

UNIVERSITY "Ss. CYRIL AND METHODIUS" in SKOPJE



INSTITUTE FOR SOCIOLOGICAL, POLITICAL
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FOREWORD

International Conference Challenges of Contemporary Society takes place in the year when the Institute for sociological, political and juridical research celebrates 50 years of existence. Over the years the Institute continuously encouraged and opened research questions and issues in the different fields of social sciences, and, as a result, large number of scientific and applied projects were conducted. Within this half century of existence around 500 applied and scientific research projects had been conducted and more than 200 different publications were published. As a result of this continuous work the Institute has been involved in the management, promotion and development of socio-economic conditions in the Republic of Macedonia.

The Conference Challenges of Contemporary Society was in this spirit of anticipating societal changes and challenges. The aim of this Conference was to provide a forum for an interdisciplinary discussion for contemporary social issues.

The agenda of the Conference covers a wide range of very interesting issues related to the modern society and challenges from important social phenomena such as:

- Challenges for democracy and democratization;
- New media, new communication, new identities;
- Social challenges for contemporary society;
- Management, business and workforce issues in the 21st Century.

Contributions from the fields of sociology, political science, communication science, law, management, psychology, and also contributions regarding methodological issues related to how to study these phenomena, made this Conference significant and inspiring.

In this edition of the Annual of the ISPJR are several works of authors whose papers were successfully presented at this International Conference in the Section: Challenges for democracy and democratization /Political and Legal perspective/.

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**BULGARIA, CUBA, UZBEKISTAN: THREE VERY
DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES WITH COMMUNISM
THAT TURNED UP TO AN IMPASSE**

Abstract

Bulgaria, Cuba and Uzbekistan seem quite different and distant one from another. It appears futile to juxtapose Southeast European Bulgaria, Central American island of Cuba, and Central Asian landlocked Uzbekistan. Cuba is almost completely Catholic, though with relatively strong impact of the pagan Santeria; Uzbekistan is predominantly moderate Moslem country; in Bulgaria, Eastern Orthodox Christianity prevails, with some 10-15% of mainly Moslem population and small presence of predominantly Christian denominations. Ethnically, Cuba is presumably most diverse, with white and Black people, and descendants of many mixed marriages. Ethnic picture in Bulgaria matches that of confessions presented, with prevalence of Christian Bulgarians, but also Bulgarian Turks, Roma, Bulgarian Moslems (Pomaks), and negligible other groups of Armenians, Jews and other – with all typical for the Balkans disparity between official data, self identification controversy, and claims of adjacent countries to share separated by the borders ethnicities often with other names. Uzbeks constitute 81% of their country's population, followed by Russians, Tajiks, Kazakhs, and others more than 100 Nations and nationalities. Despite their remoteness and attachment to diverse types of cultural traditions, national specificity, and historical background, deeper knowing of these countries reveal some significant similarities. It is the communist legacy that brings them together. Article is focused on the analysis of their experience with the post-communist realities.

Key words: Bulgaria, Cuba, Uzbekistan, post-communist realities, political regimes, ethnic relations.

Bulgaria, Cuba and Uzbekistan may seem quite different and distant one from another. To juxtapose Southeast European Bulgaria, Central American island of Cuba, and Central Asian landlocked Uzbekistan appears futile. Cuba is almost completely Catholic, though with relatively strong impact of the pagan Santeria; Uzbekistan is predominantly moderate Moslem country; in Bulgaria, Eastern Orthodox Christianity prevails, with some 10-15% of mainly Moslem population and small presence of mainly Christian denominations. Ethnically, Cuba is presumably most diverse, with white and Black people, and descendants of many mixed marriages. In Bulgaria ethnic picture matches that of confessions presented, with prevalence of Christian Bulgarians, but also Bulgarian Turks, Roma, Bulgarian Moslems (Pomaks), and negligible groups of Armenians, Jews and other – with all typical for the Balkans disparity between official data, self identification controversy, and claims of adjacent countries to share separated by the borders ethnicities often with other names. Uzbeks constitute 81% of their country's population, followed by Russians, Tajiks, Kazakhs, and others more than 100 Nations and nationalities.

Communist legacy (and for Cuba present-day, since the sole and ruling Communist Party) brings together all three countries. Cuba, with the sugar cane (reaching one time about 80% of the value of Cuban exports), and Uzbekistan with cotton, were typical monoculture agrarian economies, and Bulgaria was also dependent on agriculture. All three, however, endured serious industrialization efforts, not always rational and consistent with local conditions and resources: Cuba with nickel, Bulgaria with heavy industry, warehouse hauling equipment and electronics, and Uzbekistan with ore processing and aircraft manufacturing. With the exception of Cuba with its enormous stocks of nickel, Bulgaria and Uzbekistan were heavily dependent on import of raw materials, and Cuba and Uzbekistan (to a lesser degree Bulgaria) also for qualified working force.

Despite their remoteness and affiliation to different types of cultural traditions, national specificity, and historical background, deeper knowing of these countries reveal some significant similarities. Being on the crossroads of the greatest human movements in history, Bulgaria and Uzbekistan has experienced various influences, not always positive and delightful, that has left traces in the overall cultural shape, language, folklore, and even cuisine. We could mention, for example, that one of the central figures of the Balkan fairy tales, Nastradin Hodja, is appreciated as a national character in Uzbekistan. Influence of the prominent Islamic thinkers, Baha-ud-Din Naqshb and Bukhari (1318–1389), founder of one of the largest and most persuasive Sufi Muslim orders, has had reached as far as on the Balkans. Both Bulgaria and Uzbekistan offer various dairy products, incl. one with same name – katuk.

Likewise, we can find a number of historical resemblances between Bulgaria and Cuba. Poets and revolutionaries Jose Marti and Khristo Botev contributed greatly for the national liberation struggle, and lost their lives in the combat. Familiarity of national mood created outstanding relations between Cuba and Bulgaria at least during 1959-1989, which far outstripped common ideology and the routine of economic cooperation.

Political regimes distinguish all three countries. While Bulgaria exercises most of the at least formal traits of the representative democracy, with regular national elections, multiple political parties, none of this exist both in Cuba and Uzbekistan. In Cuba, strict grip over society by the ruling Communist Party and omnipresent secret services is far of easing. As for Uzbekistan, it represents a classical example of an authoritarian regime, where President Karimov and his closest circle keep control over the total socio-political and economic life¹.

UZBEKISTAN: LEGACY OF THE SOVIET SYSTEM

Endeavor to achieve social justice according to Marxist-Leninist ideology was not limited to Russian culture and society itself, but it tried to reach almost every cultural, ethnic and religious subgroup of the diverse republics of the USSR, including Uzbekistan (Shahrani, 1995). Thus, as John Pottenger wrote, while the Soviet Union disappeared, the Soviet system remained (Pottenger, 2004: 59). End of 20th century in Uzbekistan saw a rebirth and reassertion of the significance of the medieval Islamic texts for personal ethical elevation (See Allworth, 1990: 277-8; cf. Akbarzadeh, 1996; and Djumaev, 2001). Thus, Uzbekistan appreciated the necessity of both invigorating civil society, and habitual religious values. Nearly a year before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, President I. Karimov publicly expressed his concern over the former Soviet régime's hostility toward the institutions and principles of traditional Islam: "The consequences of the destruction of age-old moral principles for ideological reasons will be far more difficult to overcome than the chaos in the economy"(quoted in Berger, 1991: 30).

Karimov's extensive personal political experience with Soviet totalitarianism, his career in the Uzbek economy's industrial sector, and familiarity with the historic role of Islam in the history of Uzbekistan provide the incentive and basis for his political thinking and leadership of contemporary Uzbekistan². Calls for the democratic participation of Uzbek citizens in the governance sound completely futile (for example, Karimov, 1998: 108-109). With the collapse of the Soviet Union, and departure of the false, artificially imposed Marxist-Leninist values, this vacuum had to be filled by an alternative ideology or public philosophy. In

Uzbekistan, where more than 80% of the population is at least nominally Sunni Muslim, the only such alternative that commands extensive appeal is that of Islam (see Tazmini, 2001; and Allworth, *op. cit.*, Ref. 18). Many observers argue that presence of Islam in Uzbekistan is crucial for the shaping of the national identity as required by civil society (see, for example, Hanks, 1999: 159-163, and Abduvakhitov, 1995). In their resistance to Soviet ideology, many Uzbek political and religious leaders often appealed to the upright moral traditions and values incorporated in the historic literature. This fosters a civil society on the basis of Islamic traditionalism principles and dogmas, an attempt for a synthesis between modern liberal values of religious tolerance and the traditional Islamic values of social welfare. However, in order to reduce political risks to the regime, authorities banned most opposition political parties, both secular and Islamic – the Army of Islam, followers of Wahhabism, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), and Hizbut-Tahrir (Liberation Party), the autonomous Islamic mosques and NGOs, incl. the Erk (Freedom) Democratic Party, the Birlik (Unity) Party, the Adolat (Justice) Party, and the Islamic Renaissance Party. These and many other non-state approved, independent Islamic organizations are often characterized as conservative movements advocating fundamentalist teachings at odds with the ethos of toleration and pluralism typically espoused in both liberal and decent societies³. To curb the threat of Islamic militancy, in 1998 the Oliy Majlis enacted the Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations to restrict the activities of virtually all religious denominations⁴.

I. Karimov's attempt to achieve a transition from Soviet totalitarianism to liberal society has resulted in, as Gerald M. Easter wrote, 'a nontraditional form of authoritarianism in which power resides as much in the person of the president as in the office' (Easter, 1997: 209.)⁵. It might be more correctly be perceived as a non-competitive, authoritarian regime than with the constitutional democratic governments of liberal societies (see Levitsky and Way, 2002: 54–55). A disastrous consequence of such political system based on *de facto* concentration of powers and operated by elites from the Soviet era is the continual use of brutal methods and intimidation typical for that epoch. It appears that the Uzbek state has in effect nationalized one version of Islam, thus marginalizing all other interpretations to the point of persecution and, finally, has undermined own promise and prospect of civil society itself.

CUBA: LONG AGONY OF AN ESCAPE⁶

In theory, in a communist country such as Cuba, all are equal and provided with the basics of life, including housing, education and health. Once these primary

living costs are covered by public funds (is it necessary to explain that they are accumulated by solid deductions from the income of enterprises and all employed), then for all other needs wages is not necessarily to be high. So the average Cuban official, from engineers, doctors (in ordinary, non-hard currency paid medical facilities) and teachers to drivers get an equivalent of about 10-20 dollars monthly. Prices of locally manufactured products are generally low, and food – with coupons, while choice of goods is more than scarce and consists of poor quality products and services. A two currency system was established: one for average mortals, the other one supposedly only for foreign tourists. But as a matter of fact, it covers the privileged class too, including both working in the sector of tourist services and the higher nomenclature. Thus, in a society that allegedly is moving towards a classless one, in fact social disparities become more compelling. “Convertible” pesos, (“CUCs”), are approximately equal to the US dollar, while the “normal” ones – 25 times less. For some things, such as entrance to museums, foreigners pay 25 times more than the Cuban citizens; for another (e.g. intercity bus, taxi, restaurant) the price is the same, making them inaccessible to all but the most wealthy Cubans⁷. The contrast between the haves and have-nots is often quite drastic.

Cancellation of the many years subsidies to Cuba⁸ forced communist apparatchiks to seek how to survive. From 1968 on there has been several waves of introduction and rejection of limited economic freedoms and after the economy stabilized, prohibitive taxes were imposed, and tolerated activities were curtailed (see, for more details, Pérez-López, 1995; Peters and Scarpaci, 1998; Ritter, 1998, 2006). Individuals were arrested for a bag of cement or even a cake (i. e., more than the permitted through rationing amount of eggs, milk and flour, and therefore, a crime, which led to detaining).

Cuban private sector includes also informal, grey part, as well as illegal workers after the official working hours in enterprises and possibly even a larger segment of the population, referred to as the GESPI (*civil servants who receive a substantial private income*, least equal to the meager State salaries), engaged in various activities. We see them delivering bread, soft drinks, fruits, etc. in the homes, accommodating tourists. In total, at the beginning of 2013, the private sector in Cuba was estimated at nearly 2 million enterprising Cubans (40% of total employment), and probably even more (Feinberg, 2013: 8-9; Oficina Nacional Estadística; Piñeiro Harnecker, 2013; Espina Prieto and Togores González, 2012)⁹. “Now in Havana practically no one works for the state; and those who still do that also have a private business on the side.” – writes Marc Frank, journalist and longtime observer of processes in Cuba (Frank, 2013).

Non-state sector in the near future will likely continue to expand to include numerous chronically inefficient small- and medium-sized units into cooperatives

for producing and selling goods and services¹⁰. No data exist also for the private property of citizens, in particular about the ownership of homes and cars¹¹. By 2010, only 19% of Cubans possessed either stationary or then only introduced in the country mobile phones, compared, for example, with 97% in Costa Rica (Peters, *op. cit.*: 8)¹².

Cuba's achievements in the fields of health care and education are prominent, but latest quality of medical services' data show nearly critical condition: lack of the most needed drugs, poor equipment, inadequate emergencies. Malnutrition and the use of low quality products, absence of sanitation aggravate situation, creating outbreaks of nearly uprooted earlier serious diseases – beriberi, plague, tuberculosis and leptospirosis. Life expectancy, once approaching US indicators, sharply dropped (quoted according to Esperanza Hernandez Truyol, 1994: 28). Investing significant funds in hard currency clinics, where cured are paying customers from abroad – at the expense of the general health – is cynical...

Almost same in education, which is entirely part of the all-embracing propaganda and indoctrination effort (see, for more details, Horowrrz, 1993: esp. 68-70)¹³.

Currently, the definitely historical changes that came with the spectacular reconciliation between the Presidents Obama and Raul Castro in early December of 2014 serve limited political purposes and benefit only a thin layer of already privileged in Cuba. They got what they dreamed about – status of the capitalist middle and upper class, keeping their party membership. As for the at least two generations who suffered woes of an absurd revolution, they remain once again deceived. The real changes are still ahead, and it seems that will be very painful. Let us hope that it will not be bloody...

BULGARIA: LOST IN A NEVER ENDING TRANSITION?

Many of the problems in Bulgaria today stem from the corrupt and undemocratic way in which the 1989 transition was carried out. According to Jürgen Habermas (Habermas 1990), while E. European countries experienced very different revolutionary changes, under the mixture of appearances all these events of change followed a general pattern shaping a process of a singular revolution. What is distinguishing all these countries, for Habermas, is that the totalitarian regimes were not instituted by a successful and independent revolution, but as a direct consequence of the WWII and the occupation of the Soviet Army. As such, “the abolition of the people's republic has occurred under the sign of a return to old, national symbols, and, where this was possible, has understood itself to be the continuation of the political traditions and party organizations of the interwar years” (Ibidem).

An EU member since 2007, Bulgaria is still struggling with corruption and democratic consolidation. Accession to the EU was presented largely as a milestone in enhancing socio-economic development, fostering prosperity and democracy, and overcoming poverty. Some analysts even stated that the transition to democracy and a market economy is over. However, years later, the country seems to be failing to provide basic rights and freedoms, and is stressed with unfinished reforms.

Since the beginning of the transition in 1989, Bulgaria has been in a spiral of deep political, social and economic disorder – demographic predicament, brain drain, poverty, lack of basic subsistence means, and of opportunities for the youth. Most of the values, principles and procedures of democracy exist only on paper, while the political elites and administrative institutions persistently undermine them, creating favorable conditions for nepotism and corruption generally yielding chances for improvement.

The case of the Bulgarian transition has a reality of its own, other than in most E. European counterparts. As wrote Richard Crampton, one of the best Western connoisseurs of Bulgarian history, “[Bulgarian authoritarian leader from 1954 to 1989] Zhivkov’s fall was the work of the party hierarchy; it was a palace coup rather than a revolution, and ‘people power’ in Bulgaria was to be more the consequence than the cause of the change of leadership’ (Crampton, 2005: 212). Thus, the democracy, freedom are in fact *not* genuine, but granted by those who perpetuated the totalitarian regime. Bulgaria has turned into an arena where the rule of law was virtually replaced by corruption; instead of sustainable civil society – clientelist interdependence, undercover political deals instead of transparent debates prevail. Apathy and distrust has been the long-term explanation of lack of engagement and participation.

A six-year investigation conducted by the Commission of Inquiry into the dossiers of the former communist state security services, announced on 26th November 2013 that about 8,000 former agents have been in high level positions during the researched period (some of them are still in power). According to the investigative journalist Khristo Khristov, members of the former communist state security have infiltrated all parliaments since the 1990 and virtually all governments (Khristov, 2013).

