was inviting for many people who associated this popular word with an already ongoing process of world development, which finally should lead to prosperity throughout the world.

Key terms are able to hurt people, for it is difficult to grasp thoroughly the real meaning of certain notions. Unreflective usage of the notion of globalization includes the danger of drawing a biased image of reality, thereby nourishing unrealizable expectations. Deeper and more differentiated discussion and reflection seem necessary.

The development process during the post Cold War years was and remains distinctive. After global stability in terms of deterrence, interrupted only by locally confined wars and controlled by the superpowers, we now face an unstable and anomic situation, not only with regard to international relations, but also within many states. Today, it is unquestionable that the development problems in the state formations of the Second, Third and Fourth Worlds really have disappeared so that one could speak undifferentiatedly of a globalized world.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, it must be remembered that also in the highly industrialized countries of the First World there are processes of underdevelopment and social fragmentation.

In order to analyze all the dimensions related to the globalization process, we must ask precisely what should be globalized in this process and what are the impacts and social and cultural costs of such a project of transition which claims to penetrate the whole world?

If we reflect on what has happened during the last few years, primarily we can observe the following points of changes.

First, the process of globalization has enabled an almost unhindered capital around the globe. Stock exchange speculators, gambling with high-tech assistance, show governments, imprisoned within the borders of their states, who really rules the world. “On every continent, governments have become highly dependent on the availability of external capital. But money that pours in can also pour out. Global markets are now the judge and punish national economic policies. The consequences can be devastating as funds for investment, infrastructure and government programs suddenly dry up”.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Compare: Dieter Nohlen and Franz Nuscheler, “Ende der Dritten Welt?” In their *Handbuch der Dritten Welt. Grund-probleme, Theorien, Strategien* (Bonn: Verlag J.H. W. Dietz Nachf, 1992), vol. 1 and L. Brock, “Die Dritte Welt in ihrem fünften Jahrzehnt”, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte. Beilage zur Wochenzeitung Das Parlament* (Bonn: Hrsg. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1992), B 50 S. 13.

<sup>5</sup> I. Carlsson, *Time for a New Order in World Affairs*, Lecture given at the Center for International and Comparative Studies (Chicago: Northwestern University, 23 October 1996).

It is important to note that the globalization process not only weakened the position of the states, but also contributed to socially ruinous competition between states: in order not to irritate the international finance markets and to keep open the gate for foreign capital, many countries are forced to downscale standards for social security, education, etc. To be clear: neither the World Bank nor the International Monetary Fund directly intervenes with regard to distribution issues in particular countries. But the victims of such structural adjustment programs are in any case the poorest people in the different societies. The number of marginalized people is increasing in the developing countries of the South as well as in reform countries of East and Central Europe.<sup>6</sup> This nourishes social unrest.

A second feature of the ongoing globalization process is the fact that, as a result of tremendous technical progress and cost reduction plans, production is increasing steadily, whereas the number of jobs is scaling down dramatically. Experts have already mentioned the possibility that within a few years world production could be realized with only 20 percent of the economically active world population.<sup>7</sup> At present, even in highly industrialized countries there is a steadily growing number of well-trained and well-educated people who cannot find adequate jobs. Strategic cost-oriented mergers of companies can enable a handful of researchers to cover the research requirements of international companies. Production chains are not longer organized according to the location-advantages within regional or national borders, but according to the new principle of emerging uncontrolled vagabond capitalism. In order to improve the rate of profit, industrial plants are even moved from one country to another one. Inherent economic necessities lead to the fact that countries with lower wage levels, poor social security standards, low or almost no regulations with regard to environment protection, tax allowances and tax benefits for investing foreign companies attract internationally organized companies. Two examples can be given from the Austrian experience of such problematic separation and transfer of economic activities: first, the management of Austrian Airlines decided to close their accounting department because within the framework of a globalized economy it is now much cheaper for all the accounting work to be done in India. Second, the tire plant, Semperit, belonging to the German Conti-group decided to close a production line in Austria and, because of lower wages, transfer the production machines to the Czech Republic. In East Asia, some of the so-called tiger states are already complaining that companies leave the country in order to locate their production in neighboring regions.

As a result of this process of globalization, in many countries of the world, notwithstanding whether North or South, East or West, the working class has been extensively weakened, while transnational enterprises, owners of capital and some managerial or professional groups have been significantly strengthened. At the international level creditor countries, international investors and multilateral financial institutions have increased their influence at the expense of indebted countries and those already dependent upon foreign aid.<sup>8</sup> The poorest of the poor in the developing countries are the most threatened and in danger of being peripherized permanently from the so-called globalized world society.

In this context it should be mentioned that business people like George Soros, who can in no way be regarded as a left wing revolutionary, have expressed strong reservations regarding the

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<sup>6</sup> Jocham Betz, "Soziale Auswirkungen der Sparprogramme von Weltbank und IWF in Entwicklungsländern", *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B 30-31 1991, pp. 24-31.

<sup>7</sup> H.-P. Martin, *Schuhmann, H., Die Globalisierungsfalle. Der Angriff auf Demokratie und Wohlstand* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rohwolt, 1996), pp. 9-22.

<sup>8</sup> Compare D. Ghai and C.H. de Alcantara, *Globalization and Social Integration: Patterns and Processes*. Paper of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 1996.

practical working of excessive individualism and unbounded competition at the expense of the principle of solidarity. In his article, titled “The Capitalist Threat” he argues that people who believe in the infallibility of the Western capitalist system are totalitarian.<sup>9</sup>

According to Paul Kennedy, in view of the demographic, ecological and regional problems of this planet, the vision of a prosperous and harmonious world order, trusting merely in the laissez-faire principle, global foreign exchange dealings and the penetrating power of television, seems breathtakingly naive.<sup>10</sup>

As a result of vagabond capitalism in many countries there emerges hostility in various forms. Within societies there is a growing line of conflict between the rich and the poor. Generally, there are a few winners and many losers in the process of globalization. In such an atmosphere, populist, nationalist and fundamentalist leaders find it easy to offer marginalized simple answers and dangerous solutions:

- jobless and frustrated youngsters become radicalized and organize themselves in right wing circles;

- neo-nationalistic attitudes which had not been on the agenda a few years ago are more and more commonly accepted: the responsibility for the worsening of one’s own situation is seen as being in “the others”: the migrant workers who are stealing the jobs of the domestic population, the neighboring nations and one’s own government which does not care sufficiently for one’s own nation, etc.

- in countries of multi-cultural or multi-ethnic character the conflict lines between rich and poor very often correspond with membership to a particular ethnic, cultural or even religious group. Thereby, struggles for a fair distribution of economic opportunity are easily transformed into struggles between ethnic groups as such.

### **The Present Challenge: Overcoming Social Anomie**

The impact of the globalization process outlined above must, of course, not only be sketched in such a pinpointed and perhaps also polemic critique, but should be studied thoroughly and with necessary seriousness. It can safely be stated first, that the present political world system is in a phase of anomie, because the old world order exists no more and a real new world order still is not in view. At present it is merely obvious, that as a consequence of the above-mentioned political processes, the position of First World has become even more dominant than in the past. This world in which we live today is not the previous world minus communism or real socialism. The end of the “Cold War” was the beginning of colossal and multilayered processes of change of the complete world system.

Anomie always describes situations “between”, situations of social instability in a vacuum of generally accepted norms. With regard to the present globalization process and the growing division of labor on an international level, Durkheim’s reflections are of interest. His work, *The Division of Labor*, discusses the difference between a real division of labor which contributes to everyone participating in that process and a mere differentiation of labor to the detriment of some. Durkheim compares the anomic division of labor with cancer where the mode in which

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<sup>9</sup> G. Soros, “Die kapitalistische Bedrohung. Hemmungsloser Wirtschaftsliberalismus gefährdet die offene Gesellschaft”, *Der Standard*, 17. January 1997, 1.

<sup>10</sup> P. Kennedy, *In Vorbereitung auf das 21. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt: Fischer, 1996), p. 75.

certain cells are growing does not become a new common function shared by all, but a dramatic process in the social organism by which certain cells expand at the expense of others.<sup>11</sup>

The Swiss sociologist, Peter Atteslander, sees anomie as a gap between *Verfügungswissen* (the knowledge of how things can be better produced, more efficiently etc.) and *Orientierungswissen* (the knowledge of why or for what things are done or produced). What Atteslander intended by this is that the knowledge people have at their disposal (*Verfügungswissen*) is increased enormously in the processes of modernization by such new technologies as micro-electronics, information networks and communication systems, etc., whereas the knowledge required for orientation which looks for qualitative standards and moral rules lags behind.<sup>12</sup> This pattern of polarity is very similar to the concept of “cultural lag” formulated by William Ogburn.<sup>13</sup> Atteslander stresses that moral rules are social constructs and therefore have a specific cultural peculiarity. Wherever this specific cultural peculiarity is denied, anomic consequences are to be expected. With regard to the process of globalization we must therefore underline that a globalization process advanced only on the basis of purely economic rationalities, without agreed rules for social integration on international and national levels can lead only to social and political instability

### **Ways to Possible and Sustainable Solutions**

In view of the complexity of the discussed issue it is neither possible nor intended to offer easy answers for difficult solutions. To find ways for the betterment of the present situation it is perhaps more efficient to proceed to discussing common concerns. But do we really possess the necessary universal structural framework to do this?

With regard to modernity we seem far from having arrived, and as long as this is not completed talk about post modernity is nonsense. As modernity still awaits completion (Stephen Toulmin) it would be wise to reflect on the failures, shortcomings and reductions of its present appearance. A few points should be mentioned in this regard:

If one is a wanderer and realizes that he or she has gone astray, in most cases it is not very helpful to run faster along the direction one already has chosen. In order to reach one’s goal it may be better to go back, to look for the junction at which one took the wrong way and starting from such a standpoint, search for solutions. This could mean identifying the reasons of the “malaise of modernity (Charles Taylor) and to search critically for alternative ways.

The history of thought is a heritage of the whole world. We should not only enjoy this heritage, but reflect upon the mortgage. Possibly other cultural experiences on this globe which are not considered among intellectuals to be part of the human heritage could help us broaden our horizons and our search for possible solutions.

To overcome the juxtaposition of the humanities and natural sciences, each working within the framework of its own notions and connotations, seems essential for overcoming the problems of present societies. A renewed understanding of science, where the specific disciplines are related, could contribute to more humane world development.

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<sup>11</sup> See E.F. Borgatta and M.L. Borgatta, eds. “Durkheim on Anomie”, *Encyclopedia of Sociology*, p. 96.

<sup>12</sup> P. Atteslander, “Kulturelle Eigenentwicklung als Kampf gegen Anomie”, P. Atteslander ed. *Kulturelle Eigenentwicklung. Perspektiven einer neuen Entwicklungspolitik* (Frankfurt/New York: Campus, 1993), p. 6.

<sup>13</sup> W.F. Ogburn, “Die Theorie der kulturellen Phasenverschiebung”, *Ogburn, W.F., Kultur und sozialer Wandel. Ausgewählte Schriften*, Neuried-Berlin 1969.

The one-sided interpretation of development in the sense of economic growth should be replaced by an integrative understanding: jobs, independence, justice, participation, environmental protection, and cultural identity are also important development goals. These goals should not be sought in isolation, but realized in an integrative manner.

There is urgent need for a real First World order. The present international structures are still extremely biased in favor of a few highly industrialized countries. In order to avoid a clash of cultures Samuel Huntington's<sup>14</sup> recommendation that the West control world development both politically and economically are definitely counter-productive. With regard to globalization there is an urgent need for a stakeholder rather than isolated shareholder orientation. The present international bodies must be restructured to enable global stakeholders to participate in a fair and appropriate way.

For a better international understanding empathy is very important. This means that we must examine whether our educational systems and socialization agents care sufficiently for this important human potential.

With regard to ethical orientations we need something like a "Spaceship-ethic" (K. Boulding) instead of a "Lifeboat-ethic" (G. Hardin).<sup>15</sup> In the latter in a case of emergency it is socially acceptable to throw a few people into the sea in order to rescue the lives of the others. In the former no one can be left behind, even in cases of emergency: were only one person to be thrown out, all the others would die as well. In order to survive, the only possibility is to co-operate by using different capabilities and in accord with agreed rules. It is evident that for our communities and nations a spaceship ethical-orientation should be considered as the humane way into the third millennium.

Such ethical principles operate only if internalized and institutionalized in communities and societies. In view of this there is need for a new world order based on a totally different principle than that presently existing. Missing today are the values of communality and reciprocity which have been widely displaced by those which foster competition and extreme individualism both within and among nations. In order to realize a world order which has at heart the values and interests of all nations, there is a strong need for all cultures and nations, big and small, rich and poor, to appreciate this requirement so that these values and principles are agreed upon unanimously and ultimately enshrined in the respective institutions of all particular nations and in the international institutions of the United Nations. This will make it more difficult and probably impossible for global economic players to impose their will and dictates upon weaker societies, as is the case today. To arrive at this objective, it necessary that the globalization process, which in the main goes hand-in-hand with the expansion of Western values to the rest of the world, be changed into one of dialogue involving the values of all world cultures without distinction. In order to realize diversity in unity it is not enough to dream about it, but necessary to work consciously, locally and globally, towards the necessary structures and institutions. The current situation in the world calls for this; awareness of the challenges from various parts of the world can contribute towards appreciation of the need for a spaceship-ethic. Why not together construct an approach which explores and secures all the cultures of our common planet?

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<sup>14</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Cultures", *Foreign Affairs*, Volume 72, No. 3, p. 40.

<sup>15</sup> See H. Birg, "Perspektiven des globalen Bevölkerungswachstums -- Ursachen, Folgen, Handlungskonsequenzen", F. Nuscheler and F. Furlinger, eds. *Weniger Menschen durch weniger Armut? Bevölkerungswachstum -- Globale Krise und ethische Herausforderung* (Salzburg/ München, 1994), pp. 43-45.



## Chapter IV

# Social Identity and Conflict: A Positive Approach

*Byaruhanga Rukooko Archangel*

### Introduction

On the world scene today, we have experienced dramatic social changes and events, most of which have been explained in terms of social identities. Perhaps the most remarkable event in recent years is that of the Rwandan genocide in which over one million ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were savagely massacred by the so-called extremist Hutus in 1994. The Banyamulenge (extension of the Tutsi-Hutu conflict) episode followed in Eastern Zaire.<sup>1</sup> It would be more adequate to include the whole of central Africa, if not the whole of Africa, as facing the dehumanizing problem of social identities. Moreover, beyond Africa in the period after the changes of 1989, no single social problem has been as elusive or tragic as that of social identity (ethnicity) in Central and Eastern Europe. Many other parts of the world have not escaped this problem.

In spite of this being a deadly social problem, various commentators on the subject of “identity” have expressed it in nominalist terms. It has been referred to as a “narrative” (Martin, 1993 and Rex: 1995, 21-33). In ordinary terms, a narrative is a story or account and implicitly therefore a social creation. Put differently, social identities are not necessary;<sup>2</sup> they might or might not be. This, in effect, declares the term “identity” ineffective in describing social reality or, simply as being fictitious or imaginary.

But this is precisely the source of the problem, because the consequence of such a theory is that the so-called social identities are superficial and could or should be dispensed with. This interpretation has not lacked practical implementation. For example, in the period after independence, most African states faced with the problem of pluralist societies or social identities, decided to suppress pluralist social paradigms of development in favor of monolithic centralized ones (Barongo, 1990:65). This simplification is unacceptable. When millions of people are dying one should not call it a “narrative”. The word “identity” may be abstract, but when applied to a social process it bears a specific meaning whose application can be sufficiently effective. (Interestingly, while the word “identity” is denigrated and rejected, the word “specificity” is accepted in its stead [Martin, 1995:17] without realizing that the two words could be synonyms in the context of social process.)

In this connection, there is a definite need for a more authentic analysis and a positive approach to the glaring reality of the problem of social identity. Further, such analysis is essential to the understanding of social changes and events in our world today. Against this background, I maintain that:

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<sup>1</sup> Once the Hutu fled the Rwanda-Zaire border, they met with hostility from the Tutsis living in Eastern Zaire. Although the hostility has acquired wider dimensions, the initial factor has acquired wider dimensions, the initial factor was ethnic conflict between the Tutsis and the Hutus.

<sup>2</sup> The word “necessary” is used here in the Thomistic sense. That is to say, we could have social identities or not.

1. Epistemologically (or metaphysically), identity is *prima facie* and *a priori* a conflictual relation. This is the existential reality which must be recognized as such.
2. Social identities are the result of the nexus of human as an invariable factor, on the one hand, and their environment, on the other.
3. Social identities suggest the existence of “multi-wealth” which should be converted into a “commonwealth”.

## **The Notion of Identity**

In order to understand the notion of social identity, it is essential first to come to terms with the term “identity”. This is a metaphysical term, and as such abstract. As a consequence, its referent cannot be pointed at and said to be this or that. Nevertheless, it can be described and in this regard, identity means a state of being the same in nature, quality, etc., and in contradistinction to others which are different.

To identify, therefore, is to delineate or isolate the features which mark out from others the referent in question. Put differently, identity is defined in terms of others -- what it is not -- and hence of a conflict! Thus to talk of identity is to talk of a conflictual relation. This forms the basis of the underlying philosophical problem of identity, which can be stated as: what true explanation can account for the cosmological features which are the same or seemingly permanent, on the one hand, and those which are changing or diverse, on the other.

This problem was first raised by the pre-Socratic Greek cosmologists or philosopher scientists, who included Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes. They were struck by the fact that nature was an organized physical system governed by a kind of law or constancy. They noted that nature was forever re-arranging, changing, and renewing itself. Yet, in spite of unending change, there was stark continuity (Copleston, 1985: 13-21). Hence their question: “What is real vis-a-vis change and diversity?” These philosophers were searching for identity or reality. Put differently, they were trying to “identify reality”.

This philosophical issue was drawn to an extreme by the later ancient philosophers -- Parmenides, Zeno and Plato -- who insisted that reality was identified with permanence, on the one hand, and by Heraclitus who insisted that reality was identifiable with change, on the other. Even at this level, a conflict is discernible, but this is much more so as when Heraclitus says that being exists in many or that identity exists in difference (Walsh, 1985: 1-6). Here, Heraclitus not only expresses the fact of cosmological conflict, but he also points out that the changes and tensions are struggling to create a balance; in effect, that the cosmos is sustained by conflicts and their resolution.

This view of a dual conflictual cosmological constitution is often referred to as the common sense view of the universe. This view seems to be supported not only by observation, but also by logical considerations. For, when it is asserted that something is changing, does this not at the same time imply that there is something which remains permanent or unaffected by the transformations. Otherwise one may ask: What is it that is changing? As a consequence, it is the delineation of that which remains unaffected by transformations -- the problem of identity -- that has traditionally been the concern of philosophers.

Before concluding, it may be useful to make a further distinction within the problem of identity. In one sense, identity implies permanence amidst change, but in another sense it may imply one or unity amidst diversity or many. For example, when we see two objects with a similar color, we may wish to ascertain whether or not the two are identical. In this case, we are concerned



with the problem of identity in the latter context of one versus many. However, when we want to know whether a daughter of Mr. Okello has not grown up, we are concerned with the former meaning -- identity in spite of transformations in the passage of time.

Thus, in view of what has been discussed above, I want to re-assert my earlier position that identity necessarily involves a conflictual relation, which relation is pervasive in the cosmos and *a fortiori*, in man and his environment. Even such recent writers as J. Austin (1961), admit this conflictual relation. Therefore, when treating issues related to identity, a conflictual relation should be accepted and treated as such. In short, the solutions of the identity related problems must begin from recognizing and appreciating identity both nature and society as conflictual. This is an authentic approach. To deny or suppress it is neither useful nor possible without causing social instability because it is a denial of reality. Further, treating identity as a narrative is failure to perceive it as a natural manifestation.

### *Social Identity*

Applied to society, the problem of identity then is expressed at two levels: one, how is the identity of a person to be expressed vis-a-vis other persons and in the passage of time; two, how is social identity expressed in the context of other societies and of the passage of time. We call the former individual identity and the latter, multiple identity.

*Individual Identity.* It may be difficult to define the identity of man as an individual. But if done, it would be a positive step in the direction of grappling with the problem of social conflict or identity and related social problems, and hence an attempt that is worthwhile. Thus, while sometimes one is seen as existent, at other times one is seen as unfulfilled; and while sometimes one is seen as closed, at other times one appears as open. Traditionally and most generically, persons are seen from two standpoints: that of the body which provides the basis for one's determination and material interests, and that of the spirit which provides the basis for one's infinity and rationality. Even at this level, one is seen as a conflictual or antinomical unity. To be able to understand one's social identity, this antinomical duality has to be taken into consideration. Notwithstanding, this dichotomy is not sufficient.<sup>3</sup>

This abstractive duality does not say much about the nature of the identity, although it forms the basis of the explanation of one's identity and the conflict associated therewith. There is no such thing as a person living independently of the external world or one's environment, whether historical, cultural or otherwise. One is a result of the individual -- the object and subject called man -- and one's environment. One is a recipient of the external world much as one participates in the creation of the external world. Therefore, one is both a product and producer of the external world and of oneself.

In terms of the body, one could be described as physical, biological and psychological. As a physical object, one is either tall or heavy, has a heart or a head -- they provide him with a specific shape and volume different from other objects or beings, but "distinct" enough to agree with the shape of other human beings or other men. As a biological object, one's heart pumps blood to other parts of the body, the stomach digests the food which it must obtain, the skin contracts under cold weather while it expands under warm weather; all these must function only in an environment.

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<sup>3</sup> Whenever man is considered from the dualist standpoint, I am at loss as to where I should place the psychological aspect. For example, where do we place hatred -- in relation to the body or in relation to the spirit?

These too, happen only in so far as they agree with how other people's bodies function. So far, these are obvious cases of identity and difference.

In regard to the spiritual aspect, one does conceive of oneself in terms of the other. Ricoeur, in his study of the ontology of the Self, distinguishes between two aspects of identity: "Sameness" which is based on the ideas of relations through time -- a kind of mental continuum which is similar to Leibnitz's theory of consciousness -- and "selfhood" which is constituted by all the identifications to which a person has consented while at the same time allowing for change and evolution. Ricoeur then asserts that sameness cannot be conceived without the conception of selfhood. His conclusion is that the One cannot be conceived without the Other (Ricoeur, 1990). In effect, this means that to talk of the "One" is talk of the "Other" and to talk of the "Other" is talk of the "One".

Further, recent studies in psychology and philosophy have added a new vista toward a much greater understanding man. They seem to agree with regard to the problem of identity. Psychoanalysts have argued and demonstrated an indissoluble connection between the Self and the Other. Accordingly, the Other reveals the reality of Self through a multifaceted Self (Mannoni, 1969); that is, one's existence needs the existence of the Other not only in physical and social terms, but also psychologically. Relationships and communication are possible because of the consciousness that the Other exists. Otherwise how would we talk of emotions in the category of love and hate. Language too, has been shown to demonstrate the issue of identity in difference. In linguistic terms, the conscience of "we" means relative heterogeneity, which implies that the opposite is constitutive of the "we". In this way, Landowski emphasizes, if only in linguistic terms, the existence of the Other from the view of the Self (Landowski, 1991).

However, in spite of this propensity of the Self for the Other, there is stark fear and insecurity of the self with regard to the Other. While the self enjoys and reposes in the Other, he is still in conflict with the Other. Thus, out of the yearning for the Other, one reposes in the family but may feel more secure in a clan, nationality, nation, regional body like the EEC or EA community and the like. One may even cherish a universal body such as the United Nations which, I believe, was borne out of the propensity for the Other.

Whereas this progressive association supports the views of Landowski, Mannoni and Ricoeur, a propensity for progressively smaller association to the level of talking of, and cherishing individual identity and personal privacy emphasizes man's wish to repose in one's self. Put succinctly, whereas the propensity of association does exist, the propensity of "de-association" or disaggregation also exists. For example, attempts to fill the post of Secretary General of the United Nations reflect such disaggregative human propensities. The Africans converge on a specific candidate, the Americans look for another sympathetic to American interests, while the Russians and Chinese support another specific candidates, according to each nation's or group of nations' interests. Even within a nation, there are dis-associative or disaggregative tendencies. The war in Northern Uganda is being interpreted in ethnic terms (*The Monitor*, November 29th, 1996). That is to say, the Banyankole who are in the South of Uganda want the Luos in the North to suffer the consequences of the war. Within the Banyankole too, it is alleged that the Bahima are benefiting because they belong to the same sub-grouping as the President himself. This view could be extrapolated to include individuals: did not Museveni as President condemn individual soldiers for "reaping money from corpses" (*The Monitor*, November 29th, 1996).

In this regard one can talk of the tension of the community. To talk of society or community is to talk of simultaneous intersubjectivity and subjectivity, conflict and reconciliation. This is because while man's desires constitute his subjectivity, at the same time there is common desire

for social order or common good, wherein lies the embodiment of intersubjectivity (Lonergan, 1983:214-218). It is these associative and de-associative propensities that express the conflict in nature, man and society. But apparently, the conflict, as Heraclitus claimed, is essential for balancing and the search for harmony as demanded by the rational and transcendent character of the human person.

However, it should be mentioned as well that the identity of man in terms of cognitional paradigms also is influenced by one's externality. The selfhood or identity of a person is influenced, not only by one's colleagues, but also by one's wider environment. In other words, one's spirituality is not expressed *ex-nihilo*; one is a nexus of forces from oneself and from outside oneself. Even though one possesses free will, it is exercised within an epistemological framework. In other words, the rationality of man also tries to put order in the confluence of the internal and external influences (Ruch, 1984: 180-198).

In general, the external influences include history, culture, environment and relationships. These affect one's spirituality. When these combine with the body, a composite being is created. Thus depending on the vivacity of the specific force(s) and whether they be body or spirit related, the person will be what he/she is. It is dependent upon these factors, as well as on the period and space that one's choices, goals, principles and habits, in a word, one's identity will be formed.

*Multiple Social Identities:* Having said this about an individual's identity, social identity or collective personality is not very different. Thus, if there can be an internal conflict in man, the individual, *a fortiori* a great conflict should be expected in society. If, as Plato said, society is "an individual writ large," when the problem of identity versus multiplicity is enlarged to the social level the conflicts are multiplied.

Thus, the term "social identity" reflects a group of people who are homogenous and permanent in spite of change and multiplicity. In other words, the people in question have certain features invariable in time and space. This also means that, in spite of changes, the people in question remain the same. This description is partly meaningless if taken literally; however, if we recall what we said above, that identity has meaning only when it is linked to other things, then social identity has meaning when a group of people is seen against other groups. In other words, the group in question lacks complete identification without other groups. Practically, this means that, such a group, generally, has a similar physical, psychological and ideological position vis-a-vis other groups, which is quite sufficient for purposes of understanding social reality.

For example, the Rwanda case involves the Tutsi who are generally tall and slender with long teeth and long nose, whereas the Hutus are short, stout and shift in their movement. The former are shepherds while the later are farmers. The term social identity means that a specific group of people has such specific dominant characteristics in contrast to other groups. Of course, as a social grouping, they cannot be completely homogeneous. The term "people" allows for difference because, unlike objects people are unlimited in number and can realize themselves in unnumbered ways including such factors as bodily interests, psychological endowments and cultural achievements. A group of people can do likewise.

Nonetheless, when the term social identity is employed, it is meant to bring forward certain dominant characteristics which people either have or do not have in relation to other people. Doornboss shows how the Bairu are different from the Bahima (Doornboss, 1978:147). At least, verifiable propositions can be made about a social identity. For example, under the present conditions in Zaire, we can reasonably assert that the Tutsi are hostile to the Hutu or vice versa.

This states the existence of conflict in society at two levels: within a specific social identity and against other social identities, and the term identity can be applied meaningfully.

Thus, at the collective level as well as at the individual level, there is not only an expression of conflict, but also the possibilities of its rebalancing, reconciliation and resolution of tension. Ricoeur shows this as we have seen. Auge affirms that the other is present in all cultures and in organizations of all kinds (Auge, 1988). Amselle too, defines identity in Africa as the utterance of difference considered as a system of relations.

In addition, even though African identities are based on opposition, they create grounds for negotiation and establishing balances of power. This is possible because the utterance of identity in Africa involves forgetting the conditions of social conflict (Amselle, 1990), for we must not forget the communalist spirit ascribed to Africa.

In general, therefore, we can make the following observations.

- One, that identity and conflict are inseparable. This occurs not only at the level of nature or the cosmos, but also at the level of human persons and all societies. Conflict occurs not only internally, but also externally; not only bodily but also spiritually. In spite of the person's free will, social identity is influenced by the vivacity of the nexus of the operating forces.

- Whether psychologically, physically or spiritually, the interaction of various forces serves to support our position: first recognize and appreciate the conflict in nature, man and society, and then try to bring about reconciliation.

- The person's free will, as manifestation of one's transcendence, should assist in going beyond different influences and make one's choices rationally.

## **The Relevance of the Conflict of Identities**

How this social identity manifests itself must be examined and assessed. But first there is this question: Does social conflict matter? Does it have consequences? This is a difficult question because, as we have said, though conflict is seemingly universal, yet the violence is not equally universal.

Different ethnicities co-exist, religious groupings co-exist, ideological groups can co-exist; so why should this be a basis for deaths of millions? In answer I would first raise another question: Would a social conflict occur were this latent cosmological conflict to be absent?

Let us recognize that, before there can be a fight, there must be fighters, before there can be philosophy, there must be philosophers. In short, before there can be a conflict there must be "conflictors", for conflict is not possible *ex-nihilo*. Therefore, to talk of a social conflict is to presuppose people who conflict. In other words, the existence of conflictual parties provides the basis for the conflict. In this regard social identities do matter or more technically, the conflictual latency matters. The latent conflict does not imply a specific concrete and active conflict, but it is ever waiting for an opportunity to be active. Therefore it matters. Put succinctly, do away with the conflictual substratum and the conflict disappears.

### *The Manifestation of the Conflict of Social Identities*

It was observed earlier, that the latent cosmological and social conflicts are influenced by both internal and external factors. With regard to the internal aspect, the individual is able to rationalize his experience, and form a general view of reality. This exercise can be transposed to a social

grouping. The result of such rationalization is the building of a shared mental edifice. This is called an ideology -- a people's ideology, their spirit or their ethos. Perhaps it is the ideology or common consciousness of being one in relation to the Other that gives social groupings the characteristic of being referred to as social identity.

Apparently, more than any other factor, consciousness defines the boundary of the relevant social identity, notwithstanding the fact that the boundaries are susceptible to change (Okwudiba Nnoli: 1989/1). For that matter, an ideology is a social instrument because it contains the ideals or goals, the content and methods for obtaining the goals of that social identity. In the case of social identity, the ideology involves production of a theory of the difference which often is transformed into the devalorization of the Other. The Other is presented as an enemy who is a threat (whether real or not) to the social identity in question, while the identity in question present itself either as superior, better or at least positive. As a consequence, the ideologized social identity is mobilized against the Other who is seen as a threat to the identity's interests including its existence. The Other may follow similar steps.

In the process, members of the identity who are devoted to the expression of the ideology and who can harmonize the prevalent feelings and strategies emerge as leaders and mobilizes the identity. These leaders could be religious, businessmen, politicians, teachers, professionals or even the elderly who explain their history "wisely". The message is that either our history has always been superior or that our existence has always been threatened and that now is the opportunity to defend our history or to fight for our existence. At this level, the conflict becomes political as it relates to who is stronger, or who is correct or who should distribute what and how it should be distributed. Interest now becomes power or how we should defend ourselves or liberate ourselves.

For an ideology to be effective it must be received by a number of people who have generally fuzzy feelings. These feelings are given explicit expression by the leaders. The ideology acquires an emotional mobilization strategy because it touches on the deeper feelings a number of people cherish. Although it retains a semblance of a reasoned set of ideas. This emotionality is engineered from the three axes of history, space and culture (Martin, 1995:12-13).

With regard to history, the group is infused with nostalgic feelings of the past as it constructs the past -- we were rulers, we never cultivated, etc. These are collective memories which may give impetus to the emotionality of a specific group. Even when the history is traumatic, it serves to intensify the group emotions. For example, the Bairu -- Banyankore (Western Uganda) vehemently reject any attempts to re-install a king even as a cultural head because the king was a preserve of the Bahima whose rule was crude and still has great emotional impact on the Bairu memories.<sup>4</sup> In any case, the historical events and changes affect the group emotions.

Closely, related to the aspect of history, is that of culture. Culture involves all that society has achieved including knowledge, affectivity and material accumulation. Very often, culture also involves the goals of the members. For example, the Banyankore boys on maturing must begin preparing for marriage -- which includes paying the bride price. This then becomes a major goal in life until they are married. Those cherishing Christian ideals do not settle until they have married in church. Dress, music, language, foods too have affective influence on group consciousness. The meaning carried by certain words or objects also highly influences the emotional aspect of the people. Let me illustrate: traditionally Banyankore boys would never marry a woman who already had a child with another man; such a woman would be called "Kishikimakazi" -- girl-woman.

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<sup>4</sup> The old Ankore kingdom had two ethnic groups (identities) -- the Hima, from whom kings were extracted and the Bairu whose major occupation was cultivation and serving the Hima.

Thus, if a person used this term in reference to such a female, a lot would be implied such as having lesser vital force.<sup>5</sup>

Space too, has its force in relation to social identity. There is a sense of belonging of people in an historical place, or of people being in a different place from their home. They may feel their destiny lies at the specific place because their ancestors lived and were buried there. The confluence of their life is presented as being fixed at their home place. For example, in Uganda, there are many student and non student associations based on their places of origin. This reflects the weight and relevance placed on the space called home. For instance, traditionally, the Baganda never sell their ancestral burial grounds (Ebijja). However, more importantly, space may come up in relation to the exercise of power. We are in our country and cannot be ruled by foreigners is a prevalent fiction in Uganda in reference to President Museveni of Uganda.<sup>6</sup> Put differently, the group feels that they should be masters without external competition or infiltration.

Put together, these elements carry great emotive potential and most likely will affect one's decisions and actions, as well as one's choices and goals. These do have the capacity in themselves to cause social events and changes, including building a world view. However, when the emotional manifestation is supported by a form of rationalization, tension builds up and any incident can result in violence.

For example, in Rwanda, since the 1962 revolution, the Hutus have wielded power while the Tutsis have lived in diaspora. For a long time, the principle of Hutus administration was based on the fear, suspicion and hatred of the Tutsis. It was generally believed and sometimes expressed that if the Tutsis returned to Rwanda or, worse still, if they gained power, the Hutu would be harassed or even annihilated -- and apparently these fears were vindicated. Not only was this belief expressed, but it was also turned into a divisive ideology which percolated through to the whole society in Rwanda and outside. Therefore, when the Tutsis started to negotiate their return to Rwanda, the anti-Tutsi feelings were presented as truths among the Hutus who also organized resistance against the return of the Tutsi to Rwanda. As a terrible consequence, when the Hutu president was killed, genocide ensued.

There were efforts on both sides to organize and to stop the "threat" or make it disappear. Thus while the Hutus built anti-Tutsi ideology, the Tutsi too formulated their anti-Hutu ideology -- both antagonistic ideologies. For example, referring to the Hutu, one old Tutsi man living in Uganda said: "Bashangwa batategyeka". This means that, the Hutu never rule or that, it is not their business to rule!

In this regard therefore, social identity is characterized by a conflictual relationship or "otherness" of fear, suspicion and struggle on both sides. In addition, it should be recognized that both insiders and outsiders serve to enhance the social identity and its attendant conflict by way of building conflicting ideologies. Further, I would mention again that, within a specific social identity there is also considerable disagreement. To take again the example of Rwanda: There is a generally accepted claim that even though the majority of Hutus were against the return of the Tutsis to Rwanda there were some Hutus who were not concerned about this: hence you have the "moderate" Hutus and "extremist" ones.

## **Relativity, Competition and Choice of Social Identities**

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<sup>5</sup> The usage here is Tempelean -- that beings in Africa, are conceived as having hierarchical levels of existence.

<sup>6</sup> Rumors have been rife in Uganda that President Museveni was Rwandese and therefore should not become president of Uganda.

We observed earlier that human choices depend upon the confluence of forces acting from within and without. This neither means that the operation of these forces is mechanical nor does it mean that they operate in the same manner all the time, nor does it mean that the one on whom these forces are acting remains the same. In effect, this implies a high range relativity whose both epistemological and practical consequences can be easily guessed. Put differently, depending upon the force or vivacity of a specific influence and the transcendence of one's own self, one will make one's choice. This too, implies the possibility of existence of more than one identity in a person's environment. Hence, the competition of identities acting upon a person out of which one will make one's choice between one, two or three options.

There is a good example and probably a unique one among the Banyankole in Ankole, there are two major socio-ethnic identities, the Bairu and the Bahima. Upon the advent of Colonialism and Christianity, the Bahima who were mainly rulers adopted the Anglican religion of the colonizers almost without exception, while the Bairu divided in equal numbers in their choices between Catholicism, on the one hand, and, on the other, one group accepted Anglicanism, and a minimal number was left for traditional religions. However, when the Bairu Anglicans challenged the Bahima over their preserve of power (when Hima alleged supremacy), a re-arrangement ensued. The Bahima joined the DP which was mainly a Catholic's political party, while the Bairu Anglicans joined the UPC which was a political party for the Uganda Anglicans (Doornboss, 1978:127). As a social fact this alignment and reorganization has a number of implications.

First, as pointed out earlier, depending on the force of specific conditions one chooses an identity. In our case, in spite of the Bahima being Protestant Anglicans they rejected the UPC and joined the DP because of its force upon them at the time.

Second, in spite of the Anglican Bairu and Catholic Bairu claiming one ethnic identity, they were separated on the basis of religion and politics.

Third, it serves to attest to the rationality and transcendence of the human person who makes choices among competing identities. Indeed, it should be noted that absence of competition implies absence of choice. Man will always try to identify with one or several groups, which implies a choice of reference groups and a rejection of others.

It should be pointed out also that the choices are made not without cost. Still using the Hutus and Tutsis as an example, the former were equally hacked to death by their fellow, but extremist, Hutus when they accused them of reckless genocide. This social choice of whether the moderate Hutus were to be killed or not attests to the possibility of human choice and transcendence, much as it affirms the presence of conflict within the social generalities. Human choice affirms one's transcendence or infiniteness, for he could not choose unless he were infinite. Choice therefore is a reflection of one's human nature, and as social, one's choice of social identities is an invariable human condition.

Identities are part and parcel of society. One must necessarily make a choice in different situations and any attempts to deny or denigrate his choices to the level of calling them "narratives" is to obscure the necessity of human choices, even though it be in reference to social identities. That one must make a choice is the nature of social reality. What is most fundamental is not what choice one makes, but that as a living spiritual and transcendent being he has to make a choice.

However, the wide range of choice smacks of danger. We recognize any choice of man without exempting even murderous choices. This is as open-ended as the unhampered freedom

which results in anarchy. But this again can be left to the limitless transcendence of man that allows him, through culture and environment, to formulate ethical principles and values that restrain him from unethical choices. Hence man's choices are highly relative as they depend on the variable forces acting upon him.

Fourth, one is capable of changing from one social identity to another or simply suppressing one in favor of another.

Last, the same individual can embrace a manifold of identities even though such identities may seem contradictory. Thus, even though the Bahima were largely Protestant, they generally rejected the UPC whose membership was fundamentally Anglican in favor of the DP, a Catholic party.

### **The Possibility of a Commonwealth**

So far, what we have done is to highlight and call for recognition that identity in nature, man and society manifests simultaneous conflict, unity and reconciliation. Phrased differently, identity declares conflict in nature -- human included -- but also accepts unity or homogeneity and yearning for harmony. It is my view that it is from this standpoint that the solution to the problems of social identity lies. Of course, it is very difficult to devise a totally successful rational social system; however, it is fair to keep trying in the hope that a fairer one can be found. In this case, we proceed to propound one, based on the meaning of identity -- or unity or homogeneity on the one hand, and of difference, on the other. With regard to homogeneity, the relevant social system would presuppose a monolithic view of persons and societies irrespective of physical, cultural and environmental differentiation. Man is assumed to be the same everywhere, every time and all circumstances; in other words, there is an attempt to author a universal man, a universal culture, universal values and universal environment. The social system that most likely would recommend itself to such paradigm is socialism, whose consequences are too well known. Except for emphasis laid on the universality of human nature, a homogenizing system is likely to be a trite project precisely because it ignores the aspect of the latent conflict in identity. It will be recalled that, drawing from similar premises, the first African statesmen adopted a socio-political system that proved unsuccessful, if not disastrous -- Kaunda, Nkrumah, Nyerere and many others. Interestingly, Uganda's President, Museveni, is currently recasting social monolithism in the form of a supposedly all embracing mono-ideological movement. I have serious misgivings whether this movement will hold.

The social paradigm which I will develop and defend is the one whose foundation is conflict! Superficially, it may seem hopeless to anchor ourselves on conflict for a solution to identity related social problems. However, I wish to point out that, primarily, once we have accepted that conflict is a fundamental representation of identity, it is not possible to construct a social system that evades this reality. So, in which way does conflict form a viable basis for harmony?

In the first instance, we pointed out earlier that conflict is potential or latent although often it has been sparked into activity. This latent conflict, therefore, ought to be accepted and exploited for harmony. Hence, it is my view that the conflict which is reflected in the natural propensity to diverge or separate could be exploited by promoting individualism both at the personal and societal level. Put differently, the conflictual situation demands an atomized or a decentralized social system. This implies greater recognition and consequent promotion of individual freedom and independent decision, and action. In other words, this implies equality and justice, while in



addition to freedom are important pillars of human existence. In essence, this is opposed to monolithism.

In fact, drawing from this principle, several societies or countries developed social systems and policies which have given them some stability, for example, such policies as “ethnic arithmetic”, federalism, ethnic balancing, ethnic proportionality principle or even the recent proportional representation of political parties and decentralization. Other related policies have included quotas in admission to schools, universities or the army, discriminatory appointment of public figures, which recently are gender sensitive. The NRM government in Uganda tried to accommodate all religious proportionally, which contributed to Uganda’s general stability for some time, until other factors came in. I think it is precisely because the religious conflicts, which are significant factors in Uganda, were recognized that there was stability. In short, individual choices should be given priority over communal choices. This is not to say that communal choices are insignificant, but rather that, the individual counts before the society.

This position too, is problematic and could lead to anarchism. Even if it is not an anarchism, it may be useful to look at the social systems of the continent of Africa from a pragmatic point of view, i.e., how successful they have performed vis-a-vis closed, mono-lithic systems. They appear to have fared acceptably, notwithstanding their difficulties. However, even this negative corollary could be avoided by recourse to Ricoeur’s view of the Self and the Other, where the two are ever coveting each other (Ricoeur, 1990).

The difference between a social system based on unity and homogeneity and this one is that, instead of forceful unity and blanket equality which the former assumes, this latter principle of the Self yearning or searching for the Other assumes intentional preference and choice. In other words, it allows greater consideration that the rational, emotional and physical position opens to a preferred union of the different cultural identities including knowledge, emotionality and values. This approach recognizes that all -- the Self and the Other -- have resources and affirm the intention to exchange what they possess. Hence, it allows for a conversion of the multi-wealth into a commonwealth for the good of humankind.

## **Conclusion**

Social identities have generated serious social problems which today threaten the very existence of humankind. Nonetheless, their cognitional acceptability remains fuzzy. However, if solutions are to be found, greater and clearer conceptualization is a pre-requisite. The notion of identity has a specific meaning when applied to society and denigration of it does not help the situation. It is primarily characterized by conflict and it has to be understood as such.

Social identity is a result of factors from within and from without. This means that one makes choices depending on social circumstances and other factors impinging upon one from outside and inside. This too, suggests competition of factors or social identities. These factors are variable, but include cultural ingredients, environment and persons themselves.

Even though social identities involve conflict, this conflict is a guideline towards understanding social identities and the answer to its related problems lies therein. Hence, on this basis it is possible to conceive and work toward an harmonious union of several identities in a commonwealth based on individual freedom.

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## Chapter V

# National Conflicts and the Problem of Democracy in Postcommunist Societies

*Zagorka Golubovic*

### Nationalism and Democracy

#### *Nationalism*

The subject matter of this paper is nationalism as a specific kind of national affiliation and the problem of building democracy in postcommunist societies. One of the questions to be considered is whether democracy and nationalism can go together. Relying on the fact that nation is a modern phenomenon born parallel with the democratic state, certain authors hold the opinion that the nation-state represents real democracy, affirming thus their compatibility. On the other side, authors distinguish the concept of nation from nationalism, or contrast democracy and nationalism as incompatible. The problem, then is how the concept of nationalism is to be defined.

Emerging in the era of the birth of the *citoyen* and the modern state, nation designates the end of feudal particularism and a trend towards the integration of heretofore divided peoples. Therefore, the concept of nation should be differentiated from “ethnicity” which derives its meaning from tribes as an original form of social organization based on common (ancestral) origins and traditional mythologies. However, these two notions -- nation and ethnicity -- have not always been distinguished, producing misinterpretations of the modern concept of nation.

Therefore, one may speak of a twofold meaning of *nation*: one derives its roots from German romanticism and is expressed in terms of longing for a tribal unity based on ascriptive principles and historical legends, as well as on mythology;<sup>1</sup> the other comes about with the French Revolution and is defined in culturological terms, i.e. as a community determined by its political and cultural identity, implying that the nation (as an ethnic group) is not necessarily a constitutive factor of the state. Hence, we may speak of *ethnic* and *civic* nation. The former assumes a nation-state as the unity which homogenizes peoples and restricts pluralism of cultural expressions to national symbols. The latter distinguishes between state and society without striving to construe a monolithic community, although relying upon the common cultural ties (like language, basic values, etc.). Thereby, nation as a political and cultural community not only means “memory of a community’s past”, but assumes also a projection of its future way of life. It is conceived primarily in terms of a society’s “conception of the world” (its political construction), which aids the orientation of the population in their interpersonal relations and understanding of their surroundings. That is the reason why nation as a political and cultural entity serves primarily the formation of political/cultural identity and is not nationally exclusive. In contrast, its interpretation in terms of ties of “blood and soil” necessarily involves nationalism as an exclusive and aggressive attitude derived from a strict identification with one’s own nation, thereby provoking animosities towards other nations (first of all towards national minorities). This is because a feeling of belonging to the nation, if it prevails over all other forms of identification, produces a strong tendency to homogenization and ethnic purity.

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<sup>1</sup> S. Langer, *Filozofija u novom ključu* (Philosophy in a New Key) (Beograd: Prosveta, 1968).

Given the above differentiation of the concepts of nation, one may distinguish the natural national feelings in terms of national identity from nationalism as an exclusive ideology.

Human beings are social in their nature and therefore they are in need of identification with a social community in order to define their place in the surrounding world. The identification along the line of the same language and cultural continuity appears as a primary form of social identification, because it makes it possible for one to integrate oneself as the member of the community and orient oneself in it. When nation is interpreted in those terms, it provides the foundation of personal identity and the unique character structures of the community's members. The contrary holds true when the organic interpretation of the concept of nation is involved, assuming an homogenization and leveling of personal and cultural differences, because belonging to the nation is understood as complete submergence of individuals into the superior collectivity (the nation).

However, this does not imply that the concept of nation in ethnic terms is given a negative connotation. As mentioned, belonging to an ethnic group as the primary and more natural unit (than a nation in terms of citizenship) is everyone's right; it is a matter of personal commitment which cannot be determined politically nor forced upon someone by the state. Hence, the notion of nation in broader terms, as a political-cultural unit, as citizenship, does not imply any discrimination on ethnic grounds, nor does it assume that ethnic identity is to be suppressed and avoided. Ethnic affiliation is a part of every person's life, and peoples have the right to express themselves ethnically (concerning language, religion or cultural tradition). But ethnic identification is a sphere in which the state and politics must not interfere.

Being that ethnic affiliation is not something a person is born with, but develops during community life, it is a matter of personal choice, certainly conditioned by the given cultural tradition, and not arbitrary. Therefore, ethnicity as a primary tie should be incorporated into the modern concept of nation, in particular in multinational states. The problem is not due simply to the mere existence of different ethnic groups in one state, and to the diversities of ethnic identities; the problem emerges when the concept of nation is attributed an ideology of "blood and soil" and interpreted in these terms, causing its regression to the primitive level of irrational drives and ethnic animosities. It happens when: (a) ethnic identity pretends to become an absolute form of identification, enforced upon all other kinds of identity (gender, generational, professional, class, etc.), claiming thus ethnic homogeneity instead of recognizing the equal dispersion of ethnic diversities within the given community (bearing in mind that the great majority of the existing states are multi-ethnic); and (b) the nation defined as ethnicity longs to identify with the state claiming its right to a particular territory and to the constitution of the "nation-state" as an homogenous and ethnically pure community. That is the way a nationalist ideology is born which constitutes the nation as an absolute authority, as a people's inescapable fate.

I speak of nationalism in terms of an exclusive viewpoint which redirects national feelings from a national liberation movement to international clashes. Because the distinction between national feelings in terms of a needed national identity and national ideology is not easy to demarcate, there is a latent danger of transformation of a national liberation movement into an exclusive and aggressive nationalism. As the Yugoslav sociologist, Rudi Supek, writes, "National movements are very sensitive with regard to their own freedom while disregarding the liberties of other nations."<sup>2</sup> It is thus difficult to say when a struggle for national independence ends and the fight against the other peoples begins. Exclusive nationalism comes always with militarism which

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<sup>2</sup> R. Supek, *Drustvene predrasude i nacionalizam* (Social Prejudices and Nationalism), (Zagreb: Globus, 1992).

awakes an aggressive spirit, for both national feelings and nationalism as an ideology are based on emotions and irrational drives.

I will be dealing here, as mentioned before, with an exclusive and aggressive nationalism which receives its impetus from “ethnic nationalism”. That is to say, I will not consider the concept of national identity as a phenomenon that constitutes peoples and fulfills their existential needs for belonging and security, without producing in itself nationalism as an antagonistic attitude toward other peoples. Contrary to that, “ethnic nationalism” as equated with ethnicity is opposed to the modern concept of nation, for it assumes the given territory as a “holy land” which should be defended to death, whereas the former “integrates a population within the community of citizens”,<sup>3</sup> which represents a political and cultural unit.

Having been defined as an organic unity, “ethnic nationalism” assumes subordination of individuals to the people as an hypostatized entity which dominates as an inevitable fate, contrary to the individual will and reason, whereas the modern concept of nation presupposes a community constituted on the basis of free-will membership, assuming that it is freely chosen and based on the sovereignty of the citizen.<sup>4</sup>

Nationalism is one of the forms of collective identification; which sort of nationalism it is depends on whether national identification is merely one form of identification among others, or has become the exclusive form of identification. When all identification has been reduced to national, we may speak of exclusive nationalism; this has acquired a negative connotation particularly in the second half of the 20th century. Hobsbawm characterizes this kind of nationalism as a right-wing movement monopolizing all the other forms of political and social identification and leading to xenophobia and fundamentalism. Its characteristics are: exclusiveness, intolerance and chauvinism; it is linked with ethnocentrism and racism.<sup>5</sup>

Why does ethnic nationalism appear as an exclusive form of identification? Anthony Giddens answers this question when pointing out that a tendency to “regressive forms of identification” appears when ontological security is jeopardized, when the routines have ceased to be valid and when there exist general conditions of anxiety.<sup>6</sup> Craving for an ancient tribal identity -- as Susan Langer writes -- makes such nationalism see salvation in the revival of the most foolish historical legends (*Ibid.*, p. 402). It is then that loyalty to one’s own group correlates with enmity to alien ethnic groups toward whom unfriendly attitudes are formed.

In other words, one may conclude that an exclusive nationalism is a mystified consciousness based on irrational impulses; this compensates for immaturity on the part of the self by identification with the “powerful nation”. For this reason Supek defines it as regression to affective-instinctual dispositions, since nationalism forces the person to behave as a member of a herd rather than as a citizen of a developed modern nation (*Ibid.*, p. 132).

Therefore, the ethnically based nation-states promote “nativism”, as Zygmunt Bauman writes, construing their subjects as “aborigines” and fostering ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural homogeneity, propagating the feeling of a common mission and common fate; while, on the other

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<sup>3</sup> D. Schnapper, *La communauté des citoyens, Sur l’idée moderne de nation* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> M. Kullashi, “Ideologie et nation”, *Lignes*, no. 20 (Paris), pp. 134-135.

