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**ON TOLERANCE IN THE 21st CENTURY
FROM THE ASPECT OF COMMUNICOLOGY,
POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE**

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*"Tolerance makes variety possible,
variety makes tolerance inevitable"*
Michael Walzer

One of the crucial parts of the post-structuralist philosophy of variety is to support variety with enthusiasm. The alternative to opening the gates of communication is defragmenting the modern to post-modern fragments that, standing alone have blurred shapes, but create different identification shapes and forms through interaction. A contemporary open communicative entity is understood to include the principles of permeability, interaction, tolerance and co-existence in order to create an objectivity of a multiple identity.

Clearly defined forms of social, political and religious identity in the global process of *framenration* (fragmentation+ integration) are attributed with new shapes, functions and meanings.

By introducing a private sphere into the public multiculturalism has become the imperative of the time, and also a call for respecting and accepting the differences that arise when starting a conversation about politics and the culture of tolerance.

The project of Modernism, according to the contemporary politics of tolerance, is manifested through the politics of the democratic left wing fighting for social integration of those groups which were considered to be under a certain social ostracism, that is, the individuals that are persecuted within the society because of their sex, race, religion, social or

political subjectivity, such as Jews, women, black people, immigrants, the poor.

Therefore, the focus was on the individual acceptance of a man as a citizen regardless of the above-mentioned prefixes of his subjectivity.

Basically, this is how the idea of civil publicity and affirmation was conceived, the idea of a citizen of who has been accepted as an individual with both similarities and differences within the pluralistic whole of the society and the country.

After that, it chronologically follows to accept and respect groups as entities formed by members of the same or similar ethnic, national, religious, political, economic, social or cultural characteristics. Among the co-existing groups, one can notice specific differentiae that give unique qualities to each one of them. The trends of the globalization of economy and society have made the existing identities amorphous categories.

The wave of communication and technology has compensated for the time and space, enhanced the inter-dependence and integration, and has made the identity a changeable, incoherent dialectical entity, thus annulling the uniqueness of identity, or its self-sufficiency and isolationism. Once we accept “the otherness” in ourselves, it is easier to put the principle of tolerance into practice.

According to Michael Walzer¹, there are several regimes of tolerance:

- a) multi-national empire;
- b) consociation;
- c) nation state;
- d) immigrant society.

A multinational empire is the model of tolerance based on national and religious differences of social groups where the membership of an individual is obligatory since these groups represent a coherent entity of identity, and there is no right on self-determination (The Ottoman Empire, Ancient Rome). In these countries, there was one dominant religion, but the existential status was ensured to the other religions as well.

Nation state is a fictional, administrative and cultural space founded by the influence of common history, language and territory. The last

¹ Michael Walzer, *On Toleration*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1997

element (territory) in a secular society functions as a special pagan symbol of the national politics.

The territory is marked by a referential frame of how the power of the national sovereignty has spread since the first elements of statesmanship until today. The cult of sovereignty is unconceivable without the elements of land, or territory, the area within which and outside of which the influence of the state is spread, and with globalization, economic factors of the market and multinational corporations as well.

The contemporary concept of the nation places this phenomenon to be constituted through processes of industrialization, political democratisation, mass education and the media, where the factor of education is considered to be crucial for the cultural reproduction of the society.

Contrary to the traditional perception of the nation state, there is the concept of the civil state, for which the territorial term “nation” (non-ethnic) is suitable with the aim of forming an ethnically neutral state.

Multiculturalism as a phenomenon that arose as an expression of the civil pluralism of a national state requires that the cultural-ethnic groups be given a status that surpasses the groups within the civil society, observing them as political entities.

Therefore, the national identity becomes the only legitimate source of collective identification. By not introducing the basic concept of a liberal society, the individual freedom of thought, freedom is given and kept within the group, and according to Tokwil’s definition of the lack of (individual) freedom, within democracy.

Consociation is a regime suitable for the co-existence of two or three nations, as is the case with the Swiss model, the Cyprus model, the Belgian model, or the Lebanon model. Here, I want to place stress on the plural of the noun “model” since there is no particular model of consociation that can be universally applied.