According to the Constitution, Bulgaria is a parliamentary republic, but most of the policy-making depends rather on the personal over-centralized will of the government and the prime minister. This leaves the political elite practically invulnerable to any measures of accountability and civilian control. Problematic and difficult transition in the country was strongly accompanied by the dormant annoyance and disappointment. Levels of interpersonal trust and trust in the institutions of the representative democracy, according to Alpha Research data in

June 2015) are among the lowest in Europe¹⁴. Low levels of participation (81.5% would not take part in any action or initiative, Bulgarian Sociological Association, 2008), civic activity and citizens' engagement have plagued societal relations, leaving society fragmented.

The 'Bay Ganyo'¹⁵ style in politics further alienates people from joining political parties and fosters disgust toward policy making as a deceitful, dirty dealing and bargain, and this when challenges facing Bulgaria are bigger than ever.

Given the vulnerability of civil society together with defying conditions for public discourse, institutional discrepancies are leaving too little room for greater participation in policy making, which additionally deepens frustration, apparent or alleged lack of transparency and accountability. With this unpredictability of the public dialogue and overall political process grows, which makes civic organizations and individuals to refrain from exercising pressure and influence (see Nikolov, 1996, 2000; Kabakchieva, 2011). Methods that the political elites employs recall those of the former communist regime. Freedom of the media continued to gradually deteriorate, where Bulgaria dramatically declined from 80th to 87th in 2013 and to 106 rank in 2015 of the Reporters without Borders. Delyan Peevski, who became symbolic by word for the darkest side of politic, openly or allegedly controls a large share of the press. They are also using a libel campaign against the protesters and for political propaganda, which ultimately leaves the fourth pillar of democracy in the hands of the ruling elite.

Social movement that burst out in Bulgaria further divided society and exposed the deceitful nature of the fundamental institutions of democracy, justice, and freedom. Hopes were high since it was the prospect that are at stake. Expectations that protests would give birth the civil society in Bulgaria faded again. And it is only experience of the neighbor Romania with its decisive actions against corruption (a dozen of former ministers, incl. a prime minister, were jailed) gives some hope that not everything is so hopeless on the Balkans.

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Currently, these three countries are copying very differently with the post-communist realities. Bulgaria joined one of the most affluent international alliances, European Union, and after being a loyal member of the USSR-led military-political treaty, the Warsaw Pact, is now part of its main rival, NATO. This amazing shift in its formal political and economic status, however, changed almost nothing in Bulgaria's welfare standing – this country is undyingly lagging behind most of Europe. Freedom of travel, earlier only dreamed as in every communist country, appeared to be an extreme painful experience that sent off about 2 Mln Bulgarians, mainly young and skilled people, to seek better lives in W. Europe, Greece, and as

far as in the USA, Canada, and South Africa. Dire situation of the Uzbek economy causes similar exodus – after most of Russians, Ukrainians, and other former Soviet nationals, even after second or third generation local residents, quitted, now a great number of Uzbeks supply cheap, often illegal, working force for Russia, Kazakhstan and beyond. Cuba, where travel restrictions still exist, is not yet part of this flow to more affluent countries, but this most probably won't last for long anymore – with expected returning to the island of former exiles to claim their nationalized once property, new wave of deprived Cubans will seek their chance far of the calamitous fatherland.

Notes

(Endnotes)

¹ Recent re-election, with 90.39% of votes, of Islam Karimov, former First Secretary of the Uzbekistan branch of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, confirmed that blatantly. He is on the top since declaration of independence in 1991, even though the Constitution allows only two-term limit on the presidency. And this even though some observers vowed more real contest after the family feud with placing of President's capricious daughter Gulnara under house arrest.

² As P. Blackmon wrote, it should have come as a surprise to no one that Karimov, trained as a Sovietstyle economist, would have continued the state controlled economy. He had stated very early in the reform process that his country would follow limited political and economic reform. However, she concludes that 'It would be a mistake for future research to continue to focus solely on the political categorization of a leader (former-communistor authoritarian) because that is a narrow and unpredictable indicator in determining reform (Blackmon, 2005).

³ For instance, Hizbut-Tahrir ('Party of Liberation', an international pan-Islamic political organisation), asserts on replacing all corrupt societies where Muslims live, with an Islamic society, which should proceed in accordance with the laws and solutions of Islam. Party performs acts in accordance with the Shari'ah rules and solutions (See Grabowski, n.d.). It was namely Hizbut-Tahrir that first demanded creation of an Islamic Khaliphate and Islamic state. With regard to Uzbekistan, Hizbut-Tahrir criticizes the secular nature of the constitution, esp. 'the separation of religion from state' and contradicting 'the doctrine and ideology of the Qur'an'. See, for more details, Pottenger, 2004: 69; Karagiannis, 2006). Inquisitively enough, Hizbut-Tahrir adherents in Central Asia are almost exclusively ethnic Uzbeks.

⁴ Under this law, in addition to outlawing proselytism, all religious organizations must be registered with and approved by the Uzbek government before they may conduct worship activities and religious rituals as well as conduct other social programs. With regard to registered Islamic organizations, the primary target of the legislation, only those imams, mosques, liturgy and publications are permitted that have been approved by the Spiritual Directorate for Muslims (the Muftiate), a government agency with members appointed by the president.

⁵ The Constitution of Uzbekistan with its subsequent amendments and respective laws had in effect shifted the state's separated powers (as it formally exists in constitutional democratic regimes) to the executive branch, through the president's control over the personnel composition of the ruling People's Democratic Party that provides most of the candidates for the Oliy Majlis, the judiciary, the hokims (local governors), and both administrators and councils of the mahallas.

⁶ For my own long years approaching Cuba, literally and plausible, see Nikolov, 2015.

⁷ Cubans who work with tourists – waiters, bartenders, guides, hotel staff, musicians and doctors in foreigners servicing hospitals, and some other categories, receive income in convertible pesos, in addition to their normal salary. Another group of favored – are Cubans with relatives living abroad, mostly in the US and Spain that send hundreds of dollars to their families in Cuba. Authorities' attitude toward them abruptly changed in recent years – instead of being prosecuted, humiliated and harassed, they are now labeled with the euphemism “supporting the Socialist Government” (which recalls the one-time “understands and supports the activities of the people's power”, used in communist Bulgaria – i. e., the distinction between “bad” and “good” capitalists). Just because they dispose with the despised by the Communists resource, money (real money, not the paper ones, “provided with all the resources of the Central Bank”), they buy the favor of the authorities on the official and unofficial tariffs as well as a relatively decent standard of living.

⁸ By some estimates, about 1 bln dollars a year, mainly in the form of military supplies, construction of industrial objects, and basic necessities. Shelving of the Soviet subsidies led to a nearly 40% decline in income per capita in 1989-1994. That forced Cuba to reorganize its economy, de-criminalizing the US dollar use, legalizing farmers' markets, liberalizing self employment and encouraging new economic activities, incl. exports, etc. See Ritter, 2010.

⁹ An important place in the Cuban Government's plans for development occupies tourism, termed officially as “the heart of the economy”. And this against the apparently desperate state supply network in Cuba, where scarce food products, mainly potatoes, are offered together with pieces of meat covered with flies far from any refrigerators. That means that

provision is obviously a case of landlords' resourcefulness and connections. It is virtually not necessary to mention, that such trade apparently means black market, impossible to be carried out without the knowledge and quiet approval of the local activists of the so-called "Committees for defense of the revolution", the official authorities' eyes and ears.

¹⁰ As disclosed Cristina Mendiondo, subdirector of economy and planning, Villa Clara province, in her presentation in Jibacoa, Mayabeque, September 16, 2013 'Retos y Perspectivas del Desarrollo Territorial Local en Villa Clara' (Challenges and perspectives of local territorial development in Villa Clara), quoted in Feinberg, op.cit.: 11. During the first three quarters of 2013, the Council of Ministers of Cuba approved 271 cooperatives (created by the former State enterprises, commercial sites, as well as in construction, hospitality and transport – "Continúa avanzando...", 2013). According to optimistic expectations cooperatives would overcome the negative outcomes of state-owned enterprises, to implement initiatives of municipalities for the provision of services – e.g., care for children, collection and recycling of waste. There are the increasingly overt trend TPC (*trabajadores cuentapropistas* – petty urban enterprises) to officially merge in a larger enterprise (see Piñeiro Harnacker, op. cit, 2013, esp. the foreword, 1-45.). As senior functionaries say, in 2015, such enterprises will cover over 35% of employees, and by 2017 will produce 40-45% of GDP (quot. in Peters, 2012: 8).

¹¹ According to the recent changes in legislation, the citizens shall be allowed to have an urban apartment house/villa in the countryside, but in addition to that few can afford even one house, there are a number of restrictions – de jure property is available only for use and may be taken away by the state, it is forbidden to sell real estate, though even for a visitor it is very easy to spot the impromptu "residential exchanges" in the Havana down where handwritten classifieds offer housing.

¹² And here the most disturbing illustration of this economic condition is the purchasing power of Cubans compared with that of other countries. A study of the Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American studies at the University of Miami shows, for example, that for a purchase of less than 500 g milk powder, the average Cuban worker should work 57.5 hours, while for the same purchase the average worker in Costa Rica – only 1.7 hours. Comparable differences are contained in other analyzed positions from the basket of the study (Azel, 2013). More and more Cubans, in particular in Havana and Santiago de Cuba, display a quest for consumer behavior – something that apparently departure from the design of ideologues of the reforms. As an young man ironically noted, quoted in one of the recent books about the changes in Cuba, "we're not Communists, we're consumists" (Quoted in Caistor, 2013: 140). On the author's question of his goals in life, another young Cuban blithely replied: "Of course, we all want the same thing: a car that can start immediately, smart phone, PC with an access to internet, and a decent home". Even if they can't afford

that, surprisingly many Cubans recognize global brands ranging from Nike shoes to ice cream Nestlé (Morales and Scarpaci, 2012). Contrary to the former pursuit of freedom, currently the common motivation for emigrating is associated mainly with the desire to experience a typical middle class way of life associated with consumerism.

¹³ Even before the revolution Cuba's performance in these areas were better compared with the average for Latin America. For example, as for the indicators of life expectancy at birth in 1960, Cuba was the 4th in Latin America (63,8 years), and in 1990s for short time was on the first place (75,3 years), the infant mortality rate up to 5 years of age – 3rd and 2nd, respectively, and so on., see UNDP, Human Development Report, 1990: 133; 1992: 135-36.

¹⁴ Parliament is still the institution with the lowest rating (10% confidence against 52% confidence). President Rosen Plevneliev retains its position of two months ago: 24% approval against 37% disapproval. Invariably, a strong negative attitude is preserved towards the institutions of the judiciary: court (60% negative), investigation (57% negative), prosecution (60% negative), Attorney General (40% negative). Police, which in recent years was among the least trusted by people, now also collect more critical assessment than positive: 18% trust against 44% distrust (quoted from Dnevnik daily, June 18 2015). More than 80% of the citizens in the European Values Study (EVS) 2008 claim that they do not trust others.

¹⁵ A fictional character created by Bulgarian author Aleko Konstantinov(1863-97). Sometimes perceived as a stereotype of the uneducated, ignorant, egoistic, ruthless, profit-driven Bulgarian, he is often seen just as a social stereotype, member of the late 19th century's newly formed lower middle-class. In his political feuilletons, author depicts the extreme forms of electoral fraud and scam, which remind some present day way methods in the politics.

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**POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE
TRANSATLANTIC TRADE AND INVESTMENT
PARTNERSHIP (TTIP)**

Abstract

In "Project syndicate", in June 2015, the Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz published an absolutely alarming text with the title "The Secret Corporate Takeover". The topic of the text is The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). It is an agreement which the proposal, or the imposition, the US are agreed between the EU and the US. This agreement should be put in a package with The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Is not at all disputed that these agreements for the US have deep geopolitical and geostrategic interests and goals. The United States as one of the poles of the new multi polar international order that is quite certain and the means failure and end the unipolar international order of G.H.W. Bush, without are any dept, want to get the largest possible number of allies, primarily the EU, and thus essentially to reduce the number of potential competing poles of a multipolar international order—primarily Russia, China, India and Brazil. Therefore these countries of the BRICS group—along with Republic of South of Africa, are not present in the plans for TTIP neither in the plans for TTP. Troubling of the TTIP, including through the text of Stiglitz, primarily refers to his quite some conceptualization by the United States

not only as the exclusively trade agreement, i.e. a free trade agreement. It is certain that the concept of US for TTIP it is concept of the agreement to cover the whole of economic/social-economic systems of the states that will sign the agreement and will be its members. This reality would mean “Americanization” of economic/social-economic system of the EU Member States. That is one side of the problem. The second side is what most irritated Stiglitz and get him to write the specified text—the power and superiority of the global corporations in terms to modern/current (The Westphalian) state sovereignties.

Key words: TTIP, US and EU, “Americanization” of the economic/social-economic systems of EU member states, Doha Development Round, Multipolar international order.

INTRODUCTION

TTIP agreement is still under negotiation, during negotiations of the negotiating teams of the US and EU was taking place strictly behind closed doors. Nevertheless in the quite intense are appear information on negotiating positions and proposals of both parties. On the basis attempts are made to shape the mosaic of the immediate vital interests and goals of both negotiating parties. So take shape and mosaic of the two negotiating platforms—the similarities and differences in the negotiating positions of discussion and negotiation, of course fully in line with the basic interests and objectives of both sides. These objectives and interests certain that are not i.e. references. Those goals and interests they do not have only trade/economic-commercial nature. Conversely, those negotiations, the same as and the negotiations for TTP that had just been completed, are extremely complex, multilayer and with multiple means. It are goals and interests that in the most direct and the most essential way and level include the separate elements and components of the political/geopolitical goals and interests. Consequently, negotiations on TTIP, the same as and negotiations on TTP, are initiated and particularly strong dictated and directed are intensified amid the latest and current global financial and economic crisis, which quite clearly began to manifest and to charge the tax on its effects with the shooting of the bubble the housing market in the United States. This crisis execute many strong negative impact on total US international credibility. The crisis resulted in a significant theoretical and conceptual contestation and practical undermining of the complex of social power of the United States. The crisis, speaking in certain shortlisted economic/systemic-economic context, very strongly and decisively imposed dilemma for the true value of the particular concept of the American neo-liberal economic system, just as they imposed a dilemma for the correctness of the chosen model of specific economic policies of the presidential administration and the FED (Federal Reserve System/the central bank). It is a concrete concept and concrete model of economic system and economic policies that even before the explosion of the global economic and financial crisis were thoroughly and essentially caused by the economic systems and policies of the fast growth economies with their pretty deep and broad determinations in favor of state interventionism. TTIP, at the same time and TTP, focus watching, should enable the rehabilitation of US neoliberal concept and model of the economic system and to form an optimal functional economic-system space that really and truly will be capable to respond serious and dangerous challenges by side of the competitive economic-systemic concepts and models of practical/applied economic policies.

A NEOLIBERAL POLITICAL-ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY OF US

Exactly is that the negotiations for TTIP are taking and kept in the strictest secrecy. A fact which can never be taken into account as an argument and as evidence of the complex nature and structure of the negotiations and the agreement. At the same time, of course, as evidence and argument about the political and economic problematic, even controversy. It is utterly obvious that the actors in the negotiations are fully aware that negotiations are placed and impose theoretical, conceptual and practical-operational models that have far-reaching and problematic nature and structure. The actors in negotiations are quite aware that negotiating theoretical and conceptual platforms and specific practical-operational positions and proposals represent a radical intervention and change some basic and essential institutions, principles, premises and rules of the modern/current international economic/political-economic and political/geo- political relations, structures and constellations of power (Hilari, 2014).

In any case, fully not be contested and to deny the conclusion about involvement and problematic in negotiations on fundamental economic/political-economic and political/geo- political interests and objectives of the actors. It is obvious that the division of the participants in the negotiations in certain conflicting parties and blocs is not hard unequivocal and irreversible. This means that for certain specific areas and issues certain participants may to have complementary interests, goals and views and to be allies, while about some other specific areas and issues those same actors to have conflicting interests, goals and opinions. But though it this fact is not disputed, however, must be know and be conclude that participants in the negotiations, it is quite obvious, are differentiated, most generally speaking, on the basis of the economic/political-economic a philosophical commitment (Pelkmans, 2014). When are amounted this conclusion and the also must specify and emphasize the centrality of the philosophy of the state as the essential core of opposing philosophical-economic and philosophical-political considerations expressed and positioning of participants in the negotiations. This essential core of conflict opposing philosophical-economic and philosophical-political considerations expressed and positioning, for analytical needs, can develop through two philosophical-economic and philosophical-political routes and through the same two such platforms-economic philosophy of state interventionism (Keynesian state intervention) versus neoliberal free market and political philosophy of the Westphalian state and Westphalian state sovereignty versus corporate/investor cross border and transnational interests and goals.