<sup>5</sup> E.J. Hobsbawm, *Nation and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 168.

<sup>6</sup> A. Giddens, *The National State and Violence* (Cambridge: Polity, 1985), p. 218.

side, it produces hostility towards everyone who is outside the “sacred nation”.<sup>7</sup> There emerges a closed society which homogenizes itself from within, and differentiates in an antagonistic manner from without; this trend is opposite to the modern states’ integration and globalization. Society is suspended by the nation-state which becomes the bearer of national sovereignty suppressing citizens’ sovereignty. Such a regression to primitive nationalism may be explained in terms of a complete inability of society’s members to find solutions for the challenges of democratization, due to which people return to the traditional, authoritarian values of a tribal society.

Supek speaks of three psychological roots of nationalism: it is, firstly, a “social-Darwinist mentality”, i.e. such identification of the person with the group which excludes the members of the other groups (an innate gregarism); secondly, it concerns stereotypes as a way of thinking which involves prejudices about the other ethnic groups; and thirdly, the deepest motivation may be derived from frustrations, i.e. from the suppression of needs producing a sense of guilt and inferiority feeling. Individuals submerge into an impersonal entity in order to hide their own powerlessness and their weak personalities in the lap of a “great nation”. Political repression, on the one side, and the creation of the ideal stereotypes, on the other, provide the foundation of ultranationalism as a chauvinistic attitude.

This may be related with the mechanisms of mass psychology. That is to say, the analysts must unveil the unconscious zone of the individual’s psyche in order to understand such an uncritical adherence to the group and/or national leader. Then one may discover how “higher (national) goals” are linked with people’s average drives when they experience the former as if expressing their own desires. When believing that the postulated “national interests” are the very incarnation of their own being and soul, individuals regain the lost (or yet unachieved) personal dignity through the glorification of their nation. This is the reason why they strive to become one with the nation, losing themselves through such a beneficial identification. According to literature on ideology, we know that the more an ideology merges with the average structure of the mass, the greater psychological effect it has on individuals.

The obsession with the collective and immersion in it, as a reflection of the collectivist value orientation, is a major characteristic of such nationalism which reduces group and individual identity to national identification. It places the group above the individual, and the leader above the people (R. Supek, *Ibid.*, p. 131); it forces individuals to renounce their own identity, integrity and freedom, so that by participating in the power of the nation they may acquire new security by virtue of the feeling of personal participation in this power.

The nationalist is obsessed with the complex of power, caused precisely by the feeling of individual helplessness and insecurity. The overemphasis on the motive of power is manifested in the tendency to treat some (“our”) social groups as superior to others (“alien”). This easily associates with inter-ethnic aggression, since it is expressed in dichotomies: moral “us”-immoral “them”, “the right side” – “the wrong side”, strong-weak, domination-subordination, leader-mass, etc.

With this go a striving to concentrate power in the hands of a collective/group followed by homogenization, on the one hand, and the feeling of being threatened from the outside, on the other. In nationalism, therefore, the important role is played by affects. This may explain the blind adherence of individuals to the group, which Erich Fromm described as a tendency of a weak and under-developed ego to please its super-ego.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Z. Bauman, “Modernity and Ambivalence”, in M. Featherston (ed.), *Global Culture, Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity* (London: SAGE, 1990), p. 154.

<sup>8</sup> E. Fromm, *Autoritet i porodica* (Authority and Family) (Zagreb: Naprijed, 1984), p. 60.

On the basis of the previously described features it may be inferred that the nationalist and authoritarian personalities are very much alike in that: (a) they both readily subject themselves to the powers of authority, (b) they are attached to traditional values and prone to a religious and militant spirit, (c) they seek to define the culprit for their own condition among other people, and (d) they hold within themselves latent aggression and a tendency toward destruction. When the authoritarian personality structure and nationalist movements are associated, internal conflicts are projected into conflicts between national groups, while barriers arise in the consciousness in order clearly to demarcate national groups according to the described principle -- "moral us" and "immoral them". Hence guilt is projected onto the outside group and one's impeccability is asserted. One's own nation becomes the "right kind of people" and serves as the only moral parameter in interpersonal behavior, while another nation is blamed a priori for all the evils and dissatisfactions which individuals face in the given social situation. By the same token, conflict becomes inevitable and cannot be solved rationally nor institutionalized in a democratic way, for "the other nation" imposing its "wrong standards" strives to endanger "us" (the right ones). Hence, one has to struggle in order to eradicate the causes of evil. This ideology is ruled by the principle of struggle for survival in which the fittest/the "rightist" wins; these are the members of one's own nation. Exclusive nationalism is, then, basically a warrior ideology.

The mechanism of constructing nationalist ideology does not work according to the concrete negative experiences one has with the members of another people whom he/she begins to hate, but rather in accordance with the established prejudices about the given ethnic group. It has to do with a "generalized hatred" (Adorno) which does not need concrete stimulations. Antagonism towards the nation is transferred a priori to every person who belongs to it, because he/she is an "exemplar" of the species about which there exists "bad opinion".<sup>9</sup>

The ideology of nationalism relies, according to Rudi Supek, upon the following elements:

1. affective action;
2. regression to a primitive form of behavior which characterizes a mob's uncritical acceptance of the leader's authority;
3. ethnic stereotypes which need no arguments and are based on white-black vision; and
4. the projection and rationalization of hatred against the "others" (*Ibid.*, pp. 183-192).

As demonstrated, it is the ethnic nationalism which becomes an ideology generating inter-ethnic hatred and suggesting that multinational communities are no longer possible. Hence it leads inevitably to intensification of national and ethnic conflicts, perhaps ending with inter-ethnic wars. An exclusive nationalism, which breeds xenophobia and national and cultural intolerance, is aggressive and inflames militant moods. This kind of nationalism, which generates negative energy and destructiveness, is the object of criticism in this paper.

### *Democracy*

Another concept to be defined is *democracy*. As the characteristic of modern states, this conceives the notion of people in terms of *demos* and its sovereignty, assuming the existence of citizens as free persons who are in contractual relations with their societies. A democratic state involves the modern nation; this is distinguished from ethnicity and represents citizenship. In that respect, all modern states are nation-states whose members are all citizens living within their walls.

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<sup>9</sup> G. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (New York: Doubleday, 1958).

However, an ethnically based nation-state becomes the main source of ethnic nationalism. This is essentially opposed to democracy because it defines citizens ethnically and treats the “others” as “second-class citizens”. Therefore, it obviously is incompatible with democracy which recognizes individual rights and liberties regardless of individuals’ national affiliation. If a nation is defined ethnically, national minorities and other people cannot be treated as equal members.<sup>10</sup> Another author also warns that the ethnically based nation-state is incompatible with the concept of “citizen”, for it excludes the possibility for an individual to declare oneself a citizen unless he/she is primarily identified as the member of a nation. That is, in such a conceived nation-state the citizens do not exist as individuals, but rather as members of an ethnic group.<sup>11</sup>

Bogdan Denitch believes that nationalism represents a “powerful magnet” in a period of decline of an old universalism which supplied collective identity. However, it is dangerous because it excludes not a small number of citizens from their status of citizenship, which is restricted to the ethnically dominated national community. Therefore, nationalism jeopardizes both individual freedom and democracy: the former is threatened because citizens are determined by their ethnic affiliation without personal choice; and the latter is imperiled because individuals are ascribed -- according to birth -- to national parties or groups, and thereby are incapable of initiating change through democratic elections.<sup>12</sup>

In the era of great turmoil, at the end of the 20th century both individual and the existing forms of collective identities are at stake. Which new forms of collective identities will be given importance depends on the viability of present cultural identity. If the concept of culture is described in Wallerstein’s terms, i.e. as the outcome of our collective historical attempts to come to terms with the contradictions, ambiguities and complexities of the socio-political realities of a particular system,<sup>13</sup> then it indicates that the concept of culture defines a frame of reference which gives a community orientation in terms of the common symbols, norms and values as the criteria of social behavior and action. Therefore cultural identity is not reducible to any particular form of collective identity, including national/ethnic identity. However, when a cultural tradition is restricted and reduced to the common origin of an ethnic group, it contradicts the very notion of cultural identity that is more general than national identity. While the former may embrace the modern trends toward globalization, the latter implies isolation and decline of modernity.

In other words, democracy and ethnic nationalism are contradictory. Therefore the emergence of the latter in the 1990’s became one of the significant factors working against a democratic transformation of East-Central European societies.

### **Ethnic Nationalism in Yugoslavia**

The nationalist movements of the late 20th century can be interpreted mostly as ethnic nationalism with a negative connotation. In the name of national self-determination these

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<sup>10</sup> B. Denitch, *Ethnic Nationalism, The Tragic Death of Yugoslavia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> R. Rechner, “Peut-on parler de la citoyennete dans un etat post-communiste, et de plus nationaliste?” in *Dechirures et espace Yougoslave* (Geneve: Helsinki Citizens Assembly, 1993), pp. 24, 27.

<sup>12</sup> B. Denitch “Democracy and the New World Order: Dilemmas and Conflicts”, *TOD*, 6 (March 1994), pp. 128-129.

<sup>13</sup> I. Wallerstein, “Culture as Ideological Battleground of the Modern World System”, in M. Featherston (ed.), *Global Culture . . .* (1990), p. 38.



movements led to the breakdown of existing states into a set of small states. This process has been particularly manifest in the ex-USSR and Yugoslavia.

The sudden change brought about by the collapse of “real socialism” shook whole communities as well as individuals. It created a fertile ground for nationalist movements to become simultaneously a new integrative factor (within a given nation) and a new means of legitimizing the preservation of the system of domination, contrary to needed democratic transformation.

I shall analyze two main roots generating ethnic nationalism in East-Central Europe. The first speaks of a neglect of the national question in the former communist regimes and a long-lasting suppressed dissatisfaction with the relations of nationalities and national minorities in multi-ethnic countries. The second deals with a continuous suffocation of civil rights and liberties, which endangered national rights as well and generated an authoritarian personality structure in need of a collective authority with which to identify. These two sources of dissatisfaction often have been interchanged, i.e. the lack of individual rights and liberties strengthens the feeling of national deprivations, but the discrimination of nationalities gives new impetus to the threat to the civil rights of both individuals and peoples.

However, we may speak of two faces of nationalism in East-Central Europe in the 1990's: a) as national liberation movements against Soviet imperialism, and b) as an extreme aggressive nationalist ideology.

Facing the escalation of separatist trends throughout the world today, one may ask how the basic challenges to human existence are reflected today in post-communist societies in particular, and why they are conceived primarily as a threat to national identity? As regards East-Central Europe one must ask where democratic transformation failed after the collapse of Communism giving way to “national liberation” within sovereign ethnically-based nation-states.

The very fact that the “real socialist” system was totalitarian explains the behavior of people within the given institutional frame-work where individuals were oppressed and suffocated, but at the same time were offered certain amount of security which disappeared with the collapse of Communism. People then felt abandoned and left to themselves because they were not accustomed to live without the aid of a “paternalistic state”. Need for a new protective collectivity arose by which they could compensate for their helplessness and confusion. The nation logically was postulated as a substitute in its ethnic meaning, for it was closer to the individuals as a primary group. In this way, Communist collectivism was replaced by a nationalist one.

Claus Offe, quoting G. Markus, points out the fact that Communism enforced artificial supranational bonds; so the collapse of Communism brought about as a reaction the articulation of ambitions to restore the nation's past and rediscover national identity.<sup>14</sup>

Therefore, the same author says that ethnicity plays the role of the dominant cleavage and is employed as the source of symbolic representation to be used in the service of political mobilization and collective action (28). The “whole” of which people feel to be a part is no longer the state -- he continues -- but the nation or an ethnic group, because East European states are discredited as reference points of identification and loyalty (31). Since Communism destroyed all institutions of autonomous collective action and replaced them with state-dependent organs, when the latter fell apart people had no cognitive, ideological or organizational patterns. The absence of such collectivities, such as classes, status groups, professional associations, religious groups, etc. moved the ethnic code into a prominent position. Ethnicity and nationalism thus became the only categories thought of as capable of providing guidance for collective action (32).

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<sup>14</sup> C. Offe, “Ethnic Politics in East European Transition”, *TOD*, no. 18 (July 1996), p. 30.

But before beginning to elaborate these problems, I am going to analyze the meaning of the concept “self-determination” which may be misinterpreted -- as was the case in ex-Yugoslavia. The right to self-determination may be abused if considered as the right of ethnically defined nations/republics to secede from the federal state, regardless of the mass violence such an act surely would entail in a multinational country where large numbers of people live within one of the other’s “national” territory.<sup>15</sup> Opposing this view, a need for national identity and self-determination should be interpreted within a democratic context, indicating rights to political and cultural determination of the citizens’ community which does not imply territorial secession.

Another issue may be mentioned as well, which an Israeli historian, Dann Dinner, has pointed out, namely, that the Western societies had been secularized and their national consciousness turned to the present, and particularly to universal values, whereas the genesis of national states in the East goes primarily through the church. Therefore, national identity is linked with confession, which arrested the process of secularization. Besides, national consciousness there is turned to the past, and in particular to one’s own ethnicity which makes it impossible for universal values to develop (according to a report in *Republika*, Beograd, no. 141-142, 1996).

That remark has been justified in East-Central Europe, and in particular in Yugoslavia. There ethnic nationalism and religious fundamentalism went hand in hand creating obstacles for the moderation process without which the building of democracy is not possible. The problem was worse in ex-Yugoslavia which was both a multinational and multiconfessional society. The link between ethnicity and religion made the ethnic nationalism fundamentalist intensifying the separatist movements. In ex-Yugoslavia this was first of all among Catholics and Muslims who were antagonistic to Orthodox Serbs.

Where are the roots of ethnic nationalism to be found in ex-Yugoslavia? Regarding the national conflicts in ex-Yugoslavia I shall formulate two theses: The first begins with the assumption that ethnic and exclusive nationalism prevailed in the political practice of the former republics of Yugoslavia in the 1990’s. The second presupposes that the prevalence of ethnic nationalism over the modern concept of nation as a political and cultural unit appears as one of the significant factors of the dissolution of the Yugoslavian state and the outbreak of inter-ethnic war.

In a period of transition when the entire East-Central Europe liberated itself from the burden of totalitarianism, ethno-mobilization in action in ex-Yugoslavia suppressed democratic motivation and stopped the establishment of democratic movements. The events in the 1990’s were decisively colored by this fact. Instead of producing a democratic transformation of Yugoslav society, this resulted in its breakdown.

The turn from social and political problems to the primarily national question, which was initiated by the national political elites, was the major source of the rise of nationalist euphoria at the end of the 80s and the beginning of the 90s. Unable to stop the processes which were provoked by the collapse of the ancient regime, and unwilling to direct them towards democratic development, the national political elites in ex-Yugoslavia found in ethnic nationalism a profitable instrument for the revitalization of the lost legitimacy. They declared themselves as the single real defender of “national interests” and made use of national feelings to persuade their people. They made them believe that they were endangered, exploited and oppressed by the other nations living in Yugoslavia, but first and foremost by the largest one, i.e. Serbs. Therefore, they proclaimed the establishment of the ethnic nation-state as a necessary end in order to reach national sovereignty.

Nationalist elites, who imposed ethnic nationalism as a dominant ideology, were not aware that, although it possessed destructive energy for demolishing the Communist system, it had no

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<sup>15</sup> V. Pei, “Serbian Nationalism and the Origins of the Yugoslav Crisis”.

constructive charge for the constitution of a modern social order. That is because ethnic nationalism is oriented towards the past and traditional mythologies; it is far from the moderation process based on the new democratic institutions.

The ethnic conception of nation led the policy of Yugoslav leadership to the constitution of ethnic nation-states, which intensified the tendency toward secession in two of the most developed republics (Slovenia and Croatia), but also among the Albanian population in Kosovo (the least developed part of Serbia). Being composed of heterogeneous populations in all republics (except Slovenia), a romantic ideal of the nation-state could be realized only at the cost of “ethnic cleansing” of the territories, which inevitably led to the war. Acting as a disintegrative force, exclusive nationalism produced ethnic tensions which destroyed the federal state. In reaction, the feeling of being threatened grew among all the people in ex-Yugoslavia, in particular among the national minorities that were dispersed throughout Yugoslav territory.

A significant intervening variable which should be taken into consideration is the deep social and economic crisis, endangering the most basic interests of the lower and middle strata and bringing about growing existential insecurity for the majority of the population. When such an unfavorable climate is located within the theory of aggression projection, the misplacement of social conflicts to national ones is easily explicable: rational explanations of a way out of the crisis are not sought, but what is looked for instead is a culprit to be blamed for all the misfortunes, so as to relieve oneself of all responsibility.

In such an unstable situation what is prominent is the tendency to find a new source of security, be it only an illusory one. Turning to the nation as the only form of identity results precisely in illusory security since the individual tends to identify with those who have power, whereby his/her dependency and helplessness is further enhanced. Thus ethnic nationalism appears as the only possible liberation movement; it is a kind of rebellion in which old structures are merely apparently destroyed, since the domination of one authority (the party state) is simply replaced by the domination of another (the nation-state); but domination itself is never called into question.

Although it was indicated in the mid-80s that democratic development could be the only real way out of the crisis in ex-Yugoslavia, future development was determined by the national political elites' one-sided choice of the policy of ethnic nationalism, which in fact, was not going to change the monistic power structure within the nation-states. Therefore, it led to national instead of political pluralism. In that way, it offered an apparent change, substituting democratic transformation for “national emancipation” in terms of establishing the nation-states as sovereign republics. But that was an illusion of democracy, because nationalist political elites retained all power in their hands. The newly formed national elites stimulated the feeling of peril by asserting that it was exactly their nation that was victimized by the Communist regime, hence they based new legitimacy on “national interests”. Thus the Communist regime “appropriated nationalism as an important part of its own identity”.<sup>16</sup>

When nation-states became a supreme ideal, they necessarily turned into self-oriented and closed entities. Yugoslavia faced the fall of the Communist regime in a mood of disintegration and cultural and political disorientation, which was a fertile ground for the eruption of an exclusive nationalism. Unable and even unwilling to resolve national conflicts by building an acceptable political and cultural pattern, based on a democratic policy, which could have provided the necessary conditions for the co-existence of diverse national cultures and the opportunities for the equal development of national identities of all constitutive nations, Yugoslav nationalist elites

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<sup>16</sup> J. Teokarevic, *Raspad Jugoslavije, Produzetak ili kraj agonije* (The Breakdown of Yugoslavia, A Continuation or an End of the Agony) (Beograd: IES, 1991), p. 51.

continued to work towards the final disintegration of the federal state, disregarding the urgent need at the time for society's democratic transformation.

A Yugoslav economist<sup>17</sup> points out that the era of great changes is a convenient time for intensification of nationalism because the great general-systemic removal disables the democratically established balance. This is understandable because great turmoil is followed by growing uncertainty and insecurity, which throws people into the nation's arms; the national elites then manipulate national feelings and the people's need for belonging, imposing the nationalist ideology as a salvation for individual powerlessness. In that respect we may agree with Wilhelm Reich's saying that the masses are easily seduced and are prone to seduction. That is to say, people in ex-Yugoslavia easily accepted the irrational solutions offered by the nationalist movements since they lacked rational answers to the existing social and economic crisis.

One should also note a coincidence between the collapse of the system, which ruled over East-Central Europe for decades, and the eruption of nationalism which does not characterize Yugoslavia alone. This speaks again about the relations between instability and the emergence of nationalism. In other words, an unstable situation breeds nationalism because individuals need new grounds to regain their security and affirm a rather simple frame of reference which relies on primary affiliations and elementary ties.

"Democracy had to step down before nationcracy" -- wrote another Yugoslav author, even in the mid-80s when the fertile seeds of national discrimination were planted.<sup>18</sup> National pluralism without democracy recognized only the outside differences while requesting homogenization within one's nation; it emphasized differences between the constituent nations in ex-Yugoslavia diminishing thereby the already insufficiently rooted elements of "Yugoslavism". From this the separatist drives were inferred, even though they were irrational, when bearing in mind the ethnic heterogeneity of all the former Yugoslav republics (e.g. in Bosnia-Herzegovina the largest ethnic group represented in 1991 only 43 percent of the population).

When associating a community with the nation as the foundation of its sovereignty, the national political elites turned ex-Yugoslavia back to the 19th century concept of nation with the revival of the romantic dreams about the ethnic nation-states. Therefore, instead of a democratic evolution of the state which could have helped the preservation of a multinational and multicultural community in ex-Yugoslavia, the turn toward "national independence", which disregards democratic transformation, led it to destruction. The choice of "national liberation" if taken as a primary, let alone exclusive goal, led ex-Yugoslavia in the opposite direction from democracy and modernity, whose cultural universalizing theme is newness, change and progress (I. Wallerstein, *Ibid.*), whereas the former results in separatism and isolation with a relativistic point of view oriented towards the preservation of the status quo (i.e. of the constituted nation-states).

A split between demands for an external liberation -- from a hegemonic and dominant nation -- and those concerning the achievement of internal freedom, is thus inevitable. "National liberation" from without turned into a political and cultural repression from within, reviving a new authoritarianism. This may explain why new governments in the former Yugoslav republics, now independent states, failed to achieve a democratic transformation when the former regime broke down. For ethnic nationalism goes hand-in-hand with authoritarianism. This is because it shares certain characteristics with Communist ideology: both are directed against the autonomy of society

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<sup>17</sup> Lj. Mad'ar, "Democracy at the dawn of a new era", *Matica srpska*, no. 94 (1993), p. 32.

<sup>18</sup> Lj. Tadi, *Da li je nacionalizam nasa sudbina* (Is Nationalism Our Destiny) (Beograd, 1986), p. 162.

vis-a-vis the state; both are anti-individualistic, i.e. they are collectivistically-minded; both imply messianic solutions offering salvation in an “ideal order” which cannot be contested.<sup>19</sup>

As a final result, such an orientation has awakened the traditional value system and renewed national mythologies. This was a regression in light of the modern trends, for the difference between a people who are inspired by the tasks of civilization and those who are the victims of hatred and violence lies in their attitudes toward the past, i.e. whether or not they have overcome it.<sup>20</sup>

The results of recent empirical investigations in Serbia confirm the thesis that exclusive nationalism was imposed from above, in the late 80s, by the national political elites; research up to 1990 suggests that a rise of nationalist attitudes was considerably affected by current events.<sup>21</sup> A 1967 study shows that 59 percent of respondents in ex-Yugoslavia displayed no ethnic “distance”, which was more prominent in some other multinational countries. In a 1985 study the results assert that national “distance” in ex-Yugoslavia over the period 1966-1985 was stable (even diminishing). In a 1971 study 76 percent of Belgrade inhabitants considered nationalism detrimental to the unity of the country. According to the last study on the whole territory of ex-Yugoslavia, done in 1989, a vast majority of respondents (results were elaborated only for Croatia) expressed disagreement with the view that each nation must have its own state, while over a half rejected the view that a person may feel safe only if living in a community where members of his/her own nation comprise the majority. On the basis of this study ethnocentrism had relatively low value. In contrast, a sharp increase of the exclusive nationalist commitment of respondents appears in the study of 1993 (the results are analyzed in the mentioned book). E.g. 75 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement: “Everybody should know that the fate of one’s nation is also one’s own fate”; and 73 percent accepted that “Patriotism and loyalty to the nation are the first and foremost duties of a good citizen”. More than half the respondents expressed not only strong national identification but also mistrust of other nations. Fifty-two percent of the respondents held that “The chief danger for our national institutions comes from the influence of foreign ideas and behavior”, indicating the presence of xenophobia. Fifty-one percent of respondents assent to the statement that “My people is not perfect, but our cultural tradition is better than the other’s, expressing a typical nationalist overestimation of positive qualities of one’s own nation. As a whole, one-third of respondents were strongly nationalistic in orientation mostly among the lower strata and those who are less educated and live in the villages.

On the basis of the above results we may assert that the attitudes of the population shifted considerably toward national exclusivism compared with the situation described by earlier findings. Obviously, not only has national identification become primary but also the threshold has been passed when national identity ceases to be simply a framework for group identity and becomes the basis for building negative prejudices and attitudes toward other peoples. This shift had been prepared by an intensive propaganda through the mass media, which were totally controlled by national political elites. Therefore, one may conclude that war-propaganda preceded the actual inter-ethnic war in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ethnic prejudices were induced in the population. As a Yugoslav author wrote: “As it has long been in the past, the same is now, that the entire mythological-symbolic complex, the myth of the nation-state included, came from

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<sup>19</sup> P. Zwick, *National Communist* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1983), pp. 11-13.

<sup>20</sup> S. Jirkovi, *An Interview to Borba* (27 Sept. 1993), p. 18.

<sup>21</sup> See the book: Z. Golubovic, B. Kuzmanovic and M. Vasovic, *Drustveni karakter i drustvene promene u svetlu nacionalnih sukoba* (Social Character and Social Change in Light of National Conflicts) (Beograd: Filip Visnjic, 1995).

above, from the part of the elites which fight for power or for the preservation of existing forces".<sup>22</sup> He explains why this ideology of nationalism, postulated from above, has been so easily rooted and spread: since traditional prejudices have not been demolished, it was easy for nationalist ideology on a macro-plane to join with traditionalist authoritarianism on the micro-plane. Nationalism is attractive to individuals, because hiding behind the authority and power of one's own nation, they may express their aggressiveness without a personal feeling of guilt. Nationalism as such is a "modern religion of immature man", which enables individuals to attribute to the nation and the state all of what should be attributed to them in terms of responsibility and guilt. That is, thanks to the adherence to the nation and complete identification with it, individuals might hand down their responsibility to the abstraction, i.e. the nation.<sup>23</sup>

The above-mentioned research (1993) confirmed the very close ties between nationalism, authoritarianism and traditionalism. As a result, hostility became the chief attitude in inter-ethnic relations, on the basis of which peoples of ex-Yugoslavia established the conviction that they could no longer live together.

Such attitudes which have generated inter-ethnic war in ex-Yugoslavia are responsible for a general decay of all the republics, in both the economic and cultural spheres.

## Future Prospects

Is nationalism our fate in the beginning of the 21st century?

National and ethnic tensions are only one side of the modern situation; two parallel trends are in action: one still prevails, namely, toward integration and globalization, the other fostering fragmentation and separation. The latter strongly opposes the moderation processes which are the very foundation of democracy. It appears then that nationalism and democracy are not compatible and exclude each other. Therefore, a democratic development of a society is the most reliable way to remove nationalist exclusiveness and its tendency to revive the concept of a "closed society".

The trends to national liberation and the constitution of national identities have to be linked with democratic processes and the moderation trend, because the world today is a large space with mutually interwoven regions within which small isolated nation-states have no prospect. Thus, self-determination should be interpreted in political and cultural terms, not ethnically; that is, as the right of people to decide about the nature of the political and cultural forms of their autonomous communities. This does not necessarily include territorial independence. National rights are only a part of the general human rights within which the reconciliation of individual and collective rights should be attained. It is then the question of how a society is politically construed and whether democratic institutions exist which allow the expression of the basic citizens' rights, including national rights.

As far as East-Central Europe is concerned, national liberation and autonomy cannot be achieved without democratization of the former authoritarian regimes, because the latter prevents the expression of human rights and recognizes domination as the major principle of rule, in regard both to individuals and nationalities. For this reason the priority given to national self-determination over democratization was a wrong strategy, because nations cannot be allowed their

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<sup>22</sup> V. Katunarić, "Uoci novih etno-politickih raskola: Hrvatska i Bosna i Hercegovina" (At the beginning of new ethno-political clashes: Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina), *Sociologija*, no. 3 (1991), p. 379.

<sup>23</sup> D. Janjić, *Rečnik "nacionanliste"* (The Vocabulary of "Nationalist") (Beograd: SSO Srbije, 1988), p. 126.

autonomy and liberties unless rights and liberties are granted to all citizens regardless of their particular attributes.

If the authoritarian regimes are renewed, and that certainly is the case of the former republics of ex-Yugoslavia, national conflicts and hostilities cannot be settled. On the contrary, they will be reinforced because authoritarianism breeds distrust both among individuals and peoples, upon which the domination of the ruling elites is founded. Authoritarian regimes also are not interested in economic reforms since their rule may be best preserved by the means of the fusion of economic and political power. It is quite clear that it will continue the economic and social crisis which stimulates all kinds of tensions, including national conflicts.

Thereby, we come to the conclusion that the East-Central European societies can be healed from an exclusive nationalism by a long-term program of democratic development which will open a more prosperous prospect of national autonomy and identity as well. Unless the shift is made from national to democratic issues the danger of the inter-ethnic war will not be removed from the political scene of these societies.

This concerns the peace treaty in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina as well. The international forces should recognize that they have to concentrate their efforts upon real material and political support for the democratization of the new states of the former Yugoslav territory if they sincerely want to establish and preserve peace. Keeping the already restored authoritarian regimes intact -- and that is what is happening -- the inter-ethnic conflicts will continue, and sooner or later war may break out again.

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## Chapter VI

# **Post-Communist Nationalism as a New Version of Totalitarianism and Its Spiritual Democratic Alternative**

*Miloslav Bednár*

There is a common human inclination to explain away inconvenient phenomena in terms of easily and conveniently understandable, and accordingly manageable, events. When politicians take such alluring tacks, a long term disaster can loom on the horizon. This exactly is what has been happening continuously as regards post-communist nationalism from 1989 till now.

Currently western moral indignation over this phenomenon follows this pattern: In the aftermath of the demise of communism, much of the East European nations, with the conspicuous exceptions of Poland, the Czech Republic, and to a certain extent Hungary, clearly regressed to the primitive atavism of crude and hateful nationalism.

However, such a characteristic Western examination of present post-communist nationalism is too superficial to grasp its time nature. In fact, the prevailing Western attitude itself constitutes a significant regression of responsible political understanding. In order to elucidate this widespread misunderstanding, at least a summary of post-communist nationalism is necessary.

Basically, post-communist nationalism is inconceivable if we so concentrate on nationalism that it overshadows the nature of the post-communist situation itself. In other words, the eruptions of chauvinist nationalism in the post-communist countries after 1989 could not take place at all without the preceding, long and firmly rooted communist totalitarian domination. More precisely, the communist networks of power and influence have cleverly abused the surviving, but heretofore only partly employed, jingoist resentments in respective post-communist countries. The more recent and obviously successful manipulative activities, either with or without civil wars, is the continuation of their earlier exclusive political domination, and its considerable strengthening by means of systematically aroused, nourished and exacerbated national sentiments.

The common ground of the manifold East-Central European nationalism consists in an intersection of two basic political factors of the neuralgic zone of Central Europe between Germany and Russia. On the one hand, this territory of minor nations reaching from Finland in the north to Greece in the south is symptomatically marked by overlapping national and state borders. In contrast with the western part of Europe, this central belt of middle Europe does not have the almost pure nations found in the West due to its high level of national interpenetration.

On the other hand, both Germany and Russia very often abused the national diversities of this key European zone so as to establish their respective domination. The typical bias of these two European powers was, and still is, caused by the extraordinary importance of this unique part of Europe for the decisive orientations and tendencies of Europe as a whole. Its succinct kernel is expressed by the notorious statement of Bismarck : “Who is the master of Bohemia, is by that same token the master of Europe.” Consequently, in order to master the central zone of Europe between Germany and Russia, both European powers always have played with its characteristic national complexities. Moreover, the prevailing success of either power in this effort each time laid the decisive grounds for the succeeding Pan-European wars which spilled over into the world wars of our century, including the more than forty years of cold war.

A viable historic alternative to those precarious European, and now world prospects was developed in the course of history as well. Its evident logic runs as follows: the often unstable belt

of nations and states between Russia and Germany must become a firm and stable territory of free and democratic masters of their respective fortunes. This natural conception of democratic independence of Eastern Central Europe had been consistently developed especially by František Palacký (1798 - 1876) and Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (1850 - 1937). They elaborated conceptions marked by a stress upon the inevitability of a mutual democratic consensus by the nations in this area. Such a necessary consensus has universal validity, and a spiritual foundation along the following system of democratic tenets: intrinsic and international relations must not be grounded in the rude force of one great power or on a balance of several such powers. Such a materialist kind of peace can be only temporary; in fact, it is always a path to war. European and world peace, if it is to have lasting prospects, must be founded in equal rights of all regardless the individual nation's size, and it has to be rooted in democratic moral principles. Accordingly, the bedrock of any prospects of democratic peace amounts to acceptance of principles which reach beyond the selfish interests of individuals, nations and states.

First of all, these principles embody recognition of the sovereignty of human, national, and state efforts at life from the point of view of eternity, instead of living for selfish, violently achieved advantages and out of fear. Genuine equality and peace, both internal and international, can be born only on this basis.

Geopolitically, the implementation of this democratic alternative would trigger two crucial long term effects. On the one hand, democratic overall-European unity would be grounded firmly, including its central ties with the United States, and other democracies outside Europe. On the other hand, such an historical turn for Europe would influence decisively the democratic situation of the old eastern question, i.e. the vital relationship between Europe and Asia with Africa in terms of a shared democratic future. In other words, the key importance of the neuralgic national zone between Germany and Russia arises naturally from its position bridge position from Europe towards the Middle Eastern crossroad. Hence, the prevailing character of political regimes in this kernel of Europe is decisive with regard both to the character of Europe as a whole and to the predominant European influence upon Asia and Africa, and vice versa.

The partisans of the privileges of sheer force and the materialism this involves rightly understand that the democratic alternative for the whole of Europe via Eastern Central Europe places them in deadly jeopardy. Solving "the eastern question" in terms of equal, morally anchored rights naturally would eliminate their selfish, materialist ambitions and aspirations. For this reason they attempt always and by all means to annihilate this truly democratic alter-native of a democratic European unity and that of other continents which are willy-nilly united with Europe.

The most recent example of such pernicious activism is the effective instigation of nationalistic conflicts in post-communist European countries, and elsewhere, by the strong communist power networks, especially after 1989. The revival of the nationalistic turmoil this created, reaching from basically non-military forms in Slovakia to civil wars in Yugoslavia, not to mention the same characteristic inducement of nationalist wars in the Caucasus, always has the same primary power effect: it saved and firmly legitimized the originally communist, but now nationalistic totalitarian domination which had been restored in the respective countries following a very uncertain period.

Naturally, in most of those post-communist regions where the nationalistic cause was not so divisive, pervasive and acute, e.g. in Poland, the Czech Republic, and today also in Lithuania, parts of Hungary and Bulgaria, the regressive communist management of national sentiments obviously failed. This is why these states have good chances of strengthening their post-communist democratic regimes and thereby establishing their new democratic traditions of political culture.

Consequently, the core post-communist struggle occurs along the present, dynamic fault-line between the totalitarian nationalistic regressions, and the stabilization of democratic forms of rule on the basis of a shared respect for human rights. This context seems to explain the central anti-democratic role of the post-communist national chauvinism today.

The validity of these explanations is demonstrated by the present political situation in the Czech Republic, where the networks of totalitarian regression continue via three major interconnected channels.

First, both extremist political parties in the Czech Republic -- the Communist Party and the fascistoid Republican Party -- emphasize characteristically frustrating visions of a deadly menace to the nation. The racist Republicans stress the national minority of Gypsies and other distinct races from within, as well as the danger of German domination via the Sudeten Germans living in Germany from without. The Communist Party focuses on the exaggerating German imperialist tendencies, identifying this with both NATO and the European Union. The fascistoid Republicans dismiss NATO and the European Union. Thus, both major extremist parties in contemporary the Czech Republic play the same nationalist card, though with little political effect.

A third, less provocative, trend on the recent Czech political scene, seems to have more important impact by providing the two extremist tendencies with a more fashionable rhetoric. This is the mainstream of the present Social Democratic opposition party. Its major political support consists of many sorts of originally communist believers who in fact did not abandon their persuasions regarding overwhelming central control in the management of State and society. This non-democratic tenor of the Czech Social Democratic Party often assumes the form of a mixture of both social and materialist demagoguery.

In this context, the nation is being depicted as in serious jeopardy caused by the uncontrolled forces of the free market, foreign companies, and selfish and greedy capitalists. There are seen as conspiring, also politically, with their domestic criminal breeds against the sound national interests of this state. Typically enough, the Social Democratic approval of joining NATO appeared as a result of the west European Social Democratic influence on this political party. However, the Czech Social Democratic Party's standpoint was that such a step must be subject to a national referendum.

In sum, the leading phrases of the Czech Social Democrats revolve mostly around an artificial construct of a sort of criminal conspiracy threatening the future of the Czech nation. This political simplicity of the prevailing Social Democratic evaluation of present democratic rule in the Czech Republic constitutes a dangerous nationalistic continuum of the Communist and fascistoid Republican extremism with the mostly ex-communist Social Democracy in the contemporary Czech Republic.

There is a similar dynamic fault-line in the lasting struggle for democracy in each country of this sensitive post-communist region. The convinced democratic side of the political landscape is involved in a long-term battle closely entangled with the task of how to define post-communist national independence in terms of the values of democratic civilization. This crucial mission of post-communist democracies amounts to building a mood of democratic national culture after the devastating experiences with totalitarian communist regimes. Only such a primary civic mood promises to provide a viable alternative to the present acute danger of chauvinistic nationalism in the post-communist environments.

The best possible solution of this problem seems to consist in a cogent public identification of national perspectives with a democratic culture of just behavior. In this context, the justice of the democratic national spirit is anchored in the largely recognized, spontaneously acquired duty to

behave to others as we wish that they should behave towards us. Along this line, democratic national dignity grows out of the efforts of civil society to prove in action that citizens respect in the spirit of unity the active contributions of others to the morally grounded benefit of neighbors and of the citizenry as a whole.

Conclusively, democratic humanist nationalism stands or falls with the resolve to act congruently with these moral and spiritual principles, and to take the incidental risks. This type of resolve and action of civil society is an inevitable precondition for building the democratic state, its maintenance and strengthening. Only thus can human and civic virtues be acquired, and their bearers be ready to put them into practice in any condition. Only in this way are people really deserving of freedom because they act as dignified citizens. In other words, the common notorious finding that regimes must be maintained by the same skills and powers as at the time of their foundation is no less valid for the exercise of freedom.

The greatness of nations in a democratic civilization results from a persevering and consistent pursuit of the principles of humanistic democracy. If the contemporary and future life of nations is to have a viable democratic prospect after devastating decades of communism, it must develop a cogent integrity of character and education, as well as their outer exercise. Without accepting this type of attitude, all material efforts are actually disadvantageous.

Such a problem is not at all limited to the extreme cases of aggressive selfishness in post-communist nationalism, for the existing political democracies, i.e. national democracies, very generally embody only partly finished attempts at democracy in its proper, humanist sense. These are the never completed striving after justice on the basis of efficient love of fellow-citizens, and of all people of good will.

Consequently, the best way to overcome some faults of freedom is more freedom, i.e. the freedom to investigate them critically and openly with a view to reform. The repeated finding that without the prevalence of a distinct civic atmosphere of cooperation among free citizens no humanistic democracy as a way of life is possible is true not only for individuals and communities, but for nations and states, and for their interaction. All political activities can have relevant meaning only on the basis of a cooperative attitude among individuals and nations based upon lasting principles. Human rights and freedoms are justifiable only as exterior concrete safe-guards of these principles.

The humanist democracy of individual nations constituted of the dignified free life of citizens is not a matter of course. Its exercise must always grapple with self-indulgence and egoism, both internally and externally. Accordingly, to the basic moral resolve of democratic nations must be added its armed defence. Such a decision applies the law of nature that whoever violates the rule of behaving towards others as one wishes them to behave towards oneself breaches the rationally verifiable law of nature, and consequently endangers one's natural right to life, freedom and estates. In other words, the natural human rights of democratic nations are senseless if they do not entail natural moral obligations.

On these spiritual and moral foundations a cogent discrimination of legitimate national needs, illegitimate chauvinistic appeals and the post-communist manipulation of both is possible. From this point of departure, one can gain a grounded insight into the manifold versions of nationalism and its jingoish abuse. Two basic sorts of nationalism emerge. On the one hand, a chauvinistically and materialistically anchored negativism and aggression as a self-centered and entirely exclusive identity. On the other hand, the spiritually and morally based cosmopolitan version of nationalism which cogently legitimizes individual and national responsibilities as irreplaceable constituents of the complex democratic unity of our common world.

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## Chapter VII

# Individual and Communication: The Case of Yugoslavia

*Miroslav Milovic*

### History of Nationalism in Yugoslavia

There is a prevailing opinion that the national question lies at the center of Yugoslav disintegration. The idea of Yugoslavia arose in the 19th century. In external politics it stood in opposition to the dominance of the Hapsburg dynasty in the Balkans. In the internal-political sense this idea stood against the greater-Serbian and greater-Croatian national interests. In that light the First World war was, for the Yugoslav people, a war for Yugoslavia. At the end of the war, Yugoslavia was created as constitutional, democratic monarchy under a Serbian dynasty. Its original name was: "Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians," with Macedonia and Montenegro treated as part of Serbia. This kingdom was named Yugoslavia in 1929.

That Serbia and Montenegro lost their national identity is today an important political question. From the very beginning of Yugoslavia there was political antagonism between Serbian nationalism and the Orthodox tradition, on the one hand, and Yugoslavia on the other. Moreover, in Slovenia and Croatia it appeared that Yugoslavia was nothing but an extended Serbia. So, from the very beginning there were different political attitudes toward the idea of Yugoslavia: Serbia was mostly for centralism, and Croatia for federalism. During that time, the Communist Party was under the influence of the Comintern and considered Yugoslavia to be an artificial, Versailles state from which different national states should be made. The influence of the Communist Party was greater in Slovenia and Croatia, than in Serbia. After the Soviet revolution of 1917, Russia made a separate peace agreement with Germany. This created an antipathy of Serbia toward the new Soviet Union, whereas imperial Russia had been on the Serbian side. Questions about this different communist legacy have again become actual.

Between the first and second world war Yugoslavia was under a Serbian dynasty whose main political interest was to level all national differences. The solution to the national question was to erase it as question: "We have created Yugoslavia, now we only have to create Yugoslavs." This was the political ambition of the first Yugoslavia.

As fascism developed in Europe, Yugoslav drew closer to Germany and a pact between two countries was signed in 1940. America declared neutrality, Russia signed a peace agreement with Germany, and France capitulated. Yugoslav rebels decided to resist, supported by the Serbian Church which saw Serbia as a heavenly, if not an earthly, kingdom. Even today the Orthodox Church has not abandoned this mythology and defends the thesis that though the Serbs might lose millions of people, their truth is eternal and in the end will win, if only in heaven. At the beginning of the second world war the communists remained with the people. Later, the suicidal resistance to Germany was interpreted as the strategy of the Comintern to destroy Serbia and its prevailing anti-communist attitude.

The second Yugoslavia was created as communist in 1943. Its approach to solving the national question was the same leveling of differences as during the first Yugoslavia, this time through the idea of brotherhood between people. Personal and social identity was to be based on belonging to the Communist Party, not to some particular national group. Communism was to be the certain guarantee of internationalism; there was no other way to establish social integration.

Tito said that in our country democracy is not a phrase, but a reality. He considered the creation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an example of how to solve the national question. We are all Bosnian said Tito; the Yugoslav people said: we do not need democracy, we have Tito.

Claiming the right to self-determination, and with some changes in the Constitution, especially in 1974, some Yugoslav Republics (especially Slovenia and Croatia) launched the idea of secession from Yugoslavia. Serbia did not accept the different proposals for a federal or confederal constitution because these solutions were not regarded as a proper political solution for the Serbian population living outside Serbia. The slogan was "All Serbs in one state." Although Yugoslavia already was a state for all Serbs, this suggested a new political strategy. Instead of Yugoslavia, Greater Serbia was articulated as a political program. But it is not clear how a Greater Serbia guarantees democracy even for the Serbs, for obviously a country need not be great in order to be democratic.

The war which began in Slovenia in 1991 was still a war for communism. The Serbian leadership, especially its leader Milosevic, faced with the alternative of Yugoslavia or communism, chose the latter. Hence the Yugoslav army left Slovenia relatively quickly (the other reason being that there is no large Serbian population in Slovenia). But as communism in East Europe had already been defeated the strategy had to be changed and the war continued as a war for nationalism: if Yugoslavia cannot be a communist or Serbian country, then let's build a Serbian national state. Obvious such a political program is an anachronism in this period of world integrations, yet some generations are spending their whole lifetime on such an anachronism.

The war in Croatia allegedly was for the Serbian people living there, but Milosevic, the devoted follower of Tito, suddenly switched to Serbian nationalism. Such an easy transition from one political position to a quite different one reveals the political background of the war in Yugoslavia, as not a war for a specific national interest, but a strategy purely of retaining political power. Beyond the apparent national interest (for which the whole country was destroyed) there is nothing other than a specific structure power.

It is now clear who started the war and who is still leading it. These are not foreign powers, or plots against Yugoslavia; that theory is just one more strategy to avoid acknowledging the causes of the war. There is also a thesis that Germany is trying to renew its old interest on the Balkans, with German's early recognition of Slovenia and Croatia being interrupted in that light. But it is also true that until June, 1991, and the conference for European cooperation and security, the world was mostly for the preservation of Yugoslavia. But then it faced the dilemma of why to defend Yugoslavia if there is no one there to defend it. There followed a premature recognition of some republics before guarantees for all nationalities in these republics were constitutionally established.

The Serbs use this argument, namely, that their rights in Bosnia are not guaranteed. In fact, in 1990 the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina defined itself as sovereign, democratic state of equal citizens -- Moslems, Serbs, Croats and other nationalities living in Bosnia. In January, 1992, a self-proclaimed Serbian parliament in Bosnia declared independence for a Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Serbia as a military power is a new example of the thesis that there remain in Europe military power without the idea of the state. Germany was such an example and Russia may be next.

Serbian president Milosevic, who stated the war, is now trying to be the peace-maker in order to save his position. It is now clear that a war against the whole world can only fail. Of course, peace should be supported, but this initiative is a reproduction of the same structure of power and in that sense will not lead to political changes in Yugoslavia.



The real political changes are that a third Yugoslavia has been established, now including only Serbia and Montenegro. For the first time in their history Slovenia and Macedonia have been established as national states, and Bosnia and Croatia have renewed the statehood they had in the Middle Ages. The borders of each state are the borders of these republics in the former communist Yugoslavia.

### **Transcending Nationalism**

In the “Philosophy of Right” Hegel talks about acknowledging man as such rather than on the sole ground of his particular national characteristics. This became possible within the framework of a modern liberal Europe, which distinguishes between private and public, church and state.

In this sense nationalism is a kind of premodern consciousness. But in the East European countries this is only one part of nationalism, which is also a specific consequence of communism. As part of a clear political strategy communism makes the development of a civil society impossible, for every liberal social development would put in question the economic and political irrationality of communism. As a consequence, after communism we see the catastrophic consequences of its political program especially in Yugoslavia.

Hegel distinguishes between the family as the sphere of individualism and society and state as spheres of generality. Nationalism would like to make a transfer from the natural individual sphere to the state without mediation of a civil society, instead using the idea of culture. The rational institutions of such as society are, in the historical sense, the basis of rational social integration. In Yugoslavia for example, this integration existed on an ideological based as the idea of the brotherhood between Serbs, Croats and Moslems.

The main issue in facing the problem of nationalism and developing the idea of a new world order obviously is the development of a civil society. The best philosophy cannot help us if we do not have social institutions which guarantee human rights. But how to develop such a society? In Yugoslavia for example, there is much discussion about civil society, but there are no citizens in the sense of social subjects for such a society. The embargo against Yugoslavia is also an obstacle to developing a middle class in the society. For the same reason even the Chinese dissidents were against the American threat of an embargo or trade sanctions unless “significant overall progress” is made on human right (*Newsweek*, March 23, 1994).

The Yugoslav tradition lacks the presuppositions for the development of a modern individualism. There is no Protestantism to create a sense of individualism in a religious framework and there is no liberalism to create an individualism in the social framework. The Orthodox tradition and communism were two variations of the idea of collectivism.

Along with the importance of a modern individualism other presuppositions could help to understand the possibility not only of transcending nationalism, but of a new world order in the sense not only of a world market, but of a world community. These are the ethical presuppositions of the social and political order; their discussion is not only academic, but helps us to understand the whole problem of the legitimation of the political order.

According to Aristotle, for example, politics is an integral part of practical philosophy according to which human nature can be realized only in the political community. Politics builds on ethics which it realizes, and ethics itself represents a doctrine of individual virtues.

In contrast, modern political thought, which begins with Machiavelli, marks a division between ethics and politics. Machiavelli’s reasons for politics as an autonomous area are historical in character, but Hobbes made this claim a matter of principle. First of all, in Hobbes, social

philosophy is seen not in the Aristotelian context, but on the level of natural law and points implicitly to a modern subjectivity. For the constitution of political order Hobbes turns to the original and historically undermined competence of each individual to base the constitution of the political order on the instinct of self-preservation as a basic feature of the state of nature. This points to a primacy of self-preservation over sociability.

Rousseau renews the question of the foundation of the social order in the modern era. If a social contract founded on human nature is the legitimate basis of the modern state, the question remains open regarding what legitimates the contract itself. Thus the question of the relation between ethics and politics is not a matter of practical philosophy, but of the legitimate foundation of a modern society in general. Rousseau's view is that social community requires a firmer basis than that described in Hobbes and Locke. The political community must be a warrant not only of life and property, but of human freedom as well.

But which level of legitimation could be sufficiently general for establishing the idea of a new world order? It could be perhaps the idea of communication. Although as members of different social and national groups we occupy different positions, as individuals all must assume the idea of communication, which in the sense of Apel and Habermas points as its ethical presupposition to the fact that all participants are recognized as equal partners.<sup>1</sup>

I would like to underline this idea of communication. Although it does not seem to have immediate relevance to our problem, this relevance can be seen if we consider some concrete issues. For example, the embargo against Yugoslavia should not destroy communication between the world and progressive democratic forces in Yugoslavia. The world should not only react against ethnic terror, but should also look for possible partners for the future dialogue. Problems in Eastern Europe, including Yugoslavia, can be solved only through the development of its democratic potential. This is an example of some concrete political decisions which can be deduced from the idea of a communication. Hence, this idea should be incorporated in the institutions of a future world order as a possible world community.

On the one hand, we should respect religious and cultural differences. This is a part of the modern idea of tolerance. But, on the other hand, there is need also to respect some universal values such as the idea of human rights. In that sense we have to act against nationalism when it would reduce human rights to some particular level. But what are the limits of respect? Do universal values, on the other hand, mean the establishment of an impersonal world order? The development of world institutions should lead not to a new "Leviathan," to new authoritarian forms of government, but to the new possibilities of communication between different cultures.

### **Problem of Communication**

The discussion regarding Yugoslavia renews some questions from the discussion between Luhmann and Habermas (or between the idea of social technology or functionalism and the idea

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<sup>1</sup> Of course, communication has no obligatory grip upon anyone. That is why it is necessary to enter into the theory of politics and law, i.e. social theory. In most cases, moral insight exerts no immediate influence upon practical conduct, but it may exhibit some indirect influence through its prior influence upon political and legal institutions. We cannot escape discourse, but there is wisdom in the Hegelian insight regarding the need this entails for "rational institutions." This provides grounds upon which to criticize, on the one hand, the "western" project of freedom which lacks ethical substance and responsibility and, on the other hand, the "eastern" model of forced solidarity, that is, of a community which is merely postulated. Even the third Yugoslavia is an example of such a model of society.

of critical social theory) about the status of the modern community. Luhmann understands the social system in terms of functionality. On the other hand, Habermas is trying to renew the idea of communication and understanding against the idea of a functionality which can only imperil the idea of a lifeworld.

Both Luhmann and Habermas are discussing modern society, whereas Yugoslavia is still premodern. Still there are some parallels which favor the thesis of Habermas. Tito's Yugoslavia functioned in a certain sense -- or better, only Tito functioned in such a system. The third Yugoslavia is also functioning using the particular national subject as a political program. In the Kantian sense, the new transcendental, constitutive subject became the national state, which ideology resulted in a catastrophe. But neither is Functionalism a reliable criterion for establishing democratic society. The idea of communication is against the particular, national state in that it recognizes a constitutive role of the Other. However, there are different criticisms of this theory.

Rorty, as a philosopher of contextualism, tries to show that there is no need in philosophy for the idea of foundations, which he sees as a sign of totalitarianism rather than of rationality. In this article "The Priority of Democracy to Philosophy," Rorty also is trying to justify some crucial arguments expounded in John Rawls's book, *Theory of Justice*. The intention of Rawls is to investigate presumptions of social justice using two types of argument. The first is to derive the principles of justice from the so-called "original situation" through "contract argumentation." The second argument is to demonstrate the compatibility of an argument with "common sense" through a "coherency argument."

