Integration and European identity: The case of Macedonia as multiethnic society

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Abstract

New political systems need to create a unit with political identity and they are always interested in how to strengthen it. Given that European integration is not only economic but also political and wider than that, the need to establish and strengthen corporate identity is an important element. One of the biggest difficulties in connection with the issue of European identity is that Europe as a political community itself and as a physical entity does not have any fixed definition and permanently unchanged. So, on one hand, there are some problems dealing with the fact that what is meant when it is said "European identity" and what is meant when referring to United Europe. In this context, the European cultural identity which is perceived as a common European heritage itself comes face to face with a diversity of cultures and national traditions. So we do have a common history, common moral values, religion, myths, traditions, etc., or we do have as many as nation states exist. A typical case which represents the dynamics of a dynamic and multicultural society is the case of Macedonia's integration into the EU, where in addition to many other factors presents a picture of internal ethnic tensions which prove the failure in solution of their rights within the Macedonian state. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the case of Macedonia as a multiethnic society in the national-level versus supranational dimension at EU stage. As the EU tries to create a common identity "united in diversity" even within a single state, there exists an effort for unity in different dimensions. Ohrid Framework Agreement is a clear indication of this effort within the Macedonian state.

Key words: European integration, European identity, cultural identity, multiethnic society.

Introduction

By the early twentieth century, Europe has existed through divisions, antagonisms and conflicts that have somehow conceived and save it.[1] The European Union was necessary to prevent any civil war in Europe. However a key question or problem is what unites people from southern Europe to the north, east and west of it in terms of cultural, political and social values, etc.

The idea of European unity is not new it is found that in the Middle Ages to Charlemagne in the Holy Roman Empire and many others as Ernest Renan, Aristide Briand, Richard de Coudenhove-Kalergi, Jean Monet etc.. Later universities that were born in the XI's century in

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[1]Morin ,E. *Europa ne mendje*. Shtepia botuese ORA,Tirane, 2001, fq 16

Bologna, Paris, Oxford, Krakow, Tubingen, etc. strengthen by sharing their awareness of a European identity and Christian.[2]

Given that European integration is not only economic but also political and beyond, the need to establish and strengthen corporate identity is a key element.

One of the greatest difficulties in connection with the issue of European identity is that Europe as a political community itself and as a physical entity has no fixed definition. So on one hand there are problems with the fact that what is meant when it is said European identity and what is meant when referring to a united Europe.

Another problem is that of cultural identity. So we have a common history, common moral values, religion, myths, traditions, etc. or have such as how many states there. A typical case which represents the dynamics of a dynamic and multicultural society has to do with Macedonia's integration in the EU, where many other factors besides the picture represents internal ethnic tensions which prove the complete insolubility of their rights in the Macedonian State.

The historical experience of involvement of the EU in Macedonia and its leading role in the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the full implementation of which remains a precondition for Macedonia's accession to the EU, illustrates the importance of EU countries give Macedonia to maintain multicultural and multiethnic character. EU asks Macedonia to reach a certain level of multiculturalism, the EU believes that it has achieved, but they remain unaware of the major conceptual differences of the term within member states.

2. Analysis

2.1 European Identity

New political systems need to create a new entity with a political identity and are always interested in how to create it. In the context of the European Union who criticized the democratic deficit, this need is even more acute. Given that European integration is not only economic but also political, social and wider than that, the need to establish and strengthen corporate identity is a key element. European elite of 50 years engaged in this direction. On the other states or in this case the EU structures using indirect forms of political messages in order modifying the perception of the relevant political community. Special symbols used by the elite to define a community with tools such as maps, flags, emblems, anthems, common currency, etc. occupy an important place in relation to creating communal identities. The idea and purpose of the EU institutions in the provision of these symbols is strengthening the sense of belonging to the community. So, European identity is strongly influenced by vertical posts that come from European elites. Such symbols are institutional and political system but without neglecting the news or "propaganda" that reaches citizens concerned about the political system.

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[2] Morin ,E. *Europa në mendje*. Shtëpia botuese ORA,Tiranë, 2001, fq 34

In fact, the Euro barometer surveys have served more to understand European identity. What is problematic is the fact that the Euro barometer questions are exceptional nature of bypassing the fact that European and national identity are complementary. Contemporary literature addresses the issue of political identities in the relativistic seeing the latter as well as multiple and complementary doll stand. Remember that political identities constantly influenced by political communication, common symbols, political institutions, such approaches face etc. Even so stay opponent who see identity as fixed, and little or no unique able to evolve under the effect of any stimulus external, such approaches are referred to as essentialist approach.