This means that every social system has to, from its Selfhood, come up with its own variant of consociation that would be adapted to the domicile, cultural, historical, political and social environment, and, that would also be able to actively communicate with the environment. Any kind of introjection to the model from outside makes the social uniqueness artificial and fragile, or, in wider terms, subordinated and dependent on the domineering competing paradigms.

That kind of subordination automatically places the social community to the position of a passive recipient that finds its subjectivity in the tertiary sector of service and goods. In that sense, the existence (as well as) the goods refers to the wholeness of one social paradigm in the international order.

Plural existence must be defined by law that will take into consideration an equal political status of all national subjectivities. The basis for understanding the consociation is the *concensus* - or the minimum of agreements among different political beliefs in one political system.

However, the negotiations about reaching minimum agreement can always be in question, which always makes the consociation model instable and in danger of becoming an opposing social option. In the Anglo-Saxon theory of pluralism, there is no general consensus, but an agreement that, in order to achieve goals, it is necessary to apply political means asking for an agreement by all parties, or the majority of members when it comes to dealing with social issues.

Besides that, consensus also encompasses a minimum of humanistic principles, such as justice, tolerance, and common welfare. Above all, consensus is a dynamic process of creating conditions for overcoming social conflicts and stable functioning of the social system. According to J. Habermas, “the practical discourse has to be free from being forced to act in a certain way, the participants and thematic supplements must not be self-willingly limited, every aspect of power and authority must be excluded, and what is worthy is an exceptionally better argument and common truth-seeking”²

What represents a threat to the social consensus is the assumption that, at a certain moment, one group will be proclaimed a minority, and the consociation will be transformed into the model of the ethno-national state.

Michael Walzer considers consociation to be a very sensitive model, constantly exposed to danger of extermination since it is based on an openness that requires constant negotiation and addressing political (national) subjects, and, above all, a calm political discussion/speech that will encourage appreciation and tolerance.

² Diether Nohlen, *Politološki rječnik /Dictionary of Political Science/*, Pan liber Osjek-Zagreb-Split, 2001, p.166.

Today, societies in transition are most often faced with this problem. Studies show that, through national anachronism, the political ontology in the societies in transition became an end in itself, and as a consequence of that, we have an implosion and division of society into communities that defend the position of ethnocentrism and ethno-democracy. It is paradoxical that in the era of the cacophony of dialogue, people tend to agree less and less on differences and find adequate modes of living together.

A Hungarian political scientist, Istvan Bibo, started with the assumption that the elites of western nations are made up of practical politicians, business people, and independent intellectuals. The content of the eastern elites has deformed the political character of eastern nationalism, which lacks a healthy sense of balance between the real, the possible and the desirable.

The immigrant society appeared due to the influence of global migrations after World War I and II. The global society has become an open communicative entity, in which we also have individual referential national states considering the fact that the criteria of the world market do not allow the existence of a “Robinson” in the world of inter-state connections and the process of European and world integrations.

The unavoidable encounter of different cultural values has shown how no subjectivity is immune to contacts with the outer world, and that there is no absolute purity of subjectivity.

The Bestseller in 2005, “The Da Vinci Code” reveals the Apolonian ideal of purity in Christianity faced with Dionisian heresy of the natural represented in the basic shape.

To ask for an ideal of absolute cultural, religious, ethnical and national purity, that is, their isolation from the outer environment, in religious sense means a deviation from the theo-centric positioning of God(s) (Note: I intentionally use the noun God in plural considering its monotheistic interpretation in the Christian, Islamic and Jewish discourse), which leads to the necessary differentiation between the secular and theo-centric principle.

Secular theo-centrism, or theo-centric secularism, an oxymoronic compound of the two theoretically incompatible principles, in practice, however, comes to life and demonstrates a changeable inflation of the retrograde and anachronic ethno-national tendencies implicitly manifested in the transitional societies of the Western Balkans in their mental code,

which leads us to question the national awakening and the possibility of true social reforms.

The fundamentalist basis of any system makes a society impossible to adapt to the macro-environment that follows contemporary global trends.

Wittgenstein's interpretations in terms of the linguistic games stresses out the concept of conversational inference (a contextually determined process of interpretation by which the participants of a conversation guess the intentions of the others, and based on those assumptions, create their own answers; major factors are: the environment, the situation, personal experience of participants and their relationship, common knowledge, socio-cultural assumptions, and the linguistic-grammatical meaning), which leads us to conclude that language is a form of life, a projection of one's own reality.