Rorty defends this second argument in the following way: there is no need of further argument beyond that of "coherence;" there is no need to go beyond "common sense" in order to find the basic philosophical assumptions for the idea of social justice. This is why Rawls does not discuss a possible "transcendental deduction" of American liberalism, nor the idea of a possible founding of democratic institutions. The intention of Rawls is to summarize the principles and typical institutions of American society. In this sense it is possible to speak of a priority of democracy over philosophy. The main argument of Rorty is the following: there is no center, or natural essence of the human being to be philosophically articulated. Hence, the "theory of justice" should be regarded as a political, and not as a metaphysical theory.

But there is a question with Rorty's position, namely, whether the investigation of presumptions of social justice necessarily leads to metaphysics. On the contrary, it is important to investigate, for example, the presumptions of Serbian, or Croat "common sense" which caused such cruelty in the war in Yugoslavia. The investigation of such "common sense" is not a way to metaphysics, but a critical investigation of the social order as such. Perhaps it is possible to refer to "common sense" in a stable democracy which, as Rorty thinks, might be the American one. But it is not possible to substitute critical investigation by pure belief in an established order. So, the idea of a decentered human being cannot avoid critical reflection on the social or communicative conditions of being human. The fact that we speak about the universality of human rights should motivate us to try to establish a philosophical theory which could critically defend this sort of universality.

### *The Individual*

The other problem concerns the idea of the individual, which seems to be lost in a framework of general philosophical schemes. Habermas, for example, is not speaking of "subjective

certainty,” but of arguments which we can share with the community of communication. But in this context, the idea of an individual seems destructive in philosophy.

We can generalize the above mentioned critical remark and say that the reduction of philosophical reason to universal subjectivity or to a universal theory of communication will leave us without fantasy. The Kantian investigation of the subject opened a possible perspective for reason, but closed the way to other historical or personal experiences. After Hegel we have only to repeat history. In other words philosophy seems to be a criminal for it killed history.

This is why some postmodern thinkers suggest that history cannot be reduced to a single philosophical principle. In history we should search for creativity; history should be poetic in the sense of the old Greek idea of “poiesis.” This is Lyotard’s position in “Le differend,” Derrida’s idea of “difference” or Deleuze’s idea in affirming creativity.

But, the idea of communication is needed in the framework of a world where human beings become more and more anonymous parts of the system. The message of Luhmann is that we don’t need a subject; the system does not need a subject or any kind of reflection in order to function. In contrast, the theory of communication becomes the affirmation of an autonomous, critical subject of thinking.

But is it at all possible to realize a creative, plural and poetic world. The situation in Yugoslavia is a clear example that the autonomy and freedom of an individual cannot be achieved without an investigation of social reason for there is no individual unless it be recognized as subject. This Hegelian idea, without its totalitarian background, is still actual and is why we need critical conditions of social dialogue which make possible the recognition of the “Other” as “Other,” and not as a part of our vision of the “Other.” The possibility of a dialogue is at the same time the possibility of such recognition. “Is there an ‘Other’ in the modern world?” This question of Baudrillard remains actual. To be open for a dialogue is at the same time to be ready to accept the “Other.” This is the critical intent of Habermas theory.

Hence philosophical and historical reflection, communicative reason and creativity, universality and plurality are not as separated as they may seem. Is it possible to establish a theory of communication which could be the theory of an individual and of his proper creation? Is it, on the other hand, possible to establish a theory of an individual but, at the same time, to avoid the liberal egoism and monologue of such an individual? If the great philosophers have died then we must now answer these questions by ourselves.

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## Chapter VIII

# Internal Causes of National Tensions

*Jana Balázová*

Today the quest for identity emerges as the main goal of the spiritual efforts of people throughout the world. Identification with a particular community of congenial individuals provides the basis for realizing the meaning of one's life; it provides possibilities for personal spiritual development, as well as feelings of safety and security for the individual. The most lively and the broadly spread identification is that with a particular nation. At the time of a breakdown of traditional values national identity can serve psychically as a strong and sound basis for self discovery, for the realization of one's spiritual desires, and for fulfilling one's existence as a human beings. It is frame in which the members of a community share the same destiny -- good as well as poor; it provides a defence against real or imagined dangers and enemies.

At the end of the 20th century humanity is divided into nations. This would be a mere fact, did it not involve a complex of problems affecting directly or indirectly humanity as the whole. "Nation" is a concept used frequently and in many ways, in many contexts, and with many aims. It designates a particular group of people with some common features. As easy as it is to use that name in common speech, it is difficult to define. Nation is a multifaceted phenomenon with many components -- e.g. ethnic, cultural, political, territorial and economic -- which only in their complexity can give a valid concept of such a problematic social reality.

Though the concept is historically limited, nations often are considered eternal. Myths from their long history intertwine with new myths regarding a long future for the nation. The present and future history of a nation are connected closely with the idea of a nation state, which is the key element in nationalism.

Nationalism, as well as 'nation,' is a truly modern phenomenon. It has not been decided yet which came first: what was the cause and what was the consequent. In fact these phenomena are so closely connected that they do not exist one without the other, they are like two sides the same coin.

There are as many definitions of nationalism as there of nation, varying from the cultural, through the psychological to the ideological. Among the many definitions of nationalism that of A. D. Smith seems the most eloquent, namely, "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'"<sup>1</sup> To this must be added the demand for a national state, which seems to be the main aspiration and is the basis for understanding the current social movements in the most tense regions.

Nationalism as an ideological doctrine presupposes that humanity is naturally divided into nations -- actual or potential. Here nation represents a distinctive reality with specific features -- its own history (very often the older it is the less the history and the more the mythology), and future (often described as destiny). Paradoxically, the present time lived now is a step from a brave history to an idyllic, materially and spiritually prosperous future. The Golden Age is gone and the future must be fought for; the present is the time when people must struggle for the welfare of future generations and for the idea of the nation.

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<sup>1</sup> A.D. Smith, *National Identity* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 73.

Nationalism is both strong and weak. On the one hand, it can raise and usually does evoke the best in men for the sake of the nation. It is an ideal cause which creates the peaks of a culture's efforts in hard times. It causes upheavals for individuals and hence for the nation as whole.

E. Kedourie valued nationalism for allowing people to declare their identity, to join in a particular community and to share its fortunes. It is very important for a people to feel that the members of their community share a common destiny and together fight the great problems which weigh down the majority, such as alienation, feelings of oppression, and impoverishment of the spirit.<sup>2</sup>

National identity is a strong bond among people which frequently is used as well as misused by the ideology of nationalism. The identification of a person with a nation and its destiny can play a positive as well as a negative role. If one identifies with a nation one is able to reach the best in oneself and enrich the whole; at the same time one develops both oneself and the nation. A common slogan is that if the nation is strong and secure, rich in both the material and the spiritual spheres, all its members are strong and secure, rich materially and spiritually. Undoubtedly, this bright picture of one's life is too attractive to be abandoned. But unfortunately, from the point of view of a citizen -- irrespective of his or her membership in any particular nation -- the slogan may be false: in a sound society the reverse order can avail. A person in a positive content which can enrich one's life and the lives of one's relatives and make them safe feels identified with the community, especially for future generations.

On the other hand, the same nationalism which stresses the differences among nations and describes the potential or actual dangers from other nations evokes distress on the part of its members. A community led by such an idea of permanent threat to itself from outside builds high walls strictly defining boundaries between itself and its (potentially) hostile neighbors, which naturally results in the isolation of that community. The usual method of extreme nationalism, used especially in times of deepening problems inside community (which are a natural accompaniment to isolation), is a permanent search for an enemy, whether outer or inner without regard to which. An enemy threatens the security of a nation and ultimately all the hard learned gains in the everyday life of each of its members. The rhetoric of nationalism frequently uses the concepts of the freedom of a nation and of dangers which threaten it.

Often it is said that people can reach happiness, satisfaction, and fulfillment of their goals only if they identify with an endangered nation and sacrifice their lives for it. If accepted, this mobilizes people to give up their personal happiness for a common aim. It must be stressed that they are taught continually clearly or by suggestion, that no personal sacrifice is too much for the defence of common interests and that the way to freedom is difficult, but is the real goal of all national aspirations.

The freedom of a nation seems to be the most important and frequently used concept in the ideology of nationalism. It is the aim to be reached by people fighting for recognition as an independent, self-determining and fully-responsible community, the so-called nation. No doubt many or most established nations had to fight bitterly for their freedom in remote or times or even very recently. Many nations still are fighting and their goal is nowhere in sight. Both history and the present teach nations to protect their freedom as sacred; it has become one of the most used and misused elements of nationalism. Freedom has become not only the long-desired aim but also a sacred means for justifying militant nationalism.

Generalizing the above we can speak of two sides of the phenomenon of nationalism -- intranational and international. Intra-nationally nationalism can produce happiness and spiritual

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<sup>2</sup> E. Kedourie, *Nationalism* (London: Blackwell, 1993).

fulfillment accompanied by material prosperity; it can lead to a strong feeling of sympathy between men within a nation; it can invoke the best in them and gives them a chance to manifest this. No doubt strong national movements bring extremely high cultural and economic results. Paradoxically, a militant nationalism also can produce psychic oppression, permanent fears, misery and misconceived ideals if the goals are too far away and the present is too gloomy.

A nationally divided world inevitably presupposes international relations among nations. At best, relations with other nations can vary from indifferent to friendly. Sound competition among them can prove their uniqueness and exceptionality. But, on the other hand, it can be just a thin veneer over a latent hostility: when needed from the point of view of an extreme nationalism this can be transformed immediately into malign animosity.

In this view, the international side of the problem can be presented as the search for a “remedy” for such a “sickness”, consisting in a complex of the oppressive problems which trouble a nation internally. Nationalism as an extreme ideology provides a very simple and well-tried remedy. When the situation, whether material and/or spiritual, of members of a nation becomes unbearable the responsible agent is situated somewhere outside. For deeper problems a stronger remedy is sought. Historically, there are problematic relations between neighboring nations everywhere. Nationalism as an extreme militant ideology evokes only distrust and then misuses history whether real or invented, religion, demographics, welfare -- every reason for escalating distrust into hatred towards the “enemies responsible” for all the misery. Real problems are covered with unspecified fears as much as by threatening outside dangers.

Every nation has its periods crisis when strong personalities come to power. Often these national leaders have little sensitivity to the everyday needs of the common members of the community, whom they take as mere unconscious means for reaching higher spiritual aims. Such leaders cannot accept peaceful means for reaching so high a goal as is the glory of their nation. Thus, they welcome difficulties which can excite themselves and the people they lead, whether or not these causes deserve the sacred name of nation. They use nationalism to persuade people that the fight for their nation against its threats must be permanent. A skilful manipulation of social, economic and international events helps to hold fast the community and readies it to search for the source of its difficulties. Further escalation of the ideological war makes people ready to use violence to eradicate such a source of danger. Nationalism as an extreme militant ideology in the mouths and hands of narrow-minded ideologist becomes a weapon ready to fire.

Escalation of internal problems leads to further escalation of hatred, which constitutes a very fragile balance between peace and the ever-present threat of potential conflict. Undoubtedly, historically rooted hostility was and still is the starting point for many crises and, at the worst, for armed conflict among nations. When stressed along with some mis-shaped events in the current life of a nation it opens room for radical solutions. Paradoxically, in the name of the freedom of one’s nation people lose their lives, and even endanger the freedom and very existence of the nation.

All this becomes even more curious if in this framework we think of states which through terminological misunderstanding stand for nations. Historically this habit is rooted in the period of the French Revolution, which gave birth of the modern concept of nation. But it must be stressed that it is very problematic if not impossible to speak about a pure nation-state, not only in Europe, but all over the world. Modern states are clearly multinational, provided the existence of the other national minorities or oppressed nations within a state is not concealed. A very special situation occurs when one particular nation from a number of nations and ethnic groups existing within the framework of one particular state declares itself the only state-forming nation and its aggressive

nationalism becomes a state ideology. This penetrates all spheres of life and unbalance mutual relations among nations, especially with the leading one. Not surprisingly, in the atmosphere of distrust and fear for the collective rights of communities excluded from the center of the life of the state it is very hard to maintain social progress. This is true not only for them, but for the state as the whole. This opens the room for the search for an enemy within the state, and/or, if this is not satisfactory enough, for an enemy outside the state boundaries.

Nationalism frequently replaces nation with state, love of a nation with loyalty to a state. It excessively emphasizes potential dangers from outside, which leads to xenophobia and the total isolation of a community. In fact, nationalism cannot be confused either with patriotism or with xenophobia, but it is so closely connected that in the practical day to day life of a nation-state they tend to merge.

There is no room for an apology for nationalism in this frame-work. Militant nationalism with its blindness and stuffiness is responsible for the conflicts which arise daily somewhere in the world. E. Kedourie shows that nationalism on behalf of an idea of perfection not only dreams a strict borderline between the real and the ideal, but in the end rejects life so that freedom vanishes in death. Rejection of one's individual life, of the lives of the masses on both sides of a strictly drawn borderline between nations, tends to negate humanity. Such nationalism is a selfish, hypocritical, deaf and blind ideology, which sacrifices the lives of those whom it seemingly protects.

Especially in a time of searching for one's identity it must be emphasized that the nation is just a part of the human, and as a part must not be identified with the whole. The rich content of the human cannot be reduced to one of its elements. The deaf and blind following of the narrow ideology of militant nationalism results in the negation not the fulfillment of the individual. Consequently, the destruction of individuals becomes the destruction of the nation. One possible conclusion of this reflection would be that extreme nationalism can lead both to the highest humanity of a people and to their eradication. In the end it becomes a self-destructive national ideology.

Having in sight such possible consequences, humanity must look for alternative identities to resolve existing problems. As the nation, and the nationalism connected with it, are historically limited concepts potentially there exist other collective identities equivalent to the above. Such aspirations are present both on the theoretical and the actual level. One possible solution actually examined in many states with a democratic political order is to build civil society.

With the final aim of realizing what is human in persons it is necessary to study the present state of the phenomenon of human identification, especially with the community, the possible consequences of extreme forms and the possibilities of solving them. Avoiding the danger of destruction of a part of humanity, or of the most of it, is a good reason for hard work on theoretical as well as on practical political grounds.

The concept of civil society is one rational solution which would avoid the negative consequences of either a collective determination of the national identity or the strictly individual identity of liberalism. This concept works with most of the content of national identity as well as of liberalism, the two presently predominant concepts of social identities. It would be acceptable to most supporters of their two ideas because the question is not one of theories, but of the future of human beings.

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## Chapter IX

# Social Freedom in Contemporary Thought

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An essential point of departure for an examination of this subject is the definition of social freedom and its principal connotations. Both external and internal threats to social identity can arise, although our interest must be limited to the consideration of internal threats. Today, especially for nations throughout the former Soviet Union, the chief danger to social freedom lies in the adverse conditions of continued underdevelopment. It follows that for our nations today freedom means first of all development.

### **Social Freedom**

The definition of social freedom has two parts. First, it means protection against threats to the nation's existence and well-being. Second, it means a search for measures and possibilities to achieve the goals of social development and improvement. Social freedom implies the creation and preservation of conditions in which each citizen can develop as an educated, creative and responsible personality. It is very important to note the difference between the common sense concept of freedom of choice and the social concept of freedom based first of all on economic and cultural measures. Social freedom gives priority to national consciousness and intellectual resources. Such comprehension of identity implies the protection of the vitally important interests of the person from threats arising from internal factors.

Moving towards European democracy, we must educate ourselves as a modern European nation, a member of the community of European nations which manages its life according to West European standards.

We must think about the freedom of a society developing under rapidly changing conditions. At present we can see that the rapid change of social conditions has many negative consequences. Social harmony is in decline. Many of the evils originated in our history and during the Soviet totalitarian regime. Over the centuries Lithuanians have been oppressed by a host of foreign invaders -- German, Russian and Polish -- and yet have managed to preserve their national identity and even to partake of the fruits of western European civilization and culture. The territory of Lithuania has been a "window on Europe" for the Russian Tsars; it has been "Lebensraum" for the Germans in their centuries-long *Drang nach Osten*.

Lithuanian people managed to preserve their national identity over the last 50 years under the ravages of World War II, forced emigration, mass deportations, overt and covert russification and a general destruction of the very bases of national cultural life.

The occupational terror to which Lithuanian was subjected in 1940-1941 was only a prelude to the Nazi terror of 1941-44 and the Stalinist terror of 1944-1953. The occupants planned never to restore the independent state of Lithuania. Therefore, in 1941, the most active and educated sectors of the society -- the military, political, cultural and economic elites -- were repressed. All ethnic groups were equally affected by the terror. Deportations carried out in 1944-1953 dealt a particularly harsh blow to the Lithuanian nation -- at least 200,000 people were deported to Siberia. In the post-war period over 20,000 Lithuanians were killed in guerrilla warfare against the

occupational regime of terror.<sup>1</sup> Tens of thousands of political prisoners were sent to concentration camps. The repatriation policy for Poles and Germans, the fact that thousands of people fled to the West to escape from the communist terrors, and the extermination of the Jewish community by the Nazi occupants, -- all this resulted in tremendous intellectual, cultural and economic damage to Lithuanian society.

For this the nation as a whole had to pay a high price in the form of depopulation and acculturation. The loss of a great number of conscientious, educated, cultured people cannot be easily and quickly compensated.

However, our interest is to describe the present threats to the social freedom of the Lithuanian people. As the existentialists put it, we are the choices we make, but sometimes those choices are not the ones we would choose of our free will. For a great number of people the actual conditions of life have become worse. A destructive social pathology and human decline abound, and there is increasing loss of social identity. Even individualism now is expressed more by negative than positive actions. We are in a situation of a deep and radical social change.

The socio-economic processes in Lithuania have been developing dramatically: the forms of ownership, employment and the sources of income of the people have changed fundamentally. Working classes and those who try to live honestly have been seriously impoverished. The level of education and one's profession do not play any significant role here.

When the Soviet system collapsed, many people found themselves unable, for one reason or another, to succeed in the new system: the old, the young, the sick, the less able. Freedom seems to have provided opportunities only for the more energetic, and often the unscrupulous. Lithuanian society is becoming increasingly unequal and polarized in terms of opportunities, incomes and living conditions. The process of inequality in Lithuania is cumulative in nature which means that benefits tend to accumulate for certain groups. The Lithuanian rebirth is set in a framework of disaster. High mortality rates, decline of health, educational indicators, all are in the danger zone with decline in the standard of living and growth of unemployment. The number of homeless people now is rising sharply, partly as a result of the restitution of house ownership policy.

The speed of political change in Eastern and Central Europe is so rapid that the process of reform faces many difficulties. I don't agree with those who argue that these difficulties "arise from the human mind's limited ability to accept the speed of the perceived changes",<sup>2</sup> or that there is an "insufficient level of mental adaptation".<sup>3</sup> The difficulties may be interpreted in terms of multidimensional reality-economic, cultural and political. For example, to explore social freedom, some geopolitical and historic issues must be considered. Such factors, as historical consciousness, the political situation and national aspirations determine the characteristics of social freedom. Naturally, in different countries, Lithuania among them, changes in the social freedom of the people have some specific features. On the one hand, the transition to a new historical epoch is similar to the abolition of slavery or the end of colonial repression. On the other hand, there is a loss of social and personal identity under the new economic and political circumstances.

Economic reforms and problems of social inequality, social disintegration and quite intensive emigration abroad and a radical change in the lifestyle of citizens result in passivity or lack of participation in political and economic life. The economic crisis is reflected in substantial negative changes in people's self-esteem and dignity, as well as in loss of social identity.

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<sup>1</sup> *Genocide of the Lithuanian People* (Vilnius, 1992), p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Adam Biela, "Mental Changes and Social Integration Perspective in Europe: Theoretical Framework and Research Strategies", *Journal for Mental Changes*, 1(1995), 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.7.

Some basic facts should help to substantiate this assertion. Through the interpretation of some quantitative data we shall try to determine the main reasons undermining social freedom.

In a people's social freedom the possibility to acquire skills or tools, i.e., the knowledge and experience, is needed in order to function effectively in the society-building process. The main indicators of social identity and social freedom include professionally assisted birth, a safe and secure life space, an adequate diet, accessibility of health care services, a good practical education, political participation, an economically productive life, protection against unemployment, a dignified old age, a decent burial.<sup>4</sup> The multidimensional indicators of social freedom complement each other and are interrelated.

Social freedom mostly is based on national freedom, dignity, self-respect, self-esteem and responsibility on the part of the people. Social freedom is expressed as knowing and feeling dependence upon society and responsibility toward it, as well as the wish to belong to it. This means that each member of the society is aware of their freedom (is educated), belongs to the society (participates in social life) and can achieve freedom (the social conditions which ensure a worthy human life).

### **Threats to Social Freedom**

The main threats to social freedom in Lithuania are poverty, unemployment and increasing criminality. The social differentiation of the population is becoming more pronounced than is acceptable for a normal society, and for the majority of the population living standards remain low.

Poverty is an acute problem for a sustained social freedom. The miserably low salaries and pensions of most Lithuanian people make life difficult. With the rise in consumer prices and costs of services real wages have declined. Many people do not have enough money to buy even the essentials. In the current situation it is difficult to understand how and from what a person and entire family make a living. The living strategy of many families is very simple: "from salary to salary", trying to survive, spending money on only the most necessary goods, denying themselves even necessary things. Most families find it difficult to cover their basic needs; household expenditures are mostly for food. In terms of income security, the most vulnerable groups appear to be the disabled, families with children, especially single parent families or where the breadwinners work in the state sector, and the elderly. Most consumer goods become unobtainable for many people. With the underdeveloped middle-income layer poverty threatens to take on a mass character.

The psychological arrangement is no less in importance. Most Lithuanians do not believe that economic outcomes are determined by individual efforts and talents.

Gender inequality exists in salaries, job and career opportunities. Pensions cannot cover even the costs of utilities, thus putting older women in the poorest population group. The situation of rural women has become especially desperate. Gender also implies disparities in opportunities; it means less free time and fewer educational opportunities because of the growing share of unpaid household work caused by low standards and reduced childcare facilities. Women play multiple roles as homemakers, caretakers of children and the elderly, and breadwinners at the same time, working both within and outside the home. The disadvantageous status of women in Lithuania remains largely invisible because of a lack of gender-related statistics.

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<sup>4</sup> John Friedmann, "Rethinking Poverty: Empowerment and Citizen Rights", *International Social Science Journal*, (1996), 169.

Property and social differences increase. Over the last five years, concentration and polarization of incomes has been swift and pervasive. A well-off minority and poor majority are moving away from each other, and the middle strata as the base of stability of democratic society is too small to soften the differences. The middle stratum is not increasing but decreasing. The poor include professionals of different kinds, as well as the creative and cultural levels, which earlier belonged to the middle class.

These boundaries are strongly felt psychologically: the differences create great emotional conflicts. People remain silent, but the dissatisfaction is deep. The deep internal contradictions between economic, social and cultural capital of the same social group also deserve consideration. For instance, higher education and even a concrete occupation does not characterize either the individual or the position of his social group in the society. Thus, today the typical indicators of social status, used by Western sociology (income, education, occupation, wealth) can only partly show the differentiation in our society.

Alongside of the property differences, contrasts in education increase as well. Problems of accessibility of education in a broad sense are very acute. In 1993-1994 4.4 percent of children were registered as not attending school. In 1995-1996 3.4 percent of such children and teenagers were registered.<sup>5</sup> The situation is particularly desperate in rural areas. The Department of Statistics surveyed rural areas in 1994. Almost all families with underage children had insufficient incomes. Over 80 percent declared that they occasionally or always lacked money for clothing and footwear. 5 percent of those with underage children even stated that they could not send them to school because they had no clothing or footwear.<sup>6</sup>

Apart from worsening living conditions, the main reason for not attending school is a devaluation of the significance of education and learning. In many cases, educational background has little effect on people's earnings; thus a number of parents do not see the point in sending their children to school. Teaching is one of the lowest paid professions (in July 1994, a teacher's average salary was less than 300Lt. 75 USD) per month.<sup>7</sup> Three-quarters of teachers survive only on their earnings. Many teachers cannot subscribe to the necessary publications, cannot buy the latest materials or books, and cannot attend concerts or theater performances. Hence, the prestige of teachers is very low.

According to an internationally rated classification of education programs (ISCED), 25 percent of 20-24 year old in Lithuania are now pursuing specialized and higher education. Not everyone wishing to obtain higher education can afford to do so. Education is increasingly becoming accessible only to the very talented, very studious, supported by the state, or to the children of prosperous parents who can pay for their studies.

Alongside the growing insecurity of income, another serious social problem destructive of social freedom is emerging: the loss of job security and the steady growth in official and unofficial unemployment. Some categories of people lost their jobs first: elderly women, workers with disabilities and young people who have no specialization or profession. Hidden and open unemployment is steadily growing. The unemployment level, for non-workers and the unemployed combined, was 12.6 percent in 1995.<sup>8</sup> The social level of unemployment is strong in society, and many people cannot overcome this psychological barrier.

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<sup>5</sup> *Lithuanian Human Development Report, 1996* (Vilnius, 1996), p. 58.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

The criminalisation of society and the rise in the crime rate threaten personal security. Between 1991 and 1995, for every 10,000 inhabitants there were, on average, 150.8 criminal acts in Lithuania. At the same time the number of murders increased by 1.9 times. Nearly one in three murder victims was an adult male.<sup>9</sup> The country is becoming a criminal bridge between the East and the West.

Harsh economic realities, accompanied by uncertainties concerning the future and the erosion of traditional social norms put additional strains on the individual. Disillusionment has undermined people's capabilities and generates apathy. People become less careful with their lives and health and lack self-esteem which, in turn, can be directed towards the political system and put the development of democracy at risk.

Morbidity and mortality are rising in Lithuania, so that life expectancy is falling and is now lower than for two decades. The average life span for men is now lower than it was in 1959; for women it is at about the 1970 level. Mortality is growing most sharply among young people, who die mainly from such non-medical causes as accidents and suicide. There has been a sudden jump in suicide, indicating growing human distress. In 1995 the highest suicide indicator was among 40-49 year old men. For every 100,000 residents, 135 men of this age committed suicide in urban areas, and 257 in rural areas, where male suicides accounted for a sixth of all deaths in this age group. More than one third were unemployed men looking for work.<sup>10</sup>

A considerable threat to social identity is an increasing flow of intellectual and creative potential from the sciences to other branches of activities (as well as a sizeable emigration). This is more brain loss than brain drain because the work performed after leaving the institute or university is unskilled. For nearly one third of the scientists, changing jobs will constitute brain drain and two thirds brain loss.<sup>11</sup>

Scientific work is poorly paid. Earnings in research as compared to many fields of economic activity are low and even lower than average in the public sector (*ibid.*, 103), so that for scientists internal migration is one of the ways to improve their economic circumstances. Several strategies for internal mobility include making a career outside science by moving to government structures or to such other fields of activities as business, services, commerce and then into the "shadow" economy. Another strategy more difficult to identify is combining scientific and non-scientific activities, usually at the expense of scientific quality.

Liberalization of the economy and society theoretically has enlarged people's choices in terms of job, consumption and participation. But human development and human freedom are interdependent. Human freedom means that people can exercise safely and freely their widened range of choices. Thus, in connection with democratic changes and the creation of an open society, theoretic and imaginary possibilities are open for free communication, possibility to travel, wide international contacts, the opportunity of private initiative, radical changes in the style of life, fruitful work for the prosperity of the country and for the well-being of its citizens, and intensive contacts without the former fears.

However, existing poverty renders many of these possibilities inconceivable for the majority of the Lithuanian society. Economic poverty intensifies the breakdowns experienced in other areas; for example, the weakening and the breakdown of social ties and relationships, social devaluation, exclusion and loss of identity. The personal and social impacts of unemployment include poverty,

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 94, 95, 96.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>11</sup> *Mobility of Scientists in Lithuania: Internal and External Brain Drain*. Ed. By VI. Stankuniene (Vilnius, 1996), p. 107.

financial hardship, debts, homelessness or overcrowding, weakening of family ties or even family dissolution, disintegration, isolation, erosion of confidence and self-esteem, atrophy of work skills and ill health. Poverty and unemployment keep individuals out of the society.

Poverty-related social exclusion is the most persistent danger to social freedom and cohesion. It is difficult to understand how people below the poverty line live. The poor cannot be described as a category or even a social class in the real sense of these terms. But poverty manifests itself not only in malnutrition, unemployment or homelessness; the biggest threat of poverty to social freedom is that it does not allow people to take full advantage of their citizenship. Many people, who may not actually be starving, nonetheless are unable to lead meaningful lives within the values accepted in society, that is, to participate in social life. They find it difficult to develop social contacts, travel, study, buy books, visit theaters or subscribe to papers; relations of scientific workers with colleagues from abroad are not easy to maintain.

The most common indicator of the condition of human development in society is poverty. Besides the traditional, acknowledged manifestations of poverty, this can be expressed in different and sometimes invisible ways, and thus remains untreated in the society. For example, social isolation and distress may be caused by changing consumption patterns: mass-media, theaters, telephone calls and friendly visits become simply unaffordable, which could account for the rising suicide rate. Phenomena of social pathology which cause suffering in contemporary Lithuanian society are rising because of the limited possibilities of social contacts.

While the transition placed more responsibility on individuals, disillusionment undermined people's abilities and caused apathy. It is remarkable that in a country with a high literacy rate sexually transmitted diseases are rapidly spreading at alarming rates among people of all levels of education and income. The number of people with suppressed individuality, blind to higher values, and lacking a sense of civil responsibility is growing in number.

At present, difficulties of social identification are on the increase, which influences identification of personality. Entire social strata are without normal possibilities in this regard. Having lost their previous works, many people are forced to undertake new and unusual activities, to change profession. Social freedom is hardly possible if the person cannot determine his or her professional identity and/or loses his/her life support. Apart from worsening living conditions the main reason for the loss of social freedom is the devaluing of the significance of education and learning is that in many cases one's educational background has no influence on one's earning power.

## **The Redevelopment of Civil Society**

The redevelopment of civil society in our times makes participation a basic and top priority issue, requiring urgent attention. This involves issues of universal human dignity, of the essentially social nature of the human person, and of the basic right for every person and group to participate in the life of society. Civil participation and basic well-being appear to be so intricately interwoven, that the present trends towards the exclusion of many groups (in contrast to the inclusion of all) bear the most ominous implications.

Lithuania should orient its development policies towards all its people, lest it turn into a country of widespread poverty covered by a thin layer of wealth.

The main focus must be on empowering people to help themselves. This is not a solution to poverty or to the problem of freedom. Self-assistance is only a way of surviving under conditions of stratification. Identity strategies implicitly call for strengthening civil society through its social

networks and civil associations, as well as for new forms of relations between the state society. An important way to achieve this is through education. Of course, this is a commonplace crutch, but, if a society is unable to sustain a sufficiently high level of education, democracy will be put at risk.

The following is an already classical example revealing a sense of the peoples dignity and the quality of their social identity. On the night of January 13, 1991, unarmed people dared to stand against the onslaught of tanks, trained soldiers of the special military units and thus against the whole repressive system. This live-or-die elevation, love for one's homeland, civil dignity and national self-esteem showed that the Lithuanian people from different social groups were unanimous and felt their social identity. They felt themselves to be members of the society, they could make decisions, they would and could defend themselves with dignity. Five years later the major part of the society is pushed out from it (because of poverty, unemployment etc.); this phenomenon has led to a break and even loss of the deepest and highest valued quality, namely, social identity.

On the other hand, "the replacement of the expression of spiritually rich cultural values for a narrow-minded and short-lived concept of material gains is essentially an indicator of the tension in which the split of Lithuanian mentality has resulted".<sup>12</sup> All this splits, shreds and even renders schizoid human consciousness. Alongside loyalty to an independent state and national ideals we can see national and civil nihilism. The feeling of community from the days of Revival has been replaced by disunity and disagreements. Differences between the active and passive members of the society become increasingly evident.

The abnormal social differences weaken such vital elements of social freedom as the feeling of belonging to a community or the wish to belong thereto. Loss of status leads to breakdowns in socialization and sociability networks. People are suddenly and absolutely excluded because mechanisms for inclusion in the public good and measures for integration are very weak.

The transition period has left people with a growing sense of insecurity and social isolation. Apathy, alienation, indifference, violence and brutality, growing scepticism, cynicism, fatalism and despair become the established practice. The moral disintegration taking place in society, street violence, murders, etc. are indicative of the profound moral slump in our society. People, whose future is uncertain, become frightened; they look backwards rather than forwards, they look for people to blame for this situation, they become more aggressive and most likely to support an authoritarian rule which promises to implement by force rationality and justice.

The main task is not to classify threats, but to look for measures to eliminate them. The essential condition for a small nation's freedom, identity and survival is based on the people's resolve to rely upon themselves and the potentials of their own country. The peculiar geopolitical situation of Lithuania determines that the modern strategy for ensuring social freedom must follow the principle that every citizen of Republic is part of social freedom, i.e. its active agent. This can be achieved by creating the living standard and ensuring the participation in social life that provides equality of opportunity for everyone, rather than dividing the nation according to artificial groupings or according to imaginary qualitative differences. J. Habermas wrote: "Everyone must be able to hope". Today Lithuanian social freedom and stability are threatened by a deep division of the society into "castes" according to artificial and forced divisions: new poor, new rich, "patriots", "non-patriots", etc. Groups of people in Lithuania, are pushed out as poor, alienated and strange to the society.

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<sup>12</sup> Bronius Kuzmickas, Lilijana Astra, *Contemporary Lithuanian National Self-consciousness* (Vilnius: Rosma, 1996), p. 142.

Small nations and states must survive by relying on their own strength. Hence, the quality of the inhabitants is the main factor for social freedom. An educated and dignified nation, and thereby cohesive, can rely on itself, i.e. on the strength of its citizens. Self-reliance is obligatory also because various donations from rich countries, charities (except for indispensable humanitarian aid) when there is no great need for them, are not only degrading for national self-esteem and especially for social freedom, but do not promote the creative abilities and responsibility of the people, but, on the contrary, promote a psychology of dependency and servility. The nation (society) with a low level of self-esteem, which is, a low level of social identity and freedom, can unconsciously project its own negative qualities into other nations and, consequently, react aggressively.

A self-conscious, educated, responsible, dignified member of the society is the guarantee of social freedom and tolerance. Only an educated person can understand the development process of the society, forecast future events, impartially foresee their consequence and be able to contribute to progress. Only a creative person is able to control and direct the course of events, because he or she thinks independently and has his or her own point of view. Only a civic-minded and free person, taking responsibility, is ready not only to defend selfishly his or her interests, but to defend himself or herself as a member of society, that is, to defend the nation, independence, democracy, freedom, not under orders, but of his or her own inner needs and commitment. Thus, each member of society is the main agent or subject creating social identity as well as the conditions of identity for him or herself.

Solid national traditions, historic consciousness and historic memory, a level of education, considerable economic strength and good living standards maintain the development of social freedom. Freedom as well as other social goals such as independence and security can be achieved only by a formed civic society as a whole. The will of a separate individual is insufficient; unity is indispensable to bring the common will to power. Society as a whole can be subjected to freedom only on the basis of the intrinsic values of the society, the appearance of which had been shaped by the whole past life of an individual-citizen with his or her education and cultural development, as well as by the historical memory retained by the whole nation in its historic consciousness. Society cannot be brought to freedom by giving orders or instructions; it is a voluntary process, predestinated by the mentality, which usually is formed under the conditions of democracy, i.e. under the social order which promotes and encourages every citizen's freedom, equal rights and equal chances. For this, first of all, it is necessary that each citizen of a country be guaranteed worthy conditions of living and acting through the creation of a civilized political, economic and social system.

For that reason the principal foundations of social freedom, the means that make it possible not only to mobilize but to form social freedom in Lithuania, are:

- stabilization of living standards and checking unfounded social differentiation:
- formation of an equal starting point as regards economic and social possibilities for all inhabitants of the Republic;
- economic development by applying a technologically modern principle of "qualitative growth";
- development of education;
- a health care system for the population;
- cultural foundations (preservation of historical memory and historic consciousness) and rapid cultural progress;



- development of democratic institutions to ensure civil rights and freedoms.

Development of social freedom means freedom of the people, for the people and by the people. This definition must be connected with a new vision for future human development. This calls for a new point of view of people-centered freedom, i.e., a new concept of social freedom in connection with a new sense of sustainable human development.

Thus, the development and fostering of education, culture and democracy are of prime importance in this process. Especially for a small country education at all levels is not an indirect, but a direct element of social freedom: cultural “armament” is an essential and indispensable condition. An educated citizen is not only an indispensable national possession, but the bearer of responsibility, initiative and activity for one’s nation. A developed technology, democracy and social identity call for education for everyone. Creation of the most favorable conditions for each citizen of Lithuania to freely develop his or her abilities and talents is imperative. For a small country it is very important that not a single talent should be lost. Such development of the people requires development of the quality of the inhabitants through investing in human capabilities as regards education, health and skills so that they can work productively and creatively.

The most important goal of the economic program would be to create conditions which would guarantee fulfillment and harmonization of the interests of the person, society and state. Such a development for the people means ensuring that the results of economic growth must be distributed widely and fairly. The main task of the political program is to give everyone a chance to participate -- the development of social identity by the people, that is, through the agency of people.

Counter to this would be meager consumption by the greater part of the population over a long time which ruins their health or does not allow them to get a good education, i.e. does not allow to develop their creative abilities and guarantee successful participation in the life of the society; or failure of their working life to give satisfaction; or unemployment which threatens to reject them from society. Then such a low quality of life as in present day Lithuania will lead in time to economic, political and cultural decline or even a catastrophe for the nation. These are dangers to social freedom because they undermine the foundation of freedom, namely, the person and citizen.

As the greatest value for the nation and the subject of social freedom is a responsible and progressive personality, and in view of the urgent need for a strategy of preserving and developing social freedom by educational, humanitarian and economic means, this strategic goal ought to be converted into social technologies and programs.

The above consideration leads to the conclusion that for the creation of social freedom, beside other social theories and methodologies, the “qualitative growth” theory is indispensable. Objective normative social conditions of “qualitative growth” imply political, social and economic disposition of social conditions, i.e., “equal chances” for all members of society. Objective conditions determine a particular process of goal attainment and serve as a primary cause, exerting in return influence on the further purposeful improvement of objective conditions, i.e., they stimulate personal self-expression, broad democracy and the possibility for everyone to participate. The “qualitative growth” conception includes a humanists methodology, i.e., a participatory approach.<sup>13</sup>

An explanation of the specific preconditions for social freedom indicates the need for socio-philosophical research and reflection. This is a “double” investigation because it is made simultaneously in two “languages”: that of political science and that of social philosophy,

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<sup>13</sup> Zigmantas V. Morkūnas, “Conception of Social Statistics from the Standpoint of ‘Qualitative Growth’ and Features of its Social Technology”, *Lithuanian Society in Social Transition* (Vilnius, 1995), 39-43.

respectively. Theories of social action or social policy should be developed on the level of philosophical reflection, this kind of theory being the only one capable of performing the explanatory function. Without this we frequently enter into errors and experiments which are very expensive and very dangerous for society. Without a philosophical theory on the level of common sense, social phenomena would be conceived in a fragmentary, kaleidoscopic way, limited to the description of isolated facts and the analysis of solitary phenomena.

Novel trends in the application of philosophical theory are characterized by transition from the spontaneous creation and application of philosophy towards an organized methodology. Philosophical conceptions cannot save the world, but, according to V. Havel, we must all participate if we could save it.<sup>14</sup> Each one of us must “clean” one square meter around him or herself.

A theory must be able to work in practice, to influence the process of society and nation-building, of decision-making. For our task it is important to facilitate the transformation of actual processes into scientific (philosophical) reflection in the form of an ideal theoretical model. Thus, it is possible to apply the fundamental principles of the philosophical level for modelling social processes.

In this paper we have limited our focus to some components of social freedom in the process of its weakening and decline during the transition period. We have two approaches: first, objectively identifying the features of social freedom, paying more attention to the threats thereto and, second, describing an ideal theoretical model, looking for the means to strengthen it. We see a process of social disintegration and argue that the grown of social disunity differing from normal social differentiation is the main feature of the loss of social freedom during the last five years. All this we hope are difficulties which signal the beginning of a new era.

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<sup>14</sup> Vaclav Havel, Maximilian Schell, “Europe at the Fin de Siecle”, *Society*, 32 (1995), 71.

## Chapter X

# The Value Context of Ethnic and National Tensions

*Jelena Djuric*

The problems of our time may be viewed from many perspectives: political, economical, social, cultural, personal. Each conveys its particular specialized scientific, methodological and substantive insight. But the more they become specialized, the more they distance themselves from one another. With this modern departmentalization philosophy has been abandoned as the common origin and metaphysical point of reference. As a result integration has become nearly unimaginable. Indeed philosophy itself has adopted the same specialized scheme and been transformed into abstract and inapplicable onto-epistemological thinking.

The great void created thereby could no longer be filled by any sort of construction, however dialectically artful, and efforts to grasp problems whole have proven futile. Still, to renounce this as a “typically modern” failure in the unending quest for the “unity and universality of theory” (Bauman) would be to renounce the possibility of redemption. Thus, before we yield to resignation, let us recall the importance of this quest due to which hope is still alive that, someday, the recognition of the whole will enable a more complete grasp of the interconnection of its parts.

The quest for a unified source of the various approaches to the problems of our time points to the significance of the field of values. Though the value discourse is still in the process of creation, its aim is to overcome the disorientating confusion of the overall crisis of modern values. From this angle, the problems of our time appear as problems of the values upon which the entire modern epoch is based. Their decline is talked about widely but, while theoretically an awareness of the deficiencies of modern values is crystallizing, in practice they are peaking in intensity, like a wounded beast gone mad.

The veil of modernization is no longer capable of hiding the tragic consequences of its mistakes, and the inadequacy of modern values for a dignified world future becomes increasingly visible. People might not wish such a future indeed, but chaos is not acceptable before the intuition of the harmony of life as the supreme value. The inevitable question is: when will humanity adopt this value? Inevitably the answer is utopian as well: when sufficient conditions are met. This means, first, when awareness spreads that the aporetic dichotomies of modern rationality serve as the basis for the maxim “divide et impera”, and when reason begins to be employed in a constructive fashion, beginning from a consciousness of the creativity of universal love. Further, when science (particularly the social sciences which initially were to direct the other sciences for the benefit of the community) stops concealing facts and serving the abuse of power. And also when higher dimensions of being are accepted, not only intellectually, but also in everyday social life.

This certainly is a Utopia, but history has been primarily written to the sufferings caused by forsaking beautiful, good, true and just ideas. The tragic paradox is that the sources of humanness over time have been transformed into sources of inhumanity and the humanist project of modernity and its values has turned chimerical. Yet the possibility that sometime something will change still moves the world. Belief in such a possibility is necessary in order for its actualization to begin, though to hold on to this belief is extremely difficult. How deeply then the faith in a Utopia is felt we see from what happens when it disappears, for the values and meaning it bestowed on intellectual and social life also disappear.

This emergent utopia is sometimes called postmodernity signifying its negative character as a deconstruction which many see only as destruction. But for others it carries positive content which is referred to as global horizon and is what interests us here most. This relates the past from which it originates and derives; one can read it as maturation which realizes knowledge of past to be essential for self-determination and self-awareness. Here the guiding idea is to retain the good aspects of both tradition and modernization. Tradition is always to be transformed, while the acceptance of spiritual reality and the divinity of the whole transforms the naive positivism of modernity and the cruelties of its materialism. But perhaps its greatest value lies in the awareness that humans need modesty and still have much to learn in order to become capable of distinguishing between creative and destructive principles and actions.

What we have learned from past centuries and recent events is that for modern societies and values, utopias and the secular “myths” supporting them have begun to show their negative side. The actualization of the modern nation-state and the accompanying myth of social progress have become stuck in a labyrinth of self-deception. There remains to view it teleologically, i.e. from the perspective of a potential coming of humanity to its senses, for only in that way will all the past, present and future sufferings not be totally purposeless.

A teleological view grasps the whole; its quest leads across the field of values. The values adopted by national cultures (individuals and societies) are transmitted from generation to generation as a cultural heritage and tradition through which worldviews render meaning to the life of individuals and society. Hence values are the key to understanding the whole. Though we often view them from a temporal or variable perspective, values convey also the permanent meaning of Being, just as the structure of many laws of change are unchangeable. The natural and social sciences confirm this rule: history, sociology and psychology discover regularities which condition the traditional values of a society. Thus, multiple contradictions and injustices give rise to a need for liberation, which in turn moves people to effect change.

Present needs point out:

1. that ethnic and national tensions derive from the very essence of modern philosophy which screens out the possibilities of complementarity and leaves instead conflicting relations between cultures, individuals and societies;
2. that humans being conditioned by pride in the specific of their own culture and fear of others, always are guided by inhumane avarice for power and by poverty, which generates a failure of human values; and
3. that the plurality of cultures cannot overcome this failure of values and its tragic consequences, to say nothing of creating a just order, while the dynamics of societies is based primarily on the values of ethnos and nation, without subordinating this to the universal values of humankind.

These universal values do not mean an abolishment of pluralism and difference, but the establishment of a harmonious connection and communication among them.

Why has the solution for alienation, the central problem of modernity, never been found, while the construction of *identity* and feeling of *belonging* continue to unfold in the wrong direction? The weaknesses inherent in the materialist value paradigm of modernity in communism not only were taken over but even were exacerbated. However, the breakdown of communism brought neither relief nor improvement. Instead, class identification regressed to a misconceived “traditional” belonging to ethnos and nation.<sup>1</sup> Since in communism the actual substance of past

tradition was suppressed or even perverted, media simulation activated the myths, latently pre-sent in the collective unconscious, which served the abuse of power. People's lack of rootedness in themselves and the world, and even less in their harmonious unity, was and is a propitious psychological ground for various kinds of manipulation among which the most pernicious are manipulations of identity and sense of belonging. After the collapse the communist class identifications were replaced with national ones, since provoking ethnic and national tensions was a readily usable device for the usurpation of power. Therefore the change needed now is to become aware of the myths lurking in our unconscious, whence they have been exiled, in order to discharge them.

Nevertheless, the number of people aware of these phenomena is few. Unfortunately, the majority do not see the fatal worthlessness of these negative phenomena as compared to the genuine human interests in the harmony and connectedness of the whole. Teaching tolerance is difficult in an atmosphere where most people espouse completely opposite "values". Perhaps the only way is to establish values whose adoption will be motivated by growth on a personal plane. A personal example may become a solid ground in a world where everything is relative. Tolerance cannot be taught by someone who is not tolerant in his/her personal life. Such a person might philosophize wisely, but without personal weight his/her wisdom quickly would wane. Were the individual truly to become what the etymological meaning of the concept indicates -- an indivisible one -- then a society as a shared mosaic composed of such individuals could perhaps begin. Instead the modern epoch is dominated by a completely different meaning according to which the individual carries, on the one hand, the positive thrust of human ideals, but, on the other, the greed of an unlimited will to power.

In changing the traditional order of the relation between individual and community modernity was led by the vision of a Utopia of freedom, brotherhood and equality which would rift the yoke of the feudal society. But since materialism lay at the foundations of its view of human values, these were turned into direct opposites. Society remained an external and heteronomous constraint on individual autonomy, and the problem of establishing balance between the individual and the community became unmanageable. The ethnic and national community, resting on egotistic discrimination against other non-members, cannot provide a balance since it oscillates continuously between propaganda-instilled pride and fear of the enemy. These exacerbate the tensions and lead to destruction and hatred.

We may agree that the *conditio sine qua non* for the establishment of balance between the individual and the community is that the individual recognizes and accepts the community as a value and point of support of his/her perfection, thanks to which he/she will wish to overcome egocentrism. But the question arises whether this can be done within the framework of a nation-state concept which itself is based on materialist values causing intolerance. Here we face an antinomy and paradox that cannot be solved theoretically, but only by personal example. But analogously to occurrences in nature in order for such rare personal examples to bring about a "qualitative leap" at the societal level, there is required a "critical mass" of such individuals, aware of the values of community and brotherhood, who by the rectitude of their lives will be engaged in the creation of a universal foundation for the future evolution of humanity.

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## Chapter XI

# The Phenomenon of Human Dignity after Totalitarianism

*Miloslav Bednár*

The appearance of the totalitarian alternative to human existence, so typical for twentieth century, represents a consistent, consciously anti-traditional, and universal alternative to human life and its world. This consists in an elaborate ideological and behavioral embodiment of the essence of technology, i.e., in the comprehensive manipulability of both metal and practical human beings. In other words, totalitarian regimes present a systematic and cogent, but morally weak, reply to the modern split between rationality and morality which is reflected in the sharp division of the private and public spheres of human life. The totalitarian alternative offers an alluringly simple closure of this gap at the heart of modern humanity. In cases where such an answer has been accepted, as with the Communist and Nazi totalitarian regimes, the continuity of the Western tradition as such has been interrupted.

The central assault of the totalitarian thrust was aimed at the phenomenon of individual responsibility for one's private and public life, including its moral and spiritual meaning. Precisely here, totalitarian regimes appeared extremely successful in creating a new type of human which was always ready to comply with any ideological commands for total lack of personal moral responsibility. Instead of a unitive moral orientation, the manifold tints and nuances of totalitarian sophistry succeeded in promoting a universal relativism of values. These crucial elements of the totalitarian mentality and activity now constitute a most sinister flaw impeding the solid recovery of post-communist countries from their long-lasting systematic disregard and elimination of the spiritual and moral foundations of the Occidental human tradition.

In the present situation of the post-totalitarian intelligentsia in Eastern Europe, this spiritual and moral predicament appears to be considerably strengthened by the contemporary influx from the West of post-modernism and neo-liberalism. In fact, these views seem to be the last possible stage of the modern move toward the fragmentation of unity and the tensions of human life anchored and developed in Western spirituality and morality. The common denominator of the present post-modern and neo-liberal *dernier cri* is evidently the same as the kernel of the new totalitarian human being: a universal, manipulated atomization of everything.

Nonetheless philosophically, the totalitarian communist break in our civilization induced the Czech philosopher, Jan Patočka, both to regenerate and to reinterpret radically the genuine spiritual roots of Europe, i.e., Plato's concept of care for one's soul.<sup>1</sup> In this way, Patočka deepened his conception of three basic moves of human life<sup>2</sup> into an outline of spiritual life consisting in the original phenomenality of all reality not as a matter of course, but as an evident precondition of all phenomena, and by the same token of all reality.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, on existential and phenomenological grounds he restored the Socratic *daimonion* as an ability "to say 'no' to these measure of mobilization" so characteristic of our age of technology and totalitarian regimes. These

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. e.g., J. Patočka, *Evropa a doba poevropska* (Praha: Československý spisovatel, 1970), pp. 216-234; and *Kacířské eseje o filosofii d jin* (Praha: Academia, 1990).

<sup>2</sup> See Jan Patočka, *Přirozený svět jako filosofický problém* (Praha: Československý spisovatel, 1970), pp. 216-234.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Jan Patočka, "Duchovní lov k intelektuál," *Souvislosti* (1990/1), p. 15.

“render permanent the state of war”, i.e., the exponential growth of force as the essence of total technology.<sup>4</sup>

The intensive encounter of the totalitarian alternative for human existence, as radically destroying Western civilization, induced Patocka to reformulate human dignity in the light of the ultimate horizons of modernity at the end of our century of world wars and totalitarian regimes. Patocka’s concept of human dignity consists in a phenomenological reinterpretation of the original Platonic and Aristotelian harmonic hierarchy by constructing the concept of a good human life against the background of the original principle of phenomenality as such. This original European principle appears as the basic legitimation of both human plurality and tolerance.<sup>5</sup> It is the origin of human communication able to cope with differences, tensions and conflicting views deriving from the plurality of human decisions, knowledge and culture.

Thus, post-totalitarian human dignity consists in the capacity to question all reality including its open origins, as well as to adopt this ground of phenomenality as a starting point for joint human recognition, communication and action, on the one hand. On the other hand, this level of human insight made available through the totalitarian attack on the foundations of the Western tradition, presents the only legitimate environment for the genuine contemplative dimension of human life, known traditionally as *bios theoretikos* or *vita contemplativa*.