It is very clear that the utterly serious and relevant issue in the negotiations is the fact that the two negotiating parties (EU and US) do not have its own an

equal and equal legal/international-legal/state-legal identity and subjectivity. This fact is especially apparent when you need to define, to devise, to present, to defend and eventually to realize its negotiating political-economic and geopolitical position and platform, of course in full compliance with its own special economic/political-economic and political/geopolitical interests and goals. When it is stated this conclusion is quite obvious that primarily mean instead that the EU has no state subjectivity in, the EU (including and its foreign and security policy), nor as some kind the most possible loose federation, does not have its real sovereignty, does not have its real state identity and subjectivity, it is not a member of the UN, the EU is not a real entity and actor of the positive international-legal structure and framework, it does not have its a truly international-legal identity and subjectivity. At the same time, and in its practical/daily functioning, solely as a form, thoroughly mainstreamed in the framework of the Lisbon Treaty-this constitutional treaty as a constitutional substitute, i.e. as quasi-constitution of the EU, separate specific state interests and goals of the always EU Member States regularly fail to impose, by its importance and sequentiatlity, above the political commitments and positions of the organs and bodies of the Union and a significant and serious to break through the provisions and the framework of EU legislature.

This state of disappointment and this demoralizing fact (disappointment and demoralizing, of course, for europhiles, euro-enthusiasts, euro-optimists) about the real and actual situation of deficiency and insufficiency of the formal constitutional-legal and practical- political operative functionality of the Union, unavoidably implies and almost completely impossibility of the Union, or more precisely told with a huge security, of the Member States of formally-legal Union (according to the form and structure of the official contents of the Lisbon Treaty) to define, to explicate, to defend and to realize their least common if not unique position in the TTIP negotiations and that as a completely natural, normal and indispensable consequence, explosion will come to the surface of negotiations various state and national economic/political-economic and political/geopolitical interests and goals. Along with the various and conflicting cross economic/political-economic theory, conceptually and operationally-practical positioning, streamlining and modeling (Capaldo 2014). Hundred writers, this same traumatic situation regarding the projected formal-legal and political-action construct of a certain togetherness and unity of the Union, with its easily recognizable and highly functional economic/economic-political identity and subjectivity, fully was manifested in the definition, rationalizing and overcoming the great financial and economic crisis that erupted in the summer of 2008 with shooting the bubble in the real estate market in the United States-its genesis, etiology, actors, circumstances, conditions, factors and outgoing solutions.

NEO-LIBERALIZATION OF THE ECONOMIC SYSTEMS OF THE EU MEMBER STATES

In this sense, watching, analyzing and anticipating, it is quite normal and necessary in TTIP negotiations, the EU, as one of the two actors/entities in these negotiations, to be divided following the line of the economic/political–economic worldview that prefers and practice. This means that it should not in general be a any kind of surprise and anomaly EU Member States whose current political elites economic/economic-political are identified as neoliberals, muscling and lead such neoliberal economic policies and in which countries economic systems are set/reformed the neoliberal principles, tenets and norms to get closer with its determinations, positions and solutions to the positions of the United States.

As a practical and pretty plastic illustration of this explication can focus the problem and the issue of fundamental and far-reaching economic/economic-political differences and conflicts at in terms of reforms that, in particular, Germany requested by France and Italy (to mention these two intentional States such large countries and economies in the EU, unlike Greece, for example, two countries with extremely problematic competitiveness of national economies, with expensive welfare states and with perennial stag-deflation conditions and pressures) precisely following the example of German the reforms of the pension system and labor market-Riester reform and Hartz reform (Sasajkovski, 2013). Without more thorough elaborations in this context, will only observe that the governments in Paris and Rome, at least declaratively and superficially, initiated and undertaken certain changes in that direction, in general seeing and speaking it means changes in the direction and with content of a certain level of neo-liberalization of economic systems and economic policies, followed by quite strong theoretical, conceptual, ideological and political turbulences, discussions and resistances. We want to emphasize that it is very hard important EU member states to accept TTIP obligation contained in the agreement, upon request or by dictation of US, to effectively implement neoliberal reforms in nature, so as is characteristic and typical of the American economic system and US economic policies. And in general, even for EU countries that have rather advanced in terms of neoliberalization of their economic systems and economic policies, as well as in terms of social communities as whole, primarily G. Britain, would hardly accept American recipe, for example, (further) privatization and commercialization of public goods, infrastructure complexes and public services. These requirements extremely difficult, even impossible and it is inconceivable to be accepted, such as France and Italy, as two large states and national economies of the Union. The same, ultimately, can be expected even from Germany where the state has a significant, including the majority, most equity stakes in companies that work in activities of a wider/public social interest (Akhtar, 2014).

We said that negotiations TTIP are take place without the presence of the public. That alone tells argue that the subject of negotiations has sensitive way exceptional nature and essence as large and far-reaching consequences for economic/economic-political and political/geopolitical relations, structures and constellations of power, not only for the US and the EU Member States (and separately for member states and the EU as a whole/as Union) who are actors and stakeholders in the negotiations and which were members TTIP contract, but, inevitably, will have such consequences for global economic/economic-political and political/geopolitical relationships, structures and constellations of power. After all, it is entirely undisputed that it are precisely the fundamental and essential interests and goals especially when the United States with a strong intensity and urgency reported and imposed these negotiations and this agreement-a reaction which should be fully functional and effective in global economic/political-economic and political/geopolitical conditions that fundamentally characterized by an essential challenge and debasement of the unipolar world that G. H. W. Bush declared soon after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, primarily from the BRICS group.

The negotiations are not public, but about the views of the parties to the negotiations may be primarily concluded on the basis of prevailing and uncontested economic-systematic philosophies, values, principles, tenets and rules of the US and EU member states (not forgetting event for a moment any similarities and the differences between them) and on the basis of their economic–systematic platforms and positions within similar negotiations. For example, the negotiations in within the WTO, the negotiations and signed NAFTA agreement, the negotiations within the International Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey Consensus), the negotiations and contents of US–Canada Free Trade Agreement (FTA), etc. But, the most about the views of US can be concluded on the basis of their economic-systemic commitments and positions within the TTP agreement negotiations that have recently have been completed and the agreement should go to the ratification of the signatory countries.

In the context of emphasizing the importance of TTIP for US presidential administration as an economic/political-economic and political/geopolitical determinant factor can distinctively plastic be used emphasizing the statement of the US Trade Representative Michael Froman.¹ He completely openly and directly tells the British that if the referendum to be held by the end of 2017, decide to leave the EU would face a foreign-trade regime with the United States in accordance with WTO rules. Even more, the representative noted the United States in such case not interested in negotiating a separate free trade agreement with W. Britain, such as it negotiates with the EU, the agreement TTIP. And, in general representative noted

the United States is not interested in the negotiating and concluding agreements on a bilateral basis, but necessarily only on a multilateral basis. In this sense, separate states after the conclusion of such multilateral trade (and investment) agreements will be able only to express the intention and desire to join the agreements, of course with the full acceptance of their provisions.

And this example shows how much the US is fundamentally important to hoist the need to include of the entire current area of the EU in negotiations TTIP, i.e. how much important further existence of the EU, something that quite convincingly demonstrated in the case of possible degradation EMU, as a separate specific upgrade of the EU, when came to the surfaced economic-financial and ideological-political option for Greece to leave the EMU. Of course, that in this context the analysis G. Britain economic/political-economic and political/geopolitical is much it more relevant than Greece and that by all means and in all ways will be prevents any organizational-institutional degradation of the EU. Simply, it is potentially and latent indisputably the most desirable and strongest economic/political-economic and political/geopolitical ally of the US in these turbulent times of the formation of a new structure and a constellation of a global social power around the poles/pillars of that structure and that constellation.

The primary function of TTIP is exactly that- the formation of a huge economic/political-economic and political/geopolitical space of liberalized and deregulated relations. Strictly speaking, the primary function of TTIP is forming a fully rounded economic system (and not just a free trade area with some additional elements that it reinforce and raise to a higher level of reliability and functionality, for example, the regulation of intellectual property rights and industrial property, following the example of the WTO), which theoretically, conceptually and practically-operative will be designed and modeled the basics and within the neoliberal values, principles, tenets and rules. One of the basic neoliberal postulates is the one who determines the cardinal importance of the as possible major fully liberalized and deregulated markets as a strong and completely relevant factor in economic growth, social-economic welfare and overall social progressive development (Grammling, 2007). Only those economic and political spaces (necessarily multinational and cross-border) who are leaders of global economic growth, of the global social-economic welfare and of global overall societal progress, in essence will be able be confirmed as pillars of the systems, structures and constellations of global economic, political and any other kind of social power and relevance (Ay, 2014).

MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE ANTICIPATED CONTENT STRUCTURE OF THE TTIP

Were published few EU documents, primarily the European Commission, from which in more detail and more reliably are detect the separate topics for that are discussed within the TTIP agreement negotiations. Of those documents are invited authors who write about these negotiations and for this agreement (Lambert, 2015; Herrmann, 2014; Perez-Rocha, 2015; Barker, 2014).

It can be concluded that the negotiations generally are discusses the three groups of narrower topics or issues: access to markets, specific regulations and broader rules, principles and ways of cooperation.

As regards of the access to markets of goods and services, the agreement aims to provide reduction in restrictions on markets, i.e. enable the markets to are readily available for goods and services. At the same time it should be easier investing in these markets. The regulation applies especially to agriculture, the treatment of agricultural products and their origin.

When it comes the to trade in services, investment and e-commerce in the agreement is imposed the determination to improve the climate for the development of trade and investment, in particular is imposed the determination to liberalize the investment and cooperation in e-commerce. The agreement will surely contents and principles whereby of governments will ban nationalizations and expropriations (either directly or indirectly), except in special circumstances when this is done to achieve a public interest, according to the procedure laid down and regulated by law, on a non-discriminatory basis and compensation. This compensation would be in the amount of a fair market value of the investment at the time immediately before the expropriation plus interest on a commercial basis, i.e. interest which is market-determined interest. With the agreement need to determined and free movement of business managers and of other employees.

It is very important and certainly indicative that in the part of the agreement which would have concerned the banks and other financial institutions will be would have ruled that governments have no right to regulate financial markets, except in strictly defined circumstances and conditions of protection of various types of investors in financial markets, including and the depositors. But, these provisions measures must be strictly limited to dimensions that are necessary for achieving the objectives set by the agreement. With the agreement certain that would be strictly forbidden any regulation of these markets out of the circumstances and conditions provided by it.

Part of the agreement which perhaps, i.e. probably, is one of the most problematic and most controversial would be the part that refers to the initiation and implementation of procedures for resolving the disputes between investors and

governments. With high reliability can be assumed that the United States insist that in the agreement to enter provisions with which the investors would find themselves in a position of power in relation to governments, if estimate of the investors is some a government policy, measure or action could adversely affect or actually adversely affect on their investment. Certainly that the US insist the agreement to provide that in such circumstances, disputes will be guided and resolved by the body/arbitration court with supranational status. Indeed, these arbitration tribunals would not have been a novelty, they and now exist as a body for resolving disputes between investors and states, but it seems that through TTIP you are required in the conduct of disputes and decisions of arbitral tribunals investors to get much stronger and more secure status and positions to achieve their interest versus the interests of States, so as these interests define them governments. In this context it may be concluded that the United States seems required relative to this issue TTP agreement to be a classic agreement with distinctively asymmetrical rights and obligations of the parties to the agreement, in this case with an exceptionally greater rights on the part of investors and the distinctively greater obligations on the part of the states/governments. In this way and the states their sovereignty and their sovereign rights and responsibilities supposed to transfer of someone Court of arbitration composed of individuals who would have had too much power in relation to the existing power of similar bodies to annul laws and other decisions of the state authorities and bodies-parliaments and governments.

CONCLUSIONS

TTIP, just like the TTP, theoretical, conceptual and practical-operative is founded and rationalized of the base and within the theoretical foundations, conceptual premises and practical–operational models of the (neo)liberal economic philosophy. They are theories, concepts and models that in correlated link the variables of liberal and deregulated markets, as an independent variable, with the economic growth, as dependent variable. The economic growth highly productive foundation and frame gets through liberalization and deregulation of trade relations. The depth of basis and width of the frame are not at all important as theory, as a concept and as a model. This economic philosophy and true possesses confidentiality and power of apriority and axiom. The (neo) liberal economic philosophy latter possesses this confidentiality and power at least as prevalent theoretical, conceptual and practical-operational determination and commitment of global political and economic elites. It is those elites who thoroughly and in essence determined, actually impose and dictate, global flows of the main political and economic positioning, decision-

making and action. Prevails theoretical, conceptual and practical-operational view and understanding that the liberalization and deregulation of markets, of course, along with the private property, private initiative and stable currency, represent the necessary basis and the necessary economic/social-economic framework of economic growth, productivity, creating new jobs, reducing socio-economic disparities and it all concentrated and summarized as moving the overall social development and prosperity.

Of these theoretical, conceptual and practical-operational bases and in these same frames were set completed negotiations in the Uruguay Round of GATT, on these bases and within this framework are set and the negotiations of the Doha Development Round of the WTO. Of these foundations are laid and negotiations of the TTIP and TTP, with one huge difference (or one huge quality/"quality") which relates to the emphasis on the necessity EU Member States (primarily are think of great states and economies in the EU-France and Italy) the neoliberal foundation to reform their economic systems. The negotiations within the Doha round of WTO basically are located and are unfolding in zone that is primarily a zone of trade liberalization, indeed followed by additional elements of a certain breaking through the strict and narrow trade framework, but it, however, are the elements that are most related to the trade liberalization. How, for example, the TRIPS agreement which governs and regulates relations in the field of protection of intellectual property, with a special emphasis on the protection of intellectual property which is the result of scientific research, inventions and innovations in the field of medicine and pharmacy.

Notes

(Endnotes)

¹ The statement was published without indicating the source, although it is quite obvious that it is a news agency, in Dnevnik, Skopje, 31.10.2015, 6, with editorial title "If you leave the EU, Britain would face barriers to trade with America. "

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**INTER AND INTRA ETHNICAL CONFLICTS AS
FACTOR FOR REDUCING OF DEMOCRATIC
AND DEVELOPMENT CAPACITIES OF
REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

Abstract

One of the paradoxes of the contemporary Macedonian society at the beginning of twenty-first century can be seen on the fact that in the same period when Republic of Macedonia become independent and sovereign state, the Macedonian society more and more intensively is disintegrating, or it is continuously reducing its social cohesion. Certainly, there are many reasons for this among which most dominant are the inter-and intra-ethnic conflicts which have extremely negative effects as to the global social processes, but also to the individual existence of the citizens. Namely, today in Republic of Macedonia dominates ethnic, religious, political, social, cultural and axiological separation that blocks the rational approach in the processes of organizing and management of the social life in all of its spheres: politics, economy culture, education etc. At the same time it leads to reducing of the democratic and development capacities of the country that has highly

negative consequences concerning the dynamics towards access of Republic of Macedonia in European Union.

According to the previous statements in this paper we will try to analyse the inter and intra ethnic conflicts in terms of its genesis, causes, actors, consequences, and possible alternative sincreating assumptions for their gradually overcoming. This approach, at the same time, implies to defining of new priorities and contents concerning all round activities of the ethnic groups and political parties as well as the citizens in the Macedonian society that will be in function of relaxing inter and intra ethnic relations. The establishing of these priorities should result with increase of the social cohesion that in the same time is the basic assumption to speed up the integration of Republic of Macedonia in the European Union.

Keywords: inter-ethnic conflicts, intra-ethnic conflicts, social cohesion, democratic development

INSTEAD OF INTRODUCTION: THE CITIZEN IN THE CLOSED CIRCUIT OF THE CONFLICTING MACEDONIAN SOCIAL REALITY

Nowadays we face an extremely complex social reality with emphasized political ambient, thickly interwoven net of ambivalent social relations and imperceptible individual and collective interactions based on continuous conflicts. A fundamental representation of this inference is the state of the Macedonian social reality, in which foundation there are evident antagonistic processes. Namely, the Republic of Macedonia, in the last twenty-five years undertakes efforts to establish itself internally, as well as on the international political scene as independent, sovereign, legal and social state, in which the rights and freedom of its citizens are guaranteed. On the other hand, the divisive ethnical, religious, social and political grounds; the crises, armed conflicts and moral erosion; the lack of trust in the institutions and individuals that are managing them, represent the darker side of the Macedonian transitional story. At the same time, the lack of legal ruling is resulting in absence of the legal state, which is directly correlated to the disintegrated system of social functions and norms, while the members of the society are left on their own with devastated lives and generally disappointed of the effects of changes.

The system of values is completely distorted, with domination of fake values, negative selection and authoritarian political leaders. At the same time, one part of the citizens – epigones of political parties donot bother in choose means to get closer to their political leaders in order to earn their affection and to show their loyalty. It becomes norm that this way of living its own life is marked with clientelism and apologetic approach, which threatens individual virtues such as: dignity and self-respect and rendering them easier to be lost. This creates ideal preconditions for manipulations and intrigues to be perceived and glorified as ‘great visions’ and closes the vicious circle – the greater servility and idea-obedience pave the way for even greater glorification of false values and false visions for better life.