The anthropo-centric approach of interpretationism is known by the principle that, even though cultures may take different forms, in each one of them it is possible to recognize common human behaviour since some characteristics are in common to all people regardless to which cultural subjectivity they belong to. Therefore, the realization of general social goals should in no circumstances be dependent on inner social differences.

Italian Americans, Polish Americans, Chinese Americans, Hispanic Americans, etc, are a representative example of the cultural variety of the American society. The American melting-pot represents a reciprocal influence of different cultural factors in shaping the American cultural discourse, or the cultural variety in general. This means that cultural interaction leads to heterogenisation of culture, not denying the cultural specifications of each cultural expression.

Despite the prevailing concept of Christianity, America has followed the model of de-politisation of ethnos, that is, the concensus of a large number of individuals of different ethnic backgrounds. The immigrant society is in fact nomadic.

The world market imposes constant mobility, whereas the capital is a disindividualised force of integration that connects the dimensions of time and space until they unite, regardless of their geographical distance.

Revolutions in science and the density of information flow have made privacy relative to that degree that in any moment, whether we are at home, in the office or outside, we can communicate with the furthest parts of the world, make important business-related decisions in different fields,

be familiar with what is going on in the neighbourhood or elsewhere, but also, in the Orwellian sense, we can also be an object of observation or monitored by high-tech satellite systems.

It is the outer space that dominates private life. In that sense, dis-individualisation does not mean decapitation of identity, but the lack of one and only marker of personal or group identification and the possibility to choose among different options of existing social subjectivities.

Today, many discussions raise the question of understanding a reality of multi-identity that, in relation to the super-identity formation - the cosmopolitan citizen, unites all the known forms of human existence manifested through private and public sphere.

The phenomenon of immigrant society is all the more interesting since it implies today's virtual hyper-reality that, under the imperative of capital increasing, reinterprets traditional artificial concepts: nation, ideology, culture, civilization. This leads us to further ponder on reinterpretation of the national sovereignty discourse and the existence of subjectless pluralism.

I find this more detailed definition of the immigrant society suitable since the contemporary life conditions, being on the path of Popper's fallibilistic cognition and the project of open-communication community, require the principle of tolerance as the building material of pluralism in the world.

Gandhi's comparison of individuals to drops in the sea that, if isolated, cannot exist without the sea in which they swim, leads us to conclude that tolerance is a prerequisite of differences to co-exist and the democracy of dialogue as well.

Gadamer's saying that there is no verdict without prejudice points to the possible definition of tolerance as "the ability to listen to a man who has a different opinion about the same thing, so that one could, by listening to him discover new ideas that could contribute in making these different opinions come closer, be corrected, supplemented or expressed in the way that will please all the participants"³ in the process of communication.

Therefore, political culture must act in the direction of increasing the awareness of multiplicity and necessity of communication among different forms of existence. Tolerance represents the cornerstone of harmonizing

³ Đuro Šušnjić, *Dijalog i tolerancija / Dialogue and Tolerance*, Čigoja Press, Belgrade, 1997, p. 202

different interests in the direction of a general social prosperity and alleviating the consequences of mass job dismissals and disintegration of workplaces.

This is at the same time a socio-ethical dimension advocated, in the process of globalization, by Germany and France against Great Britain⁴ that insists on further scientification of the objective fact-oriented life, that is, on directing the funds for scientific purposes, which makes the society become more automatic, miniature and cybernetic.

The composition of countries in transition is rather unstable and incoherent in terms of the developments of individual countries. The character of inner politics and the relationship between countries contributes to that. The tension between the Modern and the Post-modern is most clearly seen in this field.

The sensitivity of such a socially ruined situation observed through the eyes of political and economic connotations resembles a mathematical equation in which the lines stretch out into space without a section point, which means that there is a lack of a cohesive force that would functionally connect the differences within the civil, state and inter-state spaces.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a country that is going through a very traumatic period of post-war reconstruction and transition, a specific situation present within the political system reveals a complex, non-functional and disorganised social atmosphere. The existing spectrum of problems consists of the following:

1. The division of the country into entities- national territorisation,
2. The vital nation interest of B&H not defined,
3. The category of the constituency of nations instead of the constituency of citizens,
4. A sclerotic economic system,
5. Lack of *demos* as a prerequisite for the existence of democracy, creating ethnocracy,
6. A discriminating electoral system,
7. Lack of a mechanism that would make the youth participate in political decisions
8. Mass bureaucracy

⁴ (The request of Great Britain for establishing a fund for adapting to globalization submitted on November 27th 2005 at the Summit of EU Members).

