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**Subject:**

**The Role of Collective Identities Management in Offsetting the  
Ethno – Social Distance  
(Case of the Republic of Macedonia)**

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## **SHORT BIOGRAPHY - IRINA SIMONOVSKA-SPIRKOVSKA**

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### **I. Introduction**

The concepts of nation and subsequently, the national identity, no longer comprehensively pass the test of time and respond to identity differences. They are in need of a conceptual redefinition, since they are referent for the concepts specific to the past. The homogenization and uniformity of the national state have been considered fairly successful in providing equal conditions for competition and progress in diverse settings.

The Republic of Macedonia represents a multiethnic country, whereas all of the ethnicities are historically indigenous elements, respecting the tradition of coexistence, a crossroads of many nations and ethnicities' interbreeding. The common historical traditions and processes are representing a quintessential part of the collectivistic aspect in a country that aspires to cultural pluralism. The crossroads between the general political management of the country and the issue of human rights draws close attention to the existence of collective entities. Those collectivistic entities enforce the political action on the general socio – political plan.

Considering the above context, many of the changes in Macedonia took place exactly in the period 1991-2001, perceived as a transitional junction. One of the most important distinguishing features of the country is the policy of granting collective rights to various ethnic groups and their subsequent management. The latter can be perceived as a tool of an according policy for distributive justice. The politicization of cultural considerations, or to be more specific, the politics of identity, represents one of the main focuses of political attention.

### **II. The Theoretical and Methodological Framework**

Authors such as P.Korunic, H.Gunsteren, W.Kymlicka, as well as several others, put the discourse of identity in the context of criticism of nationalism and its interchangeability with the concept of civil society and implementation of plurality in the general social flows<sup>i</sup>. For example, P.Korunic distinguishes a social level, consisted "...of multi - identities in plural social relations and identities, related to ethnic and national identities that reflected the ethnic and cultural diversity"<sup>ii</sup>.

The theoretical assertion most applicable in the Macedonian *culturally plural* case would be by Carl – Ulrik Chierup, giving an assumption that multiculturalism can be related with "...political mobilization of cultural communities, thus culturalizing their language"<sup>iii</sup>. Johnatan Friedman & Chierup further argue that in the logical nature of things:

"... the dialectical, constant relationship of "*negation and affirmation*", and attempts to overcome the cultural gaps and cleavages between the cultural groups in society and cultural groups with the state as the basic political form is, actually a form of negotiation regarding its shape...."<sup>iv</sup>

S.Brooks further elevates the cultural groups in the society by recognizing the idea of the "...cultural identities and their mutual respect - the attitude of the society and the respective manner of the same"<sup>v</sup>.

By using the example of the Western experience and the idea of "liberal pluralism", the famous multiculturalist W.Kymlicka defines cultural pluralism as a "...coherent ideal and desirable long - term goal, a product of democracy consolidation and transition in Central and Eastern Europe"<sup>vi</sup>.

The case of Macedonia is generally regarded as a positive example of the above claims. It has many specificities, being a multiethnic, multilingual and multi - confessional country, a society aspiring to become, a *community of communities*. D.Jacobs argues that that cultural pluralism requires fulfillment of several prerogatives, one of them would be "...existence of different ethnic cultural groups; their tendency towards social equalization; and social cohesion through achieving of recognition of ethnic and cultural differences."<sup>vii</sup> Although the groups can be granted

collective rights, their responsiveness to the state and general policy should especially be taken into consideration, since the precise responsiveness could be taken as a measuring point in overcoming ethno political problems. If the groups are completely separated by granting collective rights, then, such a policy would be considered segregationist. Jacobs asserts that "...the policy of inclusion, intercultural policy that aims at social relations between cultural groups to incorporate a greater degree of communication, which in some way undermine the first model and work on leveling the differences"<sup>viii</sup>. The above claims are something that Charles Taylor has sublimed into *politics of recognition*. In this sense, any group or entity that possesses a distinguished identity, in order to be socially active, must first be recognized. In Macedonia, the ethnic groups are not only recognized as such by the Constitution, but the same Constitution bestows them with collective rights. Thus, it directly implements policies of affirmation, whereas certain groups are given more rights to offset the relative inequality for various reasons.

