

Contents

Editorial	3
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MULTICULTURALISM

Joseph Raz

Multiculturalism: A Liberal Perspective	5
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The opening essay signed by Joseph Raz offers an analysis and of multiculturalism as well as a specific approach to it. It is an issue for politics and the ethics of politics. The author wants to explore the implications of the liberal political philosophy for the way in which contemporary democracies should deal with this issue.

The brief argument is that denial of multiculturalism in today's Western societies, far from keeping liberal ideals pure, leads to their degeneration into what might be called "supermarket liberalism". Before I venture a brief explanation, I would like to clarify the spirit underlying my observation. It is not one of utopian hope. It is not one of a vision of the great future liberalism holds the key to, a future in which the noblest human hopes will come to fruition. It is a spirit of pessimism nourished by perception of conflict as inevitable, and its resolution as less than ideal, regardless of who wins.

Multiculturalism, in the sense of the existence within the same political society of a number of sizable cultural groups wishing and able to maintain their distinct identity, is with us to stay. It is likely to grow in size and importance. Liberal multiculturalism, as I call it, affirms that in the circumstances of contemporary industrial or postindustrial societies, a political attitude of fostering and encouraging the prosperity, cultural and material, of a cultural group within a society, and respecting their identity is justified by consideration of freedom and human dignity. These considerations call on governments to take action that goes beyond that required by policies of toleration and nondiscrimination. While incorporating policies of nondiscrimination, liberal multiculturalism transcends the individualistic approach and recognizes the importance of unimpeded membership in a respected and flourishing cultural group for individual well being.

Levente Salat

Points of View to Interpret Multiculturalism in Romania	23
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Exploring with clarity and insight the meaning of the concept, Levente Salat encapsulate in his study the recent public debate on multiculturalism in Romanian, presenting step by step, as a hidden expectation, the international theoretical framework in which multiculturalism is debated now.

The concept of multiculturalism in the Romanian public sphere during the last two or three years has started a lot of controversial discussions. It is related to the case of the Hungarian state university from Cluj, and has a more than suggestive relevance: on one hand, it reveals some particularities which burden the Romanian as well as the Hungarian national consciousness, on the other hand, it illustrates the reciprocal distrust that shade the attempts to create the institutional conditions necessary for interethnic coexistence in Romania.

Radu Neculau

Multiculturalism, Anti-Communism, Nationalism	47
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The study of Radu Neculau is a critical view about how multiculturalism is (mis)interpreted in the Romanian public and academic sphere. In a first part the author shows the political-philosophical coordinates of the American debate on multiculturalism. In a second part he present the problems of Romanian multiculturalism, assessed through the attempts to define a democratic position inside of an anti-Communist attitude sustained by the Romanian intellectuals. And finally, in a third part, the study observe the changing of the original meanings of multiculturalism in a form of state monoculturalism in the context of debates provoked by the pressures exerted by the Hungarian community to restart the Hungarian university in Transylvania.

Multiculturalism was received with indifference and even hostility by the Romanian cultural establishment. Except for some marginal groups of young intellectuals who are studying social and political sciences at the western universities, the idea of multiculturalism has a limited influence.

The interpretation of multiculturalism in the north-American intellectual spheres is evolving. There are many debates about the practical limits of multicultural policies. But, the intention underlying these debates is founded on a tolerant system of cultural representation and is sustained by pronounced social solidarity where is no place for ambiguity. The same could not be said about the upholders of the multicultural education (in Romania). If the initiative of Andrei Marga (the actual Ministry of National Education) to transform the University of Cluj into a multicultural institute was accepted, before some years, as a superior irony, being one of the numerous forms without founds, the same project is used now abusively in the name of the dominant cultural politics. From a western transplant, suspected to be inadequate for the possibility of dialogue in the Romanian intellectual community, multiculturalism seems to be one of the main slogan to re-legitimate the majoritarian discourse. Thus, a good word and a praiseworthy initiative are reappropriated to sustain a doubtful cause.