On the basis of these identities is established ethnic nationalism. Most modern states have plural character, which means that they have more of an ethnic community within their borders and thus cannot claim to be nation-states in the true sense of the word; they aspire to become at least "national states" with a common public culture open to all citizens.[3]

This repeated reference to a community with a common public culture shows continuing influence of myths, symbols and memories shared in the life of modern European nations. On the one hand these nations seek to overcome their ethnic origin, on the other side in a world where interdependence is growing more and more, they often feel the need to return to it in order to protect the community and to justify the change. In this regard national identifications have more advantages to the idea of joining the European identity. They are lively, accessible, trusted building for a long time and are still widely believed, at least roughly. Seeing Europe in this regard is flawed in the idea and in process. Europe lacks a pre-modern past, a pre-history which can enable her emotional and historical value.[4]

But as mentioned above a very important approach is that of multiple identities access in which one can feel Italian, German, French and European. However one of the major difficulties with the issue of European identity is that Europe as a political community itself as a physical entity and has no fixed definition. So on one hand there are problems with the fact that what is meant when it is said European identity and what is meant when referring to a united Europe. Europe is a complex substance, as much a combination of conflict and solidarity, so much history, politics, culture, religion and ethnicity. Europe as expressed Jacques Lagroye[5] is a whole nation, which give up some other prerogatives, to reinforce the common features.

Analyzing theoretician Otto Bauer, who has introduced the idea that joining the fate of the nation gives identity, unity, desire for life despite all the human and social differences that contains it, Edgar Morin in his book "Europe in the mind" gives some conclusions about what he calls "common destiny". According to him, Europe is not yet a common goal but a common destiny that is already cooked in 1945, which imposed lucky despite all differences and problems of unequal circumstances. This lucky expressed as the infliction of the same factors decay of the dissolution, was unable to resist 'unless otherwise jointly; suffering the risks of identity, diversity and regional realities, the infliction of a threat to safe and unsafe with two extreme faces

[3] Smith.A.*National Identity and the idea of European Unity*.International Affairs, vol.68, No. 1.(Jan.,1992),pp.55-76
[4] Smith.A.*National Identity and the idea of European Unity*.International Affairs, vol.68, No. 1.(Jan.,1992),pp.55-76
[5] Morin ,E.*Europa në mendje*. Shtëpia botuese , ORA,Tiranë, 2001, fq 16

(extermination and totalitarianism). Saying "we already have the chance European union yeasts and cement between a European nation, at least a half-union Confederate not only national, but also Federal, which had its own identity, unity of desire for life, regardless of the cause of all ethnic and national contained.[6]

Another problem is that of cultural identity. So we have a common history, common moral values, religion, myths, etc. or have philosophical traditions such as the states are? On the other hand we can talk for a European public identity as identification with the EU institutions from different cultural which is based on a "civilization" European.

From a subjective point of view, there may exist a common cultural identity without memories shared between each other or without a sense of continuity on the part of those who are known to belong to a common past, that the subjective perception of a common past generations of a unit of cultural, ethnic history of that collective, compared with a historian's judgment for that of the past is a defining element in the concept of cultural identity as well as more specific national identities and Europe.[7]

According to sociological views, human beings have several identities; they can change from one identity to another according to the context and situation. But it is difficult to change involuntary identities rooted in ethnicity, gender or physical ability, so that positions cannot ignore racial, socio-economic or ethnic background, from which we begin our journey of identity.[8]

2.2 Macedonia versus the challenge of European Integration

1989 taken as a period of political and economic change or revolution of Eastern Europe .During this period there are two types of processes: in Western Europe have integration processes, and in Eastern Europe the disintegration processes. In Western Europe, developed and strengthened economic integration processes of nature political, social and military, in south-eastern begins federations such as the destruction of the USSR, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, which were artificial creatures that many people were integrated by force and against their. '90 years marked another period of unrest in the former Yugoslav republics, Bosnia and early 90s saw tougher fight from all former Yugoslav republics, Macedonia managed to save a full war and conflict, experienced only a brief interethnic conflict in 2001. The armed conflict between Macedonian forces and Albanian, deepened cooperation relations with the EU and ended with the Ohrid Framework Agreement in 2001. Its full implementation is a precondition for Macedonia's EU accession. In this context, Macedonia was the first country in the Balkans that went into talks with the European Commission's Stabilization and Association process,[9] in 2001. Macedonia received candidate status in 2005. What can be said with certainty is that Macedonia in 2005