The social cohesion of the Macedonian society has been undermined to a significant extent by the glorification of the own ethnos and own political party which creates circumstances for inception of antagonisms that undermine the future of the state. Namely, in Macedonia, a great number of citizens still live in their ethnical and political party ghettos. The belonging to an ethnic group or political party are the basic trademark – a password that provides certain protection in the life. This situation is, at first place, a result of the way politics is enforced, which is a direct reflection of the moral dignity of our politicians. Their congenital need to continuously manipulate the feelings of the helpless citizens complemented with lack of knowledge and vision as well as with absence of sense for dialogue makes them inferior in relation to the assignments they pretend to fulfill. They compensate

this with their arrogance, double morality, disrespect to the other's argumentation and false self-satisfaction of the 'achieved' results in their work. The price paid by the citizens for such behavior is too high. In this context, we pose the question: until when will they be able to pay that price?!

Notwithstanding, we are facing a time in which the questions for our future and economic development become questions for our survival or questions of the logical absurd that is happening here and now around us.

Evidently, in such circumstances, the Macedonian citizen does not possess ability to create his life in accordance with his needs and potentials. In the same time, to a great extent, he remains imprisoned to the impaired way of living. Torn between the desired and the real, faced with numerous existential and essential challenges, left over the cruel reality, but also to the recklessness of the politicians, he awakes continuously in the nightmare how to survive, how to find a suitable employment, how to provide existence to his/her children, how to heat the home, and in the first place, how to keep his/her dignity?!

Having in mind the above arguments, the blade of this paper is directed towards criticizing all the processes and actors that take away the citizen's right to live the life according to his own principles based on one's authentic needs. In this context, it is essential to escape the unbearable easiness of self-deception that problems are going to be resolved and situation improved on its own. Our goal is to point out that living in permanently conflicting situation is not determined by the destiny, but it is a reflection of the powerlessness of the Macedonian citizens to oppose the 'political elites' who think that can impose a way of life only because they are powerful, greedy, self-centered and inconsiderate. We would like to anticipate the assumption that things can go in another direction too. Namely, the citizen has full right to give resistance in the name of his own life philosophy; to offer own alternative for existence; to oppose the utilitarian logic of the small and little bigger dictators and their instrumental mind; that he does not comply with when living in their paranoid world being a person with less and less own spiritual habitat, while being more and more role-player in a function of maintaining alienated model of existence, designed to satisfy only their ambitions.

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES: THE SCIENCE AS CRITICISM OF THE CURRENT SOCIETAL REALITY

The general characteristics of the problems faced in our society clearly demonstrate the complex and contradictory character of the processes that currently occur in the area of the social, political, economic, collective and individual life of

the Macedonian citizens. Taking into account the necessity to perceive the intrinsic essence of these processes, it is indispensable to observe them in the framework of integrated interdisciplinary methodological approach. This will allow us to analyze certain segments of the problems including the problems as a whole, at different cognitive levels, through the prisms of separate scientific disciplines, having in mind their immanent interconnectedness in one epistemological unity. In this context, our intention is to perceive the Macedonian society in its totality through dialectical weld of general and specific approach, as well as through the numerous fragmented contradictions. In this way, the focus of analysis leads directly to the realization of the relationship between reasons and consequences of the existing conflicting states with an aim to uncover their common denominators, *i.e.* to detect the fundamental reasons that charge the disintegrative processes and make the existing social ambient anarchical and anemic.

Taking into consideration the complexity of the task, one gets the impression that it cannot be realized only with flawless scientific analysis based on the rigorous and accurately constructed scientific apparatus. This generally accepted positivistic approach produces objective truth according to the rules of the formally-logical thought and it is characterized with values neutrality, meaning that it is carried out independently from the value judgments of the scientist. Alternatively, the problem might be observed in the context of existential human needs by attempting to uncover the truth of what is happening around us. Exploring the societal states and changes while starting only from those segments of the society that are fitting for quantitative analysis in their empirical evidence is often compared to the work of Sisyphus who was condemned to ceaselessly roll a rock to the top of a mountain. Hence, it is a challenging task to start competing with the generally accepted mechanisms and instruments of the formally-logical positivistic notions, rules and principles, in the contemporary scientific research. This should be done by offering alternative methodological approaches that even at the expense of lower scientific rigor, enable perception of certain intrinsic contradictions of the complex events in one multi-layered cognitive level.

In accordance with the above arguments, our methodological approach in this paper will have as an initial standpoint the basic epistemological notions of the critical theory of the Frankfurter school. The following cognitive principles are in place:

1. The rational theoretical cognition must be, at the same time, a critique for its object of cognition, which means anticipation of the optimal possibilities for its change;
2. In order to stay in accordance with its object, the thought must follow the changes in the otherwise contradictory societal content;

3. Unity with respect to theory and practice – intrinsic connectedness of the theory and the method;
4. The cognition for the laws of movements in the society are not presented exclusively in hypothetical form ‘if - then’ nor in categorical form ‘because of - hence it must be’ but in existential form ‘it doesnot have to be - people can alter the societal being’.

INTER-ETHNICAL CONFLICTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA: GENESIS AND CURRENT CONDITION

The historical context of the Macedonian state existence undoubtedly and clearly determines the philosophy of its political and cultural self-sustainability. Macedonia, similarly as the whole Balkans throughout the centuries represents vividly persistent amalgam of interactions among numerous ethnicities. In the same time, it is a place of contradicting interests on religious and ethnic grounds, but also a place of cohabitation of different ethnic communities. Having in mind this analogy, nowadays Macedonia represents a multicultural community where citizens' existence is different according to their ethnical and confessional background, culture, tradition, language and, at the same time, the approach to and view of life. Evidently, this kind of differentiated configuration results with broad spectrum of interactions that can easily become a factor of instability. We have in mind processes in which foundation lies the glorification of the own cultural identity of the ethnical communities, most frequently for the benefit of previously well thought-of political manipulation of their political leaders. In this context, the belonging to an ethnical entity becomes a trademark for own identification. The basic existential human needs get to identify with the political requirements of the ethnical group one belongs to. The personal opinions recede before the generally accepted ethno-political doctrines of the existing ethnic group. The fear and lack of trust are further even more intensified in the mutual communication or non-communication. All of this contributes to the creation of negative feelings towards the representatives of the other ethnical groups. In this way, the already existing negative ethnical stereotypes get enhanced, which poses on its own a basic precondition for confrontation and conflicts.

Undoubtedly, the Macedonian societal ambient in the last twenty-five years is characterized by these circumstances. They have been actualized especially during the military conflict between the Albanians and the Macedonians in 2001. This conflict has surfaced all previously suppressed dividing, antagonisms, frustrations, un-satisfactions and, last but not least, the different visions for the future of the

Republic of Macedonia. Even though the conflict had limited, to certain extent controlled military enactment by the international factor, and lasted short time, still it has emitted very clear political and military message that the Republic of Macedonia is far from being oasis of peace, with domination of relaxed inter-ethnic relations – which has been the claim of the actual political leadership in that period. Formulating the above more explicitly, this event pointed out a very important fact that Macedonia has been, and still is a place of unsafe living, restlessness and uncertain future.

At the same time, despite that the Framework agreement that followed briefly afterwards, has allowed to relativize the consequences of the armed ethnic conflict, and has created legal framework for cohabitation of Macedonians and Albanians, it is still evident that the Macedonian society is still very sensitive in relation to this problem. This means that in order to surpass it, there is a need for long-term, well thought strategy, and its permanent realization, in all spheres of the social life. The ultimate effect should lead to complete integration and realization of all citizens in a common state where they will feel as their own.

INTRA-ETHNICAL CONFLICTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA: CURRENT CONDITIONS

The previous thoughts enhance the intensity, or in other words, increase the sense of concern, having in mind the fact that the Macedonian society is being divided on all basis on intra-ethnic level such as: political, social and in terms of values. Namely, today in the Republic of Macedonia, the authoritarian type of political culture in the organization and the functioning of the greater part of the political parties (especially the ones in power), as well as in the maintenance of the entire political life, whose basic mark is ultimate division to the extent of antagonism. Today, in the Macedonian society, the interests of the own party and the own interests in the name of the party are placed before the interests of the citizens and those of the entire country. Conflicts, inter-party argues, tragic-comical monologues, insults... The partitioning of the state, the partitioning of the society, the partitioning of the human souls... this is the essence of the Macedonian political and social context. In this context, in the Macedonian society there are citizens of first and second order: those who are with the government and those who want to change that government. The first ones are in situation to use certain political, social and economic advantages depending on the position they occupy in the party pyramid.

In any case, the process of division in the sphere of social living is evident and it is manifested through the creation of small 'elite' of rich and powerful citizens.

They have brought to poverty the majority of the people, which leads to reductions of the middle class as a main engine of the societal processes in the previous system. The polarization of Macedonian society furthermore creates preconditions for continuous conflicts in all areas and institutions of the social life. In analogy to this, we witness many changes in the society such as: losing basic functions of the marriage and family, malfunctioning of education, permanently eroding social capital and expansion of the societal pathology.

Additional confusion in the increase of the conflict-ability of the Macedonian societal ambient is the condition in the axiological area. After twenty-five years of transition from centrally planned to market economy, the old value benchmarks have not yet been deserted, while the new ones are not fully accepted. According to some empirical research most of the citizens find domination of holistic and traditional values, from the point of view of the social identity of the citizens and from the aspect of the accepted models and content of social behavior and integration. At this point, the promoted liberal-democratic values, on which projection the existing political and economic system should be constructed, remain to a great extent as abstract and wanted, but not existing.

Notwithstanding, the Macedonian social ambient is on dangerously low level of social integration which leads to anarchy and lawlessness, while stimulating permanent spill over from one crisis modality to another. At the moment, regardless the dominant type of crisis such as: ethnical, political, social, economic or crisis of value systems, they interchangeably complement each other and construct a vicious circle of the Macedonian hopelessness.

FINAL DISCOURSE: THE ACTIVISM AS ALTERNATIVE

In the middle of this political, ethnical, social and value system chaos the Macedonian citizen feels more and more that the basic constitutional principles as a foundation of the Macedonian state continuously diminish. These are: sovereignty, independence, civil and democratic orientation that should guarantee the rights, freedom and personal integrity of the citizen and allowing for dignified cohabitation of all its citizens, based on social security and economic welfare. We can notice that nowadays, the principles of sovereignty and independence are only on paper. The legal system protects the representatives of the government who have performed criminal acts while getting ruthlessly rich. The proclaimed democracy is only a mask for criminal, fake pluralism, and recklessness of the political and economic people in power, or a cover that conceals the problems much more than it allows for their resolution.

Left on his/her own, helpless to fight the anomalies and the paradoxes of the system, the citizen leaves the 'prey' to the ones who use intrigue, ruthlessness, manipulation, mediocrity, people with no dignity and honor, people whose trademark is the common party dress, especially the ones on rule. The worst consequence is that the feeling of helplessness results in the need for passivity or being introvert. In the environment of social anomaly the illusion for possible individual survival, grounded in the defensive logic of self-isolation or abstinence from the public life, occurs as the last act of desperation. Withdrawn in their homes, offices, ordinations, working places, in their privacy or intellectual space, accepting the life philosophy of least resistance, we consider ourselves safer and less exposed to danger. It seems as if we donot want or cannot notice that the escape from the society is at the same time escape from ourselves. Paralyzed of fear and uncertainty we keep forgetting that we are that same society, we are forgetting that we have the moral obligation to actively participate in all that is happening around us. We have to declare ourselves, we have to let everyone who wants to shatter our country that we are still here and we are still beings.

In this context, it should be stressed the necessity of a new axiological framework, with a gravitational core founded on the principles of creative living, honesty, rightfulness, freedom of thinking and acting, open-mind for exchanging ideas and tolerance to one another. With respect to this, we need a dialogue that will enable us to become more proximate to each other. This dialogue should create the preconditions for building a world of authentic living in which the freedom of thought and speech would be the fundament for its development. Only in such way the miniscule of our existence can receive some dose of permanence. This is our obligation from the deeds of our ancestors who have set the foundations of our country, but this is our obligation towards the generations to come. As much as right we come up with a conclusion that the world we live in is in permanent crisis that may culminate with entropic consequences. In relation with this, we cannot change much and we must know that the history is not familiar with good times, but only remembers brave, proud, smart, creative people, ready to sacrifice a lot of their own lives for the wellbeing of the others and the society as a whole.

In sum, the events and eras are not valued according our perception for ourselves, but according to what we leave as heritage for the ones that follow. This creates a responsibility for our generation about the processes that are happening in the time we live in. Moreover, it is an enough reason not to stay mute observer to the processes that happen around us, but to offer our critical view of the social reality as an attempt to exchange opinions that should create the foundations for more human and more authentic existence.

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**THE CHALLENGES OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY
IN THE NEW INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT: THE
EUROPEAN UNION PERSPECTIVE**

Abstract

This article investigates the challenges of the liberal democracy in the new international context, provoked by the emergence of the new great powers (Russia and China), and especially the establishment of the BRICS grouping in the world political scene. Namely, this article “clashes” the both paradigms of BRICS and the EU, in order to conclude their performances in relation to the values of liberal democracy. In that context, especially is stressed the liberal axiological set of the EU, as a postnational and postmodern entity, with typical soft power in the international relations. The EU soft power stems from its axiological set, which predominantly is composed by the values of liberal democracy. The new international context is characterized by the establishment of liberal and illiberal actors. The IR theorists treated the USA and the EU as main represents of the liberal democracy, whilst Russia and China, as illiberal democracies, or simply, autocracies. This article concludes the forthcoming challenges of the liberal democracy in the new international

context, as well as the place, role and the international political capacity of the EU, in relation to its mission for safeguarding and advancement of the liberal democratic values.

Key words: EU, international relations, BRICS, liberal democracy

THE EU POSTMODERN NATURE AND ITS AXIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

The permanent attempts for defining the role of the European Union (Union; EU) in the international relations, assumes the necessity for its constitution as a state (federation or confederation) or its stagnation in the form of atypical political community, as it is today. Therefore, if the EU would constitute itself as a state, we could speak about the political centralization of its powers and competencies and the building of an independent military capacity. Thus, the EU could become a real political actor recognized in the international relations in accordance with the modern or *realpolitik* concept. This concept refers to international relations, based on coercive power and on practical or material factors and considerations, rather than ethical and *axiological foundations*. **Apart from this, the EU highly affirms its axiological (value) foundations, creating the image of itself as a postmodern actor, which rather cooperates and communicates with other international actors, instead of forcing its way.** In this sense, theorist Robert Cooper in the book “The Breaking of Nations” (2003), stated that: “what is called ‘modern’ is not so because it is something new – it is in fact very old fashioned – but because it is linked to that great engine of modernization, the nation state” (Van Damme, 2013: 2). Consequently, the EU is not a nation state, and therefore cannot be treated as a modern actor (Table 1). Consequently, several factors confirm the EU postmodern nature: “*first*, blurring of the distinction between foreign and domestic politics; *second*, voluntary mutual intrusiveness and mutual verification; *third*, a complete repudiation of the use of force in settling disputes; and *fourth*, security built on *transparency, mutual openness and interdependence*” (Grajauskas and Kasčiūnas, 2009: 4). More precisely, the postmodern foreign policy means a break with the modern concepts. In this sense, nationalism and national markets are “being increasingly replaced by cosmopolitanism and the globalized economy, national interest is complemented by humanitarian or environmental concerns, principles of non-interference and sovereignty are being undermined by the pooling of sovereignty, *realpolitik* is being complemented by ideational / normative / *axiological* considerations” (Grajauskas and Kasčiūnas, 2009).

Table 1.