Regarding the methodology, the paper mainly focuses on the following methods: the case studies method, casting light on the main problem, whether the political aspect of the collective identities influences a favorable setting in regards to the ethno social distance? It relies on the method of allocation of sources and their evaluation; it uses historical method as a tool for processing the collected historical data on Macedonia in the XIX century in the context of their analysis and their connection with the subject of the thesis, i.e. the capacity to implement culturally plural concept in Macedonia in the period of interest, i.e. in the last twenty years (post transition till present days); the comparative method was used for reaching several goals: establishing a ratio for comparison of different historical periods as completed integral wholes, as well as viewing the socio - political situations of the different ethnic communities in the respective period and comparing their attitude towards the majority national policy and vice versa. It also focuses on the comparison between the two periods immediately before the crisis and the escalation of the causes of the conflict which followed.

### **III. Negative Memory as a Prerequisite for Ethno Political Mobilization**

One Macedonian study comprehends the prerequisites and elements of the effective political participation: "...non-discrimination, equitable representation and awareness (as prerequisites) as well as the electoral system, decentralization, territorial organization, special procedures (power of veto), direct democracy. The study offers a hypothesis that the minorities "...wish to be involved in public life and decision-making processes that affect them (including the preparatory processes)"<sup>ix</sup>.

The rebuilding of the society with the concept of collective rights, hence correcting the principle of Westminster democracy, had awakened the historical memory not only of the ethnic Macedonians, but also, of other ethnic groups. The size of the ethnic group is very important to the concept of positive discrimination and understandably, the most representative participant group in this process was/is the Albanian, followed by the Turkish, Roma, Serbian, Vlach, Boshniak and other "underrepresented" groups.

The Albanian political community is selected as an example, because its mobilization has taken the strongest political effect. The ethnic rights policy, up until 2001, had favored the Westminster/liberal democracy, according to which, the individual human rights take precedence to collective; the minorities had been reduced to an equal treatment with the majority, understandably causing a resentment. In fact, although the ethno - cultural groups were nominally recognized as equal, insufficient conditions for social interaction and integration, as well as their cultural identity field created segregationist tendencies.<sup>x</sup>

The negative collective memory of the Albanian ethnic minority, followed by other ethnic communities can be summarized in few main points: the de facto discrimination of the communities in the crucial spheres of social living, as the: high education, participation in the public administration, military forces, police, restricted access to the public finances, insufficient support for the different ethno - cultural expressions; an inadequate treatment of the language and the symbols of local and national level; depriving the minorities of the option to take care of their own needs regarding the local self - government (because of the centralization of power on national level)<sup>xi</sup>.

#### **III.1. Building the Identity Policy Scope in the 2001 Aftermath**

The Macedonian case shows a simultaneous appliance of the liberal democratic respect for individuality, followed by further development of cultural expression. This kind of management requires careful maneuvering of relatively separated, as well as politically mobilized identities. The post 2001 kind of new distributive justice necessarily includes the identities of politically mobilized ethnic groups, in this case, ethnicities. This type of management is built primarily on ethnic base, but must contain a fair separate proportion of supraethnic features. That precise philosophy slowly fills the gaps left by the artificially created a nominal *unified identity* as one of the main pillars for the liberal discourse. Of course, the uniformity builds the human rights base.

Macedonia, so as other countries with culturally plural tendencies, tends to build its own distinctive, original, indigenous model of identity politics, as well as general social regulation. The overlong process of transition in the 1990's and 2000's, as well as the post transitional period are generally being defined as very difficult for ethno -

cultural managing. The difficulties were of a general political nature (ex.the disintegration of Yugoslavia, introduction to political pluralism in a socialist country), economic (ex.privatization, the beginning of a market economy), as well as the according social follow - ups.

The above aspects had somehow failed in creating favorable conditions for the development of cultural identities of ethnic minority communities. One can claim that they even stirred a situation of *temptation* for self – sufficiency in isolation. Leading a parallel social life was followed by social marginalization and great dissatisfaction, which in the case of Macedonia turned into animosity not only towards the state in general, but also focused on the largest ethnic community. Despite the fact that the two major ethnic coexisted during a longer historical period, both of them lacked the basis of shared historical experience, i.e. common experiences and influences in their social life. Hence, the arisen parallelism in almost all social spheres, proved to be very risky, proving crucial in generating conflicts. That same parallelism reflected the ability to autonomously regulate social, economic and in some aspects and political life within one ethnic group only, reaching its climax in the crisis of 2001. The ethnic discrimination, as well as social marginalization and distance of the minority groups stood along an adequate declarative prohibition of discrimination.