This radical restoration of human dignity occurred in totalitarian circumstances as a conscious expression both of a cogent, responsible moral resistance, and of a permanent future project of meaning for human life and its world. This poses a universal, alternative human existence in principle capable of coping with the essence of technology, whatever forms it may assume. This is nothing less than to uncover and reinterpret the original creative tensions between soul, being and freedom as the explicit existential environment of humanity at the climax of modern times toward the end of our century. In other words, this implies a recovery of the founding human situation, which makes it possible for human freedom to face the permanent alternative of good/evil, truth/untruth.<sup>6</sup>

Heidegger’s concept of the human being was characterized by its relation to being, actively taking it over with responsible “caring” and thus being free in attitude.<sup>7</sup> Patocka put this consciously into practice. Nevertheless, in contrast to Heidegger, his basic insight consisted in founding the problem of Being in the much more original and profound problem of appearing (phenomenality). This is the source of original human time and makes it possible for us to understand Being.<sup>8</sup> Patocka’s conclusion that the problem of appearing as such is in fact more basic and deeper than the problem of Being implies a considerable and profound revision of Heidegger’s thinking. This consists in the identification of the phenomenon of movement with the original appearing.<sup>9</sup> In this way, the ontological grounds for freedom and human dignity in both the post-totalitarian and post-technological era were laid, including the question of the precise relation between Being, time and appearing.<sup>10</sup>

Seeing the original appearing as the utmost ground and origin of time, and consequently of Being, points to the very condition of possibility for all reality. Such an exact distinction and

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<sup>4</sup> J. Patocka, *Kacirské eseje o filosofii d jin*, p. 141.

<sup>5</sup> “Duchovní lov k intelektuál”, *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> VIII/7-8.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. VIII/20.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. VIII/3.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. J. Patocka, *Prirozený sv t jako filosofický problém*, p. 211.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. VIII/3.



hierarchy reflect a radical phenomenological way of coping with the original Greek philosophical experience of *dike*, *fysis*, *polemos* and *logos* as the prime source of everything that exists. This is a modern and responsible reconstruction of the founding and the stumbling block of Occidental spirituality. It spells tremendous risk, but seems to be the only promising alternative after the radical totalitarian break in Western civilization. In this way, human dignity appears to consist in a basic post-totalitarian faith grounded in a precise and verifiable hierarchy generating the human spiritual and moral move. Faith, as its distinctive element, is the appropriate resolve to dare the highly risky option for human life and this despite the totalitarian break in human history stemming from the radical anti-political, anti-moral and anti-spiritual character of the essence of technology.

The nature of this kind of faith as a risky post-totalitarian resolve points towards a modern reformulation of the original Western notion of a good human life in a good political community. The principle of a good human life in the Greek tradition was identical with the realization of virtues through the whole course of human life in the environment of the *polis*. On the one hand, such an environment was the only possible way in which the good life could take place. On the other hand, the very existence of a genuine political community was based on the exercise of virtues as its vital principles and essence. Thus, the distinctively Greek notion of humanity as the permanent aim of the life-long endeavor traditionally expressed by the concept of *paideia*, could be recovered in the post-totalitarian West. Now the stress would be laid on the implicit move of the soul, its movement of *praxis* creating the source of the whole of *aretai*. This type of move of human life, before its subsequent conceptual distinction and intrinsic differentiation, is conceivable as the original appearance of human faith. This is both bound, yet free, for it is towards a life that is not established for the sake of life itself. Such a phenomenon of essentially emerging human faith appears to be the practical, dynamic human counterpart of Plato's highest principle of the Good. This is precisely its distinctive nature as a one (*to hen*), being absolutely simple (*haplun*), indivisible (*adiaireton*), and undifferentiated (*adiaforoi*), and preceding all quantity as its original principle (*arche*) and element (*stoicheion*).<sup>11</sup>

The obvious central problem of this crucial phenomenon of humanity consists in its excellence over science, knowledge and truth. Because it makes these fundamentally possible, in principle it resists all discursive description. Nevertheless, its baselessness and preconditionlessness, which by the same token is the possibility of any precondition and foundation, substantiates Patocka's position regarding appearing as such, which makes possible all appearances, and in this way all reality. Consequently, the very nature of the phenomenon of original human faith as fundamental appearance necessarily encompasses both plurality and universality as its prime and mutually compatible dynamics.

In this context, Masaryk's courageous notion of religious democracy<sup>12</sup> finds its spiritual legitimacy. Conversely, it expresses the basic human appearance of the essential phenomenon of human faith. This appears as a type of community explicitly founded in human plurality, which emerges as democracy. Thus, human faith as an original human move and the counterpart of the oneness (*to hen*) of the highest good is the genuine and most adequate expression of the individual uniqueness of persons. Similar to metaphysical ontology, where the original oneness is the precondition of quantity, the oneness of the highest good, and *mutatis mutandis* the original phenomenon of human faith, appear as the utmost pre-limits and pre-measures with no preceding condition. These alone make possible the limitation, differentiation, measure, quantity and variety of the world and of human life. In this way, the fundamentally originating centrality of appearing

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. Plato, Parmenides, 137c4-1452a8.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Ludwig, p. 71.

(phenomenalism as such) unfolds into appearances, i.e., into reality. Hence, the prime ontological importance of original human faith in the movement of appearance is given.

Similarly, the ethical and ontological foundations of human dignity appear also to be anchored in the centrality of appearing. This provides a central orientation on how to reformulate the very concept of the entire realm of human virtues, which is to reformulate the very core of Western humanity. This remains under the sinister shadow both of its historic break by the totalitarian regimes and other forms of the development of technology in our century. This twofold radical shadow within Western civilization is the fatal fruit of its risky nature and origin. The only appropriate way to cope with this appears to be radical reflection and moral action based creatively on the founding Western insight of the central originating importance of an earthshaking pre-phenomenality of appearing as such for all that exists. Failure to abide in this spiritual and moral principle of the West was, and remains, the primary source of its deficient choices. Hence a redefinition of the moral complex of human and civic virtues in the light of appearing as such and its prime characteristics seems to be the way out of the looming impasse of the post-totalitarian predicament of democratic civilization.

This requires restoring the interdependence of courage, practical wisdom, piety, justice, theoretical wisdom, temperance and friendship in terms of their immediate foundation in the pre-phenomena of appearing. The need for such a refounding of all virtues in the experience of appearing as such is pointed to by the phenomenon of totalitarianism as a radical anti-political and anti-moral embodiment of universal manipulability as the essence of technology.

### *Justice*

One example is the virtue of justice. Presently this is discussed in terms of distributive and corrective systems of institutional arrangements. Behind such standard disputes lies a technological mentality postulating that the virtue of justice is a problem of inadequate systems and methods of institutional administrative organization, i.e., a task for applied technology. According to this attitude justice can be achieved by applying an appropriate system and subsystem of administrative processes, i.e., justice appears to be at the disposal of organizational and administrative power. This obviously technological conception of justice points to another standard of justice which is much more than an institutional and organization mechanism. It points to the appearance of a mutual recognition of the rights and duties of free citizens as a proper legitimating environment of moral and legal guilt and its redemption. Moreover, the environment for a mutual moral recognition of human beings in freedom after its radical totalitarian liquidation has decisively contributed, at least in Czechoslovakia, to a restoration of human and civic virtues after everyday life and peace had been shaken to the roots of its meaning.

Thus, the sheer pre-phenomenality of appearing as such constituted the final resort, and by the same token the very first beginning of a meaningful life and world which, if recognized and followed consistently, will spell another beginning of history after its totalitarian rupture. Consequently, Plato's question articulating the moral and spiritual movement of the Greek beginning of history, the question of how justice in the soul is possible, can now be answered. This follows the radical totalitarian negation of the history of answers to this most powerful question in European culture, and is situated in the midst of the culmination of the technological era of universal and versatile manipulability in the environment of modern democracies. The proper answer to this fundamental question of Western culture since 1989 is the conscious result of both the experience of, and a thorough reflection on, the founding pre-eminence of appearing as such.

This includes recollection of the earlier course of Western history deeply determined by a lack of enduring clarity as to the true nature of the phenomenal process of original appearing.

In such a critical reinterpretation and recovery of appearing as such the virtue of justice appears first as a problem of moral responsibility. The striking totalitarian success in liquidating this crucial element of the original European morality and system of law had been made possible by the artificial modern division partitioning human life into two independent spheres: public rationality and objectivity, on the one hand, and an allegedly merely subjective personal morality and religion, on the other. The totalitarian regimes constituted a radical attempt to close this characteristically essential abyss of modernity by a sophisticated and flexible combination of terror and ideologically manipulated behavior aimed at the total liquidation of individual moral responsibility, on the one hand, and of the distinction between state and society, on the other. To restore justice after such a challenge amounts to defining carefully moral responsibility in terms of overcoming the modern partition of public rational objectivity from private subjective morality and religion.

This implies a profound reformulation and extension of the concept of human rights to include both individual and public moral responsibility for the political and historical consequences of individual and civic decisions. In this moral way, the conception of human rights receives a substantial extension to basic duties. Thus, the technological concept of justice as universal order solving the question of human guilt, and appearing both in the form of equality under law and as enabling everyone to do what fits one's individual dispositions can be reformulated. Instead human rights would be redefined in terms of natural law.

Moreover, such an urgent re-definition points, first, to the need to reformulate Aristotle's general concept of justice as a matter of state into the total complex of all morality.<sup>13</sup> Second, it points to Plato's problem of the possibility of justice in the human soul. Beginning with justice as a quality of the human soul in the earth shaking experience of appearing, the appearance of original human faith is a proper environment for justice for its upholding is stamina in the moral order of virtues in action. This is the post-totalitarian moral ground facing the predicament of democratic humanity and citizenship in an era of the culmination of technology. It makes possible consistent philosophical thought capable of coping with the affective contradictions of human life, and so creates the world that originally encompasses us.

In terms of human dignity, this consists in the concept of human beings as the genuine domain of the originating process of appearing as such which proceeds all beings. It is given essentially with human finality<sup>14</sup> and defines the human soul as such.<sup>15</sup> To cope with the affective character of the human soul from the point of view of original appearance is nothing less than to cultivate the affective human move of human existence toward clarity<sup>16</sup> as the well spring of human dignity. Such cultivation appears as a genuine move of human faith which produces the justice of human soul as its proper life-world.

Justice is a total complex of morality upholding the political, i.e., civic, order. In the case of its post-totalitarian conscious foundation in human dignity as the domain of original appearing. This entails another approach to its expressions through distributive and corrective justice. This is Aristotle's insight that the human sharing of a common understanding of justice makes possible

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. Ludwig, p. 71.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Pato ka, VIII/6.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. J. Pato ka, *Evropa a doba poevropská*, p. 88.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

both the family and the state. Note that Aristotle does not say the state only, as would Rawls.<sup>17</sup> This clearly points to the inseparability of both private and public, and of moral goodness versus rights and justice. Consequently, Rawls's conditioning of moral goodness taken as a construction by principles of rights and justice, i.e., in terms of its distributiveness and correctiveness<sup>18</sup> reflects the modern supremacy of administrative and admittedly objective rationality over so-called private and subjective morality, not to say, spirituality.

In contrast to this typically modern conception of justice, the central and originating position of human dignity as a genuine sphere of appearing radically reverses the meaning of distributive and corrective justice. A characteristically modern position of equality corresponding to the state of nature in a onesidedly selected and vaguely understood traditional theory of social contract<sup>19</sup> should be replaced by a concept of free human dignity residing in the pre-phenomenal move of appearing. This position provides the ground for understanding the two principles of justice mentioned above. Thus, the call both for the broadest extent of liberties to all, and for inequalities reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage as attached to positions and offices open to all<sup>20</sup> need to be anchored in other concepts of equal rights and advantages. That is, in the equality given by free initiative, and in the advantage given by a moral understanding of the entire movement of human life, in recognition of human dignity conceived as the origin of the phenomenon of appearing.

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 243.

<sup>18</sup> Cf., *ibid.*, p. 404.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Rawls, p. 12.

<sup>20</sup> Cf., *ibid.*, p. 60.

## Chapter XII

# **The Universalism of John Paul II and the United Nations: Towards a New Intellectual-Ethical Environment**

*Janus Kuczynski*

### **The Pope as the Guardian and Co-Author of Christian Universalism**

*The Drama of Pope John Paul II as Author of a Vision of an Ethical World Order and as a Central Point of Moral Reference.*

We are witnessing a historical drama of misunderstanding. As the most universal moral authority Pope John Paul II is greeted enthusiastically by hundreds of thousands, often millions of people in almost all the countries he visits. At the same time, the component of his teachings which is socially most significant remains misunderstood or outright ignored. Recently, we observed the response of young listeners gathered in Castel Gandolfo. As during tens of foreign voyages, here too anticipation was followed by euphoric reaction to the papal words as a personification of hope.

But the element which historically could be most prominent appears to share the fate of passing moments of joy and zeal. The social teaching and ethical vision of the world based on universal premises and expounded by John Paul II remains the most important for non-believers and other religions. His is a visionary presentation of what traditionally is known as “the Church’s ‘social doctrine,’ ‘social teaching’ or even ‘social magisterium’” (*Centesimus Annus*, 2).

Very broadly in public opinion, this vision has been almost completely obscured by discussions on birth control and the tragic issue of abortion. Concentration of attention on these problems, the temperature of the discussion, and the opinions voiced therein, hamper the possibility of bringing forth the greatness of John Paul II and his possibly historic importance for the comprehension of the world situation.

This is why it seems so indispensable and urgent to inaugurate a debate, quite different from its predecessors. This must be conducted on an entirely independent and thus scientific level of historical, sociological, ethical and especially meta-philosophical studies.

In the book, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, the first sentence of the last interview entitled: *The Pope: a Scandal and a Mystery*, declares:

Each Pope regards his role with a sense of duty and humility, of course, but also with an equal sense of confidence. Catholics believe this and therefore they call him ‘Holy Father’ or ‘Your Holiness.’ Nevertheless, according to many others, this is an absurd and unbelievable claim. The Pope, for them, is not God’s representative but instead the surviving witness of ancient myths and legends not accepted today by the ‘adult’ . . .” Confronted with you -- as with each of your predecessors and successors -- one must wager (as Pascal said) that you are either the mysterious living proof of the Creator of the universe or the central protagonist of a millennial illusion.<sup>1</sup>

This fatal alternative neglects questions most relevant for the majority both of non-believers and other religions; in an overwhelming majority of cases, the latter conceive the Pope as the most

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<sup>1</sup> John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, edited by Vittorio Messori (New York, 1994), p. 4.

authoritative heir of the intellectual, artistic, and ethical culture of Christian universalism. The Pope is also the co-creator of that religion/culture, because even according to orthodox theology, his interpretation of the Church should be placed alongside revelation.

Secondly this Pope is the co-author of a social doctrine whose impact is among the greatest in the contemporary world, presented in tens of thousands of schools of higher learning and seminaries, and interpreted in a tremendous number of books, periodicals and lectures. If treated autonomously (i.e., without a strictly religious interpretation), it has a chance of gaining a most extensive, almost worldwide recognition. The encyclical *Laborem Exercens* can be envisaged as the most universal and perhaps the most prominent socio-theoretical document of the twentieth century, for it comprises one of the indispensable intellectual-scientific foundations of universal society.<sup>2</sup>

Thirdly, the Pope constitutes the most crucial reference point in the realm of morality. Although the majority probably does not share his views concerning celibacy or birth control, the opinions of John Paul II are, and will remain, the most significant for the thinking person and will thus constitute a most prominent point of reference. The greatness and tragedy of John Paul II are contained in his inflexible defence of absolute values in an era of growing relativism.

*Spiritual Absolutism, Combined with Dialogue, Leads to the Highest Values: the Exclusion of Relativism, Fundamentalism and Manicheism.*

It is a paradox that it is universalism, comprehended as a meta-philosophy and therefore as neutral from the point of view of world outlook [the author of these words is a materialist and, consequently, a non-believer], and not of Christians themselves, that is capable of perceiving the actual historical, cultural and moral greatness of John Paul II. His rank cannot be identified with a “mystery” since the latter is not recognized by non-believers and, at times, is negated violently by the adherents of many other religions. A universal acceptance of the Pope’s greatness, based on the “mystery” is, therefore, excluded.

Such acceptance is possible precisely thanks to a restriction to cultural values (with the exception of ontological and strictly world outlook debates) and the functioning of almost all values (including ontological, world outlook and religious) exclusively in the cultural and partially ethical sphere. Simply speaking: the Bible as a holy book for believers differs from a document of world culture and a literary and ethical masterpiece. Only in the second case can it win the widest possible and thus universal recognition. The same holds true for “the second source of revelation” -- the teachings of the Church which can be much more widely acknowledged as an historical and cultural reality, and as Christian universalism rather than as an object of faith.

This is the core of our argument: John Paul II is recognized universally not as the successor of St. Peter, but as a brilliant and, I might add, charismatic leader of a great cultural formation which is called Christianity, and traditionally Christian universalism.

Finally, we must understand that the most appropriate, i.e. the most universal debate is possible on such a level of culture and history, rather than of ontology, faith or theology. Only on the former level can the indubitable spiritual absolutism of Pope John Paul be conceived in an objective and all-around manner. I would like to emphasize that this absolutism can be recognized as one of the most important values of the contemporary world (just as the epistemological absolutism of Husserl is universally appreciated, albeit unrecognized). This will be possible owing

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<sup>2</sup> A special justification of this thesis is to be found in: “John Paul II’s Manifesto of Labor and Vision of Universal Society,” *Dialogue and Humanism*, no. 2-3 (1994).

to the fact that absolutism of this variety, which the teachings of John Paul II inseparably connect with dialogue, excludes fundamentalism and manicheism.

Here, the unusual key role and force of dialogue reveal themselves to the full: by definition dialogue assumes the recognition of the Other as a partner, a being worthy of respect. Moreover, John Paul is a person whose faith is so deep that it becomes the Absolute Truth, yet at the same time he acknowledges dialogue to be an indispensable principle of his stand, or even co-constitutive of a binding tradition (Vatican II). Such an exceptional person recognizes the Other as a possible partner and participant in the Absolute. Dialogue becomes an invitation of the Other to elevation in the Absolute. This spiritual absolutism of John Paul II is probably the greatest ennoblement of all people.

This principle of the uplifting power of dialogue, as a legitimation of all people to participate in the domain of absolute values according to the principle of partnership, is incomparably more important than many components of doctrinal teaching, such as a legal ban on abortion, an ethical ban on artificial birth control, or the injunction of celibacy. This is the reason why even the most correct criticism of the sexual ethics propagated by the Church should not be permitted to conceal the greatness of what is most relevant for us.

At the same time, we should be capable of perceiving a certain inevitable and philosophically apt pathos connected with the absolutization of the ban on abortion: life must be recognized as holy. This command should be acknowledged as the great value of culture, and not only of ethics, even in those instances when one decidedly rejects the intervention of law, penalization and, even more so, the politization of abortion. Regardless of philosophical or religious attitudes, ethical absolutism provides an orienting point of reference. I would even claim that in a period of relativism the moral absolute is becoming increasingly indispensable.

This is the reason why a confrontation with the spiritual absolutism represented by John Paul II, constitutively bound with the methods of dialogue (whose furthest consequences, we stress again, generate not only a recognition of the "Other," but its outright spiritual ennoblement), comes into increasingly painful confrontation with relativism and the nihilistic tendencies of consumerism, postmodernism and the cynicism of the contemporary world. Such a confrontation assumes the dimensions of authentic tragedy and cultural greatness.

It follows, however, that the perception of this level could disclose other great and essentially ignored values of the pontificate of John Paul II. One of the most striking examples could be the speeches given by the Pope in the United Nations. The majority of the listeners applauding the papal words did not share his religion, but they did notice the spiritual greatness of the guardian of the Absolute and the promoter of dialogue.

Let us limit ourselves to the application of the social teachings and personal experiences of John Paul II in the creation of an international order: two historical addresses at the United Nations, greeted with ovations by the participants of the General Assembly and yet so soon forgotten.

### **Address of Oct. 2 1979: The Foundations of United Nations Universalism**

*The Church as a Universal Community and the Universality of the United Nations: Man in His Fullness as the Object of Their Common Care*

John Paul II said: As a universal community embracing faithful belonging to almost all countries and continents, nations, peoples, races, languages and cultures, the Church is deeply interested in the existence and activity of the Organization whose very name tells us that it unites

and associates nations and States. The joint object of the concern of the Church and the United Nations is “man in his wholeness, in all the fullness and manifold riches of his spiritual and material existence,” as stated in the Encyclical *Redemptor Hominis*.

Let us keep in mind this category of “Fullness” because some critics of universalism see it as exaggerated and full of excessive pathos.

The Church and the United Nations are of similar nature: “I would like to express the wish that, in view of its universal character, the United Nations will never cease to be the forum, the high tribunal from which all man’s problems are appraised in truth and justice”. All these problems should be examined in the light of the United Nations’ “fundamental document, the ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’, and the rights of the human being as a concrete individual and in his or her universal value. This document is a milestone on the long and difficult path of the human race”.

It follows also from the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” that:

The Governments and States of the world have understood that, if they are not to attack and destroy each other, they must unite. The real way, the fundamental way to this is through each human being, through the definition and recognition of, and respect for, the inalienable rights of the individual and of the communities of peoples.

#### *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the Moral Foundation of the United Nations*

Recalling the suffering of millions of people, and mentioning the victims of Auschwitz, John Paul II said that it was their suffering and struggle which gave rise to the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, which has been the basic inspiration and cornerstone of the United Nations. “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights -- with its train of many declarations and conventions on highly important aspects of human rights, in favor of children, of women, of equality between races, and especially the two international covenants on economic, social and cultural rights and on civil and political rights -- must remain the basic value in the United Nations.”

The Pope wishes to connect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with the best traditions of the Church:

Paul VI said at the end of his encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, “if the new name for peace is development, who would not wish to labour for it with all his powers?” . . . In this titanic labour of building up the peaceful future of our planet, the United Nations has undoubtedly a key function and guiding role, for which it must refer to the just ideals contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In addition, the Pope mentioned *Pacem in Terris* by John XXIII, which is “very close to the ideological foundation of the United Nations”.

#### *The Concreteness of Universally Recognized Human Rights*

John Paul II stated to the General Assembly:

“Permit me to enumerate some of the most important human rights that are universally recognized:



- the right to life, liberty and security of person;
- the right to food, clothing, housing, sufficient health care, rest and leisure;
- the right to freedom of expression, education and culture;
- the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and the right to manifest one's religion either individually or in community, in public or in private;
- the right to choose a state of life, to found a family and to enjoy all conditions necessary for family life;
- the right to property and work, to adequate working conditions and a just wage;
- the right of assembly and association;
- the right of freedom of movement, to internal and external migration; the right to nationality and residence;
- the right to political participation and the right to participate in the free choice of the political system of the people to which one belongs.<sup>3</sup>

All those rights can constitute a legal-moral foundation of universal society.

### *The Rule of the Preeminence of Spiritual over Material Goods*

The rule is based on the relationship between spiritual values and material or economic values. In this relationship, it is the spiritual values that are preeminent, both on account of the nature of those values and also for reasons concerning the good of man. The preeminence of the values of the spirit defines the proper sense of earthly material goods and the way to use them. This preeminence is therefore at the basis of a just peace. It is also a contributing factor to ensuring that material development, technical development and the development of civilization are at the service of what constitutes man. This means enabling man to have full access to truth, to moral development, and to the complete possibility of enjoying the goods of culture which he has inherited, and of increasing them by his own creativity. It is easy to see that material goods do not have unlimited capacity for satisfying the needs of man: they are not in themselves easily distributed and, in the relationship between those who possess and enjoy them and those who are without them, they give rise to tension and division that will often even turn into open conflict. Spiritual goods, on the other hand, are open to unlimited enjoyment by many at the same time, without diminution of the goods themselves. Indeed, the more people share in such goods, the more they are enjoyed and drawn upon, the more than do those goods show their indestructible and immortal worth. This truth is confirmed, for example, by the works of creativity.

### *Material Goods Divide: Spiritual Goods Unite*

“Material goods by their very nature provoke conditioning and divisions, struggle to obtain these goods becomes inevitable in the history of humanity”. This is one of the basic sources of war; as a result, it is necessary to “pay greater honor . . . to the second dimension of the good of man: the dimension that does not divide people, but puts them into communication with each other, associates them and unites them”.

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<sup>3</sup> *Pope John Paul II at the United Nations*, Department of Public Information, United States, (New York, 1980), pp. 30-31.

It is characteristic that at this stage the Pope refers to the famous opening words of the Charter of the United Nations, in which “the people of the United Nations, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” solemnly reaffirmed “faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.”

The matter at stake is always the guarantee of peace which is threatened by an unjust division of material goods “both within individual societies and on the planet as a whole”. The Pope opposes exploitation of labour and many other abuses that affect the dignity of the human person. It follows that the fundamental criterion for comparing social, economic and political systems is not, and cannot be, the criterion of hegemony and imperialism: it can be, and indeed it must be, the humanistic criterion, namely the measure in which each system is really capable of reducing, restraining and eliminating as far as possible the various forms of exploitation of man and of ensuring for him, through work, not only the just distribution of indispensable material goods, but also participation, in keeping with his dignity, in the whole process of production and in the social life that grows up around that process.

It is striking how in his reflections John Paul II refers to his works written in Poland, and declarations made during the first historic visit to his home country and, predominantly how he opens the way to the problems and perspectives of his possibly greatest encyclical, *Laborem Exercens*.

Two years later, he will write in this encyclical about the priority of labour vis-a-vis capital, the great dignity and universality of labour, and, essentially, about labour as the premise of universal society.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Honest and Respectful Confrontation between Religious and Agnostic, even Atheistic, Views*

The Pope addresses his words to all people. This is a tradition emphatically stressed by John XXIII in *Pacem in Terris* and, upon numerous occasions, echoed in documents of Vatican II and by Paul VI. John Paul II turned the universality of his mission into a rule. Obviously, the most difficult and, at the same time, the most interesting problem was the dialogue with atheism whose adherents probably included numerous participants of the General Assembly. They heard that:

even the confrontation between the religious view of the world and the agnostic or even atheistic view, which is one of the ‘signs of the times’ of the present age, could preserve honest and respectful dimensions without violating the essential rights of conscience of any man or woman living on earth.

Undoubtedly, these convictions stem from the Polish experiences of probably the most difficult of all dialogues: the one between Christianity and atheism. Several months earlier, during his first pilgrimage to Poland, the Pope said:

Christianity and the Church are not afraid of the world of labour. They do not fear the system of labour. The Pope too does not fear working men. They were always particularly close to him. He originated from among them: the quarry in Zakrzówek, the Solvay Boilerhouse in Borek Falecki, and then the steel mills of Nowa Huta. I venture to say that due to all these environments, and his own experiences of work, this Pope has learnt the Gospel anew. . . . For the sake of the wellbeing of man, the Church wishes to achieve a mutual comprehension of issues within each system of

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. J. Kuczynski, “John Paul II’s Manifesto of Labor and Vision of a Universal Society,” *Dialogue and Humanism*, no. 2-3 (1994).

labour. It only requests that this system of labour enable the Church to speak to men about Christ and to love man with this measure, the measure of human dignity, the measure of the dignity of labour which Christ brought and unchangingly constitutes.<sup>5</sup>

I recall these words and weighty assessments, which are so willingly and totally bypassed today, in order to bear witness to historical truth. From 1956, the “system of labour” in Poland was qualitatively different from those in all other countries of so-called real socialism. It was precisely the Catholic Church and the dialogue developed by intellectuals which to an enormous, if not decisive degree, were the cause of this difference. Had it not been for geopolitical determinants which, *nota bene*, were co-created in Yalta by the Western allies, and the permanent and institutional sanctioning of the Yalta division of Europe into spheres of influence, also performed by all the Western states, Poland certainly would have been able to create a true socialism, a social-democratic labour system. This trend of development was favored by private farming, the only one of its sort in the entire camp of “real socialism”, along with the extremely strong traditions of democratic socialism, and the phenomenon of a numerous and open intelligentsia, as well as the force of the Church, whose social effects were beneficial. Cardinal Wojtyła made a great contribution also in this field.

Moreover, it was thanks to those factors that Poland initiated democratic transformations throughout the entire bloc, and managed to lead up to a pacific revolution and radical changes. In the opinion of numerous historians, John Paul II played a particularly crucial role. In a year, his first pilgrimage to Poland produced a social movement, one of the largest in the world and certainly the most extensive in Poland, which encompassed ten million people! “Solidarity” was a phenomenal movement embracing workers, peasants, the intelligentsia and intellectuals. It merged naturally authentic socialism and equally authentic Marxist postulates (starting from the Polish October of 1956, as witnessed by texts published at the time by Kotakowski, Ossowski, Katz and Kotarbiriski) with the best Catholic and national traditions, (dating back at least to the Home Army -- the most mass-scale underground armed formation in the whole of wartime Europe), and then with the accomplishments of KOR (the Committee for the Defence of Workers).

The historical rank of Cardinal Wojtyła became obvious in the spiritual inspiration and the ideological leadership of “Solidarity”, which also stemmed from a dialogue between world outlooks, a multi-faceted will and determination to reach agreements, as well as recognition of the ever broader scale of the same values. It is obvious that dialogue played a natural role in preparing a suitable climate for a pacific revolution. This phenomenon has been discussed by such American historians/philosophers as Paul Mojzes, James Will and Charles Brown.<sup>6</sup>

### *Universalism, Rooted in Tradition and Developed in/with Dialogue*

When we read today the 1979 address of the Pope at the United Nations, his speeches from that period, especially those given two years later, as well as *Laborem Exercens*, possibly the greatest encyclical of the twentieth century, at almost every step of the way we encounter traces of dialogue and natural consequences of the author’s personal experiences. Furthermore, this dialogue gave rise to a new type of universalism. It was, and remains *not a priori* and devoid of a

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<sup>5</sup> John Paul II, *Nauczanie społeczne* (Social Teaching), vol. I. *Pilgrimage to Poland* 2-10 July, 1979 (Warsaw, 1982; Osrodek Dokumentacji i Studiów Społecznych), pp. 194-195.

<sup>6</sup> Documentation of those facts is contained in a study by C. Brown published in *Dialogue and Universalism*, no. 7 (1995).

striving towards domination, as was the case with mediaeval universalism, and even Kant, in various nineteenth-century forms, or the thought of Husserl. The new universalism is qualitatively different as regards the atmosphere of its origin and argumentation, and the clime of its co-creation. It became increasingly obvious that common values can be rendered indelible in the best in those conditions when they emerge from multi-faceted reflections and a diversity of stands which meet in mutual recognition, and thus from dialogue. We see clearly that the most important outcome of such dialogue was dialogue-oriented universalism. In the past, it emerged from joint experiences and a feeling of shared responsibility, and brought close both Christians and atheists, or, more correctly, materialists of a humanistic and historical orientation. At present, it is capable of encompassing everyone. In two extensive articles published in "Studia Filozoficzne" I wrote that the elevation of Cardinal Wojtyla to the Roman See enabled the "Church to gain a new impulse towards universalism and intensified variety and a more open stand". The Church also won something which is certainly, and quite correctly so, treated as a *sui generis* ennoblement of a great "experiment" i.e. a more and more universal dialogue.<sup>7</sup>

The articles began with a motto taken from a poem by Juliusz Slowacki:

Might is needed in order for us to elevate  
The world of the Lord.  
Here comes a Slav Pope  
The brother of the people . . .  
He will eject all rot from the wounds of the world,  
All vermin and reptiles,  
He will bring health, kindle love  
And redeem the world;  
He will cleanse the interiors of churches,  
Sweep clean their entrances:  
He will show God in the creation of the world,  
As clear as daylight.

I went on to write: "It is obvious that the mirror of a single country reflects many universal issues, especially those which are a harbinger of the future for numerous parts of the world".

The fundamental turnabout, which took place during the pontificate of John XXIII and was rendered deeper by Paul VI, can be depicted symbolically by recalling two encyclicals: *Pacem in terris* and *Populorum Progressio*. Both documents delineated the basic and most universal values of our times: peace on Earth and progress of mankind. Their attainment requires what Einstein and Russell expressed in their famous appeal: "Will we learn to think anew?". To learn to think anew denotes being capable of taking into consideration new universal perspectives of the globe. The text from 1979 declared that new thought should be universal, in a multi-dimensional meaning of that term.

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<sup>7</sup> These articles were published as "To Elevate the World: The Potential of Pope John Paul the Second's Pontificate" in *Dialogue and Humanism* no. 1, (1979) and in Polish as: Dzwignac swiat and Umilowanie dziedzictwa i tworzenie przyszlosci, in *Studia Filozoficzne*, no. 1-2 (1979); later, their unaltered version was included in the book: *Uniwersalizm jako metafizologia* (Universalism as Meta-philosophy). Vol. 2, *Swiadectwo i filozofia dialogu* (The Testimony and Philosophy of Dialogue) (1990). Page numbers are cited according to the book.

Universal thought does not signify merely encompassing the global horizon, together with its variety of cultures; it is also an all-sided, non-isolating solution of diverse stands within the range of a single culture. More, if it is not to become pure contemplation, but a confirmation of one's own idea in life, it must lead to the practice of social co-existence, preceded, obviously, by dialogue and an attempt at understanding.

In his book *Upodstaw odnowy (At the Basis of Renewal; Krakow, 1972)*, Cardinal Wojtyla Morkûnasa quoted passages from the Vatican II documents:

Those who think and act differently than we as regards social, political and even religious matters, should be respected and loved; the more we shall understand their manner of thought, in a spirit of love and kindness, the easier it will be to inaugurate a dialogue with them.

The following paragraph is particularly weighty:

Although the Church rejects atheism completely, it nonetheless admits openly that all people, believers and non-believers alike, should contribute to the proper construction of this world, in which they all live together; this certainly cannot take place without an earnest and sensible dialogue. The Church, therefore, deplors the discrimination of believers and non-believers which is unjustly introduced by certain heads of states, who do not recognize basic human rights. It demands that believers enjoy freedom of activity so that they could be permitted to build churches of their God in this world. It cordially invites atheists to consider Christ's Gospel with an open heart.<sup>8</sup>

At the time, I wrote that this was the birth of a new stage of universalism

*Tygodnik Powszechny* quoted a formula which reflects one of the most essential tendencies of the increasingly clearly outlined features of the new pontificate: "With a Pole on the throne of St. Peter, Rome becomes closer to the world." True, we are struck by the intensity and multiplicity of the statements made by John Paul II about universalism and its inner -- Christian counterpart -- ecumenism. . . . Universalism is, therefore, a reflection of a new objective situation, stimulating the spreading of dialogue and the growing intensity of its categorical imperative.<sup>9</sup>

The universalism of John Paul II, rooted in the best achievements of a great heritage and the best Polish experiences, was thus exceptionally well prepared for a great encounter with the universalism of the United Nations, or more precisely, with the enormous potential of nations which describe themselves as united, with their dialogue and synergy. In its capacity as a meta-philosophy, universalism has proved that dialogue and synergy can essentially accomplish much more than initially appeared possible, even in the boldest dreams.

### **Address of October 5, 1995: A Proclamation of the Ethical Foundations of a Universal Society**

*The Uniqueness of the Papal Address and the Kairos of the World -- Opening a Perspective for Universal Society*

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<sup>8</sup> Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, *U podstaw odnowy* (Krakow, 1972).

<sup>9</sup> *Studia Filozoficzne* (1979); *Uniwersalizm jako metafizologia* (1990).

The speech given by the Pope in the General Assembly of the United Nations on October 5, 1995 is the most important in recent years, and could gain universal approval. It is simply astonishing that apart from superficial comments in the press, which range from complete approval to indifference, this historic speech has not been analyzed and situated in contemporary history.

In the view of some who for many years have held high United Nations post and witnessed hundreds of famous events this address was absolutely exceptional and ended with an extraordinary and extended ovation. Unfortunately, it was not followed by an analysis or “translation” into the language of praxis which would reach all the people throughout the world.

The unique nature of the speech in question, its integrity and, at the same time, great variety of content require numerous interpretations to bring forth all its implications and to ensure the permanent impact of its message addressed to the entire world.

In the very second sentence, His Holiness said: “in coming before this distinguished assembly, I am vividly aware that through you I am in some way addressing the whole family of peoples living on the face of the earth”. The end of the introduction states: “I would like to reflect with you on what the extraordinary changes of the last few years imply, not simply for the present, but for the future of the whole human family.” The speech is thus addressed to all people and pertains to the unique changes of the last years, which are of tremendous import for the future of the Earth.

*The Year 1989 -- the Greatest Breakthrough* John Paul II unambiguously linked those basic changes with the year 1989: “The moral dynamics of this quest for freedom clearly appeared in Central and Eastern Europe during the non-violent revolutions of 1989”. He pointed to their extremely extensive significance:

Unfolding in specific times and places, those historical events nonetheless taught a lesson which goes far beyond a specific geographical location. For the non-violent revolutions of 1989 demonstrated that the quest for freedom cannot be suppressed. . . . A decisive factor in the success of those non-violent revolutions was the experience of social solidarity.

The Pope wrote about the connection between the freedom movements, leading up to the 1989 revolution, and the moral values contained in the United Nations Charter, e.g., the belief in “fundamental human rights” and the “social progress and better standards of life in a larger freedom” (Preamble). This is a crucial link, testifying to the chances of universalism. However, there was no indubitable causal connection since the first and most important, albeit not only the reason for this, revolution took place to a decisive degree due to Polish inspirations.

We see increasingly clearly that the historical turning point in contemporary history assumed the form of the non-violent 1989 revolution in Poland, despite the fact that the almost free elections of 4 June produced a radical change in the configuration of forces on the official scene and the establishment of the “Solidarity” government. In categories of prior ruling political philosophy, this was not only a change of the prevalent system, but an outright change of the entire socioeconomic formation. Such a change subsequently took place in most countries which had been based on nationalization, and actually state ownership of the means of production, and, consequently, in the undivided rule of the nomenclature. This was a truly revolutionary transition from that which some called a socialist formation and others totalitarianism (although in the Polish case, one could speak, at worse, about enlightened authoritarianism, aware of its faults and striving towards radical reform, and, ultimately, resigning from power) -- towards authentic democracy.

It was frequently said at the time, and many continue to do so today, that this turnover is, and must denote, a full return to capitalism, and thus to another formation. From this point of view, we

could maintain that the year 1989 was the most important event within the dynamics of changes in all history heretofore, from which there was no precedent of a “return”. Furthermore, only a few years earlier, the majority of people regarded a change of the system, and even more so of the formation, and a peaceful change at that, as simply unimaginable (in 1989/1981, the ten million-strong “Solidarity” movement still proclaimed: “socialism -- yes, distortions -- no”).

I would add to this thesis about the breakthrough year of 1989, my own thesis that from a suitable historical and theoretical perspective that particular year does not denote a basic return or backward movement of history. On the contrary, it was a great opening of history towards the future: what previously appeared trapped in an almost mortal struggle between “two systems” was as an opening towards the perspectives of universal society.

I treated this topic more extensively (in a paper subsequently published as “John Paul II’s Manifesto on Labour and Vision of Universal Society”, *Dialogue and Humanism*, no. 2-3 (1994). At this point, I would say only that *ex definitione* this is supposed to be a versatile society, based on absolutized values of earlier civilizations and approved by the “whole family of peoples living on the face of the earth.”

### *From Human Rights to the Rights of Nations*

Recalling that the second world war was caused by the violation of the rights of nations and cultures (predominantly the violation of the rights of the Polish nation by the Nazis and of Polish culture by the Soviet Union -- if it is at all feasible to distinguish questions of nations and cultures), which were then repressed in the conditions of the “cold war”, John Paul II proposes a postulate of grave consequences: “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, spoke eloquently of the rights of persons; but no similar international agreement has yet adequately addressed the rights of nations”.

The Pope first recalls “the debate at the Council of Constance in the fifteenth century when the representatives of the Academy of Cracow, headed by Pawet Wlodkowic, courageously defended the right of certain European peoples to existence and independence”. and the discussion in Salamanca on “Peoples of the New World”, as well as the words of Benedict XV. spoken in 1915, that “nations do not die”

Pope John Paul continues:

Today the problem of nationalities forms part of a new world horizon marked by a great ‘mobility’ which was blurred by the ethnic and cultural frontiers of the different peoples, as a result of a variety of processes such as migrations mass media and the globalization of the economy. And yet, precisely against this horizon of universality we see the powerful re-emergence of certain ethnic and cultural consciousness, as it were an explosive need for identity and survival, a sort of counterweight to the tendency toward uniformity. . . . It demands . . . closer examination on the levels of anthropology, ethics and law.

### *Tension between the Particular and the Universal*

As philosopher, he goes on to say:

This tension between the particular and the universal can be considered immanent in human beings. By virtue of sharing in the same human nature, people automatically feel that they are

members of one great family, as is in fact the case. But as a result of the concrete historical conditioning of this same nature, they are necessarily bound in a more intense way to particular human groups, beginning with the family and going on to the various groups to which they belong and up to the whole of their ethnic and cultural group, which is called, not by accident, a 'nation', from the Latin word 'nasci': to be born. This term, enriched with another one, 'patria' (fatherland/motherland), evokes the reality of the family. The human condition thus finds itself between these two poles -- universality and particularity -- with a vital tension between them; an inevitable tension, but singularly fruitful if they are lived in a calm and balanced way.

This is a truly classical thesis which could lead to the formula-ion of one of the most general and basic rights. "Tension between particular and universal . . . immanent in human beings" is perhaps the property of every being and of being in general, the feature of *universum*, and certainly of our reflection about it.

### *The Individual and Mediations between Nations*

At this stage, we must introduce yet a third category: the individual as a single entity. By restricting ourselves to the problem of the nation, we can say that in contrast to other nations, a certain nation is particular. But, compared to the individuals creating it, a nation is universal. Hence ethnic tensions between nations will be inevitable if those nations perceive themselves solely as particulars. When mediations occur between them, however, tension is eliminated (as in the case of "men without a homeland" or "mankind without nations"), trans-formed and tamed, or to put it better: "civilized".

The mediations in question can be of three varieties:

1. on the level of the individual we deal with individualizing mediation which absolutizes individuals;
2. on the most general level of mankind, we have globalizing mediation, which absolutizes humankind as a whole;
3. finally, we deal with universalizing mediation, which operates with the principle of multi-level and parallel identification:
  - (a) of the level with itself;
  - (b) with the multiplicity of groups, e.g. local or professional communities, which open "lines" of identification with small cohesive communities or their scattered international counterparts;
  - (c) with the nation, but primarily envisaged as a historical and cultural community i.e. a homeland and not the bonds of blood;
  - (d) with continental culture, e.g. European; and
  - (e) with the culture of the human race and the emergent planetary community.

Only in the case of the third, universalizing mediation, will it be possible to solve the "national question" properly. In simple terms: ethnic and national tensions will be resolved not by their elimination by force (as practice has shown), nor by uprooting them from a nation, nor by "dissolution" in an abstract mankind. The true solution can be only universalization: mediation between nations on assorted levels simultaneously. *Nota bene*, these levels lead to a different and realistic conception of the universal human: the point of departure is simply human nature and the person protected by the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," and followed by family



member, small communities, the nation, the homeland, continental culture and, finally, “the citizen of the world”, rooted in all the communities preceding that of humankind.

*The Right to Exist Versus Types/Levels of Sovereignty: Rights as a Requirement of Particularity; Duties as a Requirement of Universality*

After the above cited classical interpretation of the essence of inevitable tension between nations, followed by an indication of a path towards its fruitful exploitation, John Paul II wrote: “Upon this anthropological foundation there also rest ‘the rights of nations’ which are nothing but ‘human rights’ fostered at the specific level of community life. . . . A presupposition of a nation’s rights is certainly its right to exist.” Nonetheless, “this fundamental right to existence does not necessarily call for sovereignty as a state.” Let us add that the limitation of, e g., ecological or energy sovereignty is becoming increasingly urgent and indispensable. This need for international regulations is a domain in which the United Nations should play a particular role.

The Pope decisively defends “fundamental spiritual ‘sovereignty’” which in the form of culture guarantees the existence of a nation, even if the latter is politically or/and economically enslaved (the Pope mentions the history of Poland by way of example).

At the end of this part of the address, we find yet another significant solution and recommendation:

But while the ‘rights of the nation’ express the vital requirements of ‘particularity’, it is no less important to emphasize the requirements of universality, expressed through a clear awareness of the duties which nations have vis-a-vis other nations and humanity as a whole. Foremost among these duties is certainly that of living in a spirit of peace, respect and solidarity with other nations.

*The Other as a Threat: Anthropological Sources of War*

In the section entitled “Respect for Differences”, Pope John Paul II declared:

Unhappily, the world has yet to learn how to live with diversity. . . . The fact of ‘difference’, and the reality of ‘the other’, can sometimes be felt as a burden or even as a threat. Amplified by historic grievance and exacerbated by the manipulation of the unscrupulous, the fear of ‘difference’ can lead to a denial of the very humanity of ‘the other’: with the result that people fall into the cycle of violence in which no one is spared, not even the children.

Postmodernism, correctly ignored by the Pope, has made “difference” into another philosophical absolutism, which in reality is an immature and almost mechanical reaction to totalitarianism. A universal approval of the solution suggested by John Paul II is possible also in this case, and thus is of a universal dimension for those who wish to understand it. “From bitter experience, then, we know that the fear of ‘difference’, especially when it expresses itself in a narrow and exclusive nationalism which denies any right to ‘the other’, can lead to the true nightmare of violence and terror”.

Fear of the “other” leads, therefore, to the negation of the humanity of “others”, who become “aliens” and even enemies. Nationalists, however, not only hate the others, but also absolutize their own “otherness”, by regarding it as exceptional and even the sole worthy of recognition. Between “us” and the “others” there comes into being a chasm which in extreme cases can lead to the

physical extermination of “them”. The extraordinary and unexpected outburst of nationalism and ethnic hatred in the former “socialist camp” is the result not only of a mechanical reaction to totalitarianism, which actually wanted to stifle differences; if this was the case, then we would be unable to explain nationalisms on other terrains.

The basic reasons for the present-day explosion of nationalisms lie in the fact that:

1. “differences” have become present not only in a purely theoretical consciousness or in distant parts of the globe; at times, they are turning into the direct reality of our daily life, and assume the facial features of an immigrant or a foreign politician, or even the traits of a foreign commodity which is desirable and fascinating but frequently unattainable and thus hostile;

2. “differences” are envisaged as wrongs or at least threats stemming from economic tensions -- at times simply an issue of food supplies, as in the case of ecological wars between the Tutsi and Hutu, or even the growing tension between the North and the South;

3. differences on a mass planetary scale are the product of globalization which has not turned into universalization: globalization emphasizes differences but not their comprehension and especially their being situated within the universe of intellect and values, a feat achieved only by universalization.

#### *“Others” as Part of Our “Community” and the Threat of Ecological and Civil War*

This is the reason why immediately after the preceding sentence, the Pope wrote:

And yet, if we make the effort to look at matters objectively, we can see that, transcending all the differences which distinguish individuals and peoples, there is a fundamental commonality. For different cultures are but different ways of facing the question of the meaning of personal existence.

To this problem of the meaning of life common for all, i.e., the spiritual or cultural good linking of all people mentioned by the Pope in his first speech at the United Nations, we can now add a joint threat. The ecological catastrophe ultimately threatens all people without exception. If we do not undertake serious steps, and do not accomplish metanoia,<sup>10</sup> the next generations will perish or perhaps our children will have to struggle arduously merely to survive.

We must do everything possible to reverse the present-day trend towards annihilation in order to save our children and humankind as a whole. What we described as the absolutization of “the other” or “difference” leads not only towards mystification and the particularization of bonds between groups and, in consequence, to their specific “ethnicization” and “nationalization”. It leads also towards the shattering of links within a group, nation and civilization, and the interiorization of hostility only temporarily disguised by animosity towards “outsiders”.

At times, however, even the closest persons become the most distant and the most hated foes. It is not surprising that civil wars become increasingly cruel, and that their participants have descended to the lowest level. The phantom of ecological civil war, waged, for example for purer space, better food, cleaner air or less radioactive pollution, already is becoming apparent in the form of a health, food or climatic discrimination of assorted regions, first in the “innocent” forms of the localization of “contaminated” industry, budgetary decisions, situating highways, etc.

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<sup>10</sup> Postulated by Leszek Koltakowski, opening the VI Symposium of the International Society for Universalism, London, 1993. This text was published in *Dialogue and Universalism*, no. 1 (1995).

Concealed ecological war between the civilization of the North and the “backward” South is being waged and rapidly will assume ever more ruthless forms. Regional wars within the European “civilization”, e.g. in former Yugoslavia, come down to still concealed ecological hostilities.

*“Others” as a Fulfillment of the Meaning of Life and the Chance of Synergy: Anthropological Premises for Universal Society*

This is precisely the reason why comprehension and education must become increasingly universal and well rounded -- starting with economic issues up to problems of the meaning of life which generalize everything. The latter denote a universalizing combination of respect for differences and the community.

Our respect for the culture of others is therefore rooted in our respect for each community’s attempt to answer the question of human life. And here we can see how important it is to safeguard the fundamental right to freedom of religion and freedom of conscience, as the cornerstone of the structure of human rights and the foundation of every truly free society. No one is permitted to suppress those rights by using coercive power to impose an answer to the mystery of man.

This is also why a “truly free society” must be universal and situate all differences in the community of mankind. Is this all, or only all the good differences -- and what is the meaning of “good”? John Paul II gives a suitable answer to this difficult question: “good” signifies what is based on human rights and the mutual duties between us and all humankind.

It is only upon the basis of the most profound universality of what is common and of “differences” elevated to the level of universality, i.e. differences interpreted as values, that we can build a “truly free society”. This could be a diversified society, which harmoniously includes all “others” who constitute individual, morally absolute values, as in the radical interpretation of Kant’s categorical imperative. At the same time, those “others” are mutually complimentary; only together do they comprise humankind as an inter-subjectively verifiable and historically developing universum of humankind.

A comprehension of this complementariness becomes the foundation of a conscious synergy -- co-operation which many times over and quantitatively transcends even the sum of the most intensive individual efforts. Synergy is one of the basic contra-dictions of the vulgarized Hegelian master-slave dialectic, which comprises an existential-anthropological premise of hatred and wars.

For these reasons, universalism does not find differences less important than unity. Only now can this tradition, dating back at least to Nicholas of Cusa, be fully understood and become a consciously realized program by resorting to the enormous powers of the synergy of differences. It has become possible to understand that the meaning and fullness they express are contained in their complementary relation to others.

To the representatives of humankind gathered at the United Nations John Paul II said:

To cut oneself off from the reality of difference -- or worse, to attempt to stamp out that difference -- is to cut oneself off from the possibility of sounding the depths of the mystery of human life. The truth about man is the unchangeable standard by which all cultures are judged; but every culture has something to teach us about one or other dimension of that complex truth. Thus the ‘difference’, which some find so threatening can, through respectful dialogue, become the source of a deeper understanding of the mystery of human existence.

We can say that the dialogue of differences leads to a deeper understanding of the “complex truth” about man, and consequently to the chance for experiencing and implementing the meaning of life.

*Nationalism as a Particularization of Differences; Patriotism as a Universalization of Differences*

In a summary of a part of his address concerned with national issues, John Paul said:

In this context, we need to clarify the essential difference between the unhealthy form of nationalism, which teaches contempt for other nations and cultures, and patriotism, which is a proper love of one’s country. True patriotism never seeks to advance the well-being of one’s own nation at the expense of others. For in the end this would harm one’s own nation as well: doing wrong damages both aggressor and victim. Nationalism, particularly in its most radical forms, is thus the antithesis of true patriotism, and today we must ensure that extreme nationalism does not continue to give rise to new forms of the aberrations of totalitarianism.

This distinction between nationalism and patriotism, frequently ignored in English and French, but well grounded in Polish, should become universally binding. We are dealing with a distinct division, more importantly, with a division which denotes a hierarchization of behaviour around two essentially different values: nation and homeland.