DIALOGUE

Transylvania 1848-49

75

At the 150th anniversary of the 1848 Transylvanian revolution, the Altera quarterly distribute a questionnaire to some well known Romanian, Hungarian and German historians from Romania, trying to expand upon part of the important and debated aspects related to the subject through the answers give by Adrian Cioroianu, Akos Eged, Sorin Mitu, Gelu Neamțu, Paul Philippi, and Pompiliu Teodor.

CASE STUDY

Attila Z. Papp

The Remembrance of the Game Past

87

Nowadays, many international sports events are far from its originally fair play and honor based character. Involving a lot of human, financial, and political resources, it became an industry, a space where also national symbols, values and, finally, identities are in competition. The exciting paper of Attila Z. Papp is a critic analysis of how Romanian and Hungarian media discourse present such a sport event: the match played between Hungary and Romania at the '98 Hockey World Cup in Budapest. The case has also a special complexity: the trainer of the Hungarian team, as well as part of the "lines" from both team are Hungarian/Seklers from Romania.

In the public sphere, the politics as well as the sport are expressed as linguistic acts, the language being in the same time the bearer and the contrary of the potential violence. Paul Ricoeur (1998) sustains that "the violence and the language constitute contradictory pairs where the measure of one is delimited by the dimension of the other".

On the other hand, for somebody who wants to know "objectively" how the game was really going on, it's hard issue. Also, because it became part of the public sphere, even a match is in fact a social construction, an external projection of the persons and groups based on the local determinations. On the other hand, the former intention will be unsuccessful because the two public spheres do not complete one another and the (symbolic) dialogue is not even outlined.

DOCUMENT

From signing to Implementing an International Document

102

The European Council's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities entered into force in February 1998, following the expiration of a period of three months after the date on which twelve member States of the Council of Europe have expressed their consent to be bound by the Convention in accordance with the provisions of Article 27. By article 25, within a period of one year following the entry into force of the Convention in respect of a Contracting Party, the latter shall transmit to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe full information on

the legislative and other measures taken to give effect to the principles set out in this framework Convention. The issue contains the official report of Romania and the shadow report prepared by Gabriel Andreescu, well known Romanian human rights activist.

TRANSYLVANIAN CONVERGENCIES

Răzvan Pârâianu

Viewing Town in the Literature of the Beginning of Century 125

This essay concern on two models of imagining and/or constructing a town. The first is that illustrated by Ady Endre, the another by Octavian Goga. The town is Budapest. Contrary with the similar conditions in which the two poets start their career, Ady and Goga developed totally different social and political interpretative perspectives. Ady was disapointed by the Hungarian Capital from a radical modernism point of view. For him, Budapest was not prepeared to play the role of a metropolis. It was too linked to the narrowed nationalism of the contemporary politicians. Ady, who wrote that „the nationalism is indeed an international allignance of the malefic darkness, stupidity and egoism of the authorities”, cannot construct a good image, specially about Budapest, because it represent the Capital of the Hungarian national state as it was represented by the Hungarian political elite. From this point of view Budapest was more a political centre than a town. Thus, Ady tried to avoid it or to escape from. He was enamoured of Paris and he want to live there, far from the feudal and backward Capital.

Contrary, Goga — getting the same realities — developed a totally different attitude. His answer was the reinvention of its native village, as an alternative to the urban modernity of Budapest. He want to reruralised himself. One of the main reasons for what he reject Budapest was the role played by this town in the national politics, because for that time the role of nationalism was totally the oposite. Goga wasn't an internationalist or a modernizator as Ady was. On the contrary, he was an archaist and later, gaining the last logical conclusions of this archaism, he became a proto-nazist writer.

The opinion of the two poets about other towns will complete the analysis. One of this towns where Ady and Goga as well lived, and which have impressed them profoundly was Paris. Paris have the advantage that it indicate more clear their attitude about the town, beyond the national question. Another case, near other Romanian towns from the after IWW period is Bucharest. Unfortunately, from here the analysis will continue unilateraly, just with the post-war evolution of Goga, because of the dissappearance of Ady in 1919.(...)