A.Addis argues that “...the social fact of divided loyalties and competing identities suggests that the legitimacy of those institutions positively correlates with their degree of inclusiveness, calling that social legitimacy.”<sup>xiii</sup> In this regard, the actual direct discrimination was fairly low in contrast to indirect discrimination, i.e. non – inclusion in the general social flows. However, it could be assumed with fair amount of certainty that objective factors stood as one of the main reasons for this, such as the will to preserve the political stability of the state, without a desire for personal discrimination against a particular group or members of the latter. It was mostly present in the institutional system, as it proved very non – inclusive to ethnic communities. Thus, its implementation fostered intrinsic inequality, colloquially translated into denial of one of the basic principles of liberal democracy, i.e., the universal equality for all citizens.

The 2001 armed crisis and the subsequent conflict conclusion embodied in the Ohrid Framework Agreement<sup>xiii</sup>, established a relatively new system of minority policy, which had the main objective to prevent new ethnic conflicts and further implementation of collective identity. The cultural plural flows do not find immediate appliance in the course of events 2001, since they are inspired and managed by two ethnic groups, primarily due to the fact that one group stands as an absolute majority, and the other one follows it demographically, as well as by the political power and quite clearly crystallized ethnic identity.<sup>xiv</sup> One of its most distinguished features is to be anticipatory by fostering the sense for political dialectic.

The Macedonian case shows that ethnicity could be a major factor of success, establishing an apparent conformity, a very present practice in the past. The more distant Macedonian history acknowledges many instances of the exercise of rights under the Muslim Sharia law (at the time enforced by the Turkish rule), although the respective subjects were Orthodox Christians, but they had effectuated their rights easier and cheaper.<sup>xv</sup> Such equilibrium is multidimensional, since it not only includes the historical and ethnic, but religious memory, serving as an identification coupling among different ethnicities. A good example in this regard would be the religious group of Christians, such as ethnic Macedonians, Serbs and Vlach people, sharing a common historical memory of the struggle against the Turkish Empire, making them a kind of allies.

The ethnicity is a powerful factor that stimulates the creation of nation - states. The relative non – integration of ethnic Albanians in the social trends within the period before and around gaining of the independence in 1991, led to the escalation of interethnic tensions in 2001. The conflict was finalized by signing of a document called Framework Agreement (by the representatives of all major ethnic parties), in order to cease fire and restore peace. Its basic task was restructuring of democratic principles with new concepts<sup>xvi</sup>. Observed primarily on the immediate level, it is an act of restoring confidence of all citizens and thus neutralizing the negative collective memories. This policy proves that a negative memory can be quite constructive, as well as the positive, if appropriately implemented in the identity policy. Hence, it is creating an inclusive concept, neutralizing the negative experiences of exclusion.

The Agreement as a policy instrument attempted to ensure: cultural, social and above all others, further political participation, inclusion of all ethnic communities in Macedonia, as well as self – expression. Its meaning is of great significance, affecting the strengthening of individual identity for, otherwise, members of collective ethnic communities and increases the feeling of security. The above goals were to be achieved through adequate percentual participation of ethnic communities in the institutions of the system (bound to their respective number, or percentage of ethnic population in the total population). It had been producing a positive effect in the identity’s modeling within the ethnic communities, which at the same time belong to their ethnicity, but also show affiliation to the Macedonian people as a concept, a term which is supranational and accumulates the first, rather than previous issues that were holding some kind of value neutrality, and maybe sometimes, a detriment.