	Modern foreign policy	Postmodern foreign policy
Means	Military instruments and hard power	Non-military instruments and soft (structural) power
Actors	Sovereign nation-states	Nation-states of contingent sovereignty, international (supranational) organizations, non-governmental actors
Sovereignty	Protective about sovereignty; avoiding mutual verification mechanisms	Less cautious about sovereignty; positive about transferring part of sovereignty to an international regime
Raison d'état	Emphasis on the nation state and on the defense of national interests (instead of values or norms)	Emphasis on norms and values
Openness	Efforts to minimize dependence on other international actors, as well as to maintain as more self-sufficient the political and the economic life as possible	Open to international cooperation and positive about increasing interdependence (seeing interdependence as a key to security)
Centralization	Substantial state control over the political, economic, and social life; tendencies of centralization	More pluralistic, democratic and decentralized domestically
International law	Skeptical about international law; predisposed to using force in international relations	Attaching great importance to international law (no fear of being bound by international legal norms)

Source: Grajauskas and Kasčiūnas (2009: 85) *Modern versus Postmodern Actor of International Relations: Explaining European Union - Russia negotiations on the New Partnership Agreement*, available at: www.lfpr.lt/uploads/File/2009-22/Grajauskas_Kasciunas.pdf

Taking into account **the EU postmodern nature**, the author **Rokas Grajauskas** (2011) **underlined that** the EU “acts as an umbrella, placing EU Member States under a postmodern framework. When EU countries want to act in a ‘modern’ way, they go on their own. In other words, *in those areas where the EU is acting as a single actor, EU’s action is postmodern*” (Grajauskas, 2011). Today, this debate has “become less dominant in the integration literature and most scholars agree that the EU should be characterized as something in between an international organization and a federal state” (Rieker, 2007: 3). Otherwise, the postmodern states are “generally striving to establish a post-Westphalian order where state sovereignty is constrained through legal developments beyond the nation-state” (Sjursen, 2007: 2). Accordingly, in a post-Westphalian or postmodern world:

[F]oreign policy transcends the state-centric view of international relations, and there is a wider specter of foreign policy actors, ranging from nation-states of contingent sovereignty to international (supranational) organizations to

non-governmental actors. Postmodern international actors are not interested in acquiring territory or using force and rather choose to build their security relationships on cooperative grounds. They prefer to use non-military foreign policy instruments and focus on soft power, as well as structural power. More generally, postmodern foreign policy tends to focus more on structures, contexts and immaterial aspects of power and influence (such as identity, beliefs, legitimacy) (Keukeleire and Jennifer McNaughton, 2008: 20).

As a result, the *affirmation of norms and values* is becoming equally important as the affirmation of national interest (*raison d'état*). Foreign policy in the Westphalian modern age, "was characterized by states as the main actors, by a clear distinction between foreign and domestic politics, by the protection of sovereignty and by the pursuit of national interest, power and *raison d'état* using mostly hard power, military means" (Grajauskas and Kasčiūnas, 2009: 4). As opposed to the modern concept, we can define the EU interest as a *raison de valeur* or a *value* interest, directly derived from its axiological foundations, stipulated in its constitutive treaties. Based on that, in the wider integration literature, the EU is mainly defined as a civilian, normative power or just soft power. Regarding the soft power, the author Frank Vibert (2008: 3) stressed: "soft power comes from international relations theory and refers to accomplishing international aims through *persuasion* and *co-option* rather than through the use of armed force or other forms of coercion such as the use of economic sanctions". This confirms that the EU soft power stems from its axiological (postmodern) set, predominantly composed by the values of liberal democracy.

Consequently, the civilian / normative power model is the most adequate for defining of the nature EU as an actor, taking into account its determination for using *negotiations* and *persuasion*, based on its axiological foundations, not by a military means. Automatically, the EU cannot be defined through the prism of hard (military / coercive) power, because of the serious lack of the European army and military means for achievement of its international goals and objectives. According to Robert Kagan, the military deficit is one of the main deficiencies of the EU as an international actor, and a main obstacle for its positioning on the international political scene (in the new international context) as a hard power.

THE EU'S AXIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Considering the EU's axiological foundations, we will investigate the EU constitutive treaties, in order to extract and to reveal the axiological provisions regarding the EU foreign policy. In this sense, the Lisbon Treaty prescribed the systematized *axiological (value) framework* that requires the EU and its Member

States to affirm and to respect its values. Such values are not always named as “values” but sometimes referred to by terms such as “objectives”, “tasks”, “principles”, “duties” and so on, which have an indisputable axiological essence. The *Treaty on European Union* (TEU) specified the EU values in Article B, stating that the EU shall: “promote economic and social progress which is balanced and sustainable, in particular through the creation of an area without internal borders, through the strengthening of economic and social cohesion and through the establishment of economic and monetary union, ultimately including a single currency in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty”. Likewise, the *Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe* (TeCE) in Article I-2 listed the following *values*: respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. This Treaty also confirmed the values of the previous *Treaty establishing the European Community* (TeEC), such as: “promotion of scientific and technological development, opposition to social exclusion, the promotion of social justice and social protection, equality between men and women, solidarity, the promotion of economic, social and territorial cohesion, and respect for cultural and linguistic differences”. Article 21 of the *Lisbon Treaty* (LT) noted that the EU’s actions on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired “its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the UN Charter and international law”. This article also confirms that the EU shall define and pursue its common policies and actions and shall work for a high degree of cooperation in all fields of international relations, in order to achieve the following *objectives*:

(a) safeguard its values, fundamental interests, security, independence and integrity; (b) consolidate and support democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the principles of international law; (c) preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter (...) promote an international system based on stronger multilateral cooperation and good global governance.

On this basis, the Union itself finds as a “savior” of humanity and the fundamental axiological system of the western civilization in the new millennium, while propagating its concept of principled, constructive and effective multilateral world order, constituted on the mutual respect, international cooperation and global solidarity. But, despite the EU’s liberal and democratic *weltanschauung*, the forthcoming international context seems more complex and not so cooperative. In

that sense, in the text below we will try to introduce BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and the South African Republic) grouping, as a paradigm of the emerging international context, in order to compare / challenge it with the EU's liberal - democratic *weltanschauung*.

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT AND THE EMERGENCE OF BRICS

The BRICS is a relatively young grouping of nations and fast-growing economies. At first, the foreign ministers of the initial four BRIC nations (Brazil, Russia, India and China) “met in New York City in September 2006, beginning a series of high-level meetings” (BRIC summit, 2009). The BRIC diplomatic meetings focused on international challenges and “on joint efforts to fight the global economic crisis” (Lukin, 2009). The leaders of the BRIC nations got together for the first time “on the side-lines of a G8 summit at Tokyo, Japan, in July 2008, and soon after that [...] Russian President Medvedev said during a visit to Rio de Janeiro that BRIC leaders would like to have a separate summit in Russia” (Lukin, 2009). The Republic of South Africa (RSA) joined the group in December 2010 and BRIC finally became BRICS. As a curiosity, Jim O’Neill, a senior economist at Goldman Sachs, proposed the very acronym BRIC, using it “to denote the four major fast-growing economies, the combined power of which might exceed that of the West sometime in the future – Brazil, Russia, India, China [and later South Africa]” (Lukin, 2009). The BRICS group is constituted on the following documents: 1) First Joint Statement; 2) Second Joint Statement; 3) Sanya Declaration; 4) Delhi Declaration; 5) eThekweni Declaration; and 6) Fortaleza Declaration (BRICS Information Centre, 2015).

At the First Summit (2009) held in Yekaterinburg (Russia), the BRIC nations stated: “We are convinced that a reformed financial and economic architecture should be based, *inter alia*, on the following principles: 1) democratic and transparent decision-making and implementation process *at the international financial organizations*; 2) solid legal basis; 3) compatibility of activities of effective national regulatory institutions and international standard-setting bodies; and 4) strengthening of risk management and supervisory practices. Regarding this statement, it can be concluded that the principle of democracy is affirmed only in terms of international financial organizations and their structuring and functioning, urging for a greater involvement of the BRIC nations in them. The Second Summit (2010) held in Brasília (Brazil), promoted the need “for corresponding transformations in global governance in all relevant areas”. At this Summit (2010), the BRIC nations underlined their support and will to create “*multipolar, equitable*

and *democratic world order*, based on international law, equality, mutual respect, cooperation, coordinated action and *collective decision-making of all States*". This is illustrative example of how the BRIC(S) political elites understand democracy. Democracy is understood as legitimacy for equal participation in the world affairs, based on the sovereignty rights of all states. This stance is in compliance with the Russian (semi - autocratic sovereign democracy concept) and Chinese (autocratic) understanding of international relations. While, the term multipolar is used as legitimacy basis of such reasoning, hoping that Russia and China will impose themselves on the international political scene as great powers, entitled to its share in the international affairs, as a separate political poles (as opposed the USA and the EU). The Sanya Declaration (2011), promulgated on the Summit held in China, acknowledged that the BRICS (and other emerging and developing countries) "have played an important role in contributing to world peace, security and stability, boosting global economic growth, enhancing multilateralism and promoting greater democracy in international relations". While, at the Summit held in India on 29 March 2012, BRICS nations adopted the Delhi Declaration (2012) emphasizing their vision for "global peace, economic and social progress and enlightened scientific temper", as well as the urgent need for greater involvement of the emerging and developing countries in the institutions of global governance (especially in the UN). Shortly after, at the Durban Summit (2013) South Africa, BRICS nations adopted the eThekweni Declaration, reaffirming their commitment to the "promotion of international law, multilateralism and the central role of the United Nations", and stressing the BRICS contribution in the maintenance of "global peace, stability, development and cooperation". And finally, the Fortaleza Declaration (2014), adopted at the BRICS Summit held in Fortaleza (Brazil) 15-16 July 2014, reaffirmed their views and commitments to "international law and to multilateralism [...] global peace, economic stability, social inclusion, equality, sustainable development and mutually beneficial cooperation with all countries". The BRICS nations emphasized that they align with the UN system and values, while seeking to enhance the role of its members in it, especially their efforts for strengthening Brazil, India and South Africa's status and role both in the UN and international affairs. This stance is previously defined at the Second BRICS Summit (2010), stating: "We express our strong commitment to multilateral diplomacy with the UN playing the central role in dealing with global challenges and threats. In this respect, we reaffirm the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN, with a view to making it more effective, efficient and representative, so that it can deal with today's global challenges more effectively. We reiterate the importance we attach to the status of India and Brazil in international affairs, and understand and support their aspirations to play a greater role in the UN". The Fortaleza Declaration (2014)

confirmed this with the following statement: “We reiterate our strong commitment to the UN as the fundamental multilateral organization entrusted with helping the international community maintain international peace and security, protect and foster human rights and promote sustainable development (...) We reaffirm the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN, including its Security Council, with a view to making it more representative, effective and efficient, so that it can adequately respond to global challenges”.

THE INNER DIVERGENCES

Considering the inner state, the value systems of one part of the BRICS nations are in contradiction with the other part of the BRICS. Some of them accept the values of the liberal world order (democratic freedoms and human rights, identical to those of the US and EU), while others; anticipate more or less autocratic, illiberal values. Only Brazil, India and the Republic of South Africa (RSA) can be considered as states that highly appreciate today’s liberal order values. Russia and China are different from the other states. Both states seek to improve their political, economy and military performance, seeking to gain power to impose their influence on the international political scene. Moreover, the creation of a BRICS common value system would appear to be a luxury for Russia and China, and an obstacle to the intensification of their political, economic and military power. The Director of EU-Russia Centre in Brussels, Fraser Cameron (2011), acknowledged: “two democracies, Brazil and India [and later the RSA], a democracy with authoritarian leanings [Russia] and an outright authoritarian state [China] cannot rally around the ‘shared values’ that such gatherings like to espouse” (Table 2). The grouping of India, Brazil and South Africa is a “much more natural grouping” (Stern, 2013), compared to Russia and China, as stressed by the former Ambassador of India in Brazil, Amitava Tripathi. BRICS is “heterogeneous lot, consisting of energy exporters and importers, democracies and autocracies, aspiring hegemons and demographic disasters. This is not an easy group to keep together, and the evidence suggests that they don’t have much of a common policy agenda” (Drezner, 2009). The heterogeneity of this group is especially evident in the sense of freedom and liberty (as highest liberal democratic values). According to the Freedom House Report (2015), Brazil (2.0), India (2.5) and South Africa (2.0) have status “Free”, while China (6.5) and Russia (6.0) have acquired status “Not Free”. As opposed to Russia and China, Freedom House Report ranked the USA and the EU Member States with highest freedom rates (Table 3). Each country score is based on two numerical ratings (from 1 to 7) for political rights and civil liberties, with 1 representing the *most free* and 7 the *least free*.

Table 2.

DEMOCRACIES	AUTOCRACIES
Brazil	Russia
India	PR China
South Africa	

Source: own depiction, based on the statement of Fraser Cameron (Director of the EU-Russia Centre in Brussels)

Table 3.

COUNTRY / EU MEMBER STATE	STATUS	FREEDOM RATING
USA	Free	1.0
Austria	Free	1.0
Belgium	Free	1.0
Bulgaria	Free	2.0
Cyprus	Free	1.0
Croatia	Free	1.5
Czech Republic	Free	1.0
Denmark	Free	1.0
Estonia	Free	1.0
Finland	Free	1.0
France	Free	1.0
Germany	Free	1.0
Greece	Free	2.0
Hungary	Free	2.0
Ireland	Free	2.0
Italy	Free	1.0
Latvia	Free	2.0
Lithuania	Free	1.0
Luxembourg	Free	1.0
Malta	Free	1.0
Netherlands	Free	1.0
Poland	Free	1.0
Portugal	Free	1.0
Romania	Free	2.0
Slovakia	Free	1.0
Slovenia	Free	1.0
Spain	Free	1.0
Sweden	Free	1.0
United Kingdom	Free	1.0

Source: *Freedom in the world 2015: Discarding Democracy: Return to the Iron Fist, Freedom House Report*, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2015#>.

VmHkrF7p7IU (accessed 2015)

The political scientist Robert Gilpin emphasized that as a nation's power increases; it "will be tempted to try to increase its *control* over its environment. In order to increase its own security, it will try to *expand* its political, economic, and territorial control; it will try to *change* the international system in accordance with its particular set of interests" (Zakaria, 2008: 114). It was stated (Financial Times, 2012) that the more BRICS become part of the "globalised world the more they want to keep their distance from western values. It is both a matter of identity and interest because they fear that the infringement of sovereignty might be used against them". Or as Ben Cormier (2012) acknowledged: "BRICS are too economically various and politically conflictual to form a cohesive and politically meaningful entity". The BRICS thus looks like a club that seeks to protect the political sovereignty of its states, in relation to the liberal West (USA and EU), aiming to gain more political and economic influence in the international affairs. Based on that, it can be concluded that three (Brazil, India, RSA) of five BRICS nations share same or identical values with those of the EU and USA (liberal values), which additionally make this group of nations more controversial in terms of common values. The liberal order currently "overrides state sovereignty, to a certain degree, in the name of values such as democratic freedoms and human rights" (Cornier, 2012). The political integration of BRICS is something that will have to wait a while, considering the evident political and value divergences inside. Or as is stated in the "Laying the BRICS of a New Global Order" (Bohler-Muller and Kornegay, 2013): "complicating this mix is an absence of long-term commitment to shared values among the BRICS nations. The concept of a world built on interdependence may be acceptable in the context of economic interaction, but there is a lack of consensus on the extent to which the BRICS wish to cooperate in the political sphere.

There are differences in the political, economic and social paradigms that individual BRICS members are willing to follow. Simply speaking, in this group there are *no* common values or a value-sharing practices, that would produce political cohesion or a unique worldview in due time. Or as the author Walter Ladwig emphasized: "[BRICS] economic characteristics are too different and political ambitions too much at odds to yield cooperation" (Cornier, 2012).

CONCLUSION

The EU foreign policy derives its own legitimacy from the values installed in its constitutive treaties, as its axiological foundations. Moreover, this kind of axiological construction of the EU foreign policy is supplemented by its postmodern nature, which highly differentiates the EU in relation to other international actors,

especially the states. Taking into the nature and the worldview of the EU, we can conclude that the EU constitutive treaties contain a set of values (axiological foundations) which promotes and affirms cooperation instead of conflict, and also, respect for international law instead of the power politics (hard power: *realpolitik* or *machtpolitik*). Unlike the other international actors (the states, in particular), which promotes the national interest or *raison d'état*, moreover, the EU possesses *raison de valeur* or *value* interest, which is directly derived from its axiological foundations, established in the constitutive treaties. Moreover, the axiological foundations of the EU, also represents and the power source - the source of its soft power. Many theorists noted that such axiological foundations of the EU foreign policy, enables an opportunity for promoting a good global governance and liberalization / democratization of the international relations, in order to remodel / transform the current world order in a new, more just, more democratic and a more cooperative world order. Those values make the EU foreign policy distinctive and authentic in comparison with other international actors on the international political scene, and thus, emphasizing its axiological engagement in the international relations.

Whereas, the value provisions of the BRICS do not coincide with the basic values of the liberal order and to the EU liberal – democratic worldview, but they refers to the values of the UN. The BRICS has no authentic set of values, and therefore, this group emerges as a derivative title of values. Moreover, it is complicated by the internal divergences among the BRICS nations, in terms of internal value harmony or disharmony and their potential for sharing of the mutual values. The BRICS is internally “stretched” between the liberal vs. illiberal value trends, which basically disables all attempts to create a coherent political structure and common values system. The type of democracy to which implies this group, refers only to the need for strengthening of its presence in the UN and other global financial institutions, as a way for imposing the international political power of specific BRICS nations on the world political scene. Precisely, it refers to Russia and China. Under the leadership of Russia and China, this group is heavily geared towards the strengthening of its influence in the UN, and strengthening of the sovereign powers of its constitutive nations, making an efforts to reform the international financial system, and building a new, parallel financial institution, aiming, these nations to grow into global political power centers, despite the USA and the EU. Currently, all efforts of the BRICS nations are directed towards the creation of BRICS’ New Development Bank, as a counterpart of the International Monetary Fund. However, founding of a political organization, based on common values, interests and political power “patterned after NATO or the EU, is impossible. China, India and Russia are competitors for power in Asia, and Brazil and India have been hurt by China’s undervalued currency. Thus BRIC is not likely to become a serious

political organization of like-minded states” (Bohler-Muller and Kornegay, 2013). On that basis, it can be concluded that BRICS seriously lacks an authentic set of common values, even in a rudimentary form. However, the BRICS cooperation is an important phenomenon in terms of the future development of international relations, especially in terms of their decentralization and pluralization.