The lack of a strong pro-citizen option causes problems in dialogue on ethno-national basis. The living space of different peoples is attempted to be bordered by imaginary borders within which members of one religion and nation settle down by selling their flats, houses, land or cattle – therefore, legally, and the result is: getting a relatively clean ethnic ground.

Bosnia and Herzegovina needs alternative forces that would tell people that, even besides the ethnic identity, there are other values as well, such as: tolerance, social justice, equality, the richness of variety, communication about oneself with the others. The first and the most important step of such a process would be for all people to say: “We are the dwellers, that is, the citizens of this country”⁵

Unfortunately, today no one thinks of a common country, the sense of belongingness has weakened. The only solution to make a positive improvement would be to influence citizens through education, culture and media.

Besides that, what is necessary is a direct political engagement of people who think in a different way, or public engagement of individuals (through the written media). To implement the desired is difficult due to the lack of an adequate state standard that would cover the fields of the media, telecommunications, economy, local administration, health, social work, education, that is, all the basic segments that a state should organise in a unique way.

The obstructions arise due to ethnonationalism and parochial nationalism, crime ratio is increased as a reaction to low life standard. The mystification and the belief in a “true” nation is becoming a form of a collective illusion, an ideological empty phraseology by which the youth is “filtered”, the feeling of disliking “the other” is intensified, and communication is limited. There is no feeling of belongingness to the Bosnian and Herzegovinian society as a whole, the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina feel more inclined to the neighbours in the East or the West.

And it is exactly this post-war, mental rebirth of the society that is far more difficult to achieve than to repair the material damage. Instead of trying to find solutions to improve life standard in every aspect, we are

⁵ Osam godina Daytonске BiH: Nove vizije za BiH: zbornik radova i zaključci sa alternativne konferencije Sarajevo, 2. oktobar 2003, / Eight Years of Dayton B&H: New Visions for B&H: Proceedings and conclusions of the alternative conference, Sarajevo, October 2nd 2003/, Heinrich Boll Foundation, Sarajevo, 2004, p. 39.

preoccupied with dilemmas of choosing the right name and surname, religious and national belonging, political stream, dilemmas about what are the basic human rights, what is completely personal for any individual that can in no circumstances be taken away, misused or be used as a basis for setting values, laying claims or denial.

The common saying: “He/she is one of us”, from the very beginning makes an unjust division into: we, they, ours, yours, known-unknown/ foreign, right-wrong, true-false/ artificial. This creates a distorted image of an individual, or the group, the circle around which is closed, communication becomes mystical and ideological, or in other words, we get a collective (self)-illusion.

The process of transition has actually become a process of pseudo-transition that resulted in pathological and pathogenic social phenomena, permanent political disagreements, economic disintegration, fall of life standard. In the long run, if this trend continues, it will lead to serious social disorders, existential insecurity, and even greater crime ratio.

“The key to the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina is to be found in Bosnia and Herzegovina itself, in the development of personal political modernity based on free and open permeation among the three cultural spheres of civilization: Arabic-Islamic, Orthodox-Byzantine, Catholic-Western”⁶ Keeping balance between these three cultural spheres as integral pluralities would make the long-expected and necessary progress in turning the paradigm of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the contemporary ethno-politics to the concept of civic-politics.

Taken all into consideration, together with the problems present among the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina that have occurred after the war, it is clear why the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina constantly goes backwards, and why it is, in comparison to the modern world, standing aside the social network.

The triadic monologue, the lack of calm political discussion represents Bosnia and Herzegovina as a communication entity in self-containment that, before all, has to learn how to open itself for what is inside, so that pluralism can come to life for real, since this is the first principle of tolerance for opening the gates for the outside and getting involved in contemporary European trends.

⁶ Stjepan Šimić, *Teorija političke moderne /Theory of Political Modernism/*, NIPP Naša riječ Zenica, 1999, p. 63

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