Furthermore, the Agreement refers to preservation of unitarily, perhaps a rare specificity of this type of matter, since multiethnic trends and subsequent management policies are usually present in areas where federalist principle is present. Speaking in this context, one must draw attention to the fact that although Macedonia is not a federation. The closest direct policy of managing the multi - ethnicity and cultural - political implications is the

political decentralization. The political decentralization is one of the basic preconditions for replication of the decision making centers, something that is completely consistent with the principle of developed civil society and the principle of inclusion of citizens in decision - making on issues that affect them. The local self - government in Republic of Macedonia corresponds to the ethnic heterogeneity. In 2004, a territorial reorganization of the country was proposed, stirring fierce debates. However, the new remodeling of the territorial map has been regarded as a manner of giving more special ethnic rights only to the Albanian minority, at the expense to the smaller communities, ex. the Turks. Out of the previous 123 municipalities, a new system of 84 municipalities emerged, 27 of these having one or more minorities with percentage greater than 20%. The City of Skopje consists of ten municipalities, whereas, besides the Macedonian, the Albanian also has the status of official language. The Law on Local Self – Government went into force in 2005, after the local elections. Thus, the number of municipalities was reduced from 123 to 84, implementing an ethnic reorganization. The municipalities in the western part of the republic were considered as *critical points*, where the percentage of the Albanian population is larger than in the central and eastern part of the country. This territorial reorganization was followed by great disappointment of the majority of ethnic Macedonians, as well as other smaller ethnic communities. The reorganization was seen as the beginning of a kind of federalization of the state, hence undermining the unitary character of the state. When a referendum on the expression of the citizens on this issue was organized, it failed<sup>xvii</sup>.

If the general picture did not involve a hypothetical conflict, a question mark arises: whether equity would have been replaced by inclusiveness or would anti – discrimination be only a dead letter on paper. The social conditions were hardly fit for such an extensive undertaking, as opposite to the political.

The aforementioned socio – political constellation represents a sublimation of state - political changes, that, most importantly, affect the mere ethnic identity. It is considered a variable, dynamic category, along with a general social change and cultural change within ethnic groups, where, as a representative example, the Albanian community is taken. Certainly, the concept is not about exclusion or marginalization of other ethnic communities, but about emphasizing the importance of manifested resentment and its political translation into a new legal home.

The policy scope of collective special rights includes, among others, the employment policy, the policy of preventing discrimination, policy of administration and judiciary in the protection of human rights, freedom of association, the right to welfare and progress, freedom of information etc., are matter of concern and regulation in the Republic of Macedonia<sup>xviii</sup>. One of the main Agreement pillars is the adequate and equitable participation of the communities in the public administration, educational system, as well as the security structures of Republic of Macedonia. The Constitution and the subsequent system laws were in fact granting the different ethnicities a quality of privileged communities, who can exercise basic democratic rights, as well as special, additional collective rights. The concrete changes are the following: a) the Agreement primarily prohibits discrimination, enhancing non – discrimination and equitable representation principles, such as: employment in public administration and public enterprises, as well as in terms of access to funding of public ventures; b) legislative and other measures for ensuring an adequate and equitable representation in the administration on central and local level, whilst respecting the competence and integrity rules, requiring a prompt implementation in terms of police services; c) One third of the Constitutional Court’s members should be members of other ethnic communities, as well as of the Ombudsman and one third of the Court Council’s members; d) Introduction of special parliamentary procedures, regarding the decisions which affect a particular minority community, requiring a double majority, i.e. majority votes by the representatives of the affected community (so - called Badinter majority).

The measures included issues of adopting a new, amended Constitution, the local self – government law, as well as laws of direct relevance to cultural issues, education, personal documents, usage of symbols; laws on local finances, local elections, the city of Skopje and territorial organization; e) in the education and usage of languages department: usage of own language for primary and secondary education; state funding for higher education, in the case when the minority language is spoken by at least 20% of the Macedonian population, as well as introduction of quotas for the communities’ members in the higher education enrollment procedures, until the quotas’ number does not reflect the abovementioned percent; in the official language use department, besides the Macedonian language (as an official language use), the use of minorities’ languages (where the ethnic communities represent at least 20% of the population number) is also provided; during the parliamentary sessions (as well as the respective parliamentary bodies); official communication among people living in local communities with at least 20% minority population; at the local level, in addition of the Macedonian language as an official, the minorities’ language (with the 20% condition) is also in official use; use of own language in civil and criminal court proceedings, at state expenses; issuing personal documents can be also conducted on other languages; f) Regarding the expression of the identity, empowering the local authorities to display, next to the official emblem of the Republic of Macedonia, the emblem/s representing the communities’ identity, whilst respecting international rules and their application; g) strengthening the powers of the Ombudsman, especially in terms of respecting the principles of non - discrimination and equal representation, as well as establishing regional offices; h) establishing a Communities’ Committee<sup>xix</sup>.