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[6] Morin ,E.*Europa në mendje*. Shtëpia botuese ,ORA,Tiranë, 2001, fq 127

[7] Smith,A."National *Identity and the idea of European Unity"*.International Affairs, vol.68, No.(Jan.,1992),pp.55-76

[8] Martin ,J ,NakayamaTh.*Hyrje ne Komunikimin Ndërkulturor*.UET Press ,Tirane,2010, fq 112

[9] The Stabilisation and Association Process was initiated by the European Commission as the EU aid for recovery, unity and development of the Western Balkans after the wars of the former Yugoslavia dissolving.

received much praise from the EU for the implementation of the Copenhagen criteria,[10] the Stabilization and Association Agreement and the Framework Agreement. While today can certainly talk to a slowdown in the European integration process due to problems with one of the member countries of the EU, Greece on the name issue of identity. Except for the name conflict, had other problems with the transparency of elections, weak economic indicators and sharp ethnic conflicts and political.

Two basic principles of the Framework Agreement, respect for the cultural identity of everyone and equal rights of every citizen, regardless of ethnicity, remain valid today. Full implementation of the Ohrid Agreement should not be seen only as a politico-legal mechanism for making or granting privileges from one ethnic group to another, but should be considered as a platform that provides the ethnic coexistence and taking shared responsibility and equal by all ethnic groups in the country's interests. Democracy and institutions cannot operate unilaterally, and requires the participation of all ethnic and religious groups in building democracy and development. I think to encourage inter-ethnic coexistence and religious harmony in Macedonia, the examples are not lacking, even when we remember the story of the founding of the EU.[11] Respect for democracy, rule of law and respect for ethnic communities is what holds the EU together. This is one of the basic criteria in the admission process. Ohrid Agreement constitutes the core of the political criteria for EU Republic of Macedonia.

2.3 Dynamics of a multiethnic national versus supranational dimension at EU level.

One of the main prerequisites of the Framework Agreement is to guarantee the rights of the Albanian population in education, language use and equal representation in the political, cultural, economic and public.[12] This illustrates the importance the EU gives preserving multicultural and multiethnic character of Macedonia.

Different ethnic groups in Macedonia have different concepts about the term "multiculturalism". Argued that the community has a more positive attitude to this term, mainly because of their interest in Euro-Atlantic integration, Macedonian majority sees "multiculturalism" or as an ideological import that is completely out of context, or just as a phrase replaces the old policy of ethnic control.[13]

Today, nearly 12 years after its signing, the Ohrid Framework Agreement has not yet been fully implemented, and tensions between the two largest ethnic groups are still very present, which makes distant dream for a multicultural and multiethnic Macedonia. The EU has a key role in the

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[10] The Copenhagen Criteria are set out in the European Council meeting in this city in 1993 where it was decided that the perspective of the countries of Central and Eastern EU membership, but also that these countries must meet certain conditions for admission to organization

[11] Reka,B. "*Geopolitics and the Techniques of EU Enlargement",* (Aspect, Brussels 2010)

[12] Ziberi,L. *An Ideographic Analysis of the EU Multiculturalism.*Discourse in Macedonia,THE WESTERN BALLKAN POLICY REVIEW,Volume 2, Issue 1, winter/spring,2012

[13] Reka, A."*The Ohrid Agreement: The travails of inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia.*" HumanRights Review, 9 no. 1, (2007).

conceptualization of the Ohrid Agreement and considers the end of the 2001 conflict as a great success, whereas Macedonia represents a rare example of an inter-ethnic coexistence.[14] According to many studies, surveys and media Ohrid after 12 years has reduced the principles relating to the administrative division, symbols and identity etc. Also different perceptions and linguistic differences between the two main ethnic groups in Macedonia every effort to hold back a functioning multiethnic society. In addition, the government came to power in 2006 has stirred controversy and caused ethnic tensions with its projects: Encyclopedia of Macedonia, textbooks for primary and secondary schools, the project "Skopje 2014", the construction of the church in the castle Skopje etc.., which drastically affect the country's multiethnic existence.[15]