*The Nation as a Product of History and Nature*

In English, the term “nation” was probably created in the fourteenth century from the Latin “natio” (from: “nasci”, to be born). Originally it signified a group bound by the place, or more extensively, the space of birth and the customs stemming from joint upbringing, culture and history. As a product of many tribes based on ties or kinship, the nation came into being as if by means of an expansion of a family, which, however, became increasingly heterogeneous. One can assume, therefore, that the nation was an integration of tribes which earlier spread throughout considerable territory and, probably owing to contact with or pressure of other tribal groups, became aware of their joint kinship. Hegel put this in an extremely succinct manner: Due to the seizure of the land of Canaan, a clan grew up into a nation, became the owner of the country, and erected a common temple in Jerusalem.<sup>11</sup>

Not until the eighteenth century did the “nation” become a political entity. In his *L’Esprit des lois* (1748), Montesquieu used the expression “esprit de la nation” (the spirit of the nation), which he based on a common history and the impact of the natural environment. Hegel in particular stressed the fact that the ethical nation, i.e. a community determined by customs and morality, is an individual defined by nature.<sup>12</sup>

*Nationalism as the Residue of Primeval Barbarity.* The natural-historical origin of the nation also bears an inevitable impact upon its behaviour: nationalism is a residue of this original state, and thus the contemporary version of barbarity is its primeval and primitive condition. Thus what centuries ago was natural and historically justified, today becomes evident regression -- an intellectual backwardness which leads to crime.

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<sup>11</sup> G. H. Hegel, *Wyktady z filozofii dziejow* (Lectures from the Philosophy of History) (Warszawa, 1958), vol. I, p. 299.

<sup>12</sup> G.W. Hegel, *Wyktady z filozofii dziejow*, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 45 and 51.

Identification with a tribal group is, of course, anachronistic. In the fascist mystification of “Blut und Boden” (blood and land -- one of the key slogans of the Nazi movement) such a national-nationalistic identification revealed its true, felonious face to the world. Unfortunately, it has reappeared in crimes committed by the Khmer Rouge and in Yugoslavia; today it recurs in Africa.

Nationalism, therefore, is a particularization of differences or, even worse, an archaization of concepts. It is the prisoner of history, and the prisoner and harbinger of a divided world. Such a world must inevitably find itself in a state of war, whose devastating force is growing mightier and which, left to itself, must lead to the annihilation of humankind.

### *The Phantom of “Ecological” Nationalism*

Today, the menace of nationalism is intensified by an objective factor which could become supreme, namely, the growing threat to the natural environment. Nature was one of the factors constituting the nation, and not only an external determinant of its existence or, to an essential degree, of the specificity of its being. When nature as the natural environment is threatened a nation is compelled to protect its land, forests, water, and even its air. Conflicts caused by such hazards could once again become decisive and fundamental -- just as in the past they concerned pastureland, convenient geographic location and forests, conceived as sources of food and fuel, and finally as sources of subsistence.

Wars waged for the natural environment are becoming a new threat with terrible consequences, an outright phantom hovering over the world. It is said that increasingly difficult conditions for survival, caused by the degradation of the natural environment, will inspire aggressive ideologies with genocidal programmes, such as eco-fascism and ecostalinism. By introducing the rather caricaturist concept of “ecological war”, or more properly speaking, armed conflict for the sake of the natural environment, I have in mind also less extreme cases, such as the growing ethnic conflicts in Africa generated by desperate competition for food, land and water.<sup>13</sup>

“Ecological” aggression in the form of poisoning the air of one’s neighbor or the “export” of pollutant-producing technologies and waste have already become a mass-scale fact, which is why there can no longer be any ecological sovereignty. It is impossible, for example, to tolerate the localization of smog-emitting factories along frontiers, or the cutting down of tropical rain forests with a detrimental aftermath for neighboring countries and humankind as a whole. At the same time, the protection of one’s own natural environment becomes one of the basic principles of states: civilization and international law have found themselves challenged by these new contradictions.

### *Universalism: the Most Effective Principle for Overcoming of Nationalism*

It is obvious that none of the prior ideologies has been capable of solving the problems of the world, since each one was an absolutization of the interests of a certain group, orientation, class or nation. Ideology as “artificial awareness” is, by the very nature of things, particular; it absolutizes “differences” which are less important from the point of view of aggression or defence.

Universalism also stems from an understanding of this situation. It can be the most effective and probably the only real way to overcome nationalism because, in contrast to particularization,

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<sup>13</sup> The threat of a war for water in the Near East was the theme of a paper presented by Prof M. Mitias at a conference entitled: “The Earth -- Home of People”, held in the Senate of the Republic of Poland in May of 1996.

it accomplishes a universalization of differences, and changes their disintegrative force into synergy.

- First, this process is achieved by overcoming the isolation of differences with the assistance, albeit insufficient, of the very process of globalization: upon the horizon of global civilization the presence of differences is rendered distinct.

- Secondly, the perception of the meaning of differences is made possible thanks to globalization: the more extensively we notice a given difference, the fuller its sense and the better its understanding.

- Thirdly, differences in mutual relations become not only instrumental but autotelic, according to the principle of mutual recognition, which has been outlined so vividly by Hegel.

- Fourth, such universalized differences cease to be barriers dividing groups (and individuals), and change into mutually enhancing bonds.

- Fifth, thanks to the mutual disclosure of meaning, already in its instrumental form, and even more so its autotelic form, differences become complimentary and supplement and enrich each other.

- Sixth, conscious complementariness leads to its higher, active and practical form -- to synergy.

*Universalization, Including the Acculturation of Differences Sets Free Their Integrative Potential.*

The sublimation of nations develops them into homelands. This is the most powerful; socially it is an almost inexhaustible source of energy, which could become the root of salvation. That is, it could be the basis for a radical transformation of consciousness -- a metanoia -- and, consequently, the co-creation of universal society.

The process of the universalization of differences is, at the same time, their increasing "spiritualization". In place of material directness, imposed, for example, by closeness with one's neighbors, and thus by borders dividing nations, there appears the presence of, for instance, the cultural or commercial values of another nation.

Beneficial possibilities resulting from integrative spiritual values come to the fore. These differ from their material counterparts which have been, and will be, the most frequent causes of wars, and for whose sake ecological conflicts continue and intensify. This theme was mentioned distinctly by John Paul II during his first visit at the United Nations in 1979.

One could say that former instrumentalization is being supplanted by the axiologization of international relations. Upon these foundations, we can propose shifting the focus of public political self, awareness from the nation towards the homeland. I formulated this postulate in 1972 as follows:

The path leading from the nation envisaged as an historical-cultural reality, towards members of other nations and towards mankind as the most general community, is difficult; heretofore history shows this much too clearly. The borders of a nations were, as a rule, the boundaries of the world and mankind, beyond which there lay only hostility and alienation. The national community cannot be the ultimate life target of humankind of a particular individual. . . .

The problem of the homeland is seen differently. . . . We have accentuated upon numerous occasions that it is above all a value which assumes a conscious and active attitude towards itself,

and that in the cultural, material and social sense it is co-created by every meaningful human deed. We wrote that we are free in our stand towards the homeland, and that our attitude is defined by ourselves and comprises co-creation.<sup>14</sup>

We belong to a given nation owing to the fact of our birth; sometimes we are ascribed to it without any participation on our part. The homeland is always the product of our choice, and in this sense it is most deeply and personally our own. National consciousness is frequently the product of countering “others”, and its innermost core remains xenophobic. The homeland is a set of values, predominantly spiritual, cultural, and historical, but not material.

*Homeland as the “United Nation”; Multi-level Identification as the Multidimensional Nature of Man.*

For these reasons, the homeland can be open and link us with others; it is essentially moral and ennobles man. The great Polish Romantic poet, Norwid, wrote in an impulse of magnificent intuition:

The people cherished a belief, mythically outlined at each outset of history, that the Homeland lies in the centre of the world -- because first Homelands had no frontiers but centers . . . hence today too the Homeland is a natural centre of the world. . . . Since the Homeland -- Kinsmen -- denotes moral unity.<sup>15</sup>

What is situated in the centre also becomes the centre of attention and, most important, does not have to lead to hostility towards “others”, to a feeling of being threatened or to the attraction of loot beyond the borders, because it does not place emphasis on boundaries; indeed borders do not have to exist at all. What is located in the centre is “only” the peak of the hierarchy of political values and verifiable earthly values. The spiritual nature of the metaphor of the homeland as a pinnacle and cultural centre unleashes human striving. At the same time, it leaves everything open, acceptable, or at least allows for interchange and/or friendship, and even cooperation. In contrast the material character of the boundary of the nation is a traditional physical division, which even today frequently counterpoises “us” to the “others”.

We have constructed at this stage a theoretical outline of “nation” and “homeland” in order to indicate the direction toward conquering nationalism by patriotism, a task undertaken from the point of view of universalism. Patriotism does not negate the national bond or its potential values. It has nothing in common with ethnicity, the absolutization of the physical aspect of lineage, one’s original place of residence, or fatalistically determined origin conceived as ruthless destiny absolutized by nationalism. Patriotism is a question of the deepest possible choice -- a choice made by oneself. Obviously, it can also entail the nation, as in the splendid definition proposed by Renan: “A nation is a spiritual union whose duration constitutes a *sui generis* daily plebiscite”.

This is the basis upon which one of the fundamental principles of universalism: the principle of the multi-level nature of identification, can appear with ever greater force. Being born in a given nation and subsequently choosing it for one’s own homeland -- a choice via acceptance -- leads to a first political identification. This original political enrootment must be accompanied by:

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<sup>14</sup> *Indywidualność i ojczyzna. Filozoficzna problematyka kwestii narodowej* (Individuality and Homeland. The Philosophical Problem of the National Question), p. 265.

<sup>15</sup> Cited after: *Indywidualność i Ojczyzna.*, p. 237.

- in the case of Europe, identification with continental culture, and
- identification with humankind.

As a rule, the intensity of those identifications grows weaker as their range expands.

In contrast to nations between which the divisions usually are rigorously observed and exclusivist, homelands, conceived as communities, are open. Moreover, the power of the homeland depends on its openness -- the number of people from other nations it is capable of attracting and keeping. Frequently, those immigrants become the greatest patriots, and are especially valuable for the homeland of their choice.

This situation makes it feasible to avoid that often prove to be dramatic choices and tragedies: it is possible, after all, to accept a second homeland and to remain faithful to both. Indeed, it became a rule for Jews expelled from Western Europe to choose Poland as their homeland and then to contribute to her wellbeing.<sup>16</sup>

*The Pluralistic Spirit of the "Universum" in Place of the Dualistic and Aggressive Spirit of the "Borderland".*

John Paul II spoke about tension between what is particular and what is universal, and in this generalized fashion depicted also the relation between nations and the United Nations. The proposed shift from nations to homelands creates a symbolic and, at the same time, synthetic level of international communication, much easier and more profound than has been the case till now. The cultural universe the true "world of man" -- perceived as an axiological correlate of the homeland can never become closed owing to its essence. The *universum* is open in dialogue to other universes of all national cultures, continental cultures and the culture of humankind. The homeland, in its capacity as a "moral unity" seems naturally "oriented" towards "the earth-homeland of men", and towards the planetary *universum*. This is the reason why in universalism, the homeland renders concrete the "spirit of *Universum*", and of its very nature is pluralistic.

When in his address John Paul II called for the "rights of nations", he also demanded pluralism and the equality of homelands. How greatly the world has changed. During the nineteenth century, Manhattan, which is the present-day site of the United Nations Organization and once was purchased from the Indians, became the center of commercial expeditions conducted in the aggressive "spirit of the borderland" which had dominated almost all earlier history. Unfortunately, the "spirit of the borderland" still poisons international and even interpersonal relations. Left to itself, especially in an era of ever more acute demographic, climatic, nutritional and economic problems, it will lead to a catastrophe. That is why today the "spirit of the *universum*" is becoming a categorical imperative in international relations.

*The United Nations as a "Moral Centre" -- a "Family of Nations"*

From the point of view outlined, we can better understand the great message addressed by the Pope to the United Nations:

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<sup>16</sup> This fact was recorded by Dr. Jakub Goldberg, *Jewish Privileges in Commonwealth Poland*. Cf. also his study: "Friends and Strangers", *Dialectics and Humanism*, no. 1 (1989).



Fifty years after its founding, the need for such an organization is even more obvious, but we also have a better understanding, on the basis of experience, that the effectiveness of this great instrument for harmonizing and coordinating international life depends on the international culture and ethic which it supports and expresses. The United Nations Organization needs to rise more and more above the cold status of an administrative institution and to become a moral centre where all the nations of the world feel at home and develop shared awareness of being, as it were, a 'family of nations'.

Moral centre! When the Pope says this, his words assume a special significance -- they become the perspective of supreme ethic ennoblement, the highest obligation of the United Nations. "Family of nations" is a challenge for a radical change of the prevailing moral climate; the heart of the matter consists in replacing political games with a "family", and the introduction of completely new relations.

The idea of 'family' immediately evokes something more than simple functional relations or mere convergence of interests. The family is by nature a community based on mutual trust, mutual support and sincere respect. In the authentic family the strong do not dominate; instead, the weaker members, because of their very weaknesses, are all the more welcomed and served.

Raised to the level of the 'family of nations', these sentiments ought to be, even before law itself, the very fabric of relations between peoples. The United Nations has the historic, even momentous, task of promoting this qualitative leap in international life, not only by serving as a centre of effective mediation for the resolution of conflict but also by fostering values, attitudes and concrete initiatives of solidarity which prove capable of raising the level of relations between nations from the 'organizational' to a more 'organic' level, from simple 'existence with' others to 'existence for' in a fruitful exchange of gifts, primarily for the good of the weaker nations but even so, a clear harbinger of greater good for everyone.

By referring to suitable paragraphs of the United Nations Charter, guaranteeing the equality and sovereignty of all member states, the Pope postulated an enormous reinforcement of the United Nations. If those postulates were to be met, we would witness a new order among nations -- a truly humane environment for all nations and thus for all people.

*The Axiological Name of Universal Society: the "Civilization of Love"*

This is the conclusion of the great address presented by John Paul II. One of its last passages reads:

The answer to the fear which darkens human existence at the end of the twentieth century is the common effort to build the civilization of love, founded on the universal values of peace, solidarity, justice and liberty.

## **Conclusion**

We have tried to show the most important ideas, values and proposals, which endow both speeches, and especially the second address, with the features of a breakthrough and give them lasting current relevance. Unfortunately, it has been impossible to elaborate further on several important problems, such as that mentioned last: the civilization of love.

Quite possibly, contemporary ecological problems could become the most concrete and even tangible test of recent changes, development and the new authority of the United Nations. There

is no doubt that the path towards the preservation, revival and development of the natural environment leads precisely through the construction of a human environment. This is the crucial issue of our day.

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## Chapter XIII

# Power Relations and Multiculturality in the Balkans

*Plamen Makariev*

### **Patterns of Relations Between Political Power and Cultural Interaction**

Mutual tolerance in relations between cultures is undisputedly one of the values of democracy. A social order cannot be democratic, if it involves discrimination or assimilation of minority cultures by the mainstream. That is why the close coexistence of cultures within one and the same country or geographical region forces the issue of arranging the relations among them in an harmonious pattern.

In the Balkans cultures are interlaced in a most complicated way. The Byzantine and the Ottoman empires brought together peoples originating from distant lands, having different religions, alphabets, etc. Today the population of the Balkans is composed of groups, speaking mainly Slavonic, Greek, Turkish or Roma languages, professing Greek Orthodox or Catholic Christianity or Islam, writing in Cyrillic, Greek or Latin alphabet. Each of these groups considers itself the autochthonous population of the land it inhabits, which means that they regard the presence of their culture in this place as fully legitimate. These people do not feel like guests or intruders; they are at home. But the distribution and redistributions of the territories of the former Ottoman empire among the new states in the Balkans have outlined borders which by no means coincide with the ethno-cultural cleavages. This has brought about a coexistence in this region, which could be called a problematic multiculturality.

Power is an important factor for interaction among ethno-cultural communities. Whether these are segregation, assimilation or harmony depends greatly on their relation with power. According to most theories, power is the control on the behavior of someone else: to exercise power over someone is to make him/her act in a manner unrelated to their own will or interest. As far as social forms of power are concerned, in the typical case this control legitimates the use of force if necessary. So, monopoly over political power of one community “at the expense” of another is a prerequisite for cultural discrimination or assimilation of the group in the inferior position. On the contrary, for power to be shared in a more or less just way by two or more ethno-cultural communities is favorable to the development of a truly multicultural society.

We find in reality several basic patterns of relations between cultural interactions, on the one hand, and political power on the other. These can be classified in two main types: involvement of power in, or separation of power from, cultural interactions. The first type is realized either as political domination by one ethno-cultural community over one or more others, usually under undemocratic regimes, or as competition for power among such groups, or, in the third place, as power sharing among ethno-cultural communities in various forms of consociational democracy.

The second type is represented nowadays mostly by societies which follow the ideal of a civic nation, that is, ethno-cultural issues are localized in the sphere of private life. One is expected to act in public social space in a way unrelated to one’s ethno-cultural affiliations: one should act merely as a citizen. In this way matters of politics and of ethnicity are dissociated from one another. However, there are at least two other forms in which the same effect has been achieved in earlier times. The first one was imperial tolerance towards ethno-cultural differences, which generally were preserved by, e. g., the Ottoman and the Habsburg rulers, who did not exercise their power

against the variety of ethno-cultural identities, insofar as this heterogeneity of the population was not a threat for the integrity of the empire. The other form of combining rigid political rule with relative tolerance towards ethnic and cultural particularism was the so-called “proletarian internationalism”. The leadership of multinational socialist states, such as the Soviet Union or Yugoslavia, had no concerns for regarding the manifestations of local cultures, because the unity of the state was guaranteed by the totalitarian communist party structures.

Our task here will be to examine briefly the historical patterns of compatibility between political power and multiculturalism in the Balkans and to draw some conclusions about the conditions for harmonious coexistence of ethno-cultural communities in this region.

### **The Ottoman Millet System**

A classical form of separation of ethnic and cultural relations from political ones was the “millet” system of the Ottoman empire. It maintained ethnic and cultural autonomy and pluralism, but this did not diminish the superiority of the Muslim religion and the power of the central authorities. Each millet (religious community) “had the right to deal with religious matters concerning the Church and priesthood, with matters relating to the individual and the family such as marriage, divorce, engagement . . . and inheritance. But other matters -- notably economic and commercial ones, law and order, and most penalties -- were left outside the millets’ prerogatives.”<sup>1</sup>

A group of people, who spoke the same language, had the same religion, customs, folklore, and more or less distinct collective memories (perpetuated by narratives and songs) of a common historical fate, did not suffer substantially from interference on behalf of the Ottoman administration, or of other groups of its kind, into its communal life. As a result, different ethnic and cultural groups existed side by side, especially in the larger towns. In many cases they cooperated economically, practicing a division of labor and complementing each other to the extent of a real symbiosis. Historical sources give plenty of evidence that in modern terms as far as day-to-day issues were concerned, most people in such places had a very good “intercultural competence”. They had sufficient knowledge about the “other’s” way of life; the “other’s” behavior was quite predictable for them (at least at an everyday level), and, most importantly, they knew what was “allowed”, and what was not in their behavior towards the other “party”. The religious holidays of the neighboring community were respected, ritual food was exchanged, etc. As far as everyday life is concerned, this situation corresponds quite well to the basic criterion of multiculturalism as it is defined in our day -- “the heterogeneity of societies within and across nations”.<sup>2</sup>

However, it would be difficult to substantiate the claim that this cultural pluralism within the Ottoman empire was due to a tolerant attitude of the authorities towards the cultures of the conquered peoples and to a recognition of their value. There is much more historical evidence that the preservation of collective cultural identities within the empire did not by itself represent a danger for the political status quo, and even served the perpetuation of power relations. Maintaining large numbers of non-Muslim population resulted in the incorporation, at least in theory, of the whole Muslim population into the mechanisms of power. Ideally every male Muslim was a soldier, and almost none of the non-Muslims had the right to wear arms (there were few

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<sup>1</sup> 1. Kemal Karpat, *An Inquiry into the Social Foundations of Nationalism in the Ottoman State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> Chicago Cultural Studies Group, *Critical Multiculturalism*, David T. Goldberg, (ed.), *Multiculturalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), p. 114.

exceptions, which were subject to strict regulations). The fact is that most of the uprisings of the Christian population in the Balkans were suppressed in their initial stage by the neighboring Muslims, so that an intervention on behalf of the government army was not even necessary.

In a word, cultural autonomy and pluralism in the Ottoman empire have for a long time not only been harmless with regard of the state's integrity, but have even contributed to this integrity. The existence of large non-Muslim ethno-cultural groups motivated the neighboring Muslim population to support the political status quo, defending its own superiority -- in many cases illusory, at least as far as the economic relationships are concerned. Besides, in this way the central authorities avoided a lot of unnecessary internal conflicts which would have been the price of a radically assimilatory policy.

So, the "secret" of the stability of the millet system was not the harmony in the relations among the ethno-cultural groups, but some kind of ruler's "alchemy", which managed to eliminate the aspirations to power from the communal life of the non-Muslim peoples, without destroying its cultural basis. As a result, these communities retained their vitality and served as dynamic and productive elements of the system, without challenging its integrity. This was certainly not the case with all empires comprised of peoples belonging to different cultures. In some of them (e.g. Russia before 1917) the central authorities imposed their cultural standards over the whole state territory. Consequently, the suppressed peoples appeared to be inferior in all respects, not being able to meet these standards, and in the account they were condemned to backwardness, and did not contribute to the economic and cultural prosperity of the country. Of course, the separation of ethno-cultural issues from political ones in the Ottoman empire could not resist the processes of the developing national consciousness and the strife towards political self-determination, which dominated Europe in the 19th century. However, many historians represent these events in the empire as a result mostly of external influences.

Another pattern of compatibility between rigid political power and multiculturalism, based on the separation of ethnicity and politics, was realized in the Yugoslav Federation. The latter was constructed generally along the Soviet model. The philosophy of proletarian internationalism represented ethno-cultural divisions as something of an entirely different order in comparison with the relations between nations. It was claimed that the issues of political sovereignty of peoples had become important in the context of the struggle of the bourgeoisie for markets, which had little to do with ethnicity or culture. So, if various cultures thrive within a given society, this would not necessarily endanger its political integrity. The political life of a socialist society is shaped by something totally different, namely, by class relationships.

The great shortcoming of this "recipe" of multiculturalism is that the peaceful coexistence of different ethno-cultural groups is quite vulnerable. If for some reason such as a weakening of the central authorities, or changes in the economic situation, etc., some of these groups cease to accept the dualism of culture and power, in other words -- do not want any more to receive cultural liberties in exchange for political passivity -- then the issue of redistribution of material resources and of positions in the hierarchy of power relations comes to the fore. While there is an unquestionable centre of power in a society, composed of different cultural groups, however despotic this power might be, cultural pluralism is possible, for the cultural groups have nothing to compete for and the relationships among them are regulated by someone else. If this government or ruling party decides that such a pluralism suits its interests, then it can be left to thrive in genuine forms, indeed. However, as soon as a center of political domination no longer predetermines the political status quo, (and this can be revised by the ethno-cultural groups themselves), a "*bellum omnia contra omnis*" can break out.

## Community vs. Society

The weakening of multiethnic states produces, as a rule, antagonisms among the constituent groups. The mobilization of the population for economic and political activity awakens national and ethnic loyalties. As M. Walzer points out, groups, which have lived in peace, side by side, under imperial rule, facing the chance to rule themselves “found that they could do so (peacefully) only among themselves, adjusting political lines to cultural boundaries.”<sup>3</sup> Self-government seems to be successful only within culturally homogeneous communities. That is why ethno-cultural groups tend to evolve towards the status of nations as soon as they are granted the right of self-determination. A group of that kind typically prefers to have the control over its fate in its own hands. Central authorities or a neighboring group look like a potential source of evil-intentioned external influence.

In such situations a change in the role of culture can be observed. Whether the cultural group is in a state of political passivity or in a state of mobilization, this conditions a different mode of belonging to the respective culture. In the first case, an individual belongs to a culture by being its “product”, i.e. by accepting as “normal” and following definite standards of behaviors shaped in the course of the collective history of his/her group. By being socialized in this group, the individual is “programmed” to perceive the world and to act in a certain way. Knowing the “logic” of his/her culture, we can predict to a certain extent his/her behavior.

However, “belonging to a culture” can also mean something else, namely, being loyal to a group. In such case the solidarity with the members of this group gives content to the individual’s identity. In his paper “The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self”, M. Sandel claims that we can understand ourselves as the particular person we are only “as members of this family or community or nation or people, as bearers of that history, as citizens of this republic.”<sup>4</sup> These commitments are more than values I happen to have without identifying myself with them. A person, incapable of constitutive attachments of this kind would be someone without character, without moral depth. “For to have character is to know that I move in a history I neither summon nor command, which carries consequences none the less for my choices and conduct. It draws me closer to some and more distant from others.”<sup>5</sup> This mode of belonging to a culture involves responsibility for the cultural identity of the group. Any kind of threat to this identity justifies a militant reaction on behalf of the individual members.

These alternative attitudes towards one’s culture can be subsumed under a famous dichotomy in social theory, that of community and society. In 1887 Ferdinand Toennies defined, in his book “Community and Society” (*Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*), two kinds of social relations. “All intimate, private, and exclusive living together” is understood by him as life in “Gemeinschaft”,<sup>6</sup> whereas there exist communities of kinship, of neighborhood, of language, of folkways, of mores, of beliefs. By way of contrast, “Gesellschaft” exists in the realm of business, politics, or sciences; it is public life the individual lives from birth on in certain communities, she/he is formed as a personality by her/his community; in contrast, “one goes into Gesellschaft (society) as one goes

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<sup>3</sup> Michael Walzer, *Pluralism, a Political Perspective*, Will Kymlicka (ed.), *The Rights of Minority Cultures* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 141.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Sandel, “The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self”, *Political Theory*, 12 (1984), 87.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Ferdinand and Toennies, *Community and Society* (East Lansing, Michigan), p. 33.

into a strange country”.<sup>7</sup> Unity with other members of the same community is an end in itself, whereas association of the individual with other agents in society is a means to achieve her/his ends. That is why in community the individual’s identity matters, but in society one is treated as an interchangeable performer of functions. The concept of “Gemeinschaft” refers to real and organic life, the concept of “Gesellschaft” to an imaginary and mechanical structure.

A similar typology, but in other terms, is made by E. Durkheim. His category “mechanical solidarity” corresponds to the “community relations” of Toennies, and “organic solidarity” to “society”. M. Weber introduces, following Toennies, the categories “Vergemeinschaftung” and “Vergesellschaftung”.

This idea of community is rather controversial. No one questions its descriptive accuracy; groups with this kind of internal solidarity obviously exist. The objections concern its eventual normative pretension. It is argued that there is no place for such communities in modernity, that they are a remnant of traditional forms of society, and that today they are a threat to liberal democracies -- a last moral refuge for nationalism and racism. Communitarian authors rarely try to justify the classical forms of communal life, but instead introduced various compromises trying to bridge the gap between community and society. R. Dworkin describes a “liberal community” as a group which is unified by communal ties in one respect, and is a free association of individuals in all others. The success or failure of a political community, for instance, resonates in the life of its members, exhibiting a typically communal internal cohesion, but this kind of social organization does not interfere with “liberal tolerance and neutrality about the good life”.<sup>8</sup> W. Kymlicka, in turn, introduces the term “ethnic association”. By “association” in general he refers to such groups as “a breeding ground for civic virtues” by establishing “horizontal” links of civic engagement which overcome social cleavages. These groups foster collective trust and solidarity, i.e. typically communal values.<sup>9</sup> Why not then regard some kinds of ethnic groups as associations?

Judging from the recent events in former Yugoslavia and former USSR, we can conclude that communities do not exist as a separate realm in modern society. In many cases “us” vs. “them” divisions, which are emblematic of community, have appeared within individualistic social environment. (The reverse process has been characteristic for Western Europe in the recent decades.) It seems that even in our day and under certain conditions, communities differentiate themselves from society.

What are these conditions? One of them is, for sure, a threat to cultural identity. In modern civilization the communal nature of culture is not obvious; as a “generator” of identity, community functions under the surface of social life. The individual belongs to a culture simply by being its “product” and takes this cultural identity for granted, usually not realizing the communal mechanisms of its formation. However, evidence of its actual source is the fact that a threat to the cultural identity of a number of people who belong to the same culture only so far as there are certain resemblances in their behavior, usually unites them with new bonds of solidarity. In such cases community exposes its importance for culture.

Situations of this kind appear with different frequency and intensity in the various parts of the world. Today the Balkans are much more often than Western Europe an arena of cultural confrontations, which nourish communal life. There are many reasons for this, one being the

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Ronald Dworkin, “Liberal Community”, S. Avineri (ed.), *Communitarianism and Individualism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 218.

<sup>9</sup> Will Kymlicka, *Ethnic Associations and Democratic Citizenship*, Amy Gutmann, *Associational Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

relative “symmetry” between the “parties” in cultural interactions. These are not relations between immigrants and host country, where the power is concentrated only in one of the partners. There are ethno-cultural minorities in the Balkan countries, which are quite large in comparison with the majority population. As some are kindred to the population of neighboring countries, their claims rely on the support of sovereign states.

On the other hand, the interactions between ethno-cultural groups in the Balkans are very dynamic. There is no system of stable relationships among states and international organizations, which can guarantee the status quo. What is at stake is not minor achievements and losses, but the historical position of the group among the others. No change is so radical as to be impossible and at any moment one expects catastrophic events concerning the conditions for her/his group’s existence: loss of a dominant position in society, restriction of human rights, loss of parts of state territory and/or population, etc. In 1984, for instance, the ethnic Turks in Bulgaria had their names replaced by Bulgarian ones within one week, without any warning. This dynamism of the situation makes it quite risky to wait until the “other party’s” position becomes clearer, and to gather evidence as to whether its aggressive claims are serious or not. Typically, the antagonistic activity against the “other party” is not a defensive reaction to an actual aggression, but an attempt to prevent a possible one. The behavior of the ethno-cultural groups is determined not so much by assessment of the actual events, but by hypotheses and suspicions. “Thus the dynamics of cultural interactions suppresses their rationality.”<sup>10</sup>

Another reason for the intensity of ethno-cultural confrontations in the Balkans is the minorities’ negative attitude towards assimilation, due to the lack of mutual respect among the Balkan cultures. Every ethno-cultural group regards the other groups’ cultures as inferior to its own. Consequently, a possible assimilation into any other Balkan cultures appears to be a disgraceful loss of status. That is why an ethnic Turk or a Bosnian Serb, who would readily assimilate in Germany, is quite reluctant to do so in Bulgaria or in Islamic Bosnia.

### **Forms of Inter-Cultural Relationships**

If then we recognize any value of cultural identity, it would be inconsistent to condemn as nationalism or xenophobia the community-rallying of individuals in cases where their cultural identity is under threat. Within the framework of our typology of the relations between cultural interactions and political power, this process of ethno-cultural mobilization appears as a shift from a state of separation of power from such interactions to a state of involvement in them. This is not to justify the violent competition for power among the ethno-cultural communities in the former Yugoslavia and in some of the countries once belonging to the former USSR. Other modes of regulating problematic multiculturalism must also be possible.

We shall review here briefly two alternative solutions which have been realized in democratic societies. The situation in Bosnia has provided an occasion for comments on consociational democracy. Guesses are made that political power in Bosnia can be shared among the Muslim, Serbian and Croatian communities in the manner in which it has been balanced among the Protestant, Catholic and secular groups in the Netherlands, between Muslims and Christians in Lebanon, etc. Consociational democracy is described generally as a consensual form of government in which all major groups of a plural society are represented. It is an institutional extension of this plurality. A. Lijphart presents four substantial characteristics of consociational

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<sup>10</sup> Plamen Makariev, *Philosophical Problems of Intercultural Education*, Alexander Andonov, Plamen Makariev (eds.), *Intercultural Education* (Sofia: Minerva, 1996), p. 19.



democracy: government by a grand coalition of the political leaders of all significant segments of the plural society; mutual veto or “concurrent majority” rule; proportionality as the principal standard of political representation, civil service appointments, and allocation of public funds; a high degree of autonomy in running a group’s internal affairs.<sup>11</sup>

Lijphart points at elite cooperation as “the primary distinguishing feature of consociational democracy”.<sup>12</sup> He contrasts the style of leadership in this model of state organization with the British one, which prevails in the political world. The former is coalescent, while the latter is competitive or, as other authors call it, “adversarial”.<sup>13</sup> Another specific feature of consociational democracy is that, at least initially, it makes plural societies more thoroughly plural. “Its approach is not to abolish or weaken segmental cleavages but to recognize them explicitly and to turn the segments into constructive elements of stable democracy.”<sup>14</sup>

In a great variety of forms, more or less successfully, consociational democracy combines plurality and democracy in the Netherlands, in Switzerland, Belgium, Austria, and also in some Third World countries such as Malaysia, Surinam and Uruguay. It is not at all certain, however, that it can be realized in the multicultural societies in the Balkans. As favorable conditions for this form of government A. Lijphart enumerates: a certain balance among the groups competing for power; a multi-party political system; a relatively small country size; crosscutting of the cleavages which constitute the plurality of this society; overarching loyalties; and traditions of elite accommodation. It is obvious that some of these conditions exist in the Balkans, but some, such as crosscutting cleavages, overarching loyalties and traditions of elite accommodation, do not.

Moreover, the primacy of elite cooperation for consociational democracy makes the latter unsuitable for the Balkans. The elites can negotiate the character of coexistence among the communities efficiently enough (so that the ordinary members, which they represent, accept these agreements as unproblematic) either if the range of controversial issues is limited and there is a general mutual trust among the communities, or if the members of the communities automatically obey their leaders. Such is the situation in Western Europe of the 20th century, and in the traditional societies in Third World countries. The case is different in the Balkans, however, where cultural interactions cannot be regulated “from above”.

There are also other arguments against exercising consociational democracy in the Balkans. This model puts at risk the integrity of society. Provided that the general situation is stable, i.e. there are no additional factors which work against this integrity, the risk is reasonable. But if there are considerable “centrifugal forces” acting, and they combine with the hardening and the politicization of the ethno-cultural differences, which result from the practice of consociational democracy, this might bring about catastrophic internal conflicts. Such was the case with Lebanon. The consociational sharing of political power between the Christian and the Muslim communities was successful until the conflict between Israel and the neighboring Arab countries, the flow of Palestinian refugees into Lebanon and the intervention of the Syrian army. After these events the political organization of the religious communities began to play a negative role, facilitating the conflict between Christians and Muslims. It is evident that the geopolitical situation in the Balkans resembles more that in the Middle East than the one in Western Europe, and hence that consociational democracy can be a hazard for our region.

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<sup>11</sup> Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 25.

<sup>12</sup> Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 42.

Another option, which seems a constructive alternative to the competition for power among ethno-cultural communities, is to replace this struggle by peaceful coexistence within a civic nation. The price for that would be the separation of intercultural relations from the mechanisms of political power. As we have already mentioned above, to act as a citizen would mean to behave in public “social space” without regard to one’s ethno-cultural commitments. One should “enjoy” the latter only in his/her private life so that group solidarities of this kind will not interfere with power relations. Belonging to the other ethno-cultural entity cannot be a reason for discrimination in any of the important social spheres, such as professional career, administration of justice, participation in political life, etc. If the individual human rights of everybody are respected by society, then why should ethno-cultural communities compete for power at all?

The recent development of racial relations in American society has cast some doubts on the consistency of this liberal ideal. Blacks and Hispanics claim that they do not perceive the patterns of behavior which dominate the public social sphere to be culturally neutral. Somehow the “rules of the game” there favor persons who follow the West-European cultural paradigm. This does not mean that someone of Greek, Russian, African or Mexican descent would not be able, or would be forbidden to learn how to act after these standards. However, that would amount to marginalization of one’s original culture, and in the last account to assimilation.

Having in mind the ethno-cultural solidarities in the Balkans, it is not realistic to expect that a separation of cultural and power relations here can be realized by minimizing the role of ethno-cultural differences in public social affairs. However, recent research and practice in the field of communication between cultures presents another prospect for dissociating ethnicity from the issues of power, which might be of greater relevance to our region. This alternative appears to be of the same importance as the three options already reviewed: the liberal confinement of the role of ethno-cultural commitments to the sphere of private life; the imperial tolerance towards cultural autonomy of the ethnic and religious minorities, in so far as they remain politically obedient; and the Marxist strict differentiation between the domain of class relationships and political power, on the one hand, and culture and ethnicity, on the other.

An important source of legitimacy for political power is the antagonisms among the subordinate groups. It is justified for the latter to accept someone else’s arbitration on their relations, because they cannot bring these relations into order themselves. It follows that the “horizontal” communication, i.e. the dialogue between the “parties” can be of crucial importance for avoiding the politicization of the relations of multiculturalism. Deviations from the balance of interests among the ethno-cultural communities, such as tendencies towards assimilation or discrimination, can be stopped early enough provided there are efficient mechanisms of intercultural communication. If mutual understanding among cultures advances in education, in the media, in the arts, and also in business, this will bring about a minimization of the role of political power in regulating the relations among ethno-cultural communities, even if no obstacles are posed to their realization in public social life. A self-regulation of these relations, including the grassroots level, can leave controversial issues, such as concerns about the collective rights of minorities, without ground. This would not be a form of consociational self-government, because it would not involve the “vertical” organization of ethno-cultural communities with the aim of participation in the sharing of power by winning seats in Parliament and in the government for their elites.

If the dialogue between ethno-cultural communities has to fulfill such important functions, it must be something different from the ordinary negotiations. There is enough evidence that since the early 80s a philosophical movement has been taking shape, which seeks an alternative to the

postmodernist reaction against modernity, by developing “the paradigm of mutual understanding between subjects capable of speech and action”.<sup>15</sup> Communicative reason is regarded as a more constructive alternative to subject-centered reason than the postmodernist particularistic and relativistic approach. From this point of view the importance of dialogue for our civilization appears to be of the same rank as the importance of the subject for modernity.

Habermas describes mutual understanding as “the intersubjective relationship between individuals who are socialized through communication and mutually recognize one another”.<sup>16</sup> The basic condition for mutual understanding is the “noncoercively unifying, consensus-building force of a discourse in which the participants overcome their at first subjectively biased views in favor of a rationally motivated agreement”.<sup>17</sup> These general views on communicative action, however, need concretization if they are to be applied to the dialogue between ethnic communities which belong to different cultures. If there is a great cultural gap between them, they have little chance of resolving a controversial issue by a rational exchange of arguments, for the latter simply cannot begin. In order to make our partner admit that she/he is not right, we usually juxtapose his/her thesis with a more fundamental assumption that we believe to be true, and we show that there is a contradiction between them. But if there are no fundamentals accepted by all participants in the discussion, then each one of them may be right for him/herself. The positions are incommensurable. If there are no common values that can serve as a basis for respecting the “other party’s” interests, mutual recognition is only a matter of wishful thinking.

It seems, that if “horizontal” communication is to be a realistic alternative of power-regulation of multiculturalism, a necessary condition for this would be the elaboration of methods of intercultural dialogue. Understanding other cultures is a theme in various sciences, such as anthropology, social psychology, intercultural communication. However, philosophy is in an especially favorable position, as far as interculturalism is concerned. It is impossible to approach empathetically an alien culture if one does not distance him/herself self-reflectively from his/her own being. This is an exclusively philosophical attitude. I believe that the potential of philosophy to contribute to intercultural understanding is not confined to the domain of the philosophical disciplines which obviously are relevant to this cause, such as hermeneutics and discourse ethics. Rather, the prospect of mobilizing philosophical intellectual “resources” in order to participate in the solution of the issues of interculturalism is a prospect of applying philosophy to social practice in a most efficient way.

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<sup>15</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), p. 295.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 310.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 315.

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## Chapter XIV

# Constitutions and the Rule of Law in Ethnically Divided Societies

*Vojislav Stanovcic*

This paper analyzes how constitutionalism and the “rule of law” (not of man) are interrelated in modern democratic theory and can help in solving some problems in divided societies (i.e. states with a multi-ethnic, multi-religious or multi-lingual population). However, in states with authoritarian political cultures and patterns of behavior it is widespread practice that constitutions could be just a facade, manipulated by those in possession of power. Frequently a constitution covers constitutional nationalism, i.e., gives power to the majority consisting of one nationality, while discriminating against other nationalities or national/ethnic minorities, thereby creating many problems in “multi-ethnic” (i.e. multinational) states. “Democracy”, reduced to “majority rule” and identified with popular support, frequently disregards institutional frame works, rules and procedures in treating minorities. Only a small number of states is ethnically homogeneous, so the revival of ethnicity created political pressures and requests of ethnic groups for constitutional provisions and institutions which could guarantee their identity, human rights and some collective rights; institutionalize the sharing in power by such groups; and frequently could secure for them control of the natural resources in territories which they inhabit. Some options offered by advocates of consociational democracy are considered. The author stresses the importance of the rule of law, civil society and democratic political culture as conditions for consociational (non-majoritarian) democracy and constitutional polyarchy.

Many contemporary states face problems arising from ethnic, national, religious, linguistic and other differences between the groups in a population. A number of scholars search for forms of political and constitutional institutions which could reduce tensions and provide a permanent basis for solving some of these problems. They know that conflicts over interests can be reconciled much more easily than conflicts over identity and value systems. Consociation, which in simplified form means “living together” of populations of different ethnic affiliations (language, religion, etc.), is very important, for less than a dozen states in the entire world can be regarded as mono-ethnic.<sup>1</sup> In an age of “ethnic revival”,<sup>2</sup> and more than 600 secessionist movements, many problems rise from multi-ethnicity which can become an obstacle to democracy and a threat to peace. It is widely assumed that “the right of self-determination” requires reinterpretation and cannot be identified with secession. However, also those models of domination, prevailing in the past must be replaced by some democratic institutional arrangements. Some studies advocate consociational instead of majoritarian democracy.

The processes of transition from authoritarianism to democracy in post-communist and other states respectively direct our attention to the importance of constitution-making and of institutional arrangements. Many things summarized in the slogan, “transition to democracy”, require new constitutional orders. In five year time 18 new constitutions were enacted in eastern Europe. Such arrangements today imply constitutional and other safeguards for human rights, which also means protection of peoples’ lives, families, liberties and properties. However, political and legal

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<sup>1</sup> Ivo D. Duchacek, “Antagonistic Cooperation: Territorial and Ethnic Communities”, in *Publius*, 7 (no. 4, 1977).

<sup>2</sup> A term which we use after A.D. Smith’s, *The Ethnic Revival* (Cambridge, 1981).

experience, as well as many studies, warn against the widespread practice of using constitutions merely as a “facade” or screen, manipulated by those in power, who turn constitutions into mere “pieces of paper”.

The mainstream of modern liberal constitutionalism advocates the “rule of law, not of man”, i.e., it tried to exclude or minimize arbitrary and personal power, and to limit power in different ways: guaranteeing civil and political rights to citizens, and introducing the separation of powers, checks and balances, local self-government, freedom of press and association, and federalism, as well as autonomy of cities, churches, enterprises, associations, universities, research institutes, corporations, professions, trade-unions, etc. Altogether these resulted in a democratic civil society.

The rule of law does not mean, as is frequently and wrongly interpreted, merely the implementation of the existing laws and constitutions. Arbitrariness in making laws by means of dictatorial decrees or decisions of a mere majority, and the consequent orders and behavior of those in power, even when it has the form or cover of law, is contrary to the very idea of the rule of law.

The idea of democracy has to be interpreted and implemented with the framework of the rule of law. All these things become more complex and complicated in multi-ethnic, i.e. multi-national states, where peace can easily be turned into conflict if constitutional institutions are not accommodated to power-sharing principles, which require the reshaping of some basic tenets of democracy. Today, we have many cases of “nationalizing states” in favor of one-ethnic-nations, and of “constitutional nationalism”<sup>3</sup> i.e., the constitution giving power to a majority consisting of one nationality, while discriminating, isolating or ignoring other nationalities or national/ethnic minorities.

The “revival of ethnicity” and “explosion of identity”<sup>4</sup> send many states in search for institutional arrangements concerning relations between ethnic groups, particularly between the majority and minorities. Some problems could be more easily solved if there would be a rule of impartial, rational, stable laws equal for all, and constitutional institutions that prevent a concentration of power and provide for power-sharing. Some situations in multi-ethnic societies, revive old dilemmas concerning institutions, procedures, and even the values attributed to “democracy”, which easily are identified with popular support, reduced to “majority rule”, regardless of the treatment of minorities, institutional framework, rules and procedures, generally taken as the necessary ground for a good/legitimate government. In multi-ethnic societies, instead of “majoritarian democracy” it would be more appropriate to establish the institutions which are being proposed by advocates of “consociational democracy”.<sup>5</sup>

By treating the law primarily as a political tool and defining it through the state compulsion used to implement it, legal positivism has excluded the meta-legal basis of the legal order, and

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<sup>3</sup> The term “constitutional nationalism” is used by an anthropologist, who accurately describes the process, features and some bad consequences of the phenomena. See Robert Hayden “Constitutional Nationalism in the Formerly Yugoslav Republics”, *Slavic Review*, 51 (no. 4, 1992).

<sup>4</sup> Ali A. Mazrui, *Post Imperial Fragmentation: The Legacy of Ethnic and Racial Conflict* (Denver: University of Denver Studies in Race and Nations, I no. 2, 1969-1970), says: “The identity explosion is the one which is helping to sharpen worldwide ethnic self-consciousness.”

<sup>5</sup> Robert A. Dahl, Arendt Lijphart, Daniel Elazar and some other authors make a pioneering contribution to the idea of consociational democracy. See particularly: Arendt Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977; and printing 1980); *Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-one Countries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984); “Federalism and Consociationalism: A Symposium” in *Publius*, 15 (no. 2, 1985), (ed. by Daniel Elazar); and Jurg Steiner, *Amicable Agreement Versus Majority Rule: Conflict Resolution in Switzerland* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1974).

weakened the axiological foundation for criticism of the law, which foundation exists outside the law in some system of values, political or legal philosophy, theory of natural rights, ethics, achieved results, etc. Positivism reduced criticism of the law primarily to such criteria as consistency between norms in regard to their place in the hierarchy and efficiency, i.e., to the conditions for the implementation of a legal system. All that is an important part of the law, but in the final analysis it can only be a manifestation of compulsion, force and sufficiently strong political will.

The opposite views on the nature of the rule of law differ on whether the orders of a political will (government), backed by enough force, can be treated as laws no matter what their content, or whether some conditions concerning the “quality” i.e. content, of laws are required. This question has been debated by both ancient and present day legal and political philosophers. The very idea of the rule of law implies that the legislator is bound by the law, which implies an answer to the question of whether the will of the majority is unlimited or should also be limited by law (constitution), as well as some social and political arrangements (proceeding from, or following upon constitutions) to avoid a “tyranny of the majority”.

We assume that developed civil society, autonomy of social and economic institutions and corporations, adequate political culture, separation of powers, an independent judiciary, political pluralism and higher standards of individual human rights implementation and some minimums of ethnic groups rights are among conditions for implementation of the rule of law and for viable constitutions in multi-ethnic societies. The process of transforming the authoritarian state (frequently still ideologically permeated with communist, nationalist, conservative, religious fundamentalism and similar radical doctrines) in such regions is not accomplished. The rule of law, even when declared as a constitutional principle can still be far from implementation in political and legal relations. There are too many difficulties and obstacles on the way of establishing the rule of law under conditions of general uncertainty, authoritarian political culture and patterns of behavior, unlimited power of governments and insecurity of citizens.

A great problem, debated from Aristotle through Stuart Mill to our contemporaries, is the tyranny of the majority. The majority does not in itself turn evil into good through its support.<sup>6</sup> That means that mass support, participation, tacit agreement, and other forms of acceptance and popularity are just a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for the legitimacy of an authority and its laws.<sup>7</sup> The essence of law, the element that makes it the foundation of human civilization, is its degree of rationality in regulating relations among people, including those in power. That essentially means securing human life, body, freedom and property, as wrote Locke. So, the rule of law is a necessary prerequisite for establishing and strengthening democratic institutions and relations; on the other hand, democracy is also in a way a precondition for establishing the rule of law as the expression of reason, dialogue and reflection rather than force, and of taking into account all major interests and views. Therefore, as noted, democracy is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for the legitimacy of a regime and for the adoption of good laws. Democracy can be radical and totalitarian, and since the time of Aristotle it is widely taken by defenders of freedom that a democracy must be evaluated also by its level of respect for some general rules. If it does not obey some material and procedural rules, it becomes mobocracy or polocracy.

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<sup>6</sup> Franz Neumann wrote that the voice of the majority cannot make evil into good, but that evil with the support of the majority becomes an even greater evil. See: Franz Neumann, *The Democratic and Authoritarian State* (Zagreb, Naprijed, 1974), p. 177.

<sup>7</sup> We dealt with this issue in great detail in *Problem legitimnosti politike vlasti [The Problem of Legitimacy of Political Power]* (Belgrade, SANU, 1992).

Despite conceptual vagueness, some institutional elements are indispensable ingredients of a democratic government and give hope for good laws. However, there is no set of political and/or legal institutions which, if put into a constitution, automatically would provide what most scholars probably mean by “democracy”, i.e. what they assume to be democratic government. Many conditions (or “preconditions”) have to be present in order that a set of potentially “democratic” political and legal institutions work, i.e. function in a democratic way. Some important “(pre)conditions” do not exist in the region discussed here. To achieve them it would require not only the wish or willingness to have them, but many other things including a favorable social structure (a numerous and influential middle class, many stable and functional social institutions, favorable economic conditions), knowledge, educational efforts and network and time, as well as managerial, technical and constitutional expertise. Further we have in mind particularly three interrelated things as preconditions for democracy: “open civil society”, “the rule of law” and “the democratic political culture”.<sup>8</sup> It is probable that institutions which are instrumental in promoting democracy also can help gradually to develop democratic political culture, bringing some changes in the direction of democracy and educating people for democracy, but this is a long process. What many political scientists probably have in mind when they use the word democracy cannot be covered by the term in its etymological sense. In some way, a new term (and notion) is already coined, though not in wide use. We have in mind the term “constitutional polyarchy” used by Robert Dahl and some other political scientists. In our view, Carl J. Friedrich’s conception of constitutional government was close to the meaning we have in mind.

Many principles of the rule of law are well known, but readiness to behave in accordance with them is lacking. There are numerous rules of material and process law which have been confirmed over time as suitable for bringing about truth and justice. But the political authorities or individual power holders usually break these rules as soon as they constitute an obstacle to the achievement of some particular or shortsighted interests or goals desired by the power-holders.

The rule of law among other things means equal rights for all, which further means equal opportunities for all. Concerning the structure (*constitutio*) of political society, the rule of law in a wide sense implies constitutionalism; on the one hand, this regulates the relationship between local, provincial, ethnic or national political and cultural autonomy and self-administration; on the other hand, it provides all necessary guarantees for the viability of a wider political entity, the state as the framework in which the autonomy is enjoyed. Constitutionalism means also the separation of powers and a certain distribution of powers/jurisdiction in both horizontal and vertical dimensions. With the tendency of statism to expand and strengthen, which is the present tendency in many “postcommunist” and other countries, institutionalized political power constantly tends to treat the law as a mere means for expressing and conveying its will to the people. Justifications for this are being supplied in our times in the name of radical ideologies, national states, national interests, constitutional nationalism and other points of view and interests which defend the authoritarian rulers or simply speak in favor of the strongest.

## **The Ethnic Revival**

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<sup>8</sup> Superficial or mechanical transplantation of institutions in inadequate situations can compromise institutions which under different conditions could be tools of democracy. The so-called Westminster system of electoral principles and majority rule can perhaps be taken as one of standard criteria of a democratic government. But such system was designed by communist governments in all parts of the former Yugoslavia in the hope that it would make it possible for communist parties of Croatia and Serbia to achieve absolute control of their legislatures with less than half of the votes.



In transforming and constitutionally founding societies of this vast region, many of the potentially most grave problems and obstacles could spring from their multi-ethnic structure. The big problem is how to deal with the ethnic, i.e. cultural, religious, national, linguistic, racial and other diversities among the population. Ivo Duchacek noted in 1977 that “out of the existing 150 territorial states only about nine to ten can properly be called “national” in a mono-ethnic sense. The total number of people living in their own self-contained mono-ethnic national states is less than one half of one percent of the world’s population”.<sup>9</sup> Multiculturalism has to be taken as a richness of traditions, variety of religious and cultural experiences and ways of life which contribute to diversity and hopefully to the potential of societies. But both cultural diversities, particularly religious differences and differences in value systems, on the one hand, and conflicting interests of a more profane nature (e.g. of a commercial nature, overlapping territorial claims, different rates of population growth, the diversion and ways of using river waters, the location of power plants, particularly those on nuclear power, the location of nuclear waste, etc.) on the other hand, play an important role in raising tensions. These can lead to conflict even when all ethnic groups are of equal constitutional and political position or status.