## III.2. Responsiveness of the Communities

In the Macedonian case, the responsiveness of ethnic minority identities had varied from community to community. The group that initiated the conflict possessed the most politically pronounced ethnic identity. It has become the most included in the social and political change. The Macedonian ethnic majority and the Albanian ethnic minority are empowered with great capacity to affect the collective identity. The latter is the titular of the second cultural matrix of society. Macedonia is also a presentation of relatively successful management of real dualism and actual pluralism. Historically, the dualism has been represented by the ratio of the two largest communities, Macedonian and Albanian, and their social prominence in each social segment. In real terms, this dualism is fairly difficult to overcome, although there have been/are numerous attempts to do so. The reason is the relatively anemic cultural identity of other ethnic communities (Roma, Vlach, Serbian and Turkish). They have been facing multiple weaknesses in this respect (due to their size and religious affiliation - Turkish; continuation of strong ties with the Macedonian community based on historical past – Serbian and Vlach, adversely affecting the mobilization creative power; general existential issues that affect their acting prime power - Roma).

As already mentioned, this socio political management has its critics, whereas it is useful to mention the criticism of the smaller political groups in terms of implementation. For example, the representatives of some associations argue that signing up considerably improves the condition of the minority communities, while some qualify as *losers* in the story linked to the Framework Agreement<sup>xx</sup>. However, some benefits of the above policy for ethnic communities must be mentioned, such as increasing the number of public sector employees as well as specific benefits for one group<sup>xxi</sup>.

One study indicates the diversity of social distance between ethnic groups in society, differently expressed in surveyed areas of society, whereas different ethnic groups give different meaning to different social relations. In that sense, the importance of the political segment of social relations is much greater than the importance of personal relationships (for example, political participation at national or local level, in relation for example, marital, friendly or neighborly relations). The study suggests that the political mobilization is the primary manner of articulating the ethnic interests; the interethnic cooperation, i.e. cohabitation of ethnic groups at the micro - level would be a subject to agreement between the political parties in the form of political agreements, alliances and so on. It underlines the size of the group as one of the prerequisites for success in including access to the resources of the state.<sup>xxii</sup> There is an interesting parallel to the importance of ethnic and political in this context, just through the term of discrimination. A survey shows that the discrimination on ethnic grounds is not the strongest, compared to the discrimination in the field of party affiliation. According to the source, more than three quarters of the Macedonian citizens believe that belonging to a political party is considered as a form of discrimination. The discrimination on ethnic ground is on the second place<sup>xxiii</sup>.

However, one can argue that the negative memory of the Albanians for any feelings of second - class citizens has not yet been definitely overcome, with the society still witnessing relapses. However, the constitutional protection has been done quite fairly, still several steps in front of terms of inclusion of ethnic minorities in the social mainstream, thus trying to minimize the ethnic distance and offer a new field for intercultural communication. It does not concentrate on final solutions, but further establishes mechanisms for lasting dialogue and offsets the ethno social distance.

## IV. Few Socio –Political Aspects of Collective Memory in the New Identity Policy. Ethnic Distance in the 2001 Aftermath

One of the basic particles of the Macedonian social dynamic is the memory of the cultural diversity. As a very present element in some societies, it can play an important role in the complex structure of social constellations.<sup>xxiv</sup> It can have a very degrading social role, as was the case in Macedonia in the period 1991 - 2001, but can, reversely, play a positive and socially integrating role, as it happened after the signing the Framework Agreement in 2001, both in the consolidation of the Macedonian society on the internal level, as well as in the process of modeling of the country's image in the eyes of the international community.

One of the most important things for the survival of any community would be its identity, being located on the premises of the cultural or social memory. Each community, whether an ethnic, national or supranational, is stemming its power accordingly, forging its survival instinct on the mentioned sense of belonging. Thus, the role of memory is indispensable, an instrument for building a certain “credibility pillar”, giving some sort of “believability” and legitimacy to one group.