Taking into account the EU perspective, the new international context seems to become more complex and confusing for understanding, and more heterogeneous one, composed of various pro-active actors (USA, BRICS, Russia and China), and also less liberal compared to the present. One of the main challenges of the EU for the future will be transformation of its power in a more *hard power direction*, in order to consolidate itself as a pro-active keeper of the liberal democratic values of the West, in the face of incoming autocracies such as Russia and China. Today liberal democracy is challenged by the incoming autocracies, but its sustainability for the future, will directly depend of the international role and activity of both the USA and the EU.

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**DEPLETED DEMOCRACY AND LIBERAL
DOWNFALL- THE STATE OF CURRENT
TURKISH AFFAIRS**

Abstract

Turkey has traditionally nurtured the idea of strong state (Barkey, 2000; Heper, 1985; 1992) with a unique political culture whose *raison d'être* is protection of the key features of Turkish national identity and Turkish territorial integrity. The venture is conscious and cyclically elitist (Abadan-Unat, 1982; Rabasa and Larrabee, 2008) by essence because it involves the rise and continuous existence of elite that dictates the political discourse and reform and modernization processes throughout the imperial era but also in modern times. Turkey is significant since it is the only secular democracy in the Islamic dominion. Furthermore, it is a capitalist country with developed and functional market economy and it is the foremost liaison between the East and the West. Lastly, Turkey is a candidate country for EU membership.

Turkish democracy, commonly described as fragile, is in need of democratization or to be exact in need of completing the process of democratic consolidation (Lowell 2009). The quest for democratization according to Lowell has become a continuous and repetitive endeavor and bespoken standpoint of all Turkish political elites since the establishment of the Republic, although not with the same degree of a dedication and same amount of popular consent. Therefore, it can be argued that the consolidation of democracy in Turkey is an ongoing process.

Conversely, articulation on democratic Turkey in terms of free and competitive elections, political pluralism and democratic practices and institutions is promising, but the discourse on liberal values and performance is questionable. The main argument put forward by this paper is that Turkey is suffering from the depleted democracy syndrome and that the current state of affairs is related to the Turkish liberal downfall. The research offers an outlook of preceding practices and maturity of Turkish democracy whilst current developments and turmoil regarding the Justice and development party (JDP) rule and its policies.

Key words: Turkey, democracy, liberalism, Islamism, Secularism

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

Turkey has traditionally nurtured the idea of strong state (Barkey, 2000; Heper, 1985; 1992) with a unique political culture whose *raison d'être* is protection of the key features of Turkish national identity and Turkish territorial integrity. The venture is conscious and cyclically elitist (Abadan-Unat, 1982; Rabasa and Larrabee, 2008) by essence because it involves the rise and continuous existence of elite that dictates the political discourse and reform and modernization processes throughout the imperial era but also in modern times.

Turkey is significant since it is the only secular democracy in the Islamic dominion. Furthermore, it is a capitalist country with developed and functional market economy and it is the foremost liaison between the East and the West. Lastly, Turkey is a candidate country for EU membership.

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DEMOCRACY “ALLA TURCA”

The Turkish political history has been extremely turbulent. If one studies the first years of pluralism, which was induced just after the WWII, one might notice that it is equally turbulent today. Although definite progress has been made, the controversies that firstly sparked the debate, on the compatibility of Islam and democracy and/or its supremacy, remain strong as ever.

Over the past six decades, Turkey has managed to establish and develop formal institutions of democracy (including some that ought to be questioned, such as

the Diyanet). These institutions have become part of the state system and despite frequent hindrance from various actors and reasons (military interventions, reforms aimed at modernization, europeanization reforms and European integration process, and so forth) they are strong and reasonably healthy. The democratization is an ongoing process and some elements of the system are still underdeveloped or not matured enough. Such is the mediascape of Turkey which was in reality recognized after the state monopoly of radio and television broadcasts was abolished with the 1993 constitutional amendment.

The Turkish model of democracy is marked by four major and complementing processes: a) pluralism - established after the WWII and abandoned in several occasions, but remaining as a characteristic element of Turkish society in which the pro-Islamic option is successfully competing in the political arena; b) parliamentarism - originally practiced since 1876 and though its reign has been interrupted by military coups it is still strongly rooted in Turkish political culture; c) modernization - part of the imperial heritage, one of the basic principles of Kemalism-republican state doctrine, and principal component of europeanization process in modern times and d) laicism/secularism - largely valued and greatly disputed institute of republican Turkey and the ontological denominator of modern Turkish identity.

The most prominent feature of the model is laicism/secularism. Laicism was initially developed in Ottoman era under the influence of ideas such as liberalism and nationalism that were imported from the West. The intriguing part of the debate on Turkish secularism is related to the non-existing neutrality and independence from the state interference in religious issues, but rather strict control and state assistance and even state intervention in the content of religion (Netherlands Scientific Council, 2004). The intrusion from the state in executive and financial matters is exercised by the Diyanet (Directorate of religious affairs - Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı) that has wide-ranging powers including the management of mosques, appointment of preachers, religious education in the spirit of Sunni Islam and so forth. Formally established in 1961, the Diyanet has replaced the seyhulislam – the highest religious legal advisor in Ottoman empire and in 1981 it was constitutionally entrusted, by an amendment of the Constitution, to protect the Turkish national identity (Netherlands Scientific Council 2004). Turkish secularism is aimed at preserving the Sunni Islam as dominant religion and is continuously and strongly supported by subsequent governments ever since 1924. As a result of the fear from revival of Islamism in Turkey, its secularism has gone deeper than what usually is seen in secular societies. Some even claim that the idea is almost inverse of a theocratic state and that Islam appears to be subordinated to the state, because Turkey is exercising too strict control over religious matters (Netherlands Scientific Council, 2004).

The Turkish political system has been fashioned despite ethnic and religious cleavages that reflect political struggles and antagonisms. Moreover, the diversification runs deep and the level of social polarization has become sharpened to the extent that Turkey can without doubt be labeled as divided society with low degree of trust and cooperation and under enduring risk of social and religious segregation mainly by the Kurdish and Alevi population.

The model is customarily named as “alla turca” democracy. It is a sui generis model in political theory and its features attract much deliberation in academia and in popular debates as well.

LIMITS OF TURKISH DEMOCRACY

One of the probably most persistent features of Turkish political culture is the notion that incumbents have the prerogative and capability to shape the society as they consider suitable. It is in fact a particular state tradition (Heper, 1985) that overwhelms Turkish society ever since the Ottoman times. The heritage incorporates massive and strong bureaucratic structure and subjective and obedient political culture of the citizens that are most likely to abide then to question decision-making thus producing weak, fearful and politically passive citizenry. During the first years of the Republic, this notion was put into force so the elite of the time could push for sweeping reforms and modernization of the society or state-building process along with the nation-building project that was to unite various groups and their diverse interests towards the singular ideal of Turkishness (Armstrong, 2015). In recent times the notion was used by JDP to cultivate a tremendously devout population. Yet, the success of the state engineering project has been questioned in many occasions and it is connected to the differentiation between omnipotent and monolithic state or bureaucracy and an equally undifferentiated and potentially hostile society against which the state operated (Lamprou, 2015). Lamprou deducts that the result of this rendering is an overestimation of the role, power and domination of an omniscient and omnipotent state over a passive society.

The limits of Turkish democracy are also related to two outstanding practices: military intervention in civil matters and persecution of the opposition. Both of them have tested Turkey’s democratic capacity to extremes.

The civil – military relations in Turkey have dominated much of its Republican era. The military intervened in civil matters when Turkish politics was threatened by fragmentation, polarization and economic instability. There were three military coups (1960, 1971, 1980) and one “post modern” coup (1997) over Turkey’s multiparty period. The military officers conducted the interventions in the

framework of their vow to protect Turkey from the enemies within and without with a clear doctrine of modernization and a secularizing mission (Yavuz, 2009) or to put it simply it was seen as their professional obligation to intervene whenever the civilian politicians had made too great a mess of things (Szarejko, 2014; Findley, 2010). Since 2002, the military's influence on civilian matters has decreased due to the reforms undertaken by JDP. The relationship is still troubled (the Sledgehammer plot of 2010) and although the military is able to show discontent with the state of affairs, the policy making is in the hand of civilians (Szarejko, 2014).

The persistent policy on restrictions of political parties was practiced towards a vast ideological parcel that included the leftist, the pro-Islamic and the pro-Kurdish political parties. The instrument that utilized this control is the nationwide 10 % election threshold and it proved as no easy task for a political party to survive under that condition (Carkoglu and Kalaycioglu, 2007). It is still in force and it is the highest representation threshold in the world.

LIBERALISM “ALLA TURCA”

Fukuyama claimed that a country can be democratic without being liberal (Fukuyama, 1994). Zakaria furthered this argument by noting that liberal democracy is a relatively new phenomenon (only several decades old) of the West where democracy and liberty have merged (Zakaria, 2004). Fukuyama proclaimed the end of history with the triumph of the liberal idea over all other. Zakaria asserted that although the world is becoming increasingly democratic, illiberal democracy can be found all over the world, even in the most developed countries in the world. The reason, according to him, is linked to the bundle of freedoms termed as constitutional liberalism (the rule of law, separation of powers, and protection of basic liberties of speech, assembly, religion and property) that has nothing intrinsically to do with democracy and the two have not always gone together, even in the West. Basically, Zakaria described democracy as procedures for selecting government and constitutional liberalism as government's goals.

Liberal democracy has two dimensions: horizontal – which corresponds to participation and vertical – which is defined by the limits of what can be included in the public sphere (Heper and Landau, 1991). In relation to issues that seem to dominate the Turkish political discourse hence derive the arguments about Turkey's depleted democracy. In reality, though some may challenge this argument, democracy in Turkey in all probability is not in danger of contest by other concepts and ideas. What can be disputed is its account. An analysis of Turkey's modern political rhetoric would inevitably show that the issue at hand is not the spiritual

induction in political affairs but the nuance offered by sharply diverse political elites and their vision of Turkey's prospects.

The current state of affairs in Turkey is commonly seen as a clash of the secular and pro-Islamic political option. This oversimplification is typically present at home and abroad, but the issue is more daring since it involves power struggle of the new and emerging elite and the old secularized elite or struggle between the center and the periphery which has deep roots back in Ottoman political history (Rabasa and Larrabee, 2008). Furthermore, this is not a novelty for Turkish politics. The democratization of Turkey especially after the 1980s has conveyed the forgotten and banned ideology of political Islam back to the plural political arena.

Turkey under Erdogan managed to move closer to the EU like never before. Despite the fact that many (the military, but also part of the civilian mainly secular establishment in Turkey) perceived the victory of JDP in 2002 as a shift towards the Islamization of Turkey and return of the political Islam at the Turkish political arena, Erdogan moved towards securing a firm date for the beginning of negotiations on accession to the EU which some label as a shrewd move (Mango, 2004). It was in fact an immensely twisted game – he was hunting the support of the military and the secular class which saw the move as a logical continuance of the republican imagery and secular principles foreseen in 1923 on one hand. He was aiming for EU approval and backing to deal with the military and to further democratization of Turkey in his vision, on the other hand. At first the military seemed soundless. The majority of people were agreeably supportive whereas the secularists remained reluctant. Soon the dominance of JDP overwhelmed the public sphere and the military was stripped from power, able only to occasionally show discontent with the state of affairs since the days when it could easily dispose civilian government were over (Szarejko, 2014).

The arguments proposed by the supporters of JDP often describe Turkey under Erdogan as society with expanded freedom and prosperity and consider the Turkish experiment as a real path towards Muslim liberty and JDP's reign as retrieval of Islamic liberalism (Akyol, 2011).

LIBERAL DOWNFALL

The main attribute of the Turkish model of democracy is the poor or more precisely depleted account in respect of the core principles of liberalism. Turkey's domestic political context is complicated by the internal confrontation between political options, the civil war and the issue of Kurdish minority rights despite the "Kurdish opening" from 2009, the secularism and related affairs, the problems with

media freedoms and freedom of expression in general, and so forth.

Turkey's liberal downfall is a complex episode incorporating a multitude of problems, government policies, civilian responses and issues, including: JDP's attempt to criminalize adultery, the headgear debate, the "KCK" trials in Kurdish regions, the investigation into the activities of the extremely marginal leftist armed group "Revolutionary Headquarters", the Constitutional referendums in 2007 and 2010 on electoral reform and other issues, the attempt to Putinize Turkey's presidential office by amending the constitution to introduce presidential/semi presidential system, the Ergenekon investigations and trials, operation Sledgehammer from 2010, state control over the media and internet in particular, the clash between JDP/Erdogan and Fethullah Gulen, several corruption scandals (2013 corruption scandal involving high rank members of JDP and the 2014 National Intelligence Organization scandal named MIT Lorries), reaching the top of the charts of leading nations in terms of the number of journalists in jail in 2012 and 2013, and second place in 2014, the Gezi park protests – as the one of most important events in modern Turkish history.

The critics of JDP's rule often state that the promise and program of the party, during the election campaign prior 2002 elections were quite liberal and progressive compared to its opponents and incumbents, but turned out as narrative with cynical ending. In fact, Erdogan even spoke of LGBT rights but once in power he promoted soft and permissive attitude towards Islamism which stands firmly against it.

Rabasa and Larrabee elaborate that the growing strength of political Islam in Turkey (or rather of politics informed by Islam) is largely related to internal factors such as democratization and socio-economic transformation of Turkey in the past decades (Rabasa and Larrabee, 2008).

Armstrong claims that the term liberal is often used as a term of abuse in Turkey and that liberalism is tragically little understood in Turkey, both by its self-declared proponents and opponents (Armstrong, 2015). Aside countless arguments that confirm this assertion there is also the issue of advocating authoritarian ideas and pursuing authoritarian goals while using democratic tools and liberal like rhetoric by the incumbents. One striking example is the endorsement of the veiling of women in institutions of the public sphere which is presented as the liberalization of the veil. According to Gole, wearing of headscarves is related not the display of traditionalism or as an expression of fundamentalism but to the issue of recognition of their Muslim identity through this symbol, in particular in the public domain (Netherlands Scientific Council, 2004). Zurcher and Van der Linden underline that this recognition is not founded in theology but in an appeal to human rights and in this case the individual right to show one's religious conviction (Netherlands Scientific Council, 2004).

Turkey's mediascape is convincingly diverse yet its realm is still under the influence of duality of political ideologies: pro-secular or pro-Islamic. In addition, the freedom of expression is being constantly suppressed by the use of repressive legislation and employment of measures that tend to eradicate difference in opinion or criticism, such as the arrests and civil pursuits of journalists, media representatives and media distributors, closure or take-over of media companies, prosecution on the grounds of tax evasion and even censorship and blockage of social media, news portals, websites, twitter accounts.

Erdogan's vision of Turkey is closely related to the project Turkey 2023 – the marking of 100 years anniversary since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. The project involves increased economic and social development and securing political stability. The latter incorporates exercise in hard power in internal and external affairs. On the domestic front he intends to put forward constitutional changes for the introduction of semi-presidential system. The attempt to settle the Kurdish problem has failed so yet again Turkey experiences civil war. The campaign to resolve the issues with his political opponents has reached a new scale after implementing numerous and vicious police actions and judicial measures against the supporters of his once close ally – Fethullah Gulen. Albeit tangible political deeds, some of the symbols and rhetoric used by this political elite include construction of the biggest airport in the world in Istanbul, construction of the biggest mosque in the world in Istanbul, the project Canal Istanbul (connecting the Black sea with the Mediterranean) and the construction of Ak Saray – probably the biggest presidential palace in the world. On the external front Erdogan changed the tune of Turkish foreign policy foremost on regional level after the Arab Spring revolts. The neo-ottomanism anticipated that Turkey will promote regional supremacy by using soft power. Instead, the recent actions on Erdogan's part attest that Turkey can't be restrained from using traditional hard power especially in the case of Syria, near-war hostility with Russia, engagement in Iraq etc. His sharp rhetoric and imprudent foreign policy actions will probably lead to grave mistakes. Accordingly his actions at home and abroad are disproving the initial optimistic views that he has learned the lessons from the past and matured on the experience of previous pro-Islamic parties, that he will restrain from imposing "majoritarian democracy" or abolish the headscarf ban in public institutions (Ahmad, 2004), that new Turkey will be erected through democratic processes and liberal practice or at least that this is a transitional period that promises to be momentous for the country as was the period between the demise of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of the Kemalist Republic (Yavuz, 2009).

DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED AUTHORITARIANISM?

It has been argued that “democratic politics is the bridge between the citizen and the state and that the links out of which the bridge is built are: civil liberties and political rights attributed to the individual citizen, the majority principle, political parties, elections, parliament and the state executive” (Offe, 1980). Further on, Offe asserts that the liberal democratic theory foresees that the traffic that moves over this bridge determines the uses of which state power is put. In relation to our analysis, it is important to underline that Turkey has been portrayed as a bridge in quite a few interconnected manners- bridge between the east and the West, bridge between the two great civilizations of the Christianity and Islam and certainly as a bridge between the democratic and religious canons (specifically Islamic canons). The latter is certainly the most important for this discourse as it implies that Turkey is the model that successfully reconciled the democratic principles and religious dogma and should continue to be considered as end goal of societies with an Islamic majority on their way of becoming modern and developed polities. And without a doubt it was part of the initial inspiration to many of the peoples that revolted in the surrounding region and became part of what became known as the Arab spring. Still, the success of the model has been reevaluated in light of the far-reaching evidence that Turkey is becoming more of a showcase for elected authoritarianism (Herzog, 2015), country ruled under Erdoganocracy (Zeynalov, 2014) or failed liberal-democratic experiment in society where pro-Islamism is inherent feature. The last argument is related to the impression that Erdogan’s aim is to refashion Turkey as Islamic society along lines of JDP religiously conservative ideology. Thought this reasoning may be disputed and confirmed by both camps one particularly essential argument for the endorsement of JDP’s rule can be found in Orientalists interpretation on the relationship between democracy and Islam. Namely, they state that since Islam has a totalist character (a total way of life rather than just a religion) only an absolutist government could put its percepts into practice (Hale and Ozbudun, 2010).

The outcome of latest cycle of elections (November 2015) in Turkey was described as a crossroad of Turkish politics where the dilemma between democracy and elected authoritarianism exists (Tüzün, 2015) but also as a strong confirmation on people’s approval of JDP’s policies. Needless to say, that this is not the end of the story on Turkey’s future and it is far from exhausting the debate on Turkey’s current state of affairs and its immediate challenges. A large body of analysts and commentators assert that Erdogan’s rule could be labeled as authoritarian but conclude that this is due to the manner in which he practices the political power rather than to its relation with Muslim religion as such.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Over the past decades Turkey has suffered much transformation, change and uncertainty. The recurrent turmoil and deepening polarization have been often pronounced as residues of the past or result of JDP's authoritarian rule, which is why it's imperative to underscore that Turkey's democratic and authoritarian legacies have been intertwined from the outset (Danforth, 2015) and should not be rendered as novelty. Regrettably, at the end of 2015 we must conclude that the securing of functional democracy and political liberalism in Turkey is a pending process.

Aside the debate on Turkish democratic deficit, arguments on poorly developed (even non-existing) liberalism are becoming more pronounced. They are traditionally nourished by the rule of authoritarian elites and in recent times by the pro-Islamic ideology of chief political parties and groups.

The efforts to build up a healthy democracy despite the continuing influence of authoritarian elements have dominated much of the JDP's rule since 2002 (Amani, 2015). However JDP's politics revived the discourse on Turkey's most lasting challenge – secularism or political Islam that can without difficulty be interpreted as confrontation of liberal democracy or authoritarianism. The 2015 general elections represent the latest example of this argument.

Hale and Ozbudun are correct when stating that the persistence of authoritarian regimes in the region is due to several reasons: the weakness of civil society, the co-optation of the bourgeoisie by state elites and the ruler's capacity to develop successful strategies (Hale and Ozbudun, 2010). And Turkey is not exempt from this trend.

Recent happenings in Turkey have been marked at a historic crossroad (Amani, 2015). Zeynalov makes the argument more viable in saying that Turkey will be full-fledged constitutional democracy when both secular people and Islamists finally understand that a limited lawful state is a final target and democracy is a goal not a tool (Zeynalov, 2014).

The current state of affairs in Turkey is also related to the halt in EU integration process and its influence on Turkish people's extended disappointment and even fatigue. On the other hand, Europeanization (as external incentive) can and should assist the process however most of the work needs to be conducted because of internal needs and incentives. Herzog states that Turkish politics has gradually left the asphalted path of a struggling and flawed democracy painfully attempting to consolidate itself and overcome the illiberal and military patronage legacies of the past and instead it appears to have driven off-piste into a dark and crisis-ridden future of civil authoritarian regime building and rule by domination (Herzog 2015).

Let us hope that the prospects will produce advanced/developed Turkish democracy with high respect for liberal values and stand as the model so needed

in the region where most of the peoples still struggle with authoritarian rule and suppressed freedoms.

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“CITIZENS FOR MACEDONIA” – FROM CITIZEN MOBILIZATION TO DEMOCRATIZATION?

Abstract

During its 25 years of independence, the Macedonian society has faced democratic turmoil many times. Still, there is a general belief that since the beginning of 2015, Macedonia has entered in its biggest social and political crisis. Following the release of the wiretapped conversations by the president of the largest opposition party in Macedonia – SDSM, Zoran Zaev, a group of citizens and party activists occupied the space in front of the Macedonian Government, asking for resignation from Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski. Protestors claimed that the Macedonian Government has lost its legitimacy to govern, and asked for immediate rebuilding of the Macedonian institutions. These actions have created the biggest political cleavage in Macedonian history.

The main purpose of the paper is to examine current and future movement related outcomes, and its capacity to push for power change. Secondly, the paper defines the genesis of the movement and classifies it as type of social/political movement. Lastly, it portrays possibilities for larger citizen mobilization for wider social restoration of Macedonian society in the future.

From a theoretical perspective, the paper presents cutting edge literature review analyzing contemporary concepts of social movements and citizen mobilization. Regarding the methodological approach, I apply a combination of thorough document analysis and in-depth interviewing. Five in-depth interviews were conducted with movement stakeholders.

Key words: democratization, movement, mobilization, Macedonia, citizens

INTRODUCTION¹

Bridging social movement literature and literature on democratization has not been done frequently throughout the past in the fields of Political Science and Sociology. Requoting the words of Sidney Tarrow, initially quoted by Donatella della Porta in the introductory chapter of her path-breaking piece *Mobilizing for Democracy: Comparing 1989 and 2011*, “Most scholars of democratization have either ignored movements altogether or regarded them with suspicion as dangers to democracy, while most students of social movements have focused on fully mature democratic systems and ignored the transition cycles that place the question of democratization on the agenda and work it through to either democratic consolidation or defeat” (Tarrow, 1995: 221-2 in della Porta, 2014: 1), it is quite clear that combining these two theoretical strands is likely to add value to the studying of a particular movement, in this specific case, the Citizens for Macedonia (hereinafter CfM) movement.

After briefly presenting the methodological approach and the main research questions which are addressed in this paper, I move towards a brief summer of the history of formal democratization of Macedonian society, which I argue that came from above, following a specific pattern of elite transformation.

Furthermore, I try to stress the peculiarities of CfM, and explain from a theoretical perspective why this particular collective action should be considered a social movement. I base my arguments on the theoretical inputs of della Porta and Diani, highlighting the distinctive theoretical elements of social movements.

I then briefly turn towards the main political outcomes of the movement, taking into consideration that many activities are still ongoing, and that the final contours of the outcomes will surely change as time passes by. I particularly focus on activists’ impressions regarding the influence of CSOs and parties on state institutions, the international community and the wider public respectively. The results of the Przhino agreement can be considered a focal point.

In the last section of the paper I take into consideration activists’ observations related to the possibilities of wider supra-party possibility for mobilization of Macedonian citizens, which will ultimately lead towards one of the paths of democratization from bellow as suggested by della Porta. I close by briefly focusing on the conclusions from the research.

METHODOLOGY AND MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS

My main methodological approach while exploring the movement-related peculiarities can be defined as dominantly narrative and sociological, to a certain

extent introducing elements of Process Tracing Analysis (PTA). Regarding the theoretical concepts, I rely mostly on recent democratization and social movement literature which dominantly focuses on citizen mobilization. As far as the data collection tools are concerned, I acquired my data via thorough document analysis and open ended in-depth interviews with activists and key informants.

I conducted five in-depth interviews with representatives from different groups of activists, trying to cover multiple angles of the happenings. By the time I performed the fifth interview I had already reached the concept which is referred to as “saturation of knowledge” (della Porta, 2014: 242), since similar information and perspectives started to become redundant. The first interviewee is an activist coming from the civil society, continuously taking part in organization and execution of movement related activities. The second interviewee is a member of the Student Plenum that also partly participated in the movement and had two speakers during the 17th of May protest. The third interviewee is a member of a central body of SDSM, the largest participating political party which had a pivotal role within the movement. The fourth interviewee comes from academia, but he is also closely collaborating both with one of the SMOs and with SDSM. Lastly, the fifth interviewee holds a Ph.D. in Political Science, and is a freelance expert who gave a relatively objective external view of the incidents.

The three central questions which are examined in this paper are the current outcomes and possible future developments related to the movement, and its capacity to push for power changes; the genesis of the movement and its localization in theory; as well as the possibilities for wider citizens’ mobilization which can possibly lead towards a complete restauration of Macedonian society, following a path of democratization from below.

FROM FORMAL DEMOCRATIZATION TO SHALLOW DEMOCRACY

Former studies on the processes of democratization of societies in Southeast Europe have, more or less, been divided in regards to the fact whether democratization emerged “from below” (della Porta, 2014), or it was mainly dictated by elite transformation and adaptation including newly established elites (Stepan and Linz, 1996; Higley, Pakulski and Wesolowski, 1998). Regarding the *democratization from below*, della Porta distinguishes three most common paths that single out the substantially important roles of protests and social movements, which are applicable both to societal transformations in Eastern Europe during 1989/90 and democratization processes in the MENA region in 2011/12. She labels as *eventful democratization* those processes where protests performed by social

movements are very important. Her second category is named *participatory pacts*, and it refers to cases where social movements dominantly use bargaining strategies to achieve democratic reforms. The third type of processes have been given the name *participated coup d'état*, signaling out specific societal transformations in which elites engage in the activity of manipulating mass protest events in order to gain power over conservative groups (della Porta, 2014: 296-297). Moving to the *elite transformation approach*, which can also be referred to as *democratization from above*, acting as an antonymic balance to democratization from below, the process of democratization is much more elite-driven and citizens' participation is not in the primary focus of the societal change. Focusing specifically on Eastern Europe, theory recognizes two dominant ways of creation of consensually-unified national elites: a *direct transformation*, and a *transformation through a settlement of basic disputes among the elites* (Daskalovski, 1999: 17). Based on the arguments by Higley and Pakulski (1992), Daskalovski defines direct transformation as an epilogue of party elites being able to acknowledge the counter-productivity of communist ideology, embrace democracy and create space for accommodation of new emerging elites (Daskalovski, 1999: 19). On the other hand, the transformation through a settlement of basic disputes among the elites, is recognized by the literature as a relatively rare and exceptional event when "national elite factions suddenly and deliberately reorganize their relations by negotiating compromises on their most basic disagreements" (Burton and Higley, 1987: 295).

One of the main arguments that I try to bring forward in this paper is that although Macedonia was formally democratized during the late 80s and early 90s of the previous century following a process of democratization from above, mainly driven by former socialist and new emerging, dominantly nationalist elites, this process resulted just with a formal and extremely shallow democracy, lacking functional and democratic institutions as well as participatory decision-making among multiple centers of power. Shallow democracy can be defined as an environment which "allows limited power sharing and restricted participation in decision making" (Meighan, 2001: 297). This form of democracy allows sharing of just small portions of power, tightly limited and controlled by those in power, which also have the space and opportunity to withdraw all elements of power-sharing and confine it only to marginal activities. Shallow democracy increases the probability of malfunctioning which leads towards "cynicism, fatalism and a strong impression that democracy does not work" (Ibid: 297), a description which largely resembles the current environment in Macedonian society. Furthermore, I want to stress the idea that the activities of the CfM coalition are one of the last remaining mechanisms which could result with essential and deeper democratization of Macedonian society, resembling a type of democratization from below that might

eventually lead towards a complete restoration of Macedonian society, finally completing the transition from shallow to deep democracy. This argument raises the need for definition of deep democracy. This democratic environment, conversely to the previous one, allows more power-sharing, as well as agenda-setting. Deep democracy does not boil down to the number or range of items among which power is shared, but it also takes into consideration the levels of decision-making (Ibid: 297).

Taking into consideration the limited time and space, but also attempting not to lose the focus of this writing, I will briefly describe the formal democratization of the Macedonian state during the late 80s and early 90s of the 20th century, subsequently moving towards assessment of the current situation in Macedonia. The current diagnosis will act as a type of introduction to the following section which stresses the core of this research – the definition of CfM and its location within a certain theoretical framework provided by social movement literature.

The formal democratization of Macedonia, which began during the late 80s of the previous century, is inseparably tied to the process of gaining independence. Macedonia's independence formally started to coin by introducing the Declaration for Sovereignty of Socialist Republic of Macedonia (DSSRM, 1991) which was enacted by the Assembly of SRM on 25th of January 1991. Following the first multiparty parliamentary election which were held on 11th November 1990, SRM had started the process of democratization of institutions, migrating from a single party assembly to a multiparty representative legislature which contained variety of political parties and independent MPs. This legislature unanimously² adopted the previously mentioned Declaration, this being one of the rare moments in the short Macedonian history when a wide cross-party consensus has been reached regarding a certain issue. Apart from all elected MPs voting in favor of the Declaration, all extant political parties backed the Declaration (Makedonska Nacija, 2010). The text of the Declaration vividly stressed the determination for independence introducing the wording "...independence and territorial integrity of the Macedonian state, as well as the right to self-determination of the Macedonian people, including the right to secession" (DSSRM, 1990: Article 1). This paved the way towards the referendum which formally sealed the Macedonian independence. The referendum was held on 8th September 1991, when 75% of the Macedonian citizens ran for the ballot boxes to cast their vote, answering the referendum question "Are you in favor of a sovereign and independent state Macedonia, with the right to participate in future alliance with other sovereign Yugoslav states?" (Referendum report, 1991: 1-2). Out of the 1.132.981 citizens which participated in the referendum, 1.079.308 citizens voted "YES" clearly stating the citizens' will for an independent and democratic country.

However, not all went rosy for the young post-Yugoslav state. The problems related to the international recognition, the economic sanctions imposed by the southern neighbor, as well as the lack of capability to deal with minority dilemmas, just announced what was going to be a long and painful 25 years path towards eventual deep democratization of Macedonian society. The formalization of the democratization process in Macedonia was a type of compromise between the direct elite-transformation model, combined with the settlement of disputes model. Both the old and the new emerging Macedonian elites opted for democracy in comparison to the old regime (see more Daskalovski, 1999). Still, the failure of the Macedonian institutions during this period is even more visible from a time distance of over 25 years. This was clearly pointed out by one of the interviewees: "... Gruevski managed relatively easy, in a short period of 2-3 years, to literally occupy all state institutions and to suffocate them without any resistance whatsoever. This obviously proves that the authoritarian tradition and the system which has been corrupt by various cliques has much deeper roots than the ruling of VMRO-DPMNE and Nikola Gruevski... Thus, we are battling a heritage deeply enrooted in history..." (IV 4, 2015).

Regarding the current state of failed and shallow democracy in Macedonia, which eventually led to the creation of the CfM movement, it is more than enough that one takes into account the recent report triggered by the crisis – the Recommendations of the Senior Experts' Group on systematic Rule of Law issues relating to the communications interception revealed in Spring 2015, colloquially known as the "Priebe Report". This document surgically notates the main spheres of concern, categorizing them in 5 areas: the interception of communications, judiciary and prosecutions services, external oversight by independent bodies, elections and the media (European Commission, 2015: 2), which leads us to the conclusion that all main pillars of a normally functioning democratic state are dangling. This undoubtedly explains the deep reasons behind the emerging of the CfM movement.

"CITIZENS FOR MACEDONIA" – INITIATION AND CATEGORIZATION IN SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY

On February 9th, after a longer period of announcements, the President of the largest party in opposition – SDSM, Zoran Zaev, released the first package of series of wiretapped conversations involving high-ranked public officials, members of the opposition, prominent journalists, as well as ordinary citizens. This led towards a string of reactions from parties in government, primarily by the leading ones in the coalition – VMRO-DPMNE and DUI, representatives of the international community, university professors and intellectuals, all of them engaging in the

endless debate regarding the sources of the released materials, their authenticity, the main reasons and timing of the unveiling, further dividing the already polarized and cleaved Macedonian society.