Studies of scholars and observers show that different ethnic groups, i.e. “ethnic nations”, have similar claims and objections to each other. And in Eastern Europe and the space of the former Soviet Union we have to deal with ethnic nations and not with nations in the Western sense which is closer to a nation based on citizenship.<sup>10</sup> Stereotypes are widely present and effect inter-ethnic relations, while political elites, leaders and dictators look for and find support and legitimate ground for their power by presenting themselves as defenders of a national cause. This is good ground for authoritarian populism (Caesarism, Bonapartism) which tries to disguise itself behind a constitution.

The age of ethnic revival has brought several hundred secessionist movements (at a conference in 1991 about 640 were mentioned). The models of domination which prevailed in the past, have to be replaced by some democratic institutional arrangements. Modern democracy has to deal with these problems in a different way than in the past when in the name of popular sovereignty it was assumed that the people (*populus, demos*) were in political terms divided only on the ground of political orientation (based on ideology or interests). Democracy, in principle, is based on an equal position of citizens and their individual rights (which frequently, though in an over-simplified way, is expressed as “one man, one vote”), and in most respects on majority rule or “volontè general”. In situations where some prerequisites for democracy, like the rule of law, high standards of human rights, and appropriate political culture are lacking, as is the case over the most of the post-communist region, and where tensions or “unsolved problems” from the past between ethnic groups constitute a heavy burden for creating new democracies, it is neither simple nor acceptable for many groups to base their political institutions only upon citizenship and majority rule (though this is one of corner-stones of democracy, and frequently even a main element in its definition). There is a substantial difference depending on whether ethnic groups are “territorialized” in an area they claim as “their” fatherland, or whether they live in diaspora. It is

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<sup>9</sup> Ivo D. Duchacek, “Antagonistic Cooperation: Territorial and Ethnic Communities”, in *Publius*, 7 (no. 4, 1977).

<sup>10</sup> Walker Connor, “A nation is a nation, is a state, is an ethnic group, is a . . .”, in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, I (no. 4, October, 1978); and Ernest Gellner, “Ethnicity and Faith in Eastern Europe”, in Stephen R. Graubard (ed.), *Eastern Europe . . . Central Europe . . . Europe* (Westview Press, 1991), pp. 267-282.

very difficult to introduce models of partnerships unless democracy is modified along some principles of “consociational theory”.<sup>11</sup>

Duchacek directs attention to measures usually used to achieve ethnic homogeneity ranging “from barbaric cruelty to mild inhumanity”, or from genocide to assimilation.<sup>12</sup> Even if extremism be avoided, some scholars point out that multiculturalism and poly-ethnicity constitute an obstacle to democracy.<sup>13</sup> To grasp the real problems of conflicts between ethnic groups, one has to deal with nationalism, which has different forms depending on whether it be that of a large or a small nation, whether it is a concern for fellow nationals or an aggressive nationalism motivated by hatred or revenge or struggle for power, acquisition of territories, etc.<sup>14</sup> According to Carl J. Friedrich, “It is well known that nationalism is probably the most powerful force in the contemporary world”<sup>15</sup> and most frequently it is irrational. These problems have some common causes and expressions, which some authors attribute to human nature. The fact is that thousands of ethnic groups have to live mixed together at the same territories, all over the world. However, as many ethnic groups now aspire to some autonomy or to a nation state, we have “the resurgence of regional separatist movements”.<sup>16</sup> The “world order” does not leave much room for such outcomes, but will have to recognize and protect not only states and most individuals, but also ethnic minority rights much more than in the past and despite opposition and critical objections to ethnic group rights.<sup>17</sup>

Many writers, scholars and diplomats recently try to interpret the right of self-determination so that it does not imply a right of secession. However, the very nature of liberal political philosophy is to advocate wide freedoms and self-determination of people in the framework of

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<sup>11</sup> However, it can happen that in some cases no kind of institutional arrangements would work (Cyprus, Yugoslavia).

<sup>12</sup> See Ivo D. Duchacek, *Comparative Federalism: The Territorial Dimension of Politics* (1970).

<sup>13</sup> In recent time attention frequently is turned to John Stuart Mill’s work on *Representative Government* in which the author said that in a country which consists of several nationalities, free institutions of a representative government are “next to impossible” (see John Stuart Mill, *Representative Government* [London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1951], p. 361). Pierre van den Berghe has reached a conclusion that perspectives of democracy in (ethnically) plural societies are directly proportional to the degree of consensus regarding the basic values, and so in reverse proportion to the degree of cultural pluralism. “In cases of maximal cultural pluralism chances of democracy are severely reduced” (Cf. Pierre L. van den Berghe, *The Ethnic Phenomenon* [New York: Elsevier, 1981]; and his “Pluralism in Africa: A Theoretical Exploration,” in Leo Kuper and M.G. Smith [eds.], *Pluralism in Africa* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969]).

<sup>14</sup> These processes have been the subject of a number of studies, including R. Schermerhorn, *Comparative Ethnic Relations* (New York: Random House, 1970); *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, vol. 433 (1977), ed. by Martin O. Heisler, and dedicated to “The Ethnic Conflict in the World Today”; Milton J. Esman (ed.), *Ethnic Conflict in the Western World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977); Robert Levin and Donald Campbell, *Ethnocentrism: Theories of Conflict* (New York: Wiley, 1972); Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Its Alternatives* (New York: Knopf, 1969); Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); William Pffaf, *The Wrath of Nations: Civilization and the Furies of Nationalism* (New York, London: Simon & Schuster, 1993); Patrick Daniel Moynihan, *Pandemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

<sup>15</sup> Carl J. Friedrich, *Trends of Federalism in Theory and Practice* (New York: Praeger, 1968), p. 30.

<sup>16</sup> Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).

<sup>17</sup> Many concerns about “group rights”, and so against this concept, are given in Robert Cullen, “Human Rights Quandary”, in *Foreign Affairs*, 71 (no. 6, 1992).

law. True, the stress of liberal philosophy is on individualism and individual freedom, but no one could deny in the name of that philosophy the right of individuals to associate on ethnic principles and then to use this right of association to disassociate, i.e. to secede from other groups or states. It is true that this philosophy leads us to a *reductio ad absurdum* because a right of self-determination can be denied to no group and in the last analysis to no individual. If without any reservation we would accept what Duchacek suggested as “territorially bound states” into which peoples have to be herded and kept, thereby limiting their freedom regarding the body politic, then we would really come into position to advocate the famous “*reason of the state*” (“*ragione di stato*”, “*Staatsräson*”) instead of the “reason of the people”, which is more in accord with liberal political values and philosophy, and with present day democratic ideas based upon such philosophy.

Recently, some very interesting ideas have been expressed, which could gain more influence and effect in the future. These ideas start from the fact that in vast regions of the world there are two parallel phenomena, two types of political entities, and that this dualism requires wider recognition and regulation. These two entities are states and ethnic-nations.<sup>18</sup> The international community and the theory of the state, products of European thought particularly from the 16th century on, take into account more or less only states, later adding “protection of minorities”. Ethnic nations ask much more. The idea is that both kinds of entities would be recognized as political entities with grounds in international law and constitutional arrangements. This could have far-reaching consequences in terms of principles, the political organization of states and constitutional institutions.

## **Consociation**

Consociation is an old concept, revived in the 20th century after the concept of pluralism. It is treated and studied as a wide-spread social phenomena (different groups living together), which is rarely constitutionally founded. When institutionalized, it modifies majority rule or majoritarian democracy. Some authors write about “compound majorities” and “non-territorial federalism” or “functional federalism”.<sup>19</sup> In the context of the rule of law and constitutions we take consociation as an institutionalized system of partnership in power. However, some authors point out that even “consociationalism” is a specific form of elite domination based on ethnic proportionality.

The political life of multinational (multiethnic) states and “consociational” relationships inside respective societies involve many problems. The experience of such states demonstrates that particularly important issues for constitutional arrangements are those related to: (a) the existence and identity of ethnic groups; (b) safeguards for human rights and some minimum of collective ethnic group rights; (c) the participation of ethnic groups in power sharing, i.e., their participation in electing, constituting, distributing and exercising power; and d) the position of such groups in controlling natural resources and of the distribution of social wealth or “national” income (which is especially controversial, but important for the respective groups).

(a) Issues dealing with identity may range from names (individual, family and group) and symbols of such separate identity to requests for a “national state”. Usually they include flags, coats of arms, hymns, costumes, but even more important, ethnic cultural and educational institutions from elementary schools to universities and academies of sciences, to radio and TV

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<sup>18</sup> See Gidon Gottlieb, *Nation against State: A New Approach to Ethnic Conflicts and Decline of Sovereignty* (New York: Council of Foreign Relations, 1993).

<sup>19</sup> D. Elazar, “Federalism and Consociational Regimes” (*Op. cit.*)

programs, journals and books in the ethnic group language, associations etc. The experience of many countries shows that in order to create and improve conditions for living together, signs or elements of identity of a certain group should be neither prescribed nor proscribed, never forcibly changed or imposed by the state or another group, contrary to the will of the respective ethnic group. Elements of identity should be freely used unless they seriously offend another group or internationally recognized standards. The flag and other symbols of the state should contain traditional symbols of constituent nations or symbols proposed by their representatives as a part of a general agreement, constitution or contract concerning constitutional arrangements. It is also practiced that an ethnic group in displaying its symbols, displays at the same time symbols of the state that the group lives in, recognizing in that way the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the respective state.

(b) For any democratic body politic, and particularly for a consociation, it is vital to establish and to safeguard individual human rights and freedoms. These have, indeed, to be taken as a starting point in solving problems of ethnic groups. Low standard of these rights and their implementation and safeguarding is one of elements which helps to explain why so many individuals in communist and other countries tried to find a harbor under the umbrella of their ethnic fellows. Overstress on the role of the state versus the individual makes ethnic groups more eager to achieve their own, independent state.

Ethnic group rights, sometimes called minority rights or national rights, cannot be denied, underestimated or neglected today, but have to be taken as supplemental to individual rights. Today in a multi-ethnic society, beside individual rights, a minimum of collective rights have to be guaranteed.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, collective rights can be achieved and exercised at the cost of somebody else's or every-body's individual rights because as the experience of the former Yugoslavia proves, nationalistic governments in pursuit of collective ethnic rights can be very oppressive and authoritarian regarding individual rights, particularly of individuals belonging to other ethnic groups. For the time being many international and the CSCE documents take "persons" belonging to ethnic groups as subjects for protection. Some balance between individual and collective rights has to be provided. But, even states that initiate discussions and regulations of human rights issues are reluctant to treat them as collective rights.

Individual rights do not solve all problems of ethnic identity, but help to achieve the recognition of such rights. If minority members as individuals do not enjoy civil and political rights, then their subjugation and eventual assimilation is imminent. While some minorities persisted and survived under very difficult conditions, some others, under certain circumstances, usually weaker or dispersed, disappeared, i.e., were assimilated over a relatively short period of time due to different and systematic measures of governments which did not respect human rights. Such a process of assimilation usually has been facilitated by forceful transfers and dispersions, as well as by different processes which affected the concentration and homogeneity of minorities (processes like urbanization, industrialization, collectivization of farms, annexation of small homogeneous ethnic settlements into a larger one inhabited by the majority group, abolishing ethnic schools on different grounds, persecuting the church, etc.

(c) The political participation of ethnic groups in constituting authorities and exercising the power of the common state includes an appropriate electoral system, a type of representation, the

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<sup>20</sup> For a good and moderate proposal, see *Democracy and Minority Communities* (Theses for the Law on Freedom and Rights of Minority Communities), Belgrade-Subotica: (jointly published by) Forum for Ethnic Relations, European Civil, European Civic Center for Conflict Resolution, and European Movement of Serbia, 1993.

composition and jurisdiction of different decision-making bodies, distribution of power between different territorial and functional units, etc.

Two things are frequently mentioned by scholars: (1) political cooperation of segmental elites, which Lijphart stresses as an important element of consociational democracy, and (2) the possibility that “groups and individuals have a number of crosscutting, politically relevant affiliations.” S. M. Lipset writes about “cross-cutting connections” as a factor which increases the chance for stable democracy.<sup>21</sup> Elites in general, and particularly if cooperation between them is low, prevent social integration on an inter-group scale. Daniel Elazar points to a process which can easily be detected in many countries, and confirmed by the experience of former Yugoslavia: while elites support heterogeneity in what is not under their control, they act very energetically to impose homogeneity inside the groups they control in order to oust alien elements, ethnic, ideological, religious, etc., and to achieve ideological, religious, etc., homogeneity, including “ethnic purity”. Elazar writes: “Segments themselves have to be quite hierarchical. . . . So while the regime-wide coalition may be democratic, there is no guarantee that democracy will prevail within segments themselves.”<sup>22</sup>

The options which are usually offered or considered in literature are based on different types and degrees of autonomy: decentralization and the delegation of authority to lower levels in the traditional state hierarchy, self-administration of local affairs wherever a minority is significant (numerous) as a group in the local community, cultural autonomy, home rule for minorities (e.g. Greenland model); cantonal or regional autonomy (Switzerland and Spain are frequently taken as good examples, recent solutions for Alto Adige (South Tyrol) in Italy are instructive and worth wide studying).

In all previous forms and cases traditional regions and historical autonomies could strengthen the considered forms. But if all the former options and possibilities fail because the intensity of conflicts or mutual hostilities make a long-term peaceful life impossible, then separation has to be considered, which again can take different modalities.

Federalism was frequently considered as a form which provides some advantages in expressing ethnic identity, preventing assimilation, hegemony, legal inequality (in some cases to prevent or discontinue genocide), extending democratic participation, and in some cases improving living conditions while preserving larger political entities (in the form of a federation). The advantages of federalism are relative, not absolute; they depend upon some other conditions and circumstances. Ethnic federalism, particularly with some extreme ideas and movements, brings many problems. Some ethnic groups or nationalities struggle for territorial federalism or an independent state, while members of the large and dominant group wish to establish their rule in the form of a unitary state or a nominal federation. The failure and dissolution of three former communist federations (Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, and Czechoslovakia) raise considerable suspicions that it was federalism, organized along ethnic lines, which caused the dissolution. Eric Nordlinger, writing about “conflict-regulation practices,” says that they “include a stable governing coalition, proportionality, and mutual veto”, but he explicitly excludes federalism as a method of regulating ethnic conflicts.<sup>23</sup> After the experience with the dissolution/disintegration of

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<sup>21</sup> Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Basis of Politics* (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, 1960) (Serbo-Croatian edition: *Politički èovek* [Beograd: Rad, 1969], p. 112).

<sup>22</sup> Daniel Elazar, “Federalism and Consociational Regimes”, in *Publius*, 15 (no. 2, Spring, 1985); see also his *Exploring Federalism* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1987).

<sup>23</sup> Eric A. Nordlinger, *Conflict Regulation in Divided Societies* (Cambridge: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1972).

formerly communist federations, political leaders try to avoid federalism, seen as but an instrument of dissolution/disintegration.

(d) Regarding the use of natural and social resources and participation in the creation and distribution of social wealth, it must be noted that it plays an enormous role, but also contradicts the free enterprise market economy. However, it has to be considered in the context of balanced social, economic, cultural, demographic development and the task of creating favorable liberal frames for meeting the reasonable needs of population. It also must be understood that arrangements of power-sharing imply some kind of “burdens-sharing”.

Outstanding scholars advocating consociational democracy advise that constitutional and institutional arrangements in multi-ethnic societies should have bicameral legislatures, and arrangements for executive power sharing. Usually it is assumed that the best solution would be to have a two-house legislature, with an assembly on proportional basis and a senate or similar body on equal or similar basis. Members of ethnic groups should be included in government bodies at all levels, at least in numbers proportional to the size of the group in relation to the whole population.

Despite the pleading against unnecessary laws, ethnic groups are in favor of their status being regulated and guaranteed by special laws, preferably by constitutional laws. The constitution has to establish such a relationship between local, regional, national (ethnic) and state political and governing bodies which provides and secures autonomy and self-administration with the basic guarantees for the viability of the wider political entity, the state in which frame-work the widest regional autonomy is enjoyed. Separation of powers and a certain distribution of powers/jurisdiction in both the horizontal and the vertical dimension that guarantees the autonomy of parts and the integrity of the whole should be a matter of institutional arrangements. An ombudsman for each group could be established and authorized to make proposals to the legislature and to the executive concerning the protection of ethnic group rights, and to initiate cases before constitutional courts or other bodies safeguarding human rights.

The universalization of the principles of the rule of law is very important for solving many problems and establishing the consociation of different ethnic groups. Frequently we witness that what one group (any group) asks for itself, that very group denies to others, and vice versa. This is contrary to the deepest sense of the rule of law, which has to include only principles that can be propounded as universal in Kant’s sense. Each act and request has to be judged in the light of the consequences should such a request become a general rule.

Our approach has advocated a consociation as perhaps the best solution for multi-ethnic and multi-cultural societies in which ethnic groups have been more or less “territorialized” or have a strong feeling of distinct identity and/or attachment to one or other element of identity (like religion or language, etc.). But we have to take into account many limits and obstacles on the way to realizing such an idea.

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## Chapter XV

# Human Rights in a Divided World

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### Diversity in Civilization

The collapse of the economic-political system in the citadel that was the communist block, together with its resulting worldwide repercussions, has revealed yet another division of the world, one that is more durable from an historical point of view. This division is not so much a matter of economic and political systems, as a matter of culture in the broadest sense of the world.

From the viewpoint of serious journalism, as exemplified by Brian Beedham of *the Economist*,<sup>1</sup> the main entities in this division of the world can be described as follows: Euro-America, Euro-Asia, Islamistan, Hinduland, and Confucianism. Broadly speaking, these five socio-cultural areas cover a large territory. But in our context there is need for a more comprehensive view of focused on the practical impact of such a division. The present day fault lines in the world deserve a more serious discussion than that of the widely publicized contributions of Francis Fukuyama, first on the end of history and then on trust as the source of social virtues and the creation of prosperity,<sup>2</sup> or of Samuel Huntington on the clash of civilizations.<sup>3</sup> This paper will attempt a step in what we believe to be the right direction.

There are obvious lacunas in Beedham's fivefold civilizational division of the world; the Buddhist societies of Southeast and Central Asia sandwiched between Confucianism and Hinduland, Confucian offshore islands, Japan's remarkably thorough integration of several cultural layers, all deserve to be marked in special colors on the map of civilizations. The other large areas of the world where the classification deserves special comment are black Africa and Latin America. Both continents are specific because of their socio-cultural heterogeneity. In Africa, Islam and Euro-American cultures permeate the autochthonous cultures along horizontal as well as vertical lines. In Latin America, there are zones where the relics of various Amerindian cultures form a specific type of civilization.

From our perspective, however, it is not so much the number as the diverse nature of civilizations that matters. Different spiritual orientations, different values, in short the different paradigms of the human predicament are at the hub of the sociocultural diversity that is likely to create problems of co-existence.

In a study on the human predicament and its changing image throughout history<sup>4</sup> I have ventured to identify five basic paradigms, each of which had become a characteristic mark of a particular socio-cultural area. The modifications, cross-breedings and mutations, as well as the extensions or contractions of the territorial impact of these paradigms, are viewed as the key factors in the process of the change in civilization.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Economist* (September 1, 1990).

<sup>2</sup> F. Fukuyama, in *A Look at the End of History*, ed. K. Jensen (Washington DC: 1990) and F. Fukuyama, *Trust: New Foundation of Global Prosperity* (London: Hamilton, 1995)

<sup>3</sup> S. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," *Foreign Affairs* (Summer, 1993).

<sup>4</sup> J. Krejci, *The Human Predicament: Its Changing Image* (London: Macmillan and New York: St. Martins Press, 1993).

Of the five basic paradigms of the human predicament four are still alive and internalized in people's minds. Four constitute the backbones of living civilizations: the anthropocentric (man-centered) paradigm in Euro-America, the theocentric (god-centered) paradigm in Dar-al-Islam, the psycho centre (soul-centered) paradigm in Hinduland and in the adjacent Buddhist orbit, and the crato-centric (rule-centered) paradigm in Confucianism. The only one of these five paradigms not to survive its social basis in the Pharaonic civilization of Egypt is the very special thanatocentric (death-centered) paradigm focused on the overcoming of death by various elaborate techniques. At present Eurasia is in a state of transition; its new paradigm may be a kind of crossbreed.

Obviously, the anthropocentric paradigm has been the most conducive to preoccupation with the co-existence of humans on a more or less equal basis, where reciprocity and contract have played the key roles. A comparatively wide scope for personal freedom, though often limited to differently assorted elites, and acceptance of other possible paradigms as complementary value systems were the by-products of this anthropocentric orientation.

Anthropocentrism, however, never was and perhaps never can be the exclusive focus of any sociocultural orientation. In the Graeco-Roman civilization it was modified by belief in an anthropomorphic pantheon and by various mystery cults. When this complex world view ceased to fulfill its integrative role in society the quest for a more comforting orientation led to the spiritual resources of the Middle East. The Judaic theocentrism ultimately provided the new source of inspiration.

In order to be accepted in the Hellenised and Romanised world, however, the Judaic understanding of God had to undergo a significant mutation. Instead of limiting himself to a covenant with one chosen people, God now addressed all humankind and sent Jesus Christ, his only son, to all peoples as the teacher who in due course was to die in martyrdom for the sake of their salvation. Greek philosophy and the Roman sense of law and order provided the rest: they worked out the ecclesiocentric (church-centered) paradigm of the human predicament. In a charismatic institution, endowed by its divine founder with sacramental powers, providing the believer with a safe conduct to salvation, theocentrism met anthropocentrism half way. As long as this paradigm was credible, it constituted a firm and exclusive bond of socio-cultural integration.

Once, however, the ecclesiocentric paradigm began to lose its spiritual appeal and to need force rather than conviction to sustain it, elements of the traditional European anthropocentrism began to reenter the stage. First, in the Renaissance, this was a matter of style rather than of substance. Nevertheless, the religious vigor of both the clerical and lay elite was weakened and the sacramental power of the Church came into question. The call *ad fortes*, for direct inspiration by Holy Writ, opened the door to alternative interpretations of Christ's message and to the fragmentation of Latin Christian civilization.

At that very time, the anthropocentric legacy received a new impetus as the Enlightenment initiated a comprehensive socio-cultural mutation. The resulting change in paradigms can be outlined as follows: natural rather than supernatural forces mould the destiny of human beings. Faith ceased to be the linchpin of human mental orientation. In the pursuit of knowledge reliance came to be vested in the scientific approach. Ethics as a contractual type of morality, Do as you would have others do to you, would gain acceptance. On the communitarian plane, ethnic and party political loyalties came to be more relevant than belonging to particular religious bodies.

The whole process, usually described as secularization,<sup>5</sup> made religious allegiance a private matter. The dominant ideology was no longer of a transcendental nature; its supreme norm was

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<sup>5</sup> This process has been thoroughly analyzed in the widely acclaimed book by David Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization* (first edition Oxford: Blackwell, 1977, reedited at Gregg Revivals, Hampshire:



the human-based concept of human rights, that is, rights of the individual to self-realization and self-assertion. Although originally conceived as bestowed on human beings by God, in practice the concept of human rights came to be legitimized by the vote of the elected representatives of the people or by international agreements of the governments of the day. Eventually, God's (or the Supreme Being's) sanction disappeared from the formula, and with it also the prospect that human rights might be enjoyed only within the limits given by a particular religious code. On the other hand, freedom to choose and practice a particular religion became one of the basic human rights. While the equality of all human beings before God can still be considered as the key element in human rights, all conceptions of God or of the Supreme Being have become equally valid objects of worship before human.

Yet the Enlightenment did not leave us a clear-cut legacy on all these points. Apart from the variations concerning Christian beliefs, the main contrast to emerge was that between those who favored equality and self-assertation throughout the whole social fabric and those who wanted to remain within the confines of a new intellectual and moral construct such as the general will or the laws of history. Thus two contrasting paradigms of the human predicament crystalized from the mental ferment induced by the Enlightenment. These twins may be called the paradigm of human rights on the one hand, and the paradigm of social engineering on the other. "Open" versus "closed" society is another more familiar but less telling label for this contrast.

It is significant that in practice the development in Western Europe and North America at large fell in line with those philosophers who stood for the paradigm of human rights. Only exceptionally and as a transient arrangement did a general will or a supposedly scientific truth dominate particular societies in the West. Specifically, this was the obscurantism of fiercely nationalistic dictators which took Europe by surprise in the 1930s and ravaged the continent until the mid 1940s.

The legacy of the philosophical protagonists of a closed society was to be taken over by societies outside the West European orbit, such as Orthodox Christian Russia and countries of predominantly Confucian tradition. Marxism in the West played the role of counter culture, but was not hostile to the advance of technology, thus it had a good chance of gaining a sympathetic hearing in countries which needed to catch up with the technological advance of the West but did not want to give up their socio-cultural identity. In those parts of the world the ground already had been conditioned to give the concept of social engineering a chance. But not all countries in such a situation followed Marx-Leninist guidelines. In some, the inspiration from the official West won the upper hand. On the other hand, the Leninist civilization of social engineering was able to extend its testing ground over a good deal of Central Europe, including countries not affected by the catch-up syndrome.

Of the other civilizations the Confucian Far east experienced a similar socio-cultural mutation, though one less pronounced in its overall profile. China's pagan antiquity evolved the metaphysically austere concept of the Mandate of Heaven, which survived the spiritual influx of Buddhism from India in what may be described as the Chinese Middle Ages. Unlike the renaissance in Europe, the Confucian renaissance was not open-ended. The Neo-Confucians merely provided the time-honored tradition with a philosophically more sophisticated and rational garb. Substantial innovation was to wait upon an initiative from Europe. Of its two versions, the Euro-American on the one hand and the Euro-Asian on the other, it was the latter that after a bloody confrontation gained, at least until the time of writing, the upper hand. The Marx-Leninist

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Aldershot, 1993). The book contains frequent hints at a sociological explanation, or interpretation of these variations, rather than an explicit, coherent theory of this phenomenon, let alone a general one.

mandate of correct doctrine followed easily in the footsteps of the Confucian Mandate of Heaven. In contrast, the situational ethics, with the principle of filial piety at its core, made the domestication of the idea of human rights an uneasy proposition.<sup>6</sup>

With respect to the different paradigms of the human predicament it may be quite understandable why the anthropocentric paradigm of human rights would not be readily acceptable to peoples educated in other than the Euro-American tradition. But there is yet another good reason why peoples of other civilizations hesitate to accommodate the Western concept of human rights. There are obvious motives for opposition on the part of the rulers in the countries concerned. However, it is the imbalance between rights and duties or responsibilities that makes the current Western interpretation of human rights so much of an irritation. In particular the permissive morality is viewed as a provocative intrusion.

This is not only the outsider's view. The one-sided stress on rights and the neglect of responsibilities has become a matter of grave concern for many who otherwise are dedicated supporters of the anthropocentric concept of human rights. There are many schools of thought, from people in and around the Club of Rome,<sup>7</sup> through such individual philosophers as Hans Jonas,<sup>8</sup> to the increasingly vocal communitarians,<sup>9</sup> such as Amitai Etzioni, who stress the virtue of responsibility for a wide range of existential issues and its necessity for the survival of our civilization. With respect to rights and duties or responsibilities, the basic issues can be summarized in terms of the contrasts itemized below.

1. contrast between the rights of different individuals (the right of one person impinges on the right of another person);

2. contrast between what is considered normal behavior and what is considered peculiar or deviant; here it is mainly the impact on public life which matters;

3. contrast between the rights of individuals and the rights of collectivities, in particular the rights and responsibilities of the organs of the state;

4. contrast between the rights of living persons and the anticipated rights of future generations; this implies responsibility for the environment, whether natural or manmade (including the cultural heritage);

5. contrast between different religious and/or secular ideologies, which impose on people different and mutually incompatible duties while allowing different rights;

6. contrast between collectivities identified in various ways (ethnic, professional, etc.); at stake is the delimitation of mutual rights and duties;

7. contrast between human interests and the imputed rights of animals; this means human responsibility for considerate behavior towards other living creatures.

Wherever these contrast lead to outright collisions, the state is supposed to arbitrate, and if necessary help the party least able to represent its interests. A special case of this is the majority-

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<sup>6</sup> For more detail on the role of Marxism in the socio-cultural transformation of China and also in the changes that took place in Eastern Europe, see J. Krejci, *Great Revolutions Compared: The Outline of a Theory* (Hempstead: Harvester—Wheatsheaf, 1994).

<sup>7</sup> For their more recent admonition see A. King and B. Schneider, *The First Global Revolution*, a report by the Council of the Club of Rome (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991).

<sup>8</sup> H. Jonas, *The Imperative of Responsibility* (Frankfurt: Insel-Verlag, 1979).

<sup>9</sup> A. Etzioni, ed., *New Communitarian Thinking: Person, Virtue, Institutions and Community* (Charlottesville, VA: Virginia University Press, 1995).

minority issue (applicable mainly with respect to points 1, 5 and 6). Some topical issues of this type are discussed in the second part of this paper.

8. As far as the state's arbitration is concerned there is a contrast between its concern for those who violate the rights of other people and concern for those who are victims of those violations or feel themselves inadequately protected against crime. After a long history during which savage punishments for trivial offenses were the norm, the legislature and judiciary in the contemporary West are moving towards the opposite extreme. Lenient punishments prevail, and calls for more effective preventive measures against crime clash with concern over civil liberties.

## **States Versus Nations**

Socio-cultural differences in the understanding and observance of human rights are not only a matter of various paradigms of the human predicament, manifested in the beliefs, rules of conduct and symbols which together mould the socio-cultural profile of individual civilizations. Often the divergent interpretations of human rights and duties have to do with various communitarian loyalties that may divide peoples within one and the same civilization. Also in such a case human rights and responsibilities are at stake not merely as personal issues, but as a matter of collective rights and responsibilities.

In our context, the most susceptible to divergent views, and hence conflicts, are situations where peoples belonging to different socio-cultural entities happen to live in a territory dominated by one of them. The issue is between two loyalties: loyalty to a political framework in which one lives, and loyalty to a community where one has his or her ethnic origin.

In terms of institutionalized societal power, legitimized by mutual recognition, by the end of 1995 the world was divided into 185 states, members of the international association called "The United Nations." This parlance implies that nation and sovereign state are synonymous terms. Such is the usage of these words in English and also in the Romance languages where, consequently, nationality means citizenship.

The difference between nation and nationality is, however, not only a matter of grammar. The noun nationality is not always understood as a derivative of nation. It can stand as a noun describing a different phenomenon. In Central Europe the difference between the words nation and nationality developed into a most significant dichotomy, namely between the national and nation state on the one hand, and the state of nationalities on the other. (The German equivalent sounds more succinct: Nationalstaat against Nationalitätenstaat.) The first stood for a one-nation state, the second for a multinational state. This became a hotly debated issue between the leading nations and national minorities in the successor state of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires.

The official terminology in some Central European and Communist-ruled states has made the following adaptation of this distinction: nation stands for the majority ethnic group in a state, nationality stands for an ethnic minority in that state.

A similar distinction between nation and nationality has also been suggested by the sociologist E.F. Francis. According to him, the term nation has to be reserved for the dominant ethnic in the state.<sup>10</sup> The term nationality describes in his taxonomy an imperfect nation, i.e., an ethnic minority which as a community has acquired some acknowledgement, in the form either of autonomous or of protected status, in a state of another nation. Otherwise, in dealing with stateless nations, Francis

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<sup>10</sup> E.F. Francis, *Inter-ethnic Relations: An Essay in Sociological Theory* (New York: Elsevier, 1976), 394.

prefers to speak of ethnic groups or ethnic categories depending on the level of integration within the nation state.

The identification of the state with the nation, words which by their etymology are better fitted for different meanings, is not a fortunate one. Most other European languages, like the ancient Greek and Latin, uphold a clear distinction between state (*politeia* in Greek, *respublica* in Latin) and nation (*ethos* in Greek and *natio* in Latin), which is helpful both for a scholarly discourse and for legal provisions.

This distinction may be reconciled with the current usage of the term nation, by using appropriate epithets: political nations on the one hand and ethnic nations on the other. Political nations are identified by political status such as statehood or, possibly, also by membership of a federation or regional autonomy. Political nation is basically a geographical or, to put it more succinctly, geopolitical concept; the individuals acquire their membership by birth in the country concerned (*Pius soli*). Ethnic nations are identified by attributes of culture such as language (this is most often the case), religious allegiance and particular tradition (historical experience). Ethnic nation is a demographic concept; membership is inherited from the parents (*Pius sanguinis*). In the case of ethnically mixed marriages or adoptions there is an element of choice. Ultimately, belonging to an ethnic nation is a matter of person awareness (national consciousness). Its presence, with an adequate number of people, adds a third, subjective, dimension to the concept of nation. In German, this trichotomy is appositely described, that is *Staatsnation*, *Kulturnation*, *Bewusstseinsnation*. People who constitute a self-conscious ethnic nation in the aforementioned sense and are at the same time organized in a state of their own (and who are thus also a political nation) may be described as a full-scale nation.

In the light of what has already been said, the term nation state which is often used to denote the standard type of modern state is misleading. In terms of international law it is a pleonasm; each sovereign state is a nation. But members of a federation (federal nation state) are called merely states and never nations. In a historical context, however, the term nation state may make more sense, but even here it is beset by ambiguity.

In the historical context the term nation state implies two main characteristics: mass citizenry and socio-cultural (mainly ethnic) homogeneity. Both these qualities were achieved by way of lengthy, more often than not turbulent, processes, struggle for civic emancipation on the part of the subjects, and pressure sure towards the assimilation of socio-cultural minorities on the part of the state authorities. As Karl Deutsch<sup>11</sup> rightly observed, wherever assimilation proceeded faster than civic emancipation (he called it mobilization), ethnic integration was achieved without having caused particular problems. On the other hand where social mobilization overtook the assimilation process, ethnic differences became a source of constant trouble.

Of 185 member states of the United Nations there are about two dozen so small, and often ethnically heterogeneous (most of them are islands), that even in official usage there is some hesitation in describing them as nations: the term nation state would be wholly out of the question.

For the sake of clarity and meaningful discourse it is advisable to uphold the time-honored distinction between the political and ethnic aspects or nationhood; not to refer to states and nations as identical entities, and to reserve for nationality its grammatical meaning of belonging to a nation in contrast to citizenship implying belonging to a state.

For English and French speakers, such a distinction may appear obvious. They may well understand that there are stateless nations such as the Kurds or the Ibo, and, on the other hand, there are states such as Indi (Bharat) or South Africa whose population is composed of more than

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<sup>11</sup> Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Its Alternatives* (New York: Knopf, 1969), 21-27.

one nation. But such a distinction between state and nation might be less acceptable where only parts of various nations constitute one state such as is the case with Switzerland or Belgium. A similar difficulty emerges where there is a melting pot of immigrants and autochthonous nations such as in most states in America and Oceania. Here the term nation is primarily a political concept. A common language of European origin is the hallmark imported by the first settlers who had come in sufficient strength to avoid being swamped by those who arrived later.

Where states are built up from various tribal elements, as in most Black African countries, with borders arbitrarily imposed upon them by former colonial powers, the term nation is an expression of intent rather than of an actual situation. The fact that the languages of former colonizers – even if the latter did not settle in Black Africa states points to the lack of a domestic contribution to the geopolitical framework of the nations in the making.

It remains to be seen whether a borrowed language without another explicit mark of cultural identity – such as religion in the case of the Irish nation – will provide an adequate amalgam for nation-building. To put it explicitly, can communication in such a language stimulate that kind of intensity by contact and imitation through which in Miyukov's terms, ethnic material acquires a common consciousness and assumes the character of a nation?<sup>12</sup> A process of composite nation-building along slightly different lines can be observed in Southeast Asia where the whole multi-ethnic territory of former Netherlands Indonesia was – after a short lived experiment with federation – transformed into a unitary state; its official language (Bahama Indonesian) is based on a Malayan dialect spoken mainly on the Malayan peninsula outside the territory of the new state.

As far as the composite nation state is concerned, reference to European experience may be useful. A newly created composite nation state made up from ethnically kindred elements, as was the case with Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, did not survive a lifespan of 74 years. A composite multi-ethnic state, such as Switzerland or Belgium, survived, but only after heavy internal strains had been overcome and complete equality of individual ethnic groups had been guaranteed and observed. Furthermore, in these two latter cases there was the element of timing: the idea of a common citizenship took root in people's consciousness before the different ethnicity, manifested in language, became the main factor of division. For the two-nation state, Canada, at the time of writing, either way is still open.

Problems of multi-ethnic or ethnically composite states reflect the basic issue of state-nation relationship in modern Europe. The last 150 years of history revolves, albeit sometimes indirectly, about its solution. From the start of the Greek uprising against Ottoman rule in 1824 till the inter-ethnic war on the territory of the unfortunate Yugoslavia in the 1990s, all the European wars were fought either for ethnic emancipation, ethnic unification, promotion of one nation state's power (whether real or alleged) or ethnic adjustment of the states' borders.

Despite all vicissitudes and setbacks, the trend has been clear: toward congruence of political with ethnic (state with nation) borders. Multi-ethnic states which could not satisfy their member nations with equality of cultural and political status and thus guarantee their self-assertion, had to go (this was the case with the Hapsburg and Ottoman empires) or seek a reprieve through a formal federation (the case of the Russian Empire, transformed, for that magic span of about 74 years, into the Soviet Union). Other empires just fought for their better borders in Europe and overseas. As a result of these developments, the share of Europe's population living in their own one nation

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<sup>12</sup> P.M. Milyukov, *Nationality, Its Origin and Development* (Czech translation from Russia) (Prague: Obis, 1930), 69. The importance of communication for building national consciousness was discovered long before the American scholars began to apply communication theory to the study of nationalism.

states, or within a satisfactorily structured multi-ethnic federation, increased from less than half at the time of the Congress of Vienna to about 90 percent at the time of the Soviet Union was dissolved.<sup>13</sup>

After World War II, however, this trend came to be matched by an opposite development: immigration from poorer or not so well-organized states – not only from Europe but increasingly from overseas – to those states which, on both counts, were better off. Against the decline of autochthonous minorities there has been an increase in heterochthonous minorities, often with a distinctly non-European socio-cultural background. Thus ethnic diversity came to be combined with diversity in civilization. The scope for inter-ethnic tension acquired a new, more sharply profiled view. Diversity in civilization moved from the macrocosm of the world stage of the heart of Europe. Often this diversity became reflected in different levels of social stratification. For quite a number of European countries socio-cultural diversity of this kind has become an internal problem.

A schematic overview of tensions discussed in this part of the introductory paper I given in Figure 1 below.

### **The Roots of Inter-ethnic Tensions**

Main Causes	Topographic Conditions (type of settlement)	Rights Issues
1. contrasting values and codes of conduct (religious or secular)	mixed or compact	
2. ethnic differences are reflected in social majority Stratification	mixed	between majority and minority within a state
3. dissatisfaction with the given political status	compact	
4. dissatisfaction with the scope for cultural self-assertion	mixed or compact	
5. disparity between political Borders	compact	

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<sup>13</sup> For more detail before 1980 see J. Krejci and V. Velimsky, *Ethnic and Political Nations in Europe* (New York: Martin's, 1981), 61-73.

**Chapter XVI**  
**The Origin and Purpose of**  
**Algirdas Julien Greimas' Structural Semiotics**

*Beliauskas Zilvinas*

It is a great challenge to present a man as a scientist, for that is, first, to uncover as objectively as possible his views and ideas. Second, however, one must convey also the essence of his understanding of meaning -- the central problem of his works. For Greimas this focus is on language.

Language should be associated primarily with meaningful signs and sign systems. At the same time there is need to understand the inner structure of language, and how it is capable of transmitting meaning. This requires an analysis of language by means of another language, a metalanguage, describing language as if from outside and understanding it in a much broader sense than the traditional linguistic view. Thus, the effort to understand the world with the help of the basic linguistic tools needs to go beyond the usual boundaries of this discipline and to look at other broader horizons.

A.J. Greimas has directed the French Language and Grammar Department in Ankara (Turkey) and teaches at Istanbul University. He is acquainted with modern logic and is interested in automatic translation and the application of statistical methods in linguistics. In 1960, together with other initiators of the application of precise methods to language analysis, he established the Société d'étude de la langue française, which marked the revival of scientific linguistics in France, as opposed to the traditional philological language studies. In 1962 A.J. Greimas was appointed professor of linguistics at Poitiers University, but insights from Egypt made him consider language as in need of a broader investigation, namely, as a system contained in itself, transmitting -- and, under special conditions, generating -- meaning, as well as providing ways to perceive it. This required a more systematic or, as it was called then, structural analysis of language. The general theoretical intellectual context of A.J. Greimas's work contained two main trends of semiotic investigations in the middle of the 20th century: structural linguistics and logical philosophy.

The first, through L. Hjelmslev, has its roots in the ideas of F. de Saussure. L. Hjelmslev intended to formalize the language theory of Saussure and added to the existing dichotomy of langue/parole the dichotomy of system/process. Also he enriched the concept of meaning with the dichotomy of form/substance, thus making it possible to talk about significant form (*forme signifiante*).<sup>1</sup> The second or logical philosophy trend developed into a philosophy of language analysis, connecting in one line such thinkers as G. Frege, L. Wittgenstein, R. Carnap, J. Austin, W. Quine, J. Searle, N. Chomsky, D. Davidson, J. Hintikka and many others with their own peculiarities and inner divisions as regards language, speech acts, communication etc. Here meaning is explained with the help of such terms of modern logic as truth, reference and information, as well as with terms defining various modalities: necessity, knowing, believing, possible worlds and others. This kind of investigation is predominant in the USA and England.

The linguistic structuralist approach is quite diversified, for there are different semiotic trends in the various countries. In France in particular there have been two main semiotic schools since the 60s. The first is known as the Greimasian or Paris school, the other, not less popular, tends more towards metaphorical, philosophical and aesthetic thinking. It concentrates mainly on the

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<sup>1</sup> Louis Hjelmslev. *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1961).

analysis of literary texts: a sort of art of texts about texts. The most prominent names associated with this school are Roland Barthes, Gerard Genet, Julia Kristeva, Michael Foucault and many others. The post-structuralists or deconstructionists are closer to the second group and oppose themselves to the Greimasian camp.

To situate A.J. Greimas's structuralistic semiotic conception in even wider contextual framework, one must note the fundamental philosophical tradition of phenomenological-hermeneutics. In its own way it too is search for meaning, but does this by trying to solve in depth the very problem of the understanding of texts, i.e. what verbal and non-verbal conditions -- historical, cultural, individual -- should be taken into account in order that the genuine meaning of a written or spoken text be disclosed. The attitude towards the concept of intentionality puts that tradition in sharp opposition with the positivist and analytic philosophy of language. This outstanding, magnificent philosophy is built upon the works of Wilhelm Dilthey, Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger, as well as of such more contemporary thinkers as Hans G. Gadamer and Jurgen Habermas. It was in this context of different theories and schools dealing with the problems of meaning that A.J. Greimas' created his semiotics as a model for a description of texts and discourses. This work was located in a triple tradition.

### **The Saussurian School**

This was developed by L. Hjelmslev, who attempts to describe language systems in general (Langage), rather than just language (Langue) characterized as a system of signs. He develops this in a deductive form, claiming for linguistics the same formal rigor as that of natural sciences. L. Hjelmslev goes beyond Saussure with regard to the notion of the sign by adding the form-substance and content-expression dichotomies to the initial one of signifier-signified. Thus he provides a much stronger conceptual apparatus, better suited for the description of discourses and systems of non-linguistic signs, which is the proper and specific project of semiotics. As L. Hjelmslev states: Linguistic theory is led by an inner need to recognize not merely the linguistic system, in its schema and usage, its totality and individuality, but through language also man and human society behind language and the whole human sphere of knowledge. At this point linguistic theory has reached its prescribed goal: *humanitas et universitas*.<sup>2</sup>

This Saussurian tradition, as developed by L. Hjelmslev and others, including A.J. Greimas, does not consist of a series of strict derivatives in obedience to F. Saussure as an unquestioned teacher. The common point is the epistemological choice to take as a starting position natural language instead of a sign. A.J. Greimas adopts the same solution, arguing that every sign is translatable into a natural language, but that the contrary is not true. The translatability of a system of signs into the system of signs of spoken language is the main principle underlying the Saussurian tradition in the history of contemporary semiotics. This epistemological orientation in the works of A.J. Greimas is connected with a particular methodological model of theoretical structural phonology developed by R. Jakobson and the Prague linguistic school. A.J. Greimas clearly stated his attachment to this tradition in his article "L' actualite du Saussurisme".<sup>3</sup> On the foundations of such dichotomies he declares his faithfulness to the following principles:

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>3</sup> Algirdas Julien Greimas, "La actualite du Saussurisme", *Le francais modern*, 3 (1956).



(a) Language is a formal object -- an entity of relationships; as such it is comparable to other formal objects and is subject to scientific analysis. Language can be described by another language, i.e. a metalanguage consisting of defined terms with a single meaning.

(b) Language is a semantic object -- an architecture of forms containing meaning.

(c) Language is a social object -- a collective institution.

In this regard it is not we who speak language, but language itself which speaks via us. We are submerged in language as in social reality. Such a broad attitude towards language makes it possible to compare it to another structure, for instance to plastic forms, or to musical structure as also covering extremely broad social regions. The same attitude suggests looking for all possible comparable and interrelated structures in the natural and humanitarian sciences. The most noticeable advances were made in phonology, a branch of linguistics, that made it possible to overstep the limits of linguistics. This was due to working with the minimal universal elements found in the basis of every language structure, that is, the principle of binary oppositions.

### **The Structural Study of Myth: Comparative Mythology**

The same search for basic general structural elements was characteristic of comparative Indo-European investigations of mythology by G. Dumazil,<sup>4</sup> who personally persuaded A.J. Greimas to introduce Lithuanian mythology into active Indo-European circulation. G. Dumazil considered myth and language as a system of collective representation, a figurative form of social ideology. This implied a mutual sympathy between structural linguistics and anthropology. The linguistic principle of binary oppositions and the concept of transformation as transition from one systemic level to another offered an opportunity to work out a more general system. This was capable of describing a yet broader field of cultural and social symbolism, which F. de Saussure called “general semiology”. Some of the most significant ideas influencing A.J. Greimas’s scientific views were generated by the founder of structural anthropology, C. Levi-Strauss, namely, the argument that kinship terms as well as phonemes are elements of signification and that they acquire their signification only when integrated into “elementary kinship systems”.<sup>5</sup> The distinction of deeper and superficial levels of systems provided the possibility of uniting different myths, texts and various ways of reading the same myth according to these levels: the vertical-paradigmatic and horizontal-syntagmatic (see L. Hjelmslev’s system process dichotomy) inspired A.J. Greimas’s theoretical vision.

C. Levi-Strauss enlarged the structural description of folk tales, initially proposed by V. Propp,<sup>6</sup> and ventured an analysis of the Oedipus myth.<sup>7</sup> It was shown that a syntagmatic reading of myth is compatible with its paradigmatic reading and contains in itself all the problems of cultural origin because of a clash of contradictory understandings of kinship patterns. The correlation of two binary categories made of contradictory elements make up the initial structure of signification, which is able to generate or deduce all possible Oedipus myths or their interpretations, including that of Freud. Such an analysis confirming the twofold semantic structure

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<sup>4</sup> George Dumazil, *L’Heritage indo-europaene Rome* (Paris, 1949) and *La Saga de Hadingus: du myth au roan* (Paris, 1953).

<sup>5</sup> Claude Levi-Strauss, *Anthropologie structurale* (Paris: Plan, 1958), p. 40.

<sup>6</sup> C. Levi-Strauss, “La structure et la forme: reflexions sur un ouvrage de V. Propp”, *Cahier de l’Institut Des Sciences Economiques Appliques*, 99 (1960), pp. 3-36.

<sup>7</sup> C. Levi-Strauss, “La structure des myths” in *Anthropologie structurale* (Paris: Plan, 1958).

of a system and realizing Hjelmslevian idea of a significant form could not be contained in the framework of the traditional science of language. A.J. Greimas considered it his task to show precisely that the essence of narrative discourse or syntagmatic action is nothing other than a projection of deeper paradigmatic categories to a syntagmatic level of text.

### **The French School of Perception**

This tradition is represented most prominently by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who develops the main thesis that we perceive only differences and that, living in the social world, we are doomed to meaning.<sup>8</sup> It is characteristic of this world to which we are related that it reveals itself to a subject through effects of meaning, which we perceive psychologically. Since differences and discontinuities are the premises of our perception, any meaning can be understood as immanent to linguistic form. A.J. Greimas considered this a natural extension of Saussurian thinking.

Due to the scope of Greimas's works he is sometimes considered a representative of different areas of the humanities. For some he seems to be a lexicographer, for others a dialectologist, a theoretician of language, a founder of a semiotic project, or, as he is mostly known and read in Lithuania, a mythologist. But the problem of meaning or sense, as he himself has repeatedly stressed, always has been central to his numerous and vast preoccupations.<sup>9</sup>

Another basic characteristic of A.J. Greimas's approach is that he does not concentrate on the dislocation of philosophical definitions or analyses of meaning in signs, beyond signs or just in our heads. Rather, he focuses on what meaning actually means or its concrete content and on how it can be deciphered in all possible sign systems. Of itself, meaning for him is a kind of a given, since we happen to live in a society and therefore inescapably signify a world of communication and relationships. Meaning is conveyed, exercised and exchanged by the "class of grown-ups", i.e., sharing something believed to be common sense acquired in the process of communication and education. Meaning is always pregnant with the effect on us of the surrounding world. But mythological data, sign systems and/or texts-discourses are complex, and very often insufficient, and hence are in need of special semiotic tools to disclose, restore, understand, interpret and integrate a particular knowledge into general knowledge and/or a heritage of belief. A.J. Greimas sees genuine knowing very often as a realization of faith and trust.

Thus, while claiming to avoid philosophical and psychological involvement, he launches a gnoseological discussion of the relationship of knowing and believing. This is not only a case of trespassing into the neighboring fields of semeiotics. The main tendency in A.J. Greimas's works is a continuous effort to work out reliable ways and methods and to invent proper tools for knowing. He is in search of an objective scientific sense in all areas of the human environment. This always consists of signs and signification bearing meaning, which is susceptible of a logic of articulation and is limited in its essence to a certain number of isotopes. This epistemological super-task diminishes the traditional division between the natural and human sciences, because the data of both is presented by means of their own languages and signs. These should be translatable into another coherent descriptive language articulating meaning units which are intangible at first sight. The latter translation is to be raised to a more formalized epistemological level, setting an exhaustive number of possible readings of any discourse of literary, scientific, cultural, gestural or whatever origin. One epistemological level is a previously designed logical model which can be

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<sup>8</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenologie de la perception* (Paris, 1945).

<sup>9</sup> Algirdas Julien Greimas, *Semantique structural* (Paris), p. 5.

applied only deductively. It is capable, not only of interpretation, but also of restoring missing parts or details in a field of investigation. Again the best example is mythology.

This is a possible hierarchical structure, stemming from the structure of language itself as the most sophisticated system. It is capable of articulating, and, by means of transformation from one epistemological level to another, of tracing the whole semiotic field leading to the deepest nucleus of meaning. Thus meaning can be called a possibility of translation from one language (language-object) into a stricter metalanguage of description, and then into an epistemological language. This is supposed as an already fixed and tested structure for the principles of verification and deduction.

All this requires a great deal of formalization and elaboration found in the books and articles of A.J. Greimas. He was constantly aware of the danger of critique from all sides. He was creatively inclusive and at the same time autonomous in his theory. He sought a middle way between logic, philosophy, psychology, literature, history and other surrounding sciences. The result is a narrative grammar and theory of modalities which are absolutely necessary when attempting to expand the limits of the semiotic approach to the whole of human activities and to cover such fields as axiology, aesthetics and the world of feelings.