Thus, certain social disadvantages have been memorized, thus turning memory as an operational tool, completing a system for further social correction. The Macedonian society certainly excluded the brutal treatment toward minorities, but had favored the element of low ethnic participation, diminishing the discrimination only by

declaration. The new identity policy further transitioned toward the treatment of positive discrimination or fair/proportionate participation of the minorities in the socio political life of the country, as well as their reconciliation.

The above negative memory, despite the benefits that ethnic Albanian community had gained after the conflict in 2001, despite the restructuring of the entire social and political system, has repeatedly been arising throughout the aftermath. One can assert that, the Macedonian and Albanian collective memory are understandably put in inverse position. Historically, most noticeably after the 2001, what was considered positive for one ethnic group was perceived as negative and vice versa. The actual opening of the socio political scene for the minorities after the Framework Agreement had been perceived by the Macedonian public as something negative that would presumably lead to a reduction of their rights.

The Macedonian case in the recent history recognizes the role of certain mediation control of the collective identity. The culturally pluralistic strive towards the creation of a new group identity, both within themselves ethnic, as well as the new supranational collective identity groups (covered by reformist action measures), represents a flexible category. Within this category of flexible mediation, the memory turns, from mainly negative (for texture Albanians as second and Macedonians - an exclusive carrier of national identity), to a softened version.

Still, one of the most important roles in divided societies is played by the civil society and the civil identity as a supranational category. In order to be set as defense against ethnicity and potential ethnic conflicts, it must rest on a fairly long civil tradition, followed by acceptance by the most citizens. It vehemently excludes ethnic parallelism in any segment. The civil, as well as ethnic identity is based on group membership of individuals in a given group, which, depending on the context could be called universal (civilian) and particularistic (ethnic). The entry or membership in a group could be performed either voluntary or imposed. When it comes to imposing, the compulsion is excluded in the contextual sense, but it is reflecting in the follow up of the ideological matrix from the near or immediate surroundings.

## **IV.1. Impact of Diversification**

In the Macedonian case, the national identity can be considered as based on political - historical continuity and coexistence of the Macedonian nation and other nations (such as Serbs, Croats, Slovenians, Montenegrins, Bosnians etc. in the Yugoslav federalist community). After 2001, the most suitable solution was in fact an attempt to build a supra - national identity, which in the Macedonian case does not conflict with ethnic identities, but unites them in a certain overlapping point.

The political processes were the triggering part, since the turning point of the Macedonian multicultural route was exactly the political mobilization of ethnic Albanian party, followed by the mobilization of ethnic Macedonian side. The 2001 aftermath displayed a political consensus on several sides, embodied in the Framework Agreement and the subsequent change of the general constitutional order.

The Macedonian socio - cultural field made a big step forward in terms of diversification. The diversification itself did not violate the liberal democratic principles for the welfare of individual rights. It can be analyzed on two levels: a) the pre - conflict level, where the diversification appears only on the ethnic level and can be considered sporadic and scattered (in regards of the plentitude of ethnicities), and b) post - conflict, where diversification is shifted on the general social policy field and has a form of organized and coordinated action. The Republic of Macedonia is one of the few countries, proven in practice, that had amended the liberal majority parliamentary model (inspired, among other things, by the unitary character of the state), with elements of the culturally plural model. In fact, the past experience has shown that an existence of only one model in the pure sense, is rather impossible because of many factors: the size of the country, ethnic diversity of the local government unites, disproportion of the size among the various groups of ethnic minorities, different degree of their social integration and hence the extent of their participation in the system of government and so on. That can be said to have influenced the *upgrading* of the model of participation of the underprivileged strata.

## **V. Conclusion**

If the term *national* was one of the main pillars of the Macedonian democratization after the 1991 independence, after the crisis between ethnic Macedonians and Albanians in 2001 (concluding with peace agreement and reconstruction of the society by giving collective rights to ethnic groups), the same term has been a subject of reconsideration. However, despite the apparent collision of the term liberal democracy with term multiculturalism, nationalism however is still deeply present in these spaces. Liberal democracy, as one of the fundamental pillars of independent Macedonia and established national identity as such, is no longer responding to social occasions. As much as nationalism is useful to maintain the core of majority democracy, if it is perceived as a threat to other identities, a conflict is inevitable. However, the mentioned nationalism might not act assimilatory towards other identities, as was the case with Macedonia.