FACES OF EUROPE

Jordanka Telbizova-Sack

The Pomaks from Bulgaria 154

This is an excellent introductory study for those who are interested in the present and past of the Pomac community from Bulgaria, and, generally, in minority issues in the former state-socialist countries. Starting from the key identity dilemmas of the Pomac community in the post-communist era, Jordanka Telbizova-Sack present us mainly the social and religious roots of this searching, to make more understandable a group reality which is very complex and hard to approached.

The Pomacs, Slavs at the beginning, in the 500 years of Ottoman rule pass to the Islam, the spreading of the new religion changing their life style. In the same time, as the result of contact with the new culture, even the religion suffers some changes. On the other hand, the language, the habits and the Christian and typically rituals were maintained. The tradition was maintained from a generation to another, and the world outlook of the Pomacs — leaving isolated in mountain places — prove a unique cultural richness. In the world outlook of this people the ideas and conceptions from Antiquity with those from Christians and Islam.

Because of their religious belongings, the Bulgarian State treat them overtime with some suspicion, trying to defeat their consciousness as cultural entity to obtain their assimilation in the majority Bulgarian population.

ALTERA PARS

Adrian Marino

As the title suggests, the author present a critical view of how the concepts multiculturalism and multiculturalism is perceived and used by the politicians and academics of the Romanian and Hungarian community from Transylvania. Also, trying to follow the aphorism that “no one is prophet in her own country”, this provocative essay approaches the ‘Transylvanian question’ (a hot issue today with the Romanian public) with the eye outsider.

The ‘question of multiculturalism’ is, at the same time, simple and complex. Simple, and even very simple, if we clearly define the concept and if we became free of ideological and nationalist prejudices. Complex if we use this concept in endless ideological-chauvinistic debates, or on an irreducible ethnicist-nationalist basis.

If it is very true that “Central Europe” is today just a far, partial and fragmentary remembrance, maintained just by a segment of Transylvanian’s older generation, or a pure ideological myth of a restricted categories of intellectuals, it is no less true than some regional particularities still exist. For instance, to an observer of ’70, when the process of the Ceușescu regime of displacing Moldavians in Transylvania was started, for the “Romanians from the region (Transylvania) the notion of Romanian citizen was secondary to the Transylvanian one”. (Renate Weber). For ourselves Moldavians, in my case, more exactly from Iași (the Capital of the region), brought here to Cluj, just because of the biographical circumstances, after a long detention period, the strongest impression was one of “regionalism”. More exactly one of “provincialism”. The great and sad historical truth is that Transylvania was and has remained, “an eternal province”.

ECUMENICA

Anti-Defamation League

Faith and Freedom — The Case for Separation of Church-State 173

In a country (Romania) or a region (CEE) where, paradoxically, the American case is taken frequently by the nationalist upholders as an example of how the ‘minority issue’ should be solved, the paper of Anti-Defamation League is an excellent counter-example of how wrong could be perceived (or at least selected parts of) the American reality. The paper shows that the distance and cultural differences between the two societies do not preclude similarities that could be developed in the search for solutions.

The greatest current threat to separation of church and state is in the public schools, the very place that Americans of every background first learn the critical values of freedom and tolerance. And at the time when our population is growing increasingly diverse, those values are more important than ever. The public schools must make students from every background feel equally welcome if democracy is to endure. The introduction of sectarian practices in this arena would undo that important function. They would intimidate students from religious minorities and compromise the religious expression of all groups.

In addition to its discriminatory effect on religious minorities, organized school prayers tells students of all faith that religion is a legitimate function of the state. This is not what the American ideal of religious freedom is about. The authors of the Constitution specifically rejected all languages that would have authorized government aid for religious institutions.

REVIEWS

Book presentations signed by Răzvan Pârâianu (Michael Polack. 1998. Vienna 1900. A hurt identity. Iași: Polirom) and Marius Lazăr (Andrei Roth. 1999. Nationalism or democratism? Tîrgu-Mureș: Pro Europe.)