Interethnic Coexistence is very important for Macedonia's democratic development. EU urges Macedonia to reach a certain level of multiculturalism, who himself believes that the EU has achieved, although it is aware of the major conceptual changes within its member states. What is clear is that Europe, too, is unclear on the definition of this concept. The concept of "multiculturalism", as well as its basic term "culture" has become a term extremely challenged and abused, which includes a variety of meanings and concepts in EU.[16]

These different conceptions, used by the various parties involved in the dialogue for Macedonia's EU membership, highlight the need for a more comprehensive analysis of meanings and ideologies that these groups imply the use of the concept of "multiculturalism." As long as the EU is an unfinished project of political integration, the challenge of enlargement depends on the establishment of a European Union that may appear different from the one today.[17]

Member countries of the EU differ greatly in their policies for minorities, thus tensions of having a unified concept of multiculturalism are becoming more visible in terms of EU enlargement. Despite the intense rhetoric on multiculturalism by EU representatives in Macedonia, tensions and concerns between Albanian and Macedonian communities remain high. Thus, Macedonian nationalists refuse to accept that the two ethnic groups should have the same status in the country and continue to regard Macedonia as a Macedonian nation and not a multicultural country. A true multicultural approach, as defined by Barry,[18] would require that Albanians are treated as equal citizens in the country where they live as a minority rather uneven.

In the case of Macedonia, evokes the concept of multiculturalism commitment to a multiethnic and multicultural society with the aim of full membership in the EU. Differences in interpretation of historical and geographic and ethnic meanings of multiculturalism in Macedonia and in dialogue with the EU, resulting in different conceptions of the term and highlight the need for a more thorough analysis of the different meanings and ideologies that these groups have or establish the concept of multiculturalism.

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[14] Fouere,E. "*Macedonia's perspective of EU membership*". Südostevropa Mitteilungen, 46 no. 5,(2006)

[15] Dhjetë vite nga Marrëveshja Kornizë e Ohrit - A funksionon Maqedonia si shtet multietnik? UEJL, 2011,pdf, fq242

[16] Aggestam,L and Hill,CH "*The challenge of multiculturalism in Evropean foreign policy.*" International Affairs 84 no. 1 (2008

[17] Francois d`Arcy.*Politikat e Bashkimit Europian*.Shtepia botuese,Papirus ,Tirane,2007,fq 23

[18] Barry,B. Culture & equality: *An egalitarian critique of multiculturalism*. (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2001).

While the aim of the concept presented by the EU was to unite these communities, different conceptions of multiculturalism have shared and contributed more to do "multiculturalism" unacceptable for various groups involved in this discourse. The EU was founded on the basis of a multicultural idea of "unity in diversity", imagining promoting cultural diversity of its member states and at the same time, the promotion of common values for all. But the idea of the EU for "unity in diversity" is vague enough to make it acceptable to all member states. Concept of multiculturalism in the EU involves a lot of tension between Europe and the nations that make up Europe, as well as between nations and individuals live there.[19]

Conclusions

Although there have been many studies on political institutions and economic organizations of the European community, great importance should be given to cultural issues and their link with politics. Given that European integration is not only economic but also political and beyond, the need to establish and strengthen corporate identity is a key element. In the context of the European Union who criticized the democratic deficit, this need is even more acute. The historical experience of involvement of the EU in Macedonia and its leading role in the Ohrid Framework Agreement, the full implementation of which remains a precondition for Macedonia's accession to the EU, illustrates the importance of EU countries give Macedonia to maintain multicultural and multiethnic character.

 However in one opinion suggested that the days of nationalism are going to an end and that ethnic nationalism, in this case in Macedonia is going against the dominant trends in world history, which tend towards greater political union. EU has to be clarified regarding multiculturalism, as a necessity to improve interethnic cohesion and assist in institutional integration of Albanians. This change can make working with the Macedonian state institutions, orienting them towards multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, modernization etc. The role of the political elite is very important in articulating these ethnic conflicts and blocking the enlargement process. Challenges and dilemmas of integration of Macedonia is a dilemma between integration or fragmentation of the Balkans and the challenge of EU enlargement eastwards.

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[19] Aggestam,L and Hill,CH *"The challenge of multiculturalism in Evropean foreign policy."* International Affairs 84 no. 1 (2008

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