The new collective identity is multifaceted by nature. It is closely related both to belonging to a separate culture in this respect, as well as a sense of belonging to the wider community. Unobtrusively though, it offers a modest attempt for overcoming the ideological inconsistencies and working on developing a broader sense of perception of the identity of otherness. It further fosters the affiliation to the term *demos* as a supranational concept.

The Macedonian identity politics has concentrated on the “lower” or a more immediate level of the specific constituent ethnic communities. Hence, quite understandably, the latter could have an inverse effect on the identities’ linear manner of evolution. As communities tend to develop particular interests (as an imminent part of their social expression), certain conflicts can arise between the collective identities. One of the possible follow ups would be raising the risk of conflict between them and between them and official state policy. Therefore, in order to mitigate the respective effects, the state is expected to take political measures to encourage the collective awareness of the diversity’s usefulness.

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Will Kymlicka and Magda Opalski, *Can Liberal Pluralism be Exported? Western Political Theory and Ethnic Relationships in Eastern Europe* (Oxford University Press, 2001).

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<sup>i</sup> Petar Korunic, *Discourse of Building the Modern Croatian Nation, Nation and National Identity*, (Hrvatski Institut za Povijest, Podružnica za Povijest Slavonije, Srijema I Baranje, 2006), 316, also: Herman Van Gunsteren, *A Theory of Citizenship: Organizing Plurality in Contemporary Democracies*, (Westview Press, Boulder, CO, 1998), p.64. Also see: Yoav Peled, Shlomo Ben – Ami, Alberto Spektorowski, *Ethnic Challenges to the Modern Nation-State*, (Macmillan, England, 2000), 11.

<sup>ii</sup> Korunic, *Ibidem*, 325 - 326.

<sup>iii</sup> Carl – Ulrik, Chierup, “An European Dilemma: Multiculturalism and Universalism in the United States and EU – Europe,” *Balkan Forum, An International Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture*, Skopje (1995): 128 – 129.

<sup>iv</sup> This seems to hold true if the creed is disseminated from the political centre, like in, for example, Canada and Sweden, or from oppositional movements and the strongholds of local councils, like for example in Sweden, Germany and France. Johnatan Friedman, *Cultural Logics of the Global System: A Sketch* (Theory, Culture, Society, 1988), also, see Chierup, *Ibid*.

<sup>v</sup> Stephen Brooks, *The Challenge of Cultural Pluralism* (Praeger, Westport, CT, 2002), 13.

<sup>vi</sup> Will Kymlicka and Magda Opalski, *Can Liberal Pluralism be Exported? Western Political Theory and Ethnic Relationships in Eastern Europe* (Oxford University Press, 2001), 309.

<sup>vii</sup> Dirk Jacobs, “Alive and Kicking? Multiculturalism in Flanders”. *IJMS: International Journal on Multicultural Societies* vol. 6, No.2 (2004):95, accessed November 28<sup>th</sup> 2016, UNESCO ISSN 1817-4574 [www.unesco.org/shs/ijms/vol6/issue2/art5](http://www.unesco.org/shs/ijms/vol6/issue2/art5) .

<sup>viii</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>ix</sup> Biljana Kotevska and Kumjana Novakova, *Effective Political Participation of the Minority Communities in the Local Government in the Republic of Macedonia, The Impact of the Ohrid Framework Agreement*, (Skopje: Studiorum, Center for Regional Research and Cooperation, 2011), 44, accessed on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2016, [http://studiorum.org.mk/ned/pdf/PolicyReport-Studiorum\\_NED\(MKD\)-web.pdf](http://studiorum.org.mk/ned/pdf/PolicyReport-Studiorum_NED(MKD)-web.pdf).

<sup>x</sup> Nazmi Maliki, *Political Peace Building in the Republic of Macedonia, Project Partners in Peace and Prevention* (Skopje: Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2004), 194.

<sup>xi</sup> Marija Tasheva et al., *The Sociological Aspects of the Ethnic Coexistence in Macedonia*, (Skopje: Faculty of Philosophy, 1996), 6 – 7.