I’ve got soul but I’m not a soldier³

The promotion video launched on YouTube, starting with the lyrics from the popular song *All These Things That I’ve Done* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMNoOcANQKE> 2015), performed by *The Killers*, announced the grand citizens’ protest scheduled for 17th of May, which officially presented the CfM platform to the wider public. The CfM movement represented a coalition of more than 70 NGOs, over 15 political parties and thousands of unaffiliated citizens. As highlighted in the headline of the declaration which was compiled by the activists, the movement represents a “citizen and non-partisan coalition for reintroducing human dignity and protection of the Macedonian Constitution” (Citizens for Macedonia, 2015). But how was this non-typical network of entities perceived by the actors themselves, which were involved in the movement from different perspectives and performing different roles?

One of the core questions which often appears in Political Science and Sociology, and which at first glance creates an impression that it has a relatively straightforward answer, is the dilemma “What is a social movement”? Still, the specificities and distinctive characteristics of social movements cannot be easily answered, since the definition of this social process is everything but simple, straightforward and with clearly set boundaries. A good starting point for providing the answer to this rather complex question, is turning towards Mario Diani’s reflections (see more in Diani, 1992; Diani, 2003; Diani, 2004 and Diani and Bison, 2004). A synthesis of his thoughts will lead towards defining social movements as “distinct social processes, consisting of the mechanism through which actors engaged in collective action and are involved in conflictual relations with clearly identified opponents, are linked by dense informal networks and share a distinct collective identity” (della Porta and Diani, 2006: 20). It is clear that the CfM platform can be easily located within this overarching and widely encompassing definition.

The conversations are stapled, edited and remastered⁴

Regarding the *conflictual collective action*, della Porta and Diani stress the engagement of social movement actors in political and/or cultural conflicts aiming towards opposition or promotion of social change (Ibid: 21). In the case of the CfM movement, a clear opposition towards an almost decade-lasting irresponsible

governing by Nikola Gruevski is visible in the information obtained by the interviewees. They describe the reasons behind the creation of the movement as a “...need which came out from the general state in which Macedonia found itself, meaning the extensive and concerning breach of human rights...” (IV 1, 2015), and as a “...challenge for unification against a political regime whose functioning and methods exceed the limits of all democratic practices, even extremely broad defined...” (IV 4, 2015). In regards to the conflict, which building on the theoretical inputs of Tilly (1978) and Touraine (1981: 80-84), della Porta and Diani define as “an oppositional relationship between actors who seek control of the same stake – be it political, economic, or cultural power – and in the process make negative claims on each other – i.e., demands which, if realized, would damage the interests of the other actors” (della Porta and Diani, 2006: 21), the social movement activists involved in the CfM platform particularly stress the political power, aiming to deprive the current establishment from their positions as soon as possible, making a clear distinction between “us” and “them” and identifying “them” as a clear target towards which claims and grievances are articulated: “...so we have a common enemy, we have an evil which is terrorizing us, and we should get rid of our personal frustrations and vanities, and we should sit together, and create a joint strategy...” (IV 2, 2015).

SOROSoids and communists⁵

Moving to the *dense informal networks*, which act as distinctive points between social movement activities and numerous occasions when collective actions are brought forward usually between specified entities (della Porta and Diani, 2006: 21), the CfM movement resembles a coalition of numerous SMOs and individuals which cannot be exhaustively enumerated. Using the words of one of the interviewees “...I treat this as a movement. It was not...this...their structures, NGOs, legal persons blablabla...that’s nonsense. In general, it was a movement...” (IV 2, 2015). Still, one cannot neglect the dominant position of the biggest political party in opposition – SDSM within the informal network of multiple actors. This strand could be detected in the responses of the majority of interviewees: “...SDSM was not supposed to lead the movement, and they (NGO representatives, I.S.) were not supposed to consult and council the party. There was supposed to be a relationship of equality, and SDSM should not have left in the end...when already both groups of actors entered the story called political party and civil society...that is why I say that some things are disputable...” (IV 3, 2015); “...I think that the platform ended at the moment when SDSM stepped out and said that ‘we are not a part of the platform anymore because we are entering the government’...now, this is slightly

complicated. I think that it (the platform, I.S.) ended. So, apparently they cannot function without the party. Look, they basically do not exist anymore. Now they might have even renamed themselves into ‘We Deserve Better’, or this is one of their activities...it doesn’t matter...” (IV 2, 2015); “...SDSM had to allocate more space for a wider spectrum of stakeholders. Although the movement was consisted of party activists, members of NGOs and non-affiliated individuals, and although there were numerous debates, discussions and other brainstorming activities, still, I think that a much wider pallet of people could have been included in generating ideas about how to fight the regime...” (IV 5, 2015). On the other hand, it must be noted that all known participating actors kept their autonomy and independence, engaging in the exchange of resources, coordination of activities continuously discussing about issues directly referring to the collective action. Additionally, the principle that “...no single organized actor, no matter how powerful, can claim to represent the movement as a whole...” (della Porta and Diani, 2006: 21) was never violated. A solid proof for this claim is the fact that SDSM, undisputedly the most powerful actor within the movement, formally left the platform as soon as the arrangements from the Przhino agreement(s) were put into motion (Telma, 2015). A more vivid picture regarding the structure, the density and the organizational and resource-sharing relationships between the actors within the informal network(s), can be obtained by prospective performing of social network analysis (SNA), as a very suitable methodological approach for measurement of these movement particularities (see more about SNA in Caiani, 2014 and Diani, 2003b).

#WeAreComing #WeAreStaying #Resignation⁶

Lastly, these theoretical and classificatory reflections which should help in definition and characterization of the CfM movement, should be rounded with a final reference to the *collective identity*, as the third and last distinctive element of a social movement. One can speak of a social movement process only if the actions are accompanied by a development of collective identities (della Porta and Diani, 2006: 21). The concept of collective identity is usually correlated to recognition and creation of relatedness (Pizzorno, 1996). This concept is strongly visible within the CfM platform. Previous quotations from interviewees stressed common beliefs that those in power almost equally underrepresent all movement actors concerning their values, morals and visions regarding how modern Macedonian society should be shaped. Quoting one of the activists “...for them (CfM, I.S.) to be analyzed as a concept, we should firstly define the concept. In this autocracy...let’s call it a modern autocracy, it can be said that in this particular moment the civil society actors and the political parties must come together...” (IV 2, 2015).

Setting clear boundaries regarding what is and what is not a social movement is never an easy and naïve task. This difficulty becomes even greater when one has to make a distinction between social movements and other different forms of collective actions. It is very likely that no social movement compared *stricto sensu* to each of the above mentioned characteristics will fully fit within the framework which represents the “pure type” of social movement. Taking into consideration the above mentioned peculiarities of the CfM platform, I would personally define this collective action as a social movement.

CURRENT MOVEMENT OUTCOMES – FROM PRZHINO TO EARLY ELECTIONS

Social movement outcomes focus on social and political changes which resulted from collective mobilizations and protest activities. Contemporary social movement literature usually distinguishes three broad types of social movement outcomes: biographical, cultural and political outcomes (Bosi, Giugni and Uba, forthcoming: 4). Regarding the CfM, this section focuses only on the political outcomes of the movement, bearing in mind that not all events can be covered and explained in detail. Furthermore, taking into consideration the current unravelling of events, one must also acknowledge that a new wave of political outcomes is likely to follow in the near future. Within the typology of social movement outcomes, political outcomes are defined as “those effects of movement activities that alter in some way the movements’ political environment” (Ibid: 4).

I will make an attempt to frame the most significant political outcomes taking into consideration one of the critical open-ended questions which was posed to the interviewees, asking them to categorize the level of pressure which CSOs and political parties, as two different entities within the movement managed to exert over the state institutions, the wider public and the international community respectively. A wider consensus can be reached that the most significant political implications regarding the CfM movement were born from the Przhino agreement. This was also clearly stated by all interviewees.

“Frying” in Przhino⁷

After long and tiring negotiations between the leaders of the four biggest parties in the Macedonian political arena – VMRO-DPMNE, SDSM, DUI and DPA, on 2nd of June 2015, a political agreement brokered by the Head of the EU Delegation to Macedonia and the US Ambassador to Republic of Macedonia, was

signed by all participating parties (Agreement, 2015). After continuous failures for implementation of several agreed provisions, pressured and facilitated by the international representatives, the party leaders signed a protocol to the Agreement on 15th of July 2015 (Annex to the Agreement, 2015), shaping the final version of the document (Protocol to the Agreement, 2015).

Interviewees are convinced that the movement played a substantial role in influencing crucial stakeholders which shaped the final text of the accord. Distinguishing between CSO and parties, their impression was that CSO representatives dominantly influenced the international community: “regarding the external...the international community, EU and the others which are involved in this process, there was a significant influence by the NGOs...” (IV 1, 2015), “...I think they (CSOs, I.S. 2015) dominantly influenced the international community, because they had extensive meetings with international community representatives and they listened to their arguments...” (IV 2, 2015), “...the civil society, which is traditionally...this civil society, which organized these activities...is traditionally pro-European and pro-American...because they are their main donors...they had blogs, columns, statements, or attitudes which were directly communicated and through which they pressured the international community...” (IV 3, 2015), “...in the initial phase, in that first phase, especially within this informal coalition, know I am referring to that period somewhere...March-April, on the eve of the 17th of May protest, the civil society exerted much greater pressure over the international community in comparison with the political parties...” (IV 4, 2015). Another common observation is that the political parties in opposition managed to impose a general pressure over all entities, primarily by releasing the materials from the wiretapped conversations: “...the releasing of the ‘bombs’ by the opposition contributed in the creation of a better perception in the eyes of the undecided voters, some of which knew what was happening even before, but they needed the audio materials to convince themselves...” (IV 3, 2015), “...we cannot overlook the fact that the opposition, as the major force, played a serious part in the pressure which the international community imposed over the state institutions...” (IV 2, 2015), “...there was a general continuous pressure imposed by the political parties in opposition...” (IV 1, 2015), “...I think that the political parties dominantly pressured the public, most likely because of the ‘infrastructure’ which the biggest party in opposition SDSM, has on its disposal...” (IV 4, 2015).

The people will decide⁸

One of the issues agreed upon in Przhino, which from this perspective is very like to be timely effectuated, are the early parliamentary elections scheduled for April

24th 2016. Although preceded by the appointment of the special prosecutor and her team, introduction of intra-party ministers, and additional deputy ministers, as well as the prospective new Government which should be appointed 100 days before the early elections, there is no much space for optimism among the interviewees: "...I am not sure about the elections to be honest...I think that VMRO-DPMNE and Gruevski still control the main pillars of society which can enable them to forge the elections..." (IV 5, 2015). Even those who believe in change, coming from the party base of the largest party in opposition, are not very sure that change of power will lead to substantial change by default: "...If it is not a strategy, but simply a hunch about how civil society and the parties should act, then it will be detected very soon and it will have negative repercussions on the campaign which should lead towards regaining power...and even if we obtain power, this may have negative impact on real democratization of society. If this was not done on purpose we will easily recognize it, and it will tamper the real prosperity of our country, even if we come into power recently..." (IV 3, 2015). Still, one of the interviewees has the impression that party activists are extremely optimistic: "...a large number of party activists are persuaded that there is going to be an institutional and relatively peaceful transfer of power and unravelling of the crisis...At least for now, they are convinced that this will happen..." (IV 4, 2015). The varying answer from the respondents add to the uncertainty on the eve of the early elections in approximately half a year from now. Only an analysis from a proper time distance can provide sufficient facts regarding the influence of SMOs over election results.

MOBILIZATION FOR RESTAURATION? THE OPTIMISTIC PESSIMISTS...

There is maybe one thing which is less certain than the election results in late April – the potential for future citizen mobilization which has the impetus for profound changes of Macedonian society. Regarding this last issue which is treated in this paper, I asked my five interviewees whether they believe that Macedonian society has the potential for a wide supra-party citizens' mobilization leading towards a complete change of values and restauration of Macedonian society, which will ultimately lead towards a certain path of democratization from bellow. The received responses stretched across the two poles on the scale, moving from eternal optimism to entrenched pessimism. This was also a way to test the potential for protest cycles and waves in a Tarrowian sense, referring to "a phase of heightened conflict and contention across the social system that includes: a rapid diffusion of collective action from more mobilized to less mobilized sectors; a quickened pace of innovation in the forms of contention; new or transformed collective action

frames; a combination of organized and unorganized participation; and sequences of intensified inter-actions between challengers and authorities which can end in reforms, repression and sometimes revolution” (Tarrow, 1994: 153), basically, initial sparks of what infected Macedonian society during the process of plenumization, a series of activities by university and high school students, professors as well as concerned parents, which suddenly went off waiting for the epilogue of the CfM – this “bigger brother” which overarched all these mobilizations.

#IProtest⁹

Optimism was very present in the response of an activist who was substantially involved in movement activities: “...My impression is that the citizen capacity still exists and I think that the real role of the civil society will follow after this situation changes...this means that it will be a long-lasting process...the authority and the power which were built during this period should be used in the future...” (IV 1, 2015). Unfortunately, this cannot be said about the other interviewees. The interviewed activist who is also a member of the central body of SDSM sees the only solution in a wide front headed by SDSM but on strictly horizontal principles: “...citizens’ potential is on machines...in severe clinical condition...Is there a possibility for something bigger? The very moment when the leadership of SDSM opens the front and starts standing side by side with other stakeholders in a certain ‘peer to peer’ relationship, then, maybe we stand a chance...” (IV 3, 2015). One of the two interviewed academics draws a parallel with neighboring Serbia, highlighting Djindjic’s efforts as wasted, together with his life, unfortunately: “...if a change of power occurs, and if the new political elites show an extremely strong will, and if many sacrifices are made...maybe...but there are too many if, if, if...I am general relatively skeptical from this perspective...” (IV 4, 2015). The Student Plenum member does not see any kind of possibilities for sharp improvement, at least not in the next 4 years: “...In the next 4 years I don’t think that there is a possibility for something like this to happen... If a mobilization is initiated by young people which are still not profiled in the public, and which are not related to a first, second, third, fifth or tenth organization or side, and in this case, and I stress once again, there is a possibility, but there is a possibility of 2% for a mobilization to happen. But currently, I don’t see a probability for something like this to happen...” (IV 2, 2015). Lastly, a lot of pessimism can be heard in the voice of a young and over-educated mother of two young children: “...just for their sake, I hope that there is some kind of possibility...but I know that it won’t happen, simply, it is obvious...I don’t care that my life has gone to hell, I cannot live with the fact that there is a high risk that their lives will be wasted as well...” (IV 5, 2015).

CONCLUSIONS

Starting from the main research questions which were addressed, I will try to derive some general conclusive remarks, which taking into account the qualitative research design and the dynamic evolvement of events, must not be taken for granted.

Beginning with the political outcomes accompanying the movement, it is rather clear that the collective action left an eternal blueprint in Macedonian society – something which by any means can never be forgotten or disregarded. This is particularly visible through the conclusion of the Przhino Agreement, a process during which the movement actors played a serious role. As for the capacity of the movement to produce change in power, the rather ambiguous responses by the interviewees can only lead to the conclusion that time can be the appropriate “judge”.

Closing with the central topic which was object of research, the mobilization from below, unfortunately the level of dominant pessimism in the voices of the interviewees can only lead me towards thinking about “failure from below”. If the several percent lamented by some of the activists accidentally come to life, and Macedonian society enters into the much wanted and expected process of democratic restauration, in that case we would most probably witness a combination of possible paths ranging between *eventful democratization* and *participatory pact*.

Notes

(Endnotes)

¹ I would like to express my gratitude to the 5 interviewees for devoting part of their valuable time and energy to provide me with valuable insights and reflections.

² All 120 elected MPs voted in favor of the Declaration

³ Lyrics from the song *All These Things That I've Done* performed by *The Killers*

⁴ A sentence frequently used by PM Nikola Gruevski. Derived from the Macedonian: „Снимките се сечени, лепени и монтирани“.

⁵ Wording frequently used by journalists and public figures supportive of the Government to stigmatize government challengers. In Macedonian: соросоиди и комуњари

⁶ Hashtags used on social media but also depicted on placards during the protests on 17th of May, and later during the encampment. In Macedonian: #Доаѓаме

#Остануваме #Оставка

⁷ Przhino is the name of the neighborhood where the political negotiations took place. The political agreement was given the colloquial name “Przhino Agreement”. The name of the neighborhood derives from the Macedonian “пржи” which is a verb with the meaning “to fry”.

⁸ One of the most popular statements frequently repeated by PM Nikola Gruevski. In Macedonian: Народот ќе одлучи

⁹ The name of an informal contentious group which continuously organized protests. The hashtag has been frequently used during their events. In Macedonian: #Протестирам

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