A.J. Greimas was always conscious of the incompleteness of his model. He regarded it as under continuous creation, correction, improvement and enlargement. He had no great hopes of completing this, but longed to see his beginnings carried on by others. The project is marked by principles of continuity, flexibility and dynamics; it is as A.J. Greimas puts it in one of his last books, *De l'imperfection*: "There is but one way leading to aesthesis -- a vitalization of the passions of body and soul". This takes place only when ordinary objects of our everyday life are resemantized, i.e., when new meaning is found, or when we seek to escape from boring monotony and transfer ourselves somewhere else. In every case this turns out to be an interruption of what is common, a change of distance between subject and object, and a special waiting for something. After reaching and passing various distant domains the circle again closes on man and the problem of his existence in this world.<sup>10</sup>

From the perspective of contemporary times the appearance of *Structural Semantics* in the late 70s played a revolutionary role. It was the first ambitious attempt to bring to life the structuralist method in its full-scale systematic form. It promised to transform not only linguistics, but every branch of the human sciences and to bring a marked shift in the fields of anthropology, psychoanalysis and literary criticism. According to some authors like Christopher Norris,<sup>11</sup> the role of A.J. Greimas is nearly mythical in the history of rapidly changing visions and revisions of European structuralism and semiotics. For quite a long time he remained unfamiliar to Anglo-Saxon readers, because another branch of semiotics developed by Charles Peirce is mostly employed in the USA and the Saussurian tradition was unknown or rejected. Now the situation has changed and nearly all of A.J. Greimas's works are available to the English reader and discussed in the publications of those scholars. From the philosophical point of view, this introduced a broad neo-Kantian tradition marked by the anthropomorphic character of his theory.

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<sup>10</sup> Algirdas Julien Greimas, *De l'imperfection* (Paris), p. 99.

<sup>11</sup> Ronald Schleifer, *A.J. Greimas and the Nature of Meaning* (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1987), p. x.



## Chapter XVII

# Otherness and Tolerance

*Basia Nikiforova*

### A National Minority

The concept of a national minority denotes a certain group of people which in view of their nationality constitutes a minor part of a country's population. The criteria defining this concept are the possession of a separate language, cultural tradition and/or religious affiliation. The self-consciousness of a national minority is formed under the influence of the following factors: ethnic and cultural-religious differentiation, their constitution as a distinct linguistic group, and a state with a national majority group. The level of development of a minority group depends on its historically formed stage of assimilation and attitudes of tolerance in the given society.

Assimilation as a process of evening out "otherness" and adjusting oneself to the dominant cultural-linguistic environment usually is accompanied by a weakening of national identity. The conventional typology of the assimilation of a national minority is the following:

1. The strong type: dissolution of its mentality into the dominant national environment by identification with the culture, language, history, civic and public-legal status of the national majority.
2. The medium type: the same as the above except that knowledge of the mother tongue is retained, whereas the sphere of its usage is reduced to the level of family relations.
3. The weak type: characterized by episodic relations with the dominant cultural-linguistic environment, self-identification by means of the minority's own historical, linguistic and public-legal traditions.

The prevalence of one or another type of assimilation depends on two areas. First there is the specific character of a national minority: the absence a religious and linguistic tradition, the presence of a state in which it constitutes a minority, and the history of its appearance in the given territory. Second, there is the specific character of the society of which it constitutes a part: the homogeneity of the national-religious structure, the history of the formation of statehood, and the manifestation of cultural-linguistic peculiarities.

Yet, apart from the strictly objective features of the national minority and society in which it lives, the subjective factor exerts profound influence. This is manifested in concentrated form in the concept of tolerance, which denotes the psychological state of forbearance to a different mode of living, thinking, feeling. The limits of tolerance are wide and mobile, ranging from indifferent neglect of "otherness" to the urge to support and protect it. In the historical sense, tolerance means to concede to a lesser evil in order to avoid a greater one, i.e. it always means the priority of one's own values and simultaneously tolerance towards those which are different and often treated as inferior. Therefore, the society in which a national minority displays a tendency towards assimilation (i.e. partial adoption of the majority's central values) as a rule proves most tolerant. The life of a national minority according to the principle of the medieval "ghetto" usually creates in society the atmosphere of intolerance and a social psychology of national superiority.

The homogeneity of the national society does not always imply religious homogeneity; and vice versa religious homogeneity does not always imply a national homogeneity. For example, Lithuania's population includes Catholic Poles and Protestant Lithuanians. Yet, the criterion determining the role of religious self-consciousness and its invariance is nationality. Therefore we distinguish the following types of national minorities:

1. A national minority belonging to the dominant religious tradition (Catholics as a national minority).
2. A national minority within the framework of the general Christian tradition (Orthodox believers, Protestants as a national minority).
3. A national minority belonging to a different religious tradition (Moslems, Karaites as a national minority).
4. A national minority professing a different religion that historically constitutes part of the dominant Christian tradition (Jews as a national minority).

In the first and the second cases one's self-identification as a member of national minority occurs through national affiliation and its cultural-historical differences. Usually such religious self-consciousness is not a source of formation of different identity. In the third and fourth case religious self-consciousness serves as a factor in integration of national identity hindering the process of assimilation. Under favorable historical conditions and in an atmosphere of tolerance religious self-consciousness is quite powerful within a national minority and influences its relations with the majority to a lesser degree.

Yet in the case of Jews as a national and religious minority we encounter a series of specific conditions that determined a particular type of relations towards them. This phenomenon is unique in the history of national minorities due to the following features: geographical and quantitative prevalence, the minimal level of assimilation, the formation of a unique and unified type of relations with the population of the country in which they live, the extent and intensity of the tragic collisions that they experienced.

Modern authors evaluate ethnic identity as changing over interval. In a stable society the changes are slower and regular; in an "unstable" society they are faster and more variable. According to P. Kolsto, the typology of the minority identity has two marks: cultural self-consciousness and political loyalty.

As a minority culture it has the choice either:

- to accept the culture of the larger community,
- to identify itself with the main body of its nation abroad, or
- to form its own self-consciousness.

In political preferences the minority has the option:

- to express political loyalty to the state in which they live,
- to join the structure of another state, or
- to create a separate state.

As regards culture Jews in Lithuania choose the first two ways. In political preference Jews have more possibilities: political loyalty, indifference to politics or return to their historical

homeland -- most choose the last way. Those who live in Lithuania today represent two kinds of minority groups. The first is "The old Lithuanian Jews," which lived here for many generations. They speak Lithuanian, feel and understand Lithuanian history, and look upon this state as their own. They have historical memory and recollections of the best and worst times for Jews in Lithuania. In their consciousness this group has parallel spheres of Jewish and Lithuanian cultures. It is the largest distinguishable Jewish group in the Central Europe. They do not think of assimilation. It may be that this group has some features a new self-consciousness, but this hypothesis awaits research.

In contrast, the "new Lithuanian Jews" have come mostly during Soviet times. Their self-consciousness is more "Soviet" than "Jewish." Their problem of assimilation is that mostly they have nothing in common with Lithuanian culture and historical traditions. Mostly they are "Russian-speaking," with but loose relations with the Jewish religion and cultural traditions. Subconsciously they feel themselves more a Russian than a Jewish minority. For example, the problem of intermarriage is the same for Russians and for these Jews in Lithuania.

With regard to Jews there are some specific aspects on the part of Lithuanians who are more tolerant to the "old Lithuanian Jews" who form part of Lithuanian history as a minority which saved its own language and religious tradition during many centuries.

## **Martin Buber**

The religious factor exerting strong influence on the socio-economic, cultural-linguistic and psychological character of Judaism has been an object of philosophical investigation by many prominent cultural figures. In the present chapter Jewishness and Judaism as an object of "unrealized" tolerance is treated in the light of the religious-philosophical analysis of the Russian Orthodox philosopher, Vladimir Solovjov and the Jewish philosopher, Martin Buber. It should be stressed that the views of both remarkable thinkers on the problems of Christian-Jewish relations and the sources of centuries-old collisions were rather untraditional, both for Orthodoxy and for Judaism. Their approach is characterized by a holistic, universal treatment of the problem, and an ability to overcome the limits of confessions and of established stereotypes.

In formulating the problem of Christian-Judaic relations both philosophers proceed from the assumption that mutual alienation and intolerance results from a lack of observance of one's own religious law and an incapacity to adhere to the requirements of one's own faith. As a result each critically analyses its own position. Hence Solovjov asserts that "we Christians have not so far learned to treat Judaism in a Christian way"<sup>1</sup> Buber expresses the same idea in the following words: "If Judaism were to become Israel again, if the holy image appeared from under the cover, then something quite different, yet unuttered today would happen."<sup>2</sup>

They regard the principle of religious tolerance as a universal law of human existence, which "requires that everyone should respect another's rights, not another's quality," despite "our subjective views on the contents of another faith, they characterize another nationality."<sup>3</sup> Solovjov refers to the elementary truth of the first Christian apologists: "If we cannot desire that somebody should use violence to our faith and nationality, we cannot afford to use the same violence to others."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> V.S. Solovjov. *Writings* (Two Volumes; Moscow, 1989), Vol. 1, p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> Martin Buber. *Selected Works* (Israel, 1979), p. 254.

<sup>3</sup> V.S. Solovjov, Vol. 2, p. 486.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

In Buber's opinion, the basis for mutual agreement and respect between Jews and Christians is their common understanding that they are endowed with sacredness and mystery, and "every real sacredness can recognize the mystery of another real sacredness." Solovjov also recognizes these "contiguous mysteries." To Solovjov the fact that God had elected the Jewish nation of His own free will means that this election "is adequate not only to the virtue of the one who elects but also to the merits of the elected." In Buber's opinion, to reveal the virtues of one's own faith and its real purpose "often veiled from reality" means to elevate faith in itself. "The more authentic the appeal to us as Israel, the more rightful the dialogue."<sup>5</sup>

To Buber "the authenticity of appeal" means recognizing as a mystery (in Solovjov's words, "sacredness") what they "other" professes as his own religious reality. He sees the Christian treatment of the term "Israel" as rather limited. It does not embrace several key issues, such as they unity of religious and national coexistence, the development of the post-Biblical history of Israel, or the faith in the Holy Spirit uniting the Christians and the Jews who abide in a state of discord.

Buber asserts that the "authenticity of appeal" is hindered by the Christian treatment of the "non-acceptance of Christ." Regarding Christology as an important phenomenon in the history of the humanity, Jews nevertheless have their own understanding of this non-acceptance. While treating the historical process as a continuity, and the divine revelation as infinity, Jews do not think that God can fully reveal Himself and His will in any of His manifestations. In Buber's opinion, the concept of God's election of the Jewish nation regarded by Christians as a proof of a national-religious egocentricity and superiority is also distorted. He transfers this concept from the category of privilege to the lot of suffering and tormenting responsibility.

## **V.S. Solovjov**

To Solovjov the problem of religious tolerance of Jews is also a problem of new interpretation of Christianity and its main commandment: to love one's neighbor. How could this commandment prove to be unrealisable for Christian? While suggesting two approaches to an answer to this question, he understands the extent to which each is unfavorable to the Christians. If you accept the possibility that this important commandment cannot be fulfilled, it follows that "those Jews are right who reproach the Christians for introducing into the world fantastic origins and ideas."<sup>6</sup> If you claim the possibility of its fulfillment, then "we are totally guilty" for not treating the Jews in a Christian way.

Yet Solovjov perfectly realizes that a human and respectful attitude towards Judaism and Jewishness meets with resistance due to long-settled negative stereotypes that affect Christians. In his opinion, in the course of centuries Christians have been inclined to remember only "the crowd that gathered around the Golgotha" and to forget about those thousands of Jews that constituted the original Christian church, the apostles and above all Paul. He considers the fact that Jesus Christ, though betrayed by Jews, "was a pure Jew by blood and human soul"<sup>7</sup> to be the strongest argument in favor of the groundlessness of the religious basis of anti-Semitism. To Solovjov this implies the requirement to recognize the God-bearing status of the Jewish nation and to acknowledge the groundlessness of condemning all Judaism in the name of Christ.

Referring to the Christian approach, Solovjov responds to the question: if Israel was elected to give Jesus Christ to the world, why did it prove to be unworthy of this purpose ? He looks for

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<sup>5</sup> Martin Buber. *Selected Works*, p. 238.

<sup>6</sup> V.S. Solovjov, Vol. 1, p. 206.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.



an answer, analyzing Israel as an indivisible union of the national and the religious. He distinguishes between the integrity and inner coherence of the Jewish character with its deep religiosity and devotion to God to the extent of self-sacrifice, and at the same time an “extremely developed consciousness of national, family and personal self,” to the extent of an “extreme materialism.” To an outsider these qualities may not appear easily to unite in one person. Yet, in Solovjov’s opinion, this can be explained by the specific character of Judaism that asserted “in God not the infinite void of a universal substratum, but the infinite fullness of being, having life within itself and giving this to others.”<sup>8</sup> This enabled the Jews to understand and perceive faith as a personal interaction between God and man, and to establish a unique interaction with God in the form of the commandments to Israel. Solovjov calls these relations “morally homogeneous” in which God could not be passive and remain in wait, but responded to the energy of the free human personality.

In these terms, the Jews perceived material nature as “an incomplete abode of the spirit of the divine man,” “religious materialism” and holy corporeality were manifestations of this “surplus of faith.” In Solovjov’s opinion, these personal and quite active relations with God prepared the nation for the fact that Christ should be born in Israel.

Like Buber, Solovjov analyses the cause of the “non-acceptance of Christ” by the Jews. He presents a profound and comprehensive analysis of the national and religious character of this community pointing to a certain disharmony. Yet as a theologian he thinks that this fact does not contain anything specifically national and socially psychological. The causes are most probably rooted in the perception of God as a manifestation of power and omnipotence. The Messianistic expectations of the Jews are a triumph of truth, a consolidation of God’s commandments in people’s hearts, and an effusion of the Holy Spirit onto every human being. Truthfulness to the Commandments means the right to enter the kingdom of God.

Hence, the cross as symbol and way signifies to the Jews an entire complex that is unacceptable. Christian asceticism, the union of the Godhead with human nature, the martyr’s way of sufferings, the utter helplessness of the One Who is endowed with divine power did not correspond to their perception of God. The idea of the kingdom of God itself for the Jews had national boundaries defined by the Commandments. They saw global salvation as an “abstract,” “arbitrary” and therefore unattainable idea.

Martin Buber also thinks that the idea of the Messiah as a Christological problem became the epicenter of contradiction between the Judeans and the Christian. There is no way that they can agree upon this issue. Accepting it as an inscrutable mystery, the Jews remain faithful to the “perception” that the world cannot be liberated and that God surpasses any of His manifestations and revelations. By their adamant and unyielding character the Judeans doomed themselves to the fact that having been formerly elected to realize the kingdom of God on earth, they are “renounced by the Church from further participation in the construction of this divine community of humanity.”<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, the Judeans continue to perform this “voluntarily accepted and terribly hard” labor, remaining firm and unyielding in their faith. Solovjov also writes about the paradoxical historical tragedy of the Jewish nation: “they did not wish to comprehend and accept the cross, yet for eighteen centuries they have been carrying their heavy cross against their will.”<sup>10</sup> For Solovjov this is not a rightful punishment, but merely a statement of historical tragedy.

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 214.

<sup>9</sup> Martin Buber. *Selected Works*. p. 246-247.

<sup>10</sup> V.S. Solovjov, vol. 1, p. 227.

Taking into account the fact that these words were written long before this historic tragedy found its expression in the Jewish Holocaust, Solovjov's providentialism, as well as Buber's, is full of extraordinary intuition. Yet there is hope of establishing relations based on mutual respect, namely "accepting each other in mystery," even when we cannot comprehend "how two contiguous mysteries can coexist" in such a way that only "God's mystery" is left. Nevertheless, the very fact that "God's mystery" is alive in the world in which we coexist, obliges us to observe tolerance and respect each other's faith.<sup>11</sup>

On the eve of the third millennium the religious factor, irrespective of its real influence, increasingly becomes the cause of local wars, terrorism and aggression. Under these conditions an illusion is formed that a monoreligious and mononational state formation would be a panacea for all these tragic collisions and problems. The practical infeasibility of such aspirations, as well as their questionable moral and legal basis, makes people look for other ways of solving this problem. These are based on the recognition of every national minority's right to equal status in society, equal opportunity for development both in social and cultural-religious respects and the creation of material and cultural-psychological conditions for their adaptation in society. The level of their adaptation may range from communication within necessary limits to partial or full assimilation. Yet the choice of the way in which the national minority and its individual representatives integrate into the dominant society belongs to them and will result from the individual's free will.

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<sup>11</sup> Martin Buber, *Selected Works*. p. 243.

## Chapter XVIII

# Tolerance and the Interpretive Whole: Cultures and Difference

*Cristal Huang*

### Prologue

During the long and changeable history of humankind, the nature of humanity is a common fundamental question for all peoples. According to different cultures and traditions, there are also cultural conflicts between different peoples, so many wars throughout history. Philosophers need to re-examine the practical world today, since we are now in a process of rapid political changes in both East and West. This paper will consider the relation between cultural tradition and the conflict based upon the identity of traditions. In modern societies the cultural horizons as the basis of understanding and interpretation, lead to conflicts between different peoples. Even in different communities people do not easily have real tolerance. We lack the idea of co-existence or sharing one world. Hans-Georg Gadamer's *Truth and Method*,<sup>1</sup> talked about *Bildung*. Here we would like to use this concept in regard to tolerance and for re-constructing a cultural whose with many different cultural contrasts.

### From the *Bildung* Culture to the *Bildung* of Difference:

According to Gadamer, one is formed through *Bildung*, that is, people learn from their traditions about cultural performance. We speak and write according to the grammar of our language; the meanings of our speech are not grammar itself, but through this we attend directly to signification. *Bildung* is a part in our life which transforms us. When we interpret this by acting or speaking we participate in establishing the culture. Between cultures and human beings there is a hermeneutic circle passing through *Bildung*.

Thus the linguistic history of *Bildung* introduces us to the circle of historical ideas that Hegel first introduced into the realm of "first philosophy." He worked out astutely the nature of *Bildung*, which he saw as the condition of the existence of philosophy (and, we may add, the human sciences, *Geisteswissenschaften*), inasmuch as *Geist* (spirit) is connected essentially with *Bildung*.<sup>2</sup>

Hence *Bildung*, is a basis task for man, for through each culture people form their own spirit, in which they identify themselves as who they are and how they differ from others. From *Bildung* one gets one's cultural identity. The universal nature of human *Bildung* can constitute itself as a universal intellectual being. It has two dimensions in *Bildung*: it both gives us the possibility of forming the world around us, and forms itself in our world. The same is true of activities of interpretation. For example, in contemporary Taiwanese-Chinese cultures people let the tradition form all their behavior, but there exists at the same time the reality or being of formation, too. *Bildung* forms in contemporary Chinese society a *Bildung*, and we can never ignore the existence of a consciousness of universality in Chinese culture. As Gadamer said:

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<sup>1</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1975), pp. 9-18.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

In self-awareness the working consciousness contains all the elements that constitute practical *Bildung*: the distancing from the immediacy of desire, of personal need and of private interest, and the exacting demand of a universal.

Indeed in the process of interpreting actual activities, a subject also faces the universality of Chinese culture. It is strange that we identify ourselves as Chinese in contemporary Chinese society, for we act and dress as in all other cities in the world, we even think and figure out problems of life with a strongly capitalistic mind; how then can we identify ourselves as Chinese?

In recent years, such concepts as Chinese and Taiwanese have become dangerous in our society, for there are many conflicts between Taiwanese and mandarin families. In our society, there are two periods of ideological changes in value systems after 1949. Recently, in Taiwan society people identify themselves as Taiwanese-Chinese, except for a more extreme political party which insists on being independent. Most people are very confused since we are not so different than the Chinese in China, but for political reasons need to be differentiated as a people. There are also some changes in social structures which came from changes in our economic level.

In the process of interpretation with regard to both economic and political changes, we are in the process of *Bildung* of contemporary Chinese culture in Taiwan. No matter what the kind of family in Taiwan, it acts first as an economic animal, and then as a Taiwanese-Chinese. Contemporary Taiwanese society is afraid of cultural universality, and answers to questions of culture depend upon who are the listeners.

In this situation the cultural conflict between Taiwanese and mandarin cultures is even more serious than before, for cultural conflict is always dangerous and violent when one refuses to face it. Our society lacks a single identity; the two kinds of cultures differ in values. These differences are not simply like two languages, for the mandarin people who escaped to a strange society are from 36 different regions of China. And though Taiwanese families have been here for more than three generations, they have great difficulty in accepting different cultures. Of course, because of inter-marriage and foreign education, etc., one now hardly finds pure Taiwanese or mandarin persons. But generally most of Taiwanese wish to be known first as Taiwanese and then as Chinese; the younger generation has two cultures and is closer to a universal human ideal than Chinese.

In such a contemporary Taiwanese-Chinese society with its conflicts over cultural identity is it possible to achieve one's identity by a hermeneutic re-unification of the two different cultures into one totality? We will trace the hermeneutic process in search of the possibility of re-establishing a cultural whole. Only by searching for one cultural whole can people in a society with more than two cultures hope to find real tolerance for one another. In the next section, we will discuss the relation between hermeneutics and praxis. As the *Bildung* of cultural interpretation can only be accomplished after we face the *Bildung* of *Bildung*, people should first identify differences and then the relation of the two different cultures. In the place of violent critiques to the other culture, we should accept that without its existence, we cannot identify as "we".

Thus, in the moment of our cultural formation, one gets also the possibility of difference, for we can differentiate from other cultures only by considering our own cultural self-understanding. In Taiwan, when people have more political parties they get the feeling of being Taiwanese in contrast to being Chinese. This is not from food or dress, but from interests, which are the real basis of such phenomena as the Taiwanese style of food or mandarin taste. Taiwanese people want to act differently than Chinese, in order to satisfy their need for their own existence. A culture that is very narrow usually refuses to be changed by other cultures; it can maintain itself well and not allow changes. Thus, Japan is very special and beautiful, but will not make space for another

culture to enter the society. In such a situation, there is not real tolerance between the different cultures.

### **Praxis in Interpretation and the Possibility of Tolerance**

For Gadamer hermeneutics is not directed toward devising a “method”; it is not concerned with the scientific control of understanding and interpretation but with human beings arriving at intellectually respectable conclusions. When we use it as a mode of approach to a different culture, we are able to situate ourselves within a tradition.<sup>3</sup> Hermeneutics is a theory of the actual experience of thinking. Here understanding itself is not considered so much as an action of human subjectivity, for Gadamer is aiming at the process. He is concerned to enter into the occurrence of transmission, in which both past and present are mediated. What must be appreciated through hermeneutic theory is that we are always in history and tradition. When some understanding emerges from the process, it is like a product of history. The method gives us the content of understanding, and when we consider its formation we face the understanding itself in the same moment. To understand something means to be related at once to a tradition out of which “things” speak; this he calls the language of tradition.<sup>4</sup>

The same situation takes place in the moment we interpret cultural differences. We begin the interpretation from understanding; and when we have understood some cultural conditions from some point of view, we must then face understanding itself as a being, too; we must dialogue both with differences and with the action of differentiation. In the conversation with tradition, no one can guide the situation; we think together with the text of the cultures, which Gadamer called the subject matter of the interchange. We exchange with our text and the tradition behind it.<sup>5</sup>

If we take cultures as texts, understanding is the way we make decisions within the cultural tradition. Hence in a society with many cultures, and whose cultural texts do not take place naturally but come through very rapid political changes, the society will have even more difficult conflicts. Because people lack sufficient time to develop dialogue in real hermeneutic circle, conflicts begin, and will remain in society. We need then mediation between cultural texts and the praxis itself; cultural texts being discourses fixed by history, and praxis being their application.

In application, a real interpretation which can establish cultural integrity must proceed by dialogue between the two participants in the conflict. In the case of Taiwanese society, with both a Taiwanese and a mandarin cultural text, we complete the circle by traveling in both the part and the whole; hence we must consider a question in both Taiwanese and mandarin style. The praxis of interpretation between differences can produce new differences. When these exist we will feel an essential need for a real cultural whole.

If an hermeneutic view can make possible tolerance between two cultures, then such praxis is not just a process of understanding and interpretation, but the Greek philosophical spirit of praxis as phronesis.<sup>6</sup>

### **Interpretive Whole and Tolerance**

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<sup>3</sup> Robert Hollinger, edit., *Hermeneutics and Praxis* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985), p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics* (Paris: Vrin, 1986), Book A, 980, b22, see also *Thique Nicomaque* (Paris, Vrin, 1994), VI, 5, 1140, b5.

In the process of interpretation, the subject must first dialogue with his own culture for when one interprets an object, one moves from the tradition of one's education, social world, and even some tragedy in one's life. But it is impossible that an interpreting subject stay only in one tradition, for as interpretation, he must converse with the horizon of object and its creator. When he understands it, he is in a fusion of horizons with many parts of this totality. For Gadamer understanding is always a fusion<sup>7</sup> of horizons which supposedly exist by themselves: we never have a present horizon without a past. In the process of cultural interpretation, we must always face the past as well as the cultural text which manifests itself now before our eyes. If in contemporary society, we have cultural interpretations which want to break with the past, this is only for some deep political purpose. This kind of interpretation ignores the possibility of establishing co-existence in a new cultural totality, but separates from every part everything which differs from their own cultural text. In other words, they interpret culture as having only one version, namely, their own version written according to their own interests. This is a violent interpretation as it rejects dialogue with others. It works only for some special subjects, who know well that it is possible to have a new cultural whole but that in this they will have less power than now.

The only way to establish a new cultural horizon in the hermeneutic circle is to interpret each other with sincere sympathy. This gives both subjects a chance to enter a different cultural context, so that each subject gets a new and unique horizon. Such interpretation has real possibilities for *Bildung*, that is, for reforming the formation of each subject's own tradition and history.

For Gadamer, to understand that something is questionable is itself to be already questioning. The voice from our cultural past, always speaks to us when we are interpreting; it poses a question and opens the meaning of a text.<sup>8</sup> The beginning of real tolerance in the hermeneutics of Gadamer is the possibility of a fusion of cultural horizons. Our discussion thus far indicates that we can have tolerance only when we achieve a fusion of horizons in facing different cultural texts. We can share one life-world with others only when we achieve a shared understanding, and this fusion comes with an interest in questioning the others.

In the process of interpreting cultures the subject faces one cultural text and begins his questioning in the context of the house of one's cultural language: a cultural discourse fixed by those who have interpreted before this moment. The subject's understanding arises from his questioning and diverges from the version of the writer who was subject to an earlier time of interpretation; the same subject here is both listener to the cultural text and speaker of his own understanding. When he begins to act in the next moment, his existence will be his interpretation. Here we use the word "existence" only because that interpretation can be any kind of text: handcraft, work of art, or even a period of silence. Any performance after understanding can be a text for understanding the cultural text.

If we achieve understanding through questioning and listening, we can know the difference in meaning between us and the writer who is already in history. Between different cultural texts, human beings can get harmony only through a fusion of horizons in the interpretation of cultures, but this fusion can also be re-identified as a past fusion. The subject should ask again and again, but only one who asks with a sincere interest in understanding has tolerance in the process of interpretation. Tolerance is a concept which can be realized only by interpreting and facing the difference; one who interprets only with his present cultural text cannot have real tolerance because

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<sup>7</sup> Gadamer, *ibid.*, pp. 306-307.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 374-375.

he will criticize immediately. Only when he learns to question and to listen to the text, can he achieve some fusion of horizons which will enable the real sincerity of tolerance. This is not mere toleration; when we understand the distance between two cultural texts and choose not to destroy the other but to listen to its different meaning, and even seek the original reason of this difference, then we are tolerant. Toleration means that the subject cannot dialogue with the text, but only repeat it and passively accept what it presents; the subject tolerates the meaning of the writer, but cannot find a way out of it. Thus he or she has only the meaning inside the context. In tolerance, in contrast, the subject can grasp two different versions, one in the text and the other his own, like the *Bildung* of meaning and *Bildung* itself; thus the subject can advance from the text and approach the future. The subject who has tolerance in interpretation can recognize the intention in his object and can look back to himself, thereby interpreting the difference between the cultural history of the writer and his own position. As he is in formation in reading and understanding, his understanding gives him tolerance of the different cultural text and his interpretation represents this understanding.

The tolerant upon completing his interpretation can appreciate the distance between him and the text which is fixed by history. If, however, a person insists on an interpretation in the beginning of this process, he does not interpret, because he does not encounter the text, but confronts it with his ideology, or with some motive or mission. Since he did not listen to this object, we may say simply that he interpreted another object, but not this one.

## **Postlude**

Whether in the East or the West, whether in ancient or modern society, when one begins to interpret an object, we have the chance to face difference. It is not difference which engenders cultural conflict, but the attitude of refusing to really interpret another being. In past human history, we already have enough disasters. Is it really so difficult to understand another; is it really so necessary to criticize, even to destroy a different culture by killing or fighting? Unfortunately, as human beings we have wreaked a lot of destruction. We need to begin to think thus: tolerance will not come automatically, but will exist only through interpretation based on a desire of a fusion of horizons with another human being. In this desire, people enter the process of forming and reforming.

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## Chapter XIX

# The Historical Roots of Tolerance and Liberalism in Lithuania

*Dalia Marija Stanciene*

The unanticipated and unexpected disintegration of the Eastern Block and the Soviet Union went differently in the various parts of that huge conglomerate of countries. In some places it took a violent character, in others it went peacefully. What caused the difference? The question is natural since the disintegration was generally connected with an upsurge of nationalism. But if nationalism was the main efficient cause of the disintegration, then we must admit that the same cause causes had different effects. Hence the conclusion follows that the differences are the results of some additional factors, which participated in the process. It is not difficult to guess that among those additional factors concrete historical, cultural and religious heritages are the most important.

Lithuania is a multinational and multireligious country. It played one of the leading part in the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The upsurge of nationalism was powerful and the reactionary communists in Vilnius as well as in Moscow tried hard to use the nationalism of the Russian and Polish minorities in Lithuania for their own purposes, from preventing decision from the Soviet Union to the initiation of civil unrest and dividing the country. Fortunately, they failed in all these attempts up to the point that in the very critical moments the minorities actively supported the Lithuanians. Therefore the restoration of Lithuanian independence went relatively smoothly without noticeable internal ethnic and national conflicts. Independence constitutionally established the equality of all nationalities and religious beliefs in the country. But this was not something new for Lithuania; on the contrary, it was a continuation of the old Lithuanian cultural and political tradition, which, though interrupted for 50 years by the Soviets, survived deep in the spirituality of the nation.

This report is a modest attempt to review some cultural, religious and political factors of the tolerance and liberalism as they appeared in the Lithuanian past, but my aim is better to understand the present.

In response to economic and political developments, the sciences came to Lithuania during the late Middle Ages. Young nobles used to go abroad to study in universities where they created their own brotherhoods and clubs. During the 14th to 17th centuries, Lithuanians studied in the universities of Prague, Krakow, Konigsberg, Jena, Tubingen, Heidelberg, Graz, Basel, Geneva, Louvain, Strasbourg, Paris, Bologna, and Padua. There are 2000 names of students from Lithuania in the matriculation lists of the above-mentioned universities.<sup>1</sup>

A great number graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Liberal Arts or Master of Philosophy. Some became professors of their colleges and universities: for example, A. Cirskis (1660) was a professor in Regensburg (Germany), P. Vaiciunas taught physics in Antwerpen, A. Virvicius taught poetics in Viterbe and Macherala in Italy.<sup>2</sup>

But in Lithuania itself there were no opportunities for the development of philosophy because of the lack of a proper school. The religious conflicts within Western Christianity changed this. In order to stop the spread of the Reformation and the Aryan heresy, the bishop of Vilnius,

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<sup>1</sup> R. Pleckaitis, *Feodalizmo laikotarpio filosofija Lietuvoje (Philosophy in Medieval Lithuania)* (Vilnius: Mintis, 1975), p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

Valerijonas Protasevicius (1504-1579) invited the Jesuits to Vilnius in 1569. The next year the Jesuits established a college in Vilnius where they began to teach scholastic philosophy in 1571. In 1579 the college was transformed into a university in which five departments of philosophy were established: the departments of metaphysics, logic, ethics, mathematics, and history.

Soon Vilnius University became one of the most important and influential schools in Northern Europe. Not only Lithuanians and Poles studied there, but also Latvians, Belorussians, Ukrainians, Germans, Spaniards, Italians, French, Swedes, Hungarians, Greeks, and Tatars. The teaching faculty was also international.

For instance, Petrus Viana (1550-1609) was a Spaniard, Joannes Schwang (1637-1710) and Nicolaus Stadtfeld (1570-1612) were both Germans, Joannes Baptista Andriani (1604-1675) was an Italian, Gorgonius Ageison (1609-1665) was a Dane, Zigymantas Liauksminas (1597-1670), Petras Kojalavicius (1622-1654), Kristupas P. Einoravicius (1644-1714), Adomas Abramavičius (1710-1780) were Lithuanians.<sup>3</sup>

The first generation of professional philosophers in Lithuania was educated within the Thomistic tradition. Scholasticism thrived in Lithuania until the middle of the 18th century.

As far back as the second part of the 16th century Lithuania had become a center of religious tolerance in Europe. In 1563, the Lithuanian parliament granted freedom of practice to all religious confessions without exception.

This religious freedom was the cause of differences among these confessions. Not only the Catholics and Protestants were involved in polemics with each other but also the Orthodox and Jews. There were also small communities of Muslim Tartars and Karaims, who had their own separate religion, based on the Old Testament. Under those conditions of political and public tolerance, religious pluralism resulted with the flourishing of culture: the capital of Lithuania became a center of printing: one of the printing pioneers, the eminent Belarussian thinker Francis Skoryna, printed his first books here; Ivan Fiodorow reestablished his printing business in Vilnius after it was destroyed by fanatics in Moscow. Because of political and legislated religious tolerance, Vilnius became a center of Jewish culture in Northern Europe.

These and many other facts allow us to maintain that in the 16th century the political, legal, and cultural development of the state began, which led to granting human rights and respecting individual freedom. Unfortunately, the expansionism of Russian, Prussian and Austro-Hungarian monarchies put an end to the democratic aspirations of Lithuania. Also it hindered the development of the Lithuanian national consciousness.

The written native language is one of the most important factors in the development of national consciousness. In 1547 in Königsberg, a Protestant priest, Martynas Mazvydas (1510-1563) wrote and printed the first book in Lithuanian “The Simple Words of the Catechism. . . .”<sup>4</sup>

Almost 50 years later Father Mikalojus Daukša (1527-1613) issued the Catholic catechism in Lithuanian. These events initiated the development of the Lithuanian national consciousness. We can therefore say that this development was begun by competition between Protestantism and Catholicism. The latter not only initiated, but also provided the means for the preservation of the national identity. For example, after the incorporation of Lithuania into the Russian Empire the Russian authorities promoted the policy of Russification along with the encouragement of Orthodoxy. In this case the competition between Orthodoxy and Catholicism was beneficial to national development: the Catholic clergy widely used the argument that by preserving

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<sup>3</sup> M. Biržiška, *Senasis Vilniaus universitetas (The Old University of Vilnius)* (London: Nida press, 1955), p. 15, and also R. Plekaitis, *Philosophy in Medieval Lithuania*, pp. 404-490.

<sup>4</sup> Ignas Šeinius, *Vasaros vaišės/Kuprelis (The Summer Feast)* (Vilnius: Vaga, 1970), pp. 294-296.

Catholicism the Lithuanian people preserved their national identity. In the 19th century, the Catholic bishop Motiejus Valancius (1801-1875) urged the Lithuanian peasants not only to remain faithful to the Catholic Church, but also to live according to its high moral standards and to seek education in their native language. As a result, the ban on written Lithuanian, imposed by Tsar Alexander II in 1866, was not successful. On the contrary, it stimulated the struggle of Lithuania for its own national school, which at that time was an underground school. Naturally this struggle strengthened the feeling of national identity and further developed national consciousness.

On the other hand, this struggle focused Lithuanian thought too strongly on political issues. Therefore, it was up to professional philosophers to correct this. Due to the above-mentioned processes, Lithuania had a basis for cultural and political development when, after the revolution of 1905, the restrictions which had been imposed upon national development, were lifted. Soon after the revolution, Lithuanians established their own national scientific society, opera, and art institutions. On this basis, the modernization of national consciousness began and a new generation of intellectuals was educated. Against the background of political and cultural oppression, the conflict between freedom and tyranny was the most important problem for philosophical thought. As far back as 1912, Ignas Šeinius wrote: "People already feel the call of freedom within their own souls: that freedom, which is a source of creativity. . . . Nevertheless, we are still not sure which way to go, as if we had just woken up. Some of us abuse freedom, wounding ourselves and others. Others use it to unite all the disoriented people and enslave them again. Freedom is only the means for the improvement of ourselves and others, but only a few men know this truth."<sup>5</sup>

The Lithuanian Catholic thinker Antanas Maceina (1908-1987)<sup>5</sup> looks at freedom through the prism of the Christian faith. He maintains that, "the essence of freedom could be grasped only within its relation to God, that is, only when the idea of freedom is treated as religious."<sup>6</sup> God, according to Maceina, is the source and guarantor of human freedom: "Religion starts at the moment when man as a person meets God the person."<sup>7</sup> In this way, Maceina makes the distinction between the ontological and anthropological approaches to the analysis of freedom.

This enables him to separate himself from existentialism, especially in treating the opposition between necessity and freedom, the central problem of Western philosophy from Aristotle to Hume. Maceina attempts to rehabilitate necessity and to reconcile it with freedom. He sees necessity as belonging to nature: "Nature is a realm of necessity in which we are living as free entities and trying to realize our freedom. Since necessity is the negation of freedom, one who acts from necessity is not free. Then how is it possible to realize freedom within the realm of necessity?"<sup>8</sup> Defining necessity as a notion of nature, Maceina concludes that man prepares the possibility of freedom by inquiring about and understanding nature and, at the same time, necessity. "Understanding necessity is the precondition of freedom, and transformed necessity is realized freedom."<sup>9</sup>

At first man understands nature as necessity and then he masters it. Thus, nature understood, transformed and mastered is called "culture." As a process, culture is history, or, as Maceina puts it: "Culture includes all the space of man's existence, which expands in all directions and so the

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<sup>5</sup> He received his Ph.D. in 1934 and studied at the Universities of Kaunas, Louvain, Freiburg, Strasburg and Bruxelles. In 1944, before the Soviet Army occupied Lithuania he left for the West. He was a professor at Freiburg and Muenster Universities.

<sup>6</sup> Antanas Maceina, *Dievas ir laisvė (God and Freedom)*, (Chicago, "Ateitis", 1985), p. vii.

<sup>7</sup> Antanas Maceina, *Jobo drama (Drama of Job)* (Freiburg: Venta, 1950), p. 191.

<sup>8</sup> A. Maceina, *Dievas ir laisvė*, p. 42.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

creation of culture becomes the chronological process of history.”<sup>10</sup> In turn, history becomes the uninterrupted process of the realization of freedom, or in other words: “The history of humankind is the history of freedom.” This is the anthropological dimension of freedom.

But in the ontological dimension freedom appears as openness,<sup>11</sup> which Maceina treats in a scholastic manner. Man is free because he is “the image and likeness” of God.<sup>12</sup> In other words, freedom ontologically understood is the divine element in man and in his activity, and creativity in man resembles that of the Creator. Maceina maintains that to create is to interpret, which is possible because created things are open. This is due to the fact that they came into being through freedom and express freedom. There is a difference here between a created thing and one which is necessary. The latter is fully defined, completed, and closed; therefore, the natural phenomenon can be only investigated. In contrast, the created object, which came into being through freedom, is open for interpretation.

Further, man is united with his world, since both are created by God. When abstracted from each other, both lose their meaning: the world of pure necessity has no meaning, since necessity is blind; and man, when thought of without the world, becomes powerless, since he has no place and means for the realization of his freedom.<sup>13</sup>

The Lithuanian philosopher, Juozas Girnius (1915-1994),<sup>14</sup> a contemporary of Maceina, devotes much attention to the same problem. *Freedom and Being* was his first published book (Brooklyn, 1953). But even as far back as 1938, while studying at the Sorbonne and the College de France, J. Girnius decided to devote his Ph.D. to an analysis of the philosophy of Karl Jaspers with whom he made personal acquaintance and spent long hours in conversation.

Girnius regards freedom as a human and personal value. He did not pay much attention to abstract free will, but was engaged in the analysis of freedom as a basis for humanism and personal dignity. This was the central issue of his thought; and he asked: what has man to do in order to express and realize his own humanity? His answer was: to participate in the creation of culture, which is the expression and the embodiment of human freedom.

Following Karl Jaspers and Martin Heidegger, Girnius relates the meaning of life to mortality. “When death calls”, writes Girnius, “one must leave behind not only this world but also all one’s exploits and works.”<sup>15</sup> To the question of the ultimate meaning of human life,<sup>16</sup> Girnius answers that even death cannot deprive man of what he was, therefore “the ultimate vocation of man is the creation of his own self.”<sup>17</sup> “Creativity” is the category which makes it possible to reveal the meaning of freedom for Girnius as well as for Maceina.

At the beginning, speaking about freedom, both philosophers share the Christian creationistic view, but they develop it differently. Girnius tries to reconcile the principles of the existential

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

<sup>14</sup> He received his Ph.D. in 1951 at Montreal University, Canada and studied also at the Universities of Kaunas, Louvain, Freiburg, and Paris. In 1944, before the Soviet Army occupied Lithuania, he left for Germany where he worked as a teacher in a camp for deported persons. In 1949 he left for the USA and from 1953 to 1969 was the editor of the *Lithuanian Encyclopedia*, and from 1965 to 1980 editor of the journal *Aidai*.

<sup>15</sup> Juozas Girnius, *Zmogus be Dievo (Man Without God)* (Chicago, I Laisve Fondo lietuviškai kulturai ugdyti, 1964), p. 346.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 346.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 346.

philosophy of Jaspers with Thomistic metaphysics. He maintains that independent human reason can reach the first cause, God. But, since human reason is limited, whereas God is beyond all limits, reason cannot comprehend Him but only confess Him. Even after the proof of God's existence is accepted as valid, one still needs to find God for oneself, that is, one is still free to believe or not to believe. Or, as Girnius puts it: "In spite of the reliability of the proof of God's existence, man can find God by means of faith alone."

Freedom of choice seen through an ethical prism presupposes the existence of moral values and rests upon them. It is not only freedom that makes human acts valuable but, on the contrary, "The realization of values through free acts makes freedom itself valuable."<sup>18</sup> As the basis of humanity, freedom is one of the fundamental conditions for a valuable human activity within the definite limits of space and time, that is within history.

There is no morality without freedom, but at the same time that "freedom itself has no moral value, since it can serve for good and for evil equally."<sup>19</sup> It is possible to preserve the positive value of freedom only by conscious faithfulness to what is invariable and valuable. Hence Girnius develops his conception of freedom against the background of rational moral choice, for which, he was criticized by Maceina.<sup>20</sup> The latter argued that the problems of God and freedom are insoluble within the limits of human reason alone. Though Girnius does not reject the metaphysical proof of God's existence, he concentrates his attempts upon human choice and maintains in his *Man Without God* that the unbeliever also realizes man's freedom, and in this negative way gives witness to God. In a sense Maceina agrees with this statement of Girnius, while at the same time underlining that on this anthropological level we can observe only the appearance of freedom, not its essence. Thus, Maceina remains with the traditional scholastic hierarchy of philosophical disciplines in which there is no place for indifferent freedom, nothing to say about an evil one: whereas Girnius suggests that indifference can be overcome only by moral values.

On the basis of this comparison of the two Lithuanian philosophers we can infer that there may be no real possibility to reconcile existentialism with Thomistic philosophy.

This short review indicates some roots of the Lithuanian tolerance, intellectual, political, legislative and religions. We conclude that elements of tolerance and liberalism were traditional for Lithuania. These provided a foundation for modern Lithuanian tolerance and smoothed the process of restoration of independence.

*Vilnius, Lithuania*

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 307.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 308.

<sup>20</sup> Antanas Maceina, *Laiskas Aidu redaktoriui Juozui Girniui (Letter to the Editor)* of *Aidai Juozas Girnius*, 10 (1965), p. 445.



## Chapter XX

# The Orthodox Church and Ethno-Religious Tolerance in Romania

*Magdalena Dumitrana*

Though Romanian is a Latin language and the words “tolerance”, “to tolerate” derive from the Latin vocabulary (*tolero, -are* and *tolerantia, -ae*, for Rom. *a tolera* and *toleran a*), they came quite late to the Romanian language, entering as neologisms. The explanation of this is that the Latin meaning, far from the present acceptation refers to “to hold, to carry a weight, to resist, to cope with” for which there were corresponding terms in Romanian, of Latin and non-Latin etymology.<sup>1</sup>

The neologism “to tolerate” with its family of words, came from the French, meaning “to accept an object, fact, idea that deviates from the norm<sup>2</sup> but remains within admissible limits. Beyond these limits intolerance intervenes, as a rejection of the lack of measure. In this context the original sense of intolerance is also positive: What is removed is not the object different from norm but the object different from value. Modern developments have so enlarged the significations of the expressions tolerance -- intolerance until it has become confused, and in any case no longer bespeaks a moral criterion.

At the same time, paradoxically, the content and use of the concepts were simplified; as a rule, to be tolerant means to bear everything and to be intolerant means to resist, reject or even to be violent. Consequently, to be tolerant means to be good; being intolerant is mean. This is very simple, but ethically it is dangerous, for very quickly the conclusion can be drawn that any resistance is a sign of intolerance and therefore to be avoided. Thus rejection being a priori blameworthy, a tolerant person abdicates all discrimination and agrees that there is no such thing as good or bad, but only “different”.

A good illustration of this dilemma is the snake story as told by Ramakrishna:

A terrible poisonous snake lived in a meadow. All the people were afraid of him and mostly the boys who used to tend their cows in that place. One day a brahmachari was going along the meadow. The snake attacked him but the holy man recited a mantra and the snake laid at his feet like an earth-worm. Then he taught the snake a holy word and initiated him into spiritual life. “Repeat that sacred word, the brahmachari said, and do no harm to anybody”. And he added “I shall see you again”. Some days passed and the cowherd boys noticed that the snake would not bite. They threw stones at him. Still he showed no anger, but he behaved as if he were an earthworm. One day one of the boys came close to him, caught him by the tail and whirling him round and round, dashed him again and again on the ground and threw him away. The snake vomited blood and became unconscious. It was stunned and could not move. Thinking him dead, the boys went their way. Late at night the snake regained consciousness. Slowly and with great difficulty he dragged itself into its hole; its bones were broken and its could scarcely move. Many days passed. The snake became a mere skeleton covered with a skin. Since receiving the sacred

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<sup>1</sup> Gheorghe Gutu, *Dictionar latin-român* (Latin-Roman Dictionary) (Bucuresti: Editura, Stiintifica si Enciclopedica, 1983), p. 1229.

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionarul limbii române moderne* (the Dictionary of the Romanian Modern Language) (Bucuresti: Editura Academiei R.P.R., 1968), p. 867.

word from the teacher, it had given up doing harm to others. It maintained its life on dirt, leaves or the fruits that dropped from the trees. About a year later the brahmachari came that way again and asked after the snake. Hearing the teacher's voice, it came out of his hole and bowed before him with great reverence. But, the teacher asked: Why are you so thin? It can't be mere want of food that has reduced you to this state; there must be some other reason! The snake said: The boys one day dashed me violently against the ground. How could they know I wouldn't bite or harm anyone? The brahmachari exclaimed: What a shame! you are such a fool! You don't know how to protect yourself. I asked you not to bite, but I didn't forbid you to hiss. And Ramakrishna concluded: So, you must hiss at wicked people. You must frighten them lest they should do you harm. But never inject your venom into them.<sup>3</sup>

The parable of the snake is a clear example of what have to be the normal limits of a tolerant behaviour: understanding, patience, self-transformation for the good of others -- but not to subject oneself to self-destruction in the name of pseudo-values. From this point of view, tolerance has no value and no object. There are concepts and special words that allow nuances of phenomena which otherwise are treated generally but also permit a moral axis. In our times, tolerant behaviors usually refer to acts or deeds, psychologically eliminating, more or less deliberately, moral values from the field of discussion at least to make them appear relative and hence easier and close to disappearance. The generalization of the word "different" and the directive to allow "everything" that differs from oneself are philosophical sophisms and pseudo-civic values meant to justify psycho-social manipulations.

If the term "tolerance" cannot be avoided, then, it must be re-defined from an honest position. We shall understand by tolerance an acceptance of differences, patience and permissiveness towards those who express these differences in their lives, together with an effort at their rational understanding and emotional forbearance, but without the obligation to incorporate or be limited by them. In addition it is compulsory to discriminate between "the different good" and the "different bad" and not to accept the latter.

The principle of tolerance necessarily implies admission of the existence of an original aggression: physically or ideally there always is a certain interference by one individual with another by the mere fact that the first is different from the second. The degrees of aggression vary as do the perception and reaction on the part of the one aggressed who can feel a need for self-defense. Aggression in discussions does not necessarily imply violence, but it manifests itself in subtle ways such as demands for adhering to values, principles, ideas, institutions and social systems, very often in the name of "human rights". In this last case it is not rare for the aggressor to hide in the form of a victim.

There is no possible way out of this conflict without ethical criteria for a correct definition of the aggressor. In a word, tolerance must be framed in a moral field.

### *Institutions and Tolerance*

There are many aspects to this issue. Tolerance within institutions or the institutionalization of tolerance can be both simple word games and very serious. The question is which institution is or has to be made responsible for promoting and monitoring tolerance?

As noted, the confusion concerning what is and is not tolerance/intolerance can be dispelled only through clear moral norms. Such norms and models cannot be expected from political

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<sup>3</sup> *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (New York: Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 1984), pp. 85-86.



institutions, at which level there are only different degrees of compromise according to temporary interests.

Focusing on the basic institutions: school, family and church, in present day school and church seem most capable of providing the criteria for the ethical concept of tolerance and related moral behaviour.

The family, the traditional bearer of values subject to steady erosion, turning itself slowly into a slogan with utilitarian functions. The pressure to which individuals are subjected impels them to fight first for their survival -- physical or psychical. Competition in all spheres of daily life, generated mainly by pragmatic and financial interests, opens bearers of intolerance (the young are preferred to adults, men to women, singles to those married, etc.) suppressing from the beginning the idea of acceptance and cooperation. The adult members of a family are responsible for the welfare of their own family; this is the main value they can teach and the first rule according to which the family maintains its function.

Like family, school in turn is subject to financial and political pressures of the power structures. At the present moment, the ideology defended by school is disrupted by transitory interests. The only identifiable fragments are those belonging to tradition, but these are hindered in their effects by accusations of conservatism. Though disturbances continue, in the end the school will be able to assume the defence of an ideology, but right now the moral basis of this ideology is difficult to foresee.

A last institution remains to be considered, namely the church or more specifically the Orthodox Church. This one begins with a few important advantages.

First, unlike other Churches, the Orthodox Church is not deeply involved in politics. Inevitably, it has been touched by the ideological traits of different regimes. Nonetheless, the Romanian Orthodox Church always has been outside of political preoccupations in both senses -- from church to politics and from politics to church. It was a victim of the communism, but was not destroyed by it. It knew periods of development, but does not have ambitions to the political direction of social life. Its actions and interests were far less influenced by the different political games and upheavals, compared to other sectors of civil society; a certain consistency can be found in the ideas promoted by the church. This is important for trust on the part of believers because the spiritual guidance of the Church is exerted not upon the political and financial class, but upon the mass of the population outside of and subject to the intolerant forces of political and financial interests. In this way the norms promoted by the church have a chance to become the bonds of the social infrastructure through open acceptance and clear adhesion by individuals to religious values.

A second important advantage of the Romanian Orthodox Church derives from the persecutions and deprivations suffered during the communist regime. They were harsh enough to awaken sorrow, sympathy, compassion and trust in the priests as transmitters of real values; at the same time they were not so harsh as completely to destroy the external material support (priests, church buildings, icons, Bibles) that stimulate the desire for belief and religion. In Romania, the communist leaders did not dare to raze to the ground all churches, to eliminate all monasteries, the Metropolitanate or the Theological Seminary and the Faculty of Theology. The destructions which did take place were carried out either at the order of the Soviet masters initially or under the sick phantasms of Ceausescu. It must not be forgotten however that Nicolae Ceausescu organized his parents' obsequies with great religious pomp, and the madness of destruction which came upon him towards the end of his reign was aimed not especially against the Church, but against the village, humane studies and the Church. This seemed to be a personal fight against the soul in its

different hypostases, a manifestation of atheistic conduct before his intuition of spiritual immortality, not less characteristic than the behaviour of those who ordered him killed.

This Orthodox spirit which never left Romanians is confirmed today by the phenomenon that in the villages, where the church functioned relatively regularly during the communist regime, there is now a decrease in the number present at religious services, whereas in towns, where the surveillance and interdictions were much stronger by contrast, there is a great affluence of peoples in the churches.