<sup>xii</sup> Adeno Addis, “Deliberative Democracy in Severely Fractured Societies”, *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies, Volume 16, Issue 1* (2009): 5, accessed 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2016, <http://www.repository.law.indiana.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1384&context=ijgls> .

<sup>xiii</sup> The Ohrid Framework Agreement represents an internal document since its signing was attended by Macedonian political parties only, while international factors (the representatives on the behalf of the European Union and the United States of America) have had only the status of a mediator. It is a document to complete the conflict situation, not of war and as such should be distinguished from other peace agreements in the region, including the Dayton Agreement that ended the war in Bosnia as one of the most representative examples. The Agreement was signed by the members of the largest Macedonian ethnic parties (one governing, the other one in opposition), two Albanian political parties and the President of the Republic of Macedonia. The members of the

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National Liberation Army have later transformed it into a legitimate political party, called Democratic Union for Integration, being a part of all the government coalitions in the past decade.

<sup>xiv</sup> The conflict lasted about six months and did not affect the whole territory of Macedonia, but only the Northern – Northwestern part of the country, namely the territories with large percentage of Albanian population. For further reference see: Emilija Simoska, “Survey of the Center for Ethnic Relations” *Macedonian Affairs, Macedonian Information Centre*, (1997):15, also, Ganka Cvetanova, *Cultural Differences and Social Integration (Macedonia Before and After the Framework Agreement)*, (Skopje: Institute for Economic Strategies and International Relations Ohrid, 2007), 104.

<sup>xv</sup> Aleksandar Matkovski, *Civil Marriages and Divorces of Christians in Macedonia and the Balkan Peninsula at the Time of Turkish Rule*, (Skopje: Herald of The Institute for National History, 1973), 23.

<sup>xvi</sup> The basic changes were the following: guarantees the multiethnic character of the state; the first part represents the basic principles, followed by three annexes: A – consisting of constitutional amendments; B – changes in legislation and C – *confidence – building* measures and the process of the implementation.

<sup>xvii</sup> Law on Local Self Government, *Official Journal of the Republic of Macedonia 5/2002*, accessed on 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2016 [http://aa.mk/WBStorage/Files/Zakon\\_lokalnata\\_samouprava.pdf](http://aa.mk/WBStorage/Files/Zakon_lokalnata_samouprava.pdf).

<sup>xviii</sup> Vlado Petrovski, “Ethnicity as an Education Factor in the Republic of Macedonia” (PhD diss., Faculty of Philosophy, Institute for Sociology, Sv.Kiril i Metodij University, Skopje, 2004), 29.

<sup>xix</sup> Secretariat for Implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement (2001), The Ohrid Framework Agreement, accessed on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2016, [http://www.siofa.gov.mk/data/file/Ramkoven\\_dogovor\\_mk.pdf](http://www.siofa.gov.mk/data/file/Ramkoven_dogovor_mk.pdf) also, *Euro Atlantic Perspectives of the Republic of Macedonia: Problems, Challenges and Political Reality after the NATO Summit Failure in 2008* (Tetovo: Southeast Europe University, June 2009), 14.

<sup>xx</sup> In this context, the most common feature of the agreement is the “... binational feature of the Agreement, promoting a bi-national type of state, or an Agreement between the Macedonians and Albanians, the 20% threshold, its uneven implementation ...” Kotevska and Novakova, 47.

<sup>xxi</sup> For example, changing the traditional employment policy towards the members of the Roma community and their inclusion in the administrative sector, instead of being employed as janitors. Kotevska and Novakova, 48.

<sup>xxii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation, “Barometer for Equal Possibilities”, Research Report, Skopje, (2009):15, accessed on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2016, <http://rodovaplatforma.mk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/barometar-za-ednakvi-moznosti-mcims-200922.pdf>.

<sup>xxiv</sup> One Macedonian study has shown that in Macedonia in the period before the 2001 crisis existed a “...high degree of social separation along ethnic lines, which was evident in relations blended Macedonians and Albanians...” Lela Jakovlevska – Josevska, “Social Distance within the Adolescents in the Republic of Macedonia,” *New Balkan Politics - Journal of Politics 2* (2002), accessed on 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2016, <http://www.newbalkanpolitics.org.mk/item/Social-Distance-in-Adolescents-in-the-Republic-of-Macedonia>.