A third advantage of the Orthodox Church is the massive presence of intellectuals within trends of religious thinking, especially in the humanistic approaches, in art and literature. There is much less open adhesion to religion among teachers, which is important in evaluating the school's capacity to explain and demonstrate the moral model of tolerance.

A fourth advantage of the Romanian Orthodox Church is that it is already in possession of the models of tolerant behaviour.

### *Tolerance Patterns*

These models of Christian tolerance are visible on a number of levels:

- biblical norms
- behaviour of the clergy
- secular history in its Christian aspects
- the Romanian Christian psychology.

It is premature to approach the first level of the biblical norms and examples. Hardly coming out of a regime of which the fundamental premise was atheism and hardly entering a new period of political transformations in which Christian norms yet have no place, the common people bear distrusts from the previous epoch and have been hurt by intolerant financial and political action. Lacking minimum biblical culture, these people, are not prepared for Christian discourse.

Things are similar regarding the model of tolerance expressed by the behavior of the clergy and monks, but it also is peculiar due to certain characteristics of the Romanian people's opinion regarding priests. Romanians have always manifested a rather critical attitude in the sense that the clergy's good conduct passes unnoticed as normal, but in contrast its faults and weaknesses are extremely harshly judged; folk stories, poems and anecdotes are full of ridicule of priests. This is not atheism or lack of respect, but a regular critical attitude of the Romanian peasant towards the whole community in which he lives. For him the priest is, first of all, a member of the community having duties to observe; he is not above the rules. In the same time, in the Romanian village the priest and primary teacher enjoy the full confidence of the people, being considered guides of the community and judges of its deeds. Understandably this transition period with its subjective convulsions cannot be propitious for this pattern. But it is absolutely necessary that this model exist and be visible in daily life in order for the Orthodox Church as an institution to maintain its spiritual prerogatives.

The third possibility in shaping the tolerance concept structure is the utilization of the historical facts, especially those of so-called anecdotal facts, stories and even legends related to the life and opinions of historical personalities. Being closely linked to Christian attitudes, these facts have been ignored during the communist period. Their reappearance in historical consciousness not only will lead to a revival of the national memory and conscience too long

humiliated by exponents of the regime, but also will contribute to a Christian spiritual rebirth. A dignified mirror confers a new look to the one who mirrors oneself in it.

Over a long period of time the history of the Romanian people developed a fundamental attitude, explicit in all the Romanian chroniclers, namely, that it is not people, but God who makes history; who opposes God's will fails; and the people's sufferings are the effects of the ruler's sins and of a bad life. Some facts exemplify this propensity to Christian spirituality in the deeds of some Romanians kings.

In January 1475, Stephen the Great ( tefan cel Mare), the Moldavian ruler, won an important battle with his army of 40,000 soldiers against 120,000 Turkish soldiers. Afterwards he did not celebrate, but according to Jan Dlugosz, the Polish chronicler, Stephen the Great fasted for 40 days on bread and water, ordering that no one attribute to him this triumph, but only to the Lord, though all thought the victory due to Stephen.<sup>4</sup>

The same capacity to live in God is expressed by the High Steward Constantin Cantacuzino who wrote in 1690, in his *History*: "Great wickednesses did the devil to the Romanian nation from the very beginning of the world, from Adam our forefather, and the Romanians fell into sin". The wars and the invaders are only the effects of the people's acts as individuals and as nation. The chronicler thinks only with understanding and broad Christian tolerance when analyzing the cruelties and massacres to which the Romanians were repeatedly subjected by the armies of the Ottoman Empire: "But indeed, this is not their (the Ottomans') fault but the Romanians' because by themselves they wanted them (the Ottomans) and got them, as the Lord says: Who will seek, will find; the Romanians found, and very well indeed!"<sup>5</sup>

Another chronicler of 17th-century, speaking about the old times, affirms the same belief in God's will as embodied in worldly things: "One can know that Neagoe-Voivode (Neagoe Vod ) was a man with fear of God . . . due to the peace that the country had for nine years during his reign, and also due to the fact that he had agreements with all his neighbors". Neagoe-Voivode, being a true believer, had the power to perform miracles. The chronicler Radu Popescu relates as beyond doubt the following story: Radu-Voivode (Radu Vod ) began his rule wisely by putting himself and his crown under the guidance of the Holy Patriarch, Nifon. Later, however, he turned away from belief and good advice, chasing the Patriarch from the country. After Radu Voivode's death, the ruling prince was Neagoe Basarab, former court official during Radu's time and also a deep admirer and spiritual disciple of Nifon. He asked that the Patriarch Nifon's remains be brought to the monastery that sheltered Radu-Voivode's grave. Nobody was able to bring back Nifon's body until Neagoe put the holy man's relics over Radu's tomb and ordered more religious services. During a night mass lightning broke Radu Voivode's gravestone as one can see today and from the saint's body water entered Radu's tomb, washing the ruler's dead body, cleansing and forgiving it. That night Radu Voivode came to Neagoe in his dream to thank him for this good deed of bringing forgiveness.<sup>6</sup>

This Christian conception of history lies at the basis of the all chroniclers' narrations and guided the rulers of Romanian lands. It is one of the treasures waiting to be rediscovered by the Romanian Orthodox Church. The Christian spirit in the daily life of the political class of long ago

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<sup>4</sup> Simion Mehedinti, *Crestinismul românesc* (the Romanian Christianity) (Bucuresti: Fundatia Anastasia, 1995), pp. 98-99.

<sup>5</sup> Stolnicul Constantin Cantacuzino, *Istoria Tarii Românești* (the History of Wallachia) (Bucuresti: Editura Minerva, 1984), pp. 159, 163.

<sup>6</sup> Radu Popescu, *Istoriile domnilor Tarii Românești* (the Histories of the Rulers of Wallachia) (Bucure ti: Editura Minerva, 1984), pp. 42-43.

is a measure of the power of the Romanian church, not in the worldly sphere, but in the spiritual one.

Also in the series of historical facts, but more focused on civil rights, are the objective expressions of religious tolerance. Not all acts of tolerance are registered in official documents. It is characteristic for Romanians that good deeds are overlooked, because they are normal, while bad deeds are put on display. Of course, this feature has its own disadvantages. It should be remembered that the first edict of religious tolerance in the Roman-Byzantine Empire was given by Galerius in 311, whose mother was Dacia. The Dacians were a native population conquered by the Romans. However, they did not perish, but by assimilating both the Romans and Christians gave birth to the Romanian people.<sup>7</sup>

The Romanian countries Moldavia and Wallachia were the refuge lands for Hussites, for the Jews from Spain and for all those who were persecuted for their religious beliefs. One of the first positive remarks can be found in Rabbi Benjamin de Tudela's account, about 1170:

Beyond the river Sperchio is Wallachia of which the inhabitants, living in the mountains, call themselves Wallachians. . . . Nobody dares to face them in war and no king was able to conquer them. They do not really keep the Christian law, but give their children Hebrew names and call the Jews 'brothers.' This makes some people attribute them an Israelite origin. When they capture a Jew, they despoil but do not kill him.

Leaping over years, there are other testimonies about Romanian religious tolerance:

In the 16th century, Georg Reichersdorff, an Austrian ambassador in Moldavia at the Petru Rareș's royal court, noted: "There are here, different sects, kinds of religions and nations, Russians, Polish people, Armenians, Serbians, Bulgarians, Tartars, and not a few Saxons from Transylvania, living here and there under the Moldavian king's scepter. Without fighting each other all use all sorts of ceremonies and dogmas, every sect or nation having full liberty to follow its own rites and customs.

The Italian traveller Raicevich noted in 1788, in his work *Osservazioni intorno la Valacchia e Moldavia*, that "Every sect and religion is tolerated to practise its worship without any hinderance. In Wallachia there are many Franciscan monasteries. . . . In Bucharest there is a Lutheran church and a Jewish synagogue. . . . Being too numerous in Moldavia, the Israelites obtained the permission to have more temples."

As for Mahomedans, the documents show the existence in the 15th century and later of Tatar and Turkish colonies, subject to Orthodox rulers, but free in their religion.<sup>8</sup> After the Independence war of 1877 when Romanians liberated themselves completely from the Ottoman domination, there was no idea of revenge against the Muslims who remained within the borders of the state. "On the contrary, forgetting the villages burned, the inhabitants forced into slavery, and the churches plundered, Romanians allowed the descendants of their former enemies to live quietly, and even built mosques from the state budget and set up schools for their muftis' training".<sup>9</sup>

A fourth indication of tolerance is found at a deeper psychological level and regards the people's spirituality itself, of which the axis consists in Christian humaneness. The Romanian soul

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<sup>7</sup> Simion Mehedin i, p. 33.

<sup>8</sup> Bogdan Petriciscu Hasdeu, *Istoria Toleran ei Religioase în România* (the History of the Religious Tolerance in Romania) (Bucure ti: Editura Saeculum, 1992), pp. 49-50; 62-63; 74-75.

<sup>9</sup> Simion Mehedin i, p. 80.

has its genesis in Jesus's teachings; its beliefs and folklore are closely related to Christianity. The introduction of Christianity to Romania is a specific phenomenon, parallel with their ethnogenesis. Unlike all neighboring peoples, the Romanian people has no certain date of its Christianization. This work began in the first century and developed slowly through the inner adhesion of all individuals. Christianity was not imposed by order and did not know persecutions. It began in this part of the world with the teaching of the holy Apostle, Andrew. Its ideas of mercy, love and tolerance were naturally absorbed, being harmonious with the old beliefs of the Dacians. This process is simultaneous with the genesis of the Romanian people. Moreover, old Roman gods were received in the new flow of spirituality and by the folk beliefs turned into Christian personages. Characteristically the Roman goddess of love, Venera, was transformed into Saint Vineri. She was an important presence in Romanian folk tales, under the appearance of a nun or a devout old woman, living at the edge of the world and whose aim was to help heroes in their fight against the wickedness of dragons or illwilled people.<sup>10</sup>

Another sign, characteristic for Romanian Orthodoxy is the deep penetration of Jesus and Virgin Mary in the folk legends. This Christian spirit, reflecting the tolerance of the Romanian soul, reflects an original view of paradise and hell, and their inhabitants. The devil appears nowhere in the folk stories as strong or threatening for men. He is weak and simple-minded, very often cheated and beaten by the ninny of the village. The Lord's pity for the one who fell is shown in short stories such as this: once, the Old Davy built a house without windows and then was working hard to carry inside the sun light with a sack. . . . until the Lord taught him to break the wall to make the windows.

But most amazing is the theory of Christian Romanians about the end of the world: at that time, hell will be not enlarged but, on the contrary, will be abolished. Peoples' souls will turn more and more toward the Lord; Jesus's Mother will draw one by one out of hell's flames all the wretches tortured there; they will grasp the threads of the bundles that are given as alms for them, and in this way everyone will come out. Hell will remain empty and the devils, having no work to do, will turn into good beings and Our Lord will let them also into His paradise. But, of course, they will first have to expiate their sins.

Scarcely any people's psychology expresses a more total understanding and tolerance than do these Romanian stories. And it is easier now to understand why this people resisted not only the numerous waves of invaders, but also very different sorts of calumny.

### *The Romanian Orthodox Church Today*

Multiple arguments prove that tolerance is one of the major features of the Romanian's Christian humaneness throughout history. Moreover, due to the fact that the "Romanian is born Christian", there is a close relation between religious and ethnic tolerance. The biblical principles of not harming anyone are applied in all situations and towards any religion and nation. What can be criticized is the person as such, not his or her affiliation. This is another trait of Romanians with its good and bad aspects, namely, personalization or the tendency to see and judge the individual, not the mass.

However, these affirmations seem to have much less support at the present time. Political and financial pressure, the powerful impetus of the survival instinct transforms tolerance more and more from reality into an almost unreachable aim. A natural question arises therefore, whether at this moment religion can offer a shelter in facing the moral conflict; if in a period of confusion and

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 109; 120; 125.

lack of discrimination, of attack against moral and communitary norms, the Church can set up a barrier against drift.

The years of change brought intolerance of words, acts and ideas; the fight for predominance leaves no place for empathy and understanding.

Firmness in justified behaviour is replaced more easily than before by a hardness in aim and means, together with an increased tendency to perceive the others' acts as negative, whatever their value. The differentiation that today characterizes the value system is accompanied by a battle of a peculiar genre, perhaps specific to the contemporary transitional periods in East Europe. In the first years after Revolution, the intellectual class, pushed on to the political stage due to particular reasons of the moment, was allowed to use its own specific weapons, fighting like Don Quixote with eagerness but little more in the name of high spiritual and entirely non-pragmatic ideals, which therefore were irreconcilable with the new political and financial social aims. If before, the general judgement was that to live better was to have more material tokens for improving one's culture, today this assertion is seen as naive. The choice now is simple, even rough, for intellectuals: either culture (creativity) or politics (wealth). Between the two social systems, genuine intellectuals, with their socialist salary, had a minimum for starting a normal business and acquiring enough power to protect their spiritual rights. As a consequence there was a strong migration of cultural personalities from the public field of politics/business to the public field of culture. Renouncing alien ways of life and tools, intellectuals now have returned to their natural ways of action, and we assist at a new offensive of spirituality, framed mainly in three broad trends: tradition, history and religion.

The Romanian world is acting on two value axes, less and less related to each other: political and financial interests, on the one hand, and moral and cultural aspirations, on the other. The responsibility for maintaining Romanian spirituality naturally is taken over by intellectuals, either lay or in the service of Church. Folk traditions and lay traditions are in corporation in different religious movements, born especially in the cities. The recognition of one's own inner being by remembering the nation's deeds, works almost the same way a person who has lost his identity together with his memory, finds himself and acts as himself from the moment he recovers his memory.

The chance for the Church authority then is to be recognized as a spiritual personality able to restore the nation's memory. One of the remaining Romanian traits is to submit themselves to external authority as long as they see, or think to see, in this guide an authentic moral value.

Another good path for the Orthodox Church would consist in rejecting the temptation to involve itself in political life, and influence it in one way or another. Until now the Romanian Orthodox Church has understood exactly the correctness of this conduct: the only firm interventions belonged to the need to protect itself against aggression from outside political interests whether in a lay or religious form.

Nevertheless, the real force of Romanian Orthodoxy is in supporting the feeling of tolerance among Romanians. Its restoration in places where this has become weak due to attacks by the subvalues is in the new discussion of tolerance due to the pressure of immediate interests and the attraction of excessive intellectualism. Large zones of contemporary religious thinking are invaded by the virus of approaching biblical verities on the basis of a hierarchy of texts, under the burden of which the original religious meaning is lost. The freshness of direct contact with the Scriptures contributes to strengthening the capacity of Romanian Orthodoxy to return the right balance between tolerance and compromise. Father Constantin Galeriu noted:

In line with the precursors and in homage to them, contemporary Romanian Orthodox Theology has consciousness of existing within the truth revealed by the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Tradition. . . . Being born at the same time as its Romanians and Christians, the Romanian Orthodox Church feels itself one with its people during the whole history, in all circumstances and today. In the spirit of the same unswerving tradition it works in the same manner.<sup>11</sup>

For symmetry, having started with a text of one of the authentic modern saints born in a very remote and different culture, we will end with a Christian text, one of the most “intolerant” passages of the New Testament: “And the Jews’ passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting. And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the tables” (St. John, 2, 13-15); “And he taught, saying unto them, “Is it not written ‘My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer?’, but ye have made it a den thieves” (St. Mark, 11, 17).

Returning to this kind of text may help find the way out of confusion, of a wrongly understood indulgence, and toward a correct delineation of the value of tolerance. This is protected through a healthy sense of dignity and through firm moral behaviour, which too quickly is categorized by ignorance or illwill as ‘intolerant’. Restoration of the original meaning of Christian tolerance is the road towards strengthening the Orthodox church, and to reinforcing human spirituality.

Thus, even if tolerance is a constituent virtue of Romanians, and very likely of any nation and almost of every individual, it is subjected to the pressures and frustrations of the present time and has to be promoted and fortified. “For a long time tolerance was no longer a simple detail of civilization. More than an acute need of the epoch, tolerance becomes a test of participation in Christian identity”.<sup>12</sup> Only a sane self-identification with genuine Christian values can lead peoples and individuals to an inner and outer tolerant behaviour.

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<sup>11</sup> Constantin Galeriu, “Sintez a Ortodoxiei Române Contemporane”, *Ortodoxia Românească* (“A synthesis of the Romanian Contemporary Orthodoxy”, the Romanian Orthodoxy) (București: Editura Institutului Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1992), p. 264.

<sup>12</sup> Florin Buhuceanu, “Românul s-a născut creștin”, *IKON. Revistă de spiritualitate* (“the Romanian was born Christian”), *IKON. Review of Spirituality*, 1 (1995), p. 4.





## Chapter XXI The Home of Man

*Aviezer Tucker*

When ethnic and nationalist wars over “homeland” expel from their homes fleeing refugees, who then search for new homes and have to clash with xenophobic populations, who in turn wish to send them back “home,” the meaning of “home” becomes important for ethical and political considerations. A philosophical analysis of the meaning of “home” in its contexts may clarify the assumption embodied in ordinary language about the relation between person and home, as well as distinguish uses of “home” from Orwellian newspeak misuses of “home” that change its meaning while maintaining its relation with man to legitimize xenophobic and inhumane policies.

### **The Term, “Home”**

First there is a need to clarify some common confusions between home and other concepts. “A house is not a home,” shows that not every permanent or fixed residence is a home. “Home is where the heart is,” and “At the turn of the century Vienna is my real home,” show that not every home is a permanent or fixed residence. The irony of “This is your home now,” said to the prisoner by a jailor, pointing to a dungeon is based on a patently incorrect identification of a permanent residence (the dungeon) with a home. “Home is where the heart is” and the experience of successful immigration show the distinction between home and the place of birth. The irony of “welcome back home” said by the smirking jailor, as the captured prisoner of conscience was led back to jail after a failed attempt to flee his native country, is based on the fact that one’s native place is not always home. Home is not where we happen to be born or reside, subject to meaningless chance; we may be born on a means of transportation or in a jail, or be under circumstances that force us to reside in a location that is not home.

Home is usually a multi-level structure that combines several single level homes, such as an emotional home, a geographical home, a cultural home, etc. For example, “I am at home in Prague, reading Patočka, listening to a Mahler symphony, with my love in my arms.” The combination of single-level homes that makes our home is so closely connected to our personality, that a description of a person’s multi-level structure of single level homes, his home, may be unique enough to suggest that person’s identity. For example, “I am at home in the marketplace, in the company of well-bred young men, arguing about the meaning of things.”

Vaclav Havel recognizes in his “Summer Meditations” the multi-layered structure of home.<sup>1</sup> Havel regards “home,” following Patočka,<sup>2</sup> as an existential experience that can be compared to a set of concentric circles on various levels, from the house, the village or town, the family, the social environment, the professional environment, to the nation as including culture and language (Czech or Slovak), the civic society (Czechoslovak), the civilization (European), and the world (civilization and universe). Havel stressed the equality among all concentric circles,

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<sup>1</sup> Vaclav Havel, *Summer Meditations*, trans. Paul Wilson (New York: Knopf, 1992), pp. 30-33.

<sup>2</sup> On Patočka and home see: Aviezer Tucker, “Jan Patočka’s Idea of the World Movement as Ultimate,” *Ultimate Reality and Meaning*, 20 (nos. 2-3, June-September 1997), pp. 107-122.

especially the national, civic, and universal ones with their corresponding national self-determination rights, civic rights, and human rights.

Every circle, every aspect of the human home, has to be given its due. It makes no sense to deny or forcibly exclude any one stratum for the sake of another; none should be regarded as less important or inferior. They are part of our natural world, and a properly organized society has to respect them all and give them all the chance to play their roles. This is the only way that room can be made for people to realize themselves freely as human beings, to exercise their identities. All the circles of our home, . . . are an inalienable part of us, and an inseparable element of our human identity. Deprived of all the aspects of his home, man would be deprived of himself, of his humanity.<sup>3</sup>

The actual political purpose of Havel's concept of independent dimensions of home was to allow the Slovaks to have their own national identity, while feeling at home in a non-national Czech and Slovak federal state based on civic society and respect for civic and human rights. While Havel is correct in his multi-layered characterization of home, the equality between the layers of home is questionable. Elsewhere, Havel himself implies that the national level is relatively less important for him, when compared with the universal one:

To me, my Czechness is a given, along with the fact that I am a man, or that I have fair hair, or that I live in the twentieth century. . . . In any case, I have other worries. And the main worry is one common to all people everywhere: how to deal with one's life, how to bear and sort out one's dilemmas as a Czech living in Bohemia and not as an Argentinean living in Argentina is obviously related to the fact that -- as Svejek says -- we are all from somewhere; and for some reason or other the good Lord decided that I should vex the world and myself here and not in Argentina.<sup>4</sup>

In contrast to Havel, nationalists value far more their national single-level home than their other single level homes, certainly more than their civil and world single-level homes, if they recognize such homes at all. Accordingly, the importance of the familial or human-universal home levels may be more important, respectively, for family persons or for cosmopolitans.

Further, though all homes are multi-leveled, the kinds of levels may differ from person to person. For example, some people may have no national sentiments and accordingly no national home. Others may be incapable of perceiving a universal human home beyond the tribal or national one, and hence lack a universal human home. Nationalism, as Havel recognized has a tendency to deny the existence or the normative correctness of the non-nationalist levels of home. Havel's failure in his attempt to convince the Slovak nationalists in his scheme led to his resignation as the last Czechoslovak president. The exclusionary nationalist concept of home is yet to exact a heavy toll from East Europe.

Havel's multi-level scheme of concentric circles of single-level homes centered around the person does not consider the possibility of having several homes on the same single level. For example, one may have more than one national home, one person may be simultaneously at home in the Hungarian, Jewish, and Slovak nationalities, or the Romani (Gypsy) and Czech nationalities. The mental incapacity to conceive the possibility of complicated personalities and corresponding multi-level and multi-single level homes, as in multilingual and multinational homes, has been a major intellectual basis of exclusionist and intolerant systems of thought and action. I do not claim,

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<sup>3</sup> Havel, *Op Cit*, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> Vaclav Havel, *Disturbing the Peace: A Conversation with Karel Hvizdala*, trans. Paul Wilson (New York: Knopf, 1990), pp. 178-179.

of course that Havel, who is a very tolerant and enlightened person, shares these exclusionist positions; he is just unaware of the shortcomings of his analysis. Some exclusionist versions of monotheism, in contrast to polytheism for example, may resemble in that respect the nationalist concepts of home. While polytheism recognizes that we may have several religious homes whose co-existence is not excluded by any one religion, and while the more universalist, deistic or theistic leaning versions of monotheism recognize the diverse religious homes as steps on the road to an identical ideal home, some more fundamentalist versions of monotheism exclude the possibility of having more than one religious home, and further prohibit other persons from having religious homes different from theirs. Nevertheless, persons may have several homes on a single level that are as much an expression of their identity as the homes they may be at on different levels. For example, "I am at home at Buckingham Palace and Windsor;" or "I am equally insufficiently at home in my Jewish, German, and Czech homes, and I feel equally guilty because of it."

In this respect, we may change our homes often throughout life, with changes in tastes, circumstances, and emotions, as in: "My marriage was a homecoming, after leaving my childhood home, I reached the adult home I was searching for, for so long, in a state of emotional homelessness."<sup>5</sup> Sometimes, our change of homes involves giving up a cherished home on one level, to gain a more valued home on another level. For example, a political refugee gives up a cultural or national home to gain a political one. The tragedy of political refugees is that they cannot be completely at home anywhere. At the national home, political refugees are persecuted and unable to be fulfilled politically, professionally, etc., while at the chosen political home (which may be "the home of the free") they may feel culturally homeless. Under less dramatic circumstances, we may make such value judgements about the relative importance of our homes many times through life, as when we choose between a professional home and a geographical or cultural one (when we are offered a better job in what we regard as an inferior geographical or cultural area -- or vice versa), or when we prefer our familial home to a professional home (when we are offered a fulfilling job that may necessitate prolonged absence from our family), etc.

## The Nature of Home

Having cleared some confusions of "home" with fixed residence and place of birth and having seen that home may be a structure of several single level homes (on different and identical levels) which may change in time, it is time to attempt a more positive analysis of home. In "home is where the heart is;" "at the turn of the century Vienna is my real home;" and "my marriage was a homecoming," "home" is marked by an emotional attachment: to a place, a person, an intellectual environment, etc. "I am at home in Prague, reading Patocka, listening to a Mahler symphony, with my love in my arms," as well as the sentences identifying the homes of Socrates, the British monarch and Franz *Kafka* stress the strong relation between personal identity and home (as Havel claimed in the above quotations). Home is where we could or can be ourselves, feel at ease, secure, able to express ourselves freely and fully, whether we have actually been there or not. Home is the reflection of our subjectivity in the world. Home is the environment that allows us to fulfil our unique selves through interaction with the world. Home is the environment that allows us to be ourselves, allows us to be homely. Since in a home environment we can express our true identity, home is the source of home truth. Home may be an emotional environment, a culture, a

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<sup>5</sup> Following C.P. Snow's novel *Homecoming*. Harold Pinter's play of the same name gives *homecoming* a bitter cynical turn.

geographical location, a political system, a historical time and place, etc., and a combination of all the above.<sup>6</sup>

One's natural home is the environment without which existence is precluded by nature. For example, "The polar regions are the natural home of the penguin." Outside their natural home, penguins cannot survive (unless by human interventions that create artificially simulated natural homes as in zoos, etc.). Accordingly, in terms of spacial location, most of the dry land on the planet earth is the natural home of the human race. A closer examination of the nature of man and woman may discover other features (emotional, intellectual, etc.) of our natural home. Still, most of the features of home are not natural. As much as the human personality is acquired rather than a part of a common human nature, so is the human home unnatural. As much as one's particular personality is individual and unique, so is one's particular home, where one's personality may fulfil itself.

Expressions such as "Please make yourself at home!" "Thank you, I already feel at home," assume the positive connotations of being at home. Most people spend their lives in search of home, at the gap between the natural home and the particular ideal home where they would be entirely fulfilled. Some of the greatest literary and poetic achievements of all time from the *Odyssey* to *Ulysses* and beyond are about such a search for home. Such a search may have a religious expression as in a pilgrimage or the search for the promised land (which is not necessarily a territory), it may take a sentimental turn as in *Oliver Twist* and *The Ugly Duckling*, or it may be a confused search, a journey in space for a home lost in time, as in the novels of Amos Oz. Our particular ideal home is as voluntary as our personality, being its ideal fulfillment in the world. Our actual home tends to be the best approximation of our ideal home, under the given set of constraining circumstances. Sometimes, as in the case of a prisoner in jail, a person's environment is so remote from that person's or for that matter anybody's ideal home, that we say this is no home at all -- although the experience of some prisoners, such as Vaclav Havel, is that after awhile even their prison cell becomes a kind of home for them.<sup>6</sup> On the level of moral home, under certain circumstances, such as unjust laws, a prison cell may indeed be the ideal moral home for a moral person.

### **Variants on "Home"**

"Homelessness" is an appropriate term for a general state of having no home, no ability to fulfil oneself in one's environment. Homelessness is not necessarily a lack of permanent residence, for tribes migrating with their herds in search of pasture can be quite at home without a fixed, four-walled, residence. Homelessness goes much deeper, it is a state of lack of self-fulfillment, lack of control of one's physical environment, lack of emotional comfort, absence of intellectual stimuli or state of utter social loneliness. The description of the friendless, shelterless, comfortless persons that live as homeless in many modern inner cities is quite appropriate. Attempts to eliminate the "home" part of the description in such expressions as "street people" or "outdoor persons" are futile, Orwellian attempts to change a disturbing reality by eliminating the negative connotations of the language that describes that reality. Being homeless is bad; not calling homelessness by its appropriate name does not change that.

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<sup>6</sup>"... even my prison cell was my home in a sense, and I felt very put out whenever I was suddenly required to move to another. The new cell may have been exactly the same as the old one, perhaps even better, but I always experienced it as alien and unfriendly. I felt uprooted and surrounded by strangeness, and it would take me some time to get used to it, to stop missing the previous cell, to make myself at home." (*SM*, 30).

“Hospitality” is the extension of conditions of home for somebody else. The home of the guest is not necessarily the home of the host. Hence the considerate host cares to find what is the home of the guest, to provide the guest with conditions of hospitality. For example, a considerate teetotaler host, keeps a stock of alcoholic beverages for the pleasure of drinking guests. Yet, while the number of people who may feel at home at an identical ideal home is not limited by nature, hospitality in some cases is naturally limited. While the number of persons who may feel at home in my apartment is unlimited, since the space of the apartment is limited, so is my hospitality. The hospitality of some homes (mostly spiritual homes) does not have such natural limitation, for example a cultural or linguistic home may accommodate all those who may wish to fulfil themselves in it. The limitations on hospitality stem from the finiteness and scarcity of the resources necessary to create the conditions of home. Spiritual homes suffer from no such limitations, more material conditions of home are more limited. The natural extent of possibilities of, or limitations on, hospitality may be disputed.

The expression “runaways-from-home” is widely misused because it refers generally to young people who leave the residence of their legal custodians, either because they wish to induce a certain response when they return, in which case they do not really run away; or, they may actually run away from an abusive environment, but then they do not run away from home. The only group of people who may be said to run away from home are some vagrants or Buddhist monks who voluntarily refuse to have a home, and runaway from any possible home, physical or emotional, they happen to come across.

With “the place of the woman is at home,” the chauvinist utilizes an ambiguity in the meaning of “home” in the sentence. The place of men and women is at home, but their own home. What the chauvinist means is that the place of the woman is at the home of the man, not her own home. Correspondingly “homemaker” can mean a person, man or woman, who creates conditions of a common home for himself or herself together with his or her significant other. However, homemaker can also mean somebody who makes the conditions of home for somebody else, not for oneself, in which case the concept is discriminatory.

What has been said so far of the home in relation to the individual is also true of the home of communities. On one level the home of communities may be a defined geographical location, a homeland, or just a social and cultural environment as in the scientific community. Exile is a forced collective homelessness, the prevention by force of the possibility of self-fulfillment for a group of people. Communities may be exiled from their homeland, from their cultural or emotional home, etc.

Exiles are searching for home, for a refuge. Those who provide such a refuge are hospitable. The extent of the possibilities for hospitality is a debated political issue. For example, those who represent inhospitable political movements may claim that “the ship is full,” that if more guests are admitted there would be no actual home left for anybody. Usually, they lie. For example, even if the whole of European Jewry had found refuge in Switzerland during the Second World War (not to say the USA, Canada, and Australia), there still would have been an actual Swiss home. More reasonable inhospitable political forces claim with some truth that hospitality costs the hosts material resources.

The personal equivalent of such a position is a person who refuses to entertain guests because it costs money and effort: one has to prepare dinner, buy foods and drinks, be polite and entertaining, and to top it all, when the guests finally stop spending the host’s resources and leave, the host has to wash the dishes after them. So who wants to be a host? The point, however, is that personal loneliness or political seclusion are worse than some dent in the personal or national

budget. We also hope that if we are hospitable today, if we want or need our guests' hospitality tomorrow, the relationship of hospitality will be mutual. For example, major political forces in Hong Kong displayed particularly inhospitable attitudes towards the Vietnamese refugees who sought their home on the shores of that crown colony. Soon the same xenophobic populations may be seeking their own homes away from Chinese oppression.

The use of "home" by the media and various deportation authorities, such as the American, in the case of Haitians refugees and Hong Kong officials in the case of Vietnamese refugees, as in "forcibly sending refugees back home" or "repatriating them" is an Orwellian misuse of the language. Home and homeland are surely not a place where one prefers not to have been born, and wishes to escape. Home is where a person or a community can be safe and fulfilled. Had places like the former Yugoslavia, Haiti and Vietnam been the homes of the refugees who left them, they would not have risked their lives to escape to lands they thought had the potential for becoming their home.

East Europeans who seek shelter in Germany, Haitian risking the high sea to get to America, and the Vietnamese boat-people seek their home. The European community and American authorities who force them to go back are not returning them home or repatriating them, but deporting them from what they conceive to be their potential home to exile in the land of their birth.

The assumptions that the land of our birth is for some reason our home, or that our home is determined by our ethnicity, that there is an inevitable and involuntary connection between geography, ethnicity and what we are and where we can be fulfilled all are based at best on a misunderstanding of language, and, at worse, on its deliberate misuse to justify morally questionable political decisions. Statements like "returning refugees home" or "surrounding Haiti with a navy picket-fence" attempt to utilize the positive connotations of the relation between person and home, while twisting the meaning of "home" to be either the land of birth, or fixed residence, or mostly somewhere held to be a collective territorial home.

We are all descendants of immigrants. The natural home of humanity is the dry land of the planet. People, unlike trees and bushes, are not "rooted" -- people are born with legs. The fact that we are born with legs and intelligence opens to us ever new spacial and intellectual horizons. The human race, like other animals, is a migratory specie, from our ancient ancestors who, as we are told by anthropologists, migrated from Africa's plains to settle the globe some three million years ago, to present day refugees and migrants. The human ability to migrate has been one of our basic assets for survival, allowing us to free ourselves of geographic constraints, from bondage to the earth. Bosnians, East European refugees in German hostels, Chinese, Haitian and Vietnamese refugees, like our ancestors and ourselves, whoever we may be, are searching for a home. This search for home is a basic trait of being human. It seems though that in today's inhospitable world, the search may end in homelessness rather than in homecoming.

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## Chapter XXII

# Democracy from the Grassroots: Learning by Doing

*Stjepan Gredelj*

### Introduction

There is no doubt that any properly educated scholar in the humanities and the social sciences could easily list no less than ten definitions of the concept of “democracy” and that each of them could be justified, despite their individual differences. On the other hand, any single voter in East-Central Europe undoubtedly has his/her own understanding and definition of the concept, justified as well. The majority of people “know” (or simply feel) what is preferable concerning this concept, but the question is how this knowledge/feeling/affiliation could work practically? In other words, how the concept could be put into efficient operation in an environment which, by definition, is rather inappropriate and/or even hostile to the genuine meaning of the idea of “building democratic society”? Bearing that in mind, another question arises: which social group or stratum contains (no matter how deeply hidden) potential to carry out the painful process of building a democratic society, which could last decades?

These and other questions were the ‘Archimedian point’ from which the group of Yugoslav scholars and experts from different areas of social science began. They were deeply concerned with the growing discrepancy between major, but immature, ‘wishful thinking’ on democracy and the not so ‘pink’ social reality, faced with challenges of democratization. Luckily, they soon met several persons who shared the same ideas and concerns; their joint effort and mutual support brought about the results which will be presented here.<sup>1</sup>

The ‘meeting point’ was a cross-national and multi-disciplinary comparative project “Health Reach Children in the War Zones”, covering Sri Lanka, Palestine and Yugoslavia. The project was designed by McMaster University, Hamilton and sponsored by the Canadian government. The initial project design was afterwards adjusted to the situation in each of selected zones, in order to identify the most vulnerable social groups and/or contingents of population, which were estimated to be the most affected by the war situation in their surroundings. According to this methodologically flexible approach, in Yugoslavia three categories of population were found vulnerable: children under five, adolescents and elderly people. But, while the youngest and the oldest group were investigated mostly by a social medicine approach (social conditions of health under the sanctions imposed upon Yugoslavia by the UN Security Council), the group of adolescents needed to be observed from a rather different and more complex point of view, demanding the cooperation of experts from different fields of the social sciences: sociologists, social psychologists, anthropologists, pedagogues and political scientists.

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<sup>1</sup> The group was composed of people of different age, gender, nationality and professional skill, but of similar interests and concerns; thus each deserves mention here. The Yugoslav part of the team was: Dragan Popadic, Ph.D. social psychologist; Vuk Stambolovic, Ph.D. physician; Aleksandra Pejatovic and Violeta Orlovic, M.A. pedagogues; Nena Skopljanac-Brunner, B.A. political scientist; Zdenka Milivojevic, B.A. sociologist; and the author of this article, Ph.D. sociologist. External advisors, collaborators, sponsors and reviewers were: Professor Edith Klein, Ph.D. political scientist, Joanna Santa Barbara and Graham McQueen, anthropologists; and Andrew Ignatieff (all from Hamilton University, Canada); Neil Anderson (from CIET International, New York-London-Acapulco) and Arne Engeli (HEKSA, Switzerland).

This group was recognized as a ‘missing link’ in the search for a potential carrier of democratization, since it is the only one which by definition is open to the future, but currently it is living in the status of expanded childhood and in an environment which is very hostile or at least indifferent to that future. Contemporary Yugoslav youth become the victim of imposed self-illusion in which the safety of the present times and perspectives for the future are found in the values of the past.<sup>2</sup>

This as well as other insights into the currently very unpleasant situation of the Yugoslav younger generation challenged the organization of the field survey of youth on a huge nationwide sample of about 3500 respondents/adolescents in 35 schools, including 17 grammar (white collar) and 18 so called vocational (blue collar) schools in Former Republic Yugoslavia. The survey was conducted through complex interviews covering the following problems of young generation:

- family situation: including family relations, economic resources, housing, but also self-identification of youth within the family, models of socialization, “materialist” and “post-materialist” needs and restrictions in their fulfillment;
- schooling: educational system, teachers’ profile and image, authority and submission, system of rewards and punishment, life plans and prospective;
- relations within age group: group identity, attitudes towards rival groups, models of identification; ‘types of heroes,’ attitudes towards tolerance, emphatic attitudes, solidarity, friendship and love, estimation of juvenile crime;
- attitudes towards the social and political system: obedience and disobedience, acceptance and rejection of social values and rules;
- traumatic experiences and PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) especially among refugee youth and minority groups;
- social distance, towards ethnic minorities, but also towards other ‘out-groups’ such as drug addicts, homosexuals, AIDS-virus positive, criminals, political ‘witches’ -- communists, fascists, liberals;
- personal beliefs, hopes and frames of orientation; and
- acceptance and/or rejection of dominant social value orientations.<sup>3</sup>

### **Value Orientations of the Youth in ‘Destroyed Society’**

Value orientations here were operationalised as following: if values in one society are something we can define as its ‘know what’, that is, its main frames of orientation, fundamental ideas and ideals and preferable ways of behavior; value orientations are recognized as ‘know how’, i.e. as general principles of thinking, behavior and action, which are connected with certain social goals.

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<sup>2</sup> “For contemporary Yugoslav youth its ‘social clock’ was not only stopped, but it was turned backward. Moreover, the youngest generations were sacrificed on the altar of past times. It was a clash of the old age (literally and metaphorically), which proposes only the past, and the youth, which has only the future. In this clash the ‘people of the past’ prevailed; the sound of the “gusle” overcame the sound of the electric guitar.” (Srecko Mihajlovic, 1993), pp. 315-316.

<sup>3</sup> The complete results of the survey are supposed to be published in Canada as a common study of six authors; only parts of my chapter will be presented in that study, covering but a narrow sample of the problems emerging from the results of the field survey, namely, value orientations of adolescents.



Attitudes of respondents about three value orientations, presented in the tables below, were measured, as well as the spread of the ‘authoritarian syndrome’ within youth and, finally, as an ‘outcome’ of adopted dominant value orientations, (non)acceptance of the rigid political culture.

The three value orientations mentioned were: collectivist, liberal-democratic and nationalistic. The operational definitions of value orientations which were the subject of this survey were based on attitudes provided by Likert’s scale<sup>4</sup> and subsequently fitted into higher positions in the hierarchy, or value patterns, a set of which forms a specific value orientation.

In this research authoritarianism was observed as a characteristic of personality, rather than a feature of political power.

Finally, political culture was defined as “consisting of cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations to political phenomena, distributed in national populations or in subgroups” (Almond, Verba, 1989: 26). Speaking in ideal-types (Max Weber), it could appear as participant, subject and parochial political culture.

Rigid political culture arises from a dominant inclination toward the subject and a parochial relationship, which include submission to above levels of polity and aggression and/or intolerance both to ‘lower’ and to horizontal levels of the political spectrum and to ‘different’ fellow citizens.

The results obtained from the survey were, at least, disturbing and at the most frightening. Young people had displayed on average more authoritarian, collectivist, anti-liberal, nationalistic and politically rigid attitudes than ever before and, when compared with results of the survey among adults (conducted several months before), the attitudes of the youth were closer and more similar to those of the adult population than ever before.<sup>5</sup> Instruments in both surveys were more or less the same (concerning value orientations), thus giving the opportunity for rough comparisons (bearing in mind differences in the sample sizes).

Such statistics manifest a very broad acceptance of authoritarianism. To illustrate this conclusion, I will present scores on just one attitude, “Obedience to and respect for authority are

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<sup>4</sup> Likert’s scale of attitudes employed in the survey, as follows:

(1 -- completely disagree; 2 -- mostly disagree; 3 -- cannot estimate; 4 -- mostly agree; 5 -- completely agree).

- (1) Obedience to, and respect for, authority are the most important virtues children must learn 1 2 3 4 5.
- (2) Too much freedom today does society more harm than good 1 2 3 4 5.
- (3) Without a leader every nation is like a man without a head 1 2 3 4 5 .
- (4) Only a wealthy man can be really free 1 2 3 4 5.
- (5) If an individual is free, so is the society 1 2 3 4 5.
- (6) What is good for the individual, is also good for the society 1 2 3 4 5.
- (7) Exaggerated differences in wealth are not moral 1 2 3 4 5.
- (8) The struggle for personal interests has brought us to the present chaos 1 2 3 4 5.
- (9) Justice cannot be achieved without material equality 1 2 3 4 5.
- (10) My people are not perfect, but our cultural tradition is superior to others 1 2 3 4 5.
- (11) One should be careful towards people of other nations, even if they are our friends 1 2 3 4 5.
- (12) If ethnic minorities live in poverty, that is because they are not enterprising or well-educated 1 2 3 4 5.
- (13) After we destroy our external enemies, we should wipe out national traitors 1 2 3 4 5
- (14) When the situation in country is unstable the government should use its power and establish order by force 1 2 3 4 5
- (15) In every society there has to be political authority people must trust and whose decisions should be obeyed without objection 1 2 3 4 5.

<sup>5</sup> See: M. Lazic (ed.), 1995.

the most important virtues children must learn". Almost three in five respondents (58.2 percent) supported this attitude, while less than one quarter (23.8 percent) rejected it. One could agree that the very broad authoritarian patterns are not necessarily connected with anti-democratic orientations and a rigid political culture, but no doubt there exists a very stable correlation between them. This was confirmed by the scores on attitudes about political culture, which, on purpose, were defined very negatively, all drawn from current local political rhetoric. Here are the scores on the most rigid attitude, based on ideology of ultra-right (fascist) political wings in Yugoslavia: "After we destroy our external enemies, we should wipe out our national traitors". Hostility toward "internal" political (and other) differences was supported by almost one half of young people (47.7 percent), one third of them completely, while again only a weak one quarter (14.7 percent) firmly rejected the attitude, every seventh respondent.

The first and the most important conclusion based on the results of the survey is a significant level of anomie that prevails among youth. This is a consequence of actual social and political circumstances and the "stable" situation of ongoing social crisis. Anomie is here considered in Robert Merton's sense as a gap between promoted social goals and a shortage of means for their realization. This gap appears in a vacuum made by withdrawal of the previously dominant value system and a strong monolithic ideology. In actual clashes between competitive ideological "successors", each of them designed to become a new ruling orientation, the youth reacts with much more anomie, even in comparison with adults. Adolescents are a "generation in between", strongly shaken by turbulent social events and yet unprepared to form their own firm attitudes towards the events. This is why their actual value system is a contradictory mixture of patterns adopted from the older generation and "self-determination" which is under enormous influence from the so-called situation factor. Some more or less clear features emerged from the value and political orientations, promising to become long-term trends.

The young generation in significant majority inclines toward collectivist rather than individualistic patterns of social behavior and solutions of everyday problems. It is not only because of an authoritarian syndrome deeply rooted in personality (which is a stable feature of the inherited cultural pattern, more or less independent from the impact of current situation), but it also entails less risk in decision-making and a stable background in uncertain times.

The ascent of a liberal-democratic orientation can hardly be expected in an unstable situation, particularly if, due to successfully applied official propaganda, it is linked only to its actual promoters, embodied in weak, confused, immature and estranged opposition parties (and their leaders respectively). The immediate experience of that fact turned the initial enthusiasm for a pluralist political life and democracy among a majority of the common people (following the post-socialist "turnover") into disgust. This, in turn, reaffirmed people's wish for a "strong person with a firm hand" to establish order in society.

The opposite nationalistic (ethnocentric) orientation at first sight offers more "clear" and acceptable answers which "have been settled" in the past and therefore need not be questioned again. If the revival of this orientation is based on a (real or artificial) feeling of a threatened collective identity and reaffirmation of religious fundamentalism (clericalism) as a significant political factor, the switch towards values of the past centuries (national romanticism and an ethnically clean "national state") is more acceptable than surprising.

In an atmosphere of a prevailing authoritarian personality and a more or less rigid pattern of political socialization, collectivism and exclusive nationalism naturally support affiliation for a radical and intolerant political culture, based on the concept of the other as enemy (no matter whether external or internal).

All these conclusions bring us back to the level of global society. If society was not such as it is, basically pathologic in all its spheres and sub-systems, if it was not generally supportive and deeply involved in wars “which were not happening”, and, finally, if it was not the society of hypocrisy, falsehoods, legalized criminalization of economy and politics, rapid enrichment without work and even more rapid impoverishment because of work, young people would probably display different value orientations. The way things are, these results are not so much the portrait of youth, but rather a caricature of the entire society at the crossroads of either true transformation or persistent and longrun stagnation and self-isolation from the main developmental trends in its closer and wider environment.

### **An Action-Oriented Project: Establishing “Youth Protection” Centers**

What came out after this, that Lewis Wirth called “putting hands into the muddy water of empirical survey”? After the team had processed and discussed the data we decided not to add just another book on the shelf (which, of course, is not an unimportant contribution) but to make the data public immediately and to try to apply them in social practice. The first step was not successful. Our appeals to professors, parents’ councils in the schools observed and the Ministry of Education (which was offered the data) were addressed to deaf ears and remained without any reply. People in the above institutions obviously had more important problems to solve than to bother with the burning problems in their domain of competence and authority.

Thus we decided to enter into the heart of problem on our own, not from above, but from below -- from the perspective of the vulnerable group. We did not want to preach but to speak, not to give diagnoses and recipes but to listen, share and discuss particular problems and to search for possible solutions; not to teach but to learn; in a word, it was an attempt at ‘learning by doing’.

Methodologically, the project was based on active participant observation and social intervention, not over the groups but together with the groups. The aim was to make the young people capable of protecting their own interests by “doing” or acting based on their own observations and decisions in the broader environment, that is, the essence of “democracy from the grassroots”, or democracy from below.

In this peculiar social experiment two groups of youths were established, each built around the specific and most serious problem they shared, one in Prishtine (Kosovo Autonomous region) and another in the downtown Belgrade municipality of Vracar. The most important problem determined in Prishtine was inter-ethnic conflict and ethnic distance between ethnic Albanians and non-Albanians (Serbs, Montenegrins, Gypsies, children from mixed marriages, etc.) and the total breakdown of mutual communication, no matter the very similar problems in their (divided) environments. In Belgrade, the main problem was determined to be the enormous rate of growth of juvenile crime (according to official statistics 100 percent per year).

The main purpose of the action-oriented project in Prishtine was to learn tolerance, bridging interethnic gaps and conflict resolution. The Belgrade project was inspired by W. White’s book *Street Corner Society*, whose main idea was to enter into juvenile gangs and re-structure and reorient them towards “positive” social goals (the creation of a solidarity network within the local community, the “Hi neighbor” project, self-protection of victimized social strata, etc.)

The initial problem was how to enter in those more or less closed groups, how to gain the confidence of their members without disturbing directly the already existing structure. Before the practical realization of the projects some previous steps were needed, such as design of appropriate methodology for approaching particular target groups, that is, entering already existing groups,

i.e., debate clubs and workshops; connecting with the ‘Post-pessimists’ group (initiated by Prishtine adolescents and afterwards organized also in Subotica, Belgrade and Zagreb) and gradually building the group by approaching particular ‘opinion’ and/or ‘gang’ leaders, as well as broadening the circle of participants by the so-called ‘snowball procedure’.

Very soon It became obvious that it was easier to develop the project in Prishtina then in Belgrade, primarily due to the type of problem, but also due to the lack of support from the local level. Unfortunately, the project in Belgrade was abandoned, despite positive initial results, both because of lack of room for meetings and also because of hostile and non-cooperative attitudes of the authorities (police, courts and local government).

After that, the complete energy of the team was transferred to the Prishtine target group, which had been working successfully for more than six months.<sup>6</sup> At the very beginning, a general methodology of work, labeled a ‘good will workshop’ program for conflict resolution was discussed and agreed upon.

The timing of the project was strictly defined -- two years: the first year was planned for “learning” (with the assistance of experts from the team), while the second was aimed at “doing”, meaning the establishment of an independent youth center, which would act autonomously as an institutionalized “lobby” group against violation of the individual rights of young people.

The first year of the project started with one month of “warming up” and recognition of the most “burning” individual problems; further, with learning the “art of communication”, above all, with solution of the language gap (Albanian -- Serbian language). An initial compromise was communication in English (with simultaneous translations), but very soon the “major” ethnic part of the group (ethnic Albanians) spontaneously decided to communicate in Serbian in order to facilitate conversation.<sup>7</sup>

After three weekend meetings, the following rules of the group operation were accepted after democratic discussion:

1. ethnically mixed composition of the group;
2. equality of all languages, according to mixed group;
3. no “macro” politics;
4. person to person;
5. disagreement -- yes, insult -- no;
6. respect for the time of others (5 minutes);
7. confidentiality and discretion (individual problems, some-times very intimate, cannot become the topic for gossip outside the group);
8. don’t focus only on your needs -- give a chance to others;
9. there are no words like “I’m sorry, I apologize” -- everyone is responsible for his/her feelings;

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<sup>6</sup> The work would not be possible without the logistic and financial support of the “Soros Fund Yugoslavia” and its local branch in Prishtine.

<sup>7</sup> An important part of the project was regular evaluation (every three months) of the results through anonymous interviews of the participants on what was achieved, what was not and what should be the future improvements in the work. Putting aside other very frank and responsible evaluations of the Center operation, major Albanian participants pointed out “their relaxation in using the Serbian language and the disappearance of shame when speaking the language they are not too familiar with”. This rather unexpected outcome of the project we consider one of the most important results of the Center operation, since it proved that multi-culturalism is possible when based on good grounds of fairly recognized interests.

10. no questions like: “why” and “how”, just follow the essence of the problem and give the proposal for solution, if you have any;

11. “put yourself in the other’s shoes” -- be supportive and creative; and

12. “Each of us is individual thus we should work together to support any single individuality”.

In the very beginning the group had about ten members, but, being completely open, over time it gradually grew to 25 regular participants.

The next phase was recognition of particular problems in different areas of everyday youth life, as well as a search for the possibilities for their efficient solution. This was organized during the next five months through intensive workshops consisting of the following contents:

a) recognition of the problems which are individual by their nature, but which are, on the other hand, also common to majority in the group;

b) exercising (with assistance of social psychologists) self-affirmation/self-confidence and self-esteem -- recognizing self within the environment, other people, society -- in a word, *positive thinking*;

c) meeting the problems of other person: listening and sharing the problem, but confidentially; and

d) supporting each other:

Workshops further focused on:

- from whom support is expected: parents, family, friends, close age group, partner;

- from whom support is obtained;

- what is the way for bridging “expects of the worse, hoping the best”;

- if the expected support fails, what are the most frequent feelings: humiliation, disappointment, feeling of betrayed, or other.

During this period the following problems were discussed:

1. Loneliness and support

2. Fear

3. Friendship

4. Love

5. Future life plans -- professional orientation

6. Interests

7. Gossiping

8. Conflicts

All discussions were tape-recorded and are being prepared for publication in a “Goodwill Handbook”.

Unfortunately, after six months of successful operation and achieving the first concrete results, the Pristine “Youth Protection Center” was forced to abandon its work in the spring of 1996. This was due completely to external factors, one of which was the breakdown of financial sponsorship by the Soros Fund of Yugoslavia, caused by sharp pressure from the Yugoslav authorities against this non-governmental institution. These pressures resulted in the reorganization of the Soros Fund

Yugoslavia into the Open Society Fund and, consequently, to the reduction of funds for some projects. One of the victims of this reduction was the project “Youth Protection Center in Prishtine”. We did not give up but went on with efforts to raise funds for continuation of the work.

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