An Ideographic Analysis of the EU Multiculturalism Discourse in Macedonia

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Abstract

This study employs rhetorical criticism to examine the discourse between the European Union and Macedonia surrounding the concept of "multiculturalism." Rhetorical criticism affords opportunities to examine the hidden notions in the construction of "multiculturalism" while considering the political, ethical and social impacts in the perception and response of the people in Macedonia and their acceptance or rejection of this concept. The current study analyzes how "multiculturalism" is rhetorically constructed in the speeches of EU representatives to the Macedonian public, as well as explores how "multiculturalism" is rhetorically constructed in the speeches of the Macedonian government. Differences in historical interpretation, geographical and ethnic understandings of multiculturalism within Macedonia and in the dialogue with EU, produce different conceptions of the term, and highlight the necessity for a more thorough analysis of the diverse meanings and ideologies that these groups attach to the concept of multiculturalism.

The critical understanding of the rhetoric of "multiculturalism" and its conceptions by all parties involved focuses upon a vital component in EU accession dialogue between Macedonia and the EU and addresses a crucial precondition for achieving a functioning democratic society. The ideograph of "multiculturalism" in Macedonia invokes identification to the commitment of a multiethnic and multicultural society that is a full member of the EU. While the aim of the ideograph introduced by the EU was to unite the Macedonian and Albanian communities, their differing conceptions of multiculturalism has further separated them and contributed to the vague and contested nature of the ideograph.

Introduction

This study employs rhetorical criticism to examine the discourse between the European Union (EU) and Macedonia surrounding the concept of "multiculturalism." Rhetorical criticism affords opportunities to examine the hidden notions and possibilities in the construction of "multiculturalism" within the discourse between the EU and Macedonia while considering the political, ethical and social impacts in the perception and response of the people in Macedonia and their acceptance or rejection of this concept. This method provides an understanding of the way ideographs (McGee, 1980) such as "multiculturalism" act on people by

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exploring how individual choices and ideological assumptions shape patterns of cultural expression. The critical understanding of the rhetoric of "multiculturalism" and its conceptions by all the parties involved focuses upon a vital component in EU accession dialogue between Macedonia and the EU and therefore addresses a crucial precondition for achieving a functioning democratic society in Macedonia. The study analyzes the way "multiculturalism" is rhetorically constructed in the speeches of EU representatives to the Macedonian public, as well as the way "multiculturalism" is rhetorically constructed within Macedonia by the two major ethnic groups, Macedonians and Albanians.

I. "Multiculturalism" in Macedonia

The multicultural discourse in Macedonia was developed under conditions of warfare and intensive pressures from the European Union and United States (Staniševski & Miller, 2009). The concept itself resulted from the interethnic-conflict between Macedonians and Albanians in 2001, and the Ohrid Framework Agreement which provides the main format for the multiculturalism discourse. As a result, the different ethnic groups in Macedonia have competing conceptualizations of the term. According to Reka (2007), while the Albanian community has a more positive attitude toward the term, due to their interests in Euro-Atlantic integration, the Macedonian majority view multiculturalism either as an ideological import that is completely out of context or as just a catchy phrase replacing the old-fashioned policies of ethnic control.

Inter-ethnic co-existence is of major importance to the stability and democratic development of Macedonia as a country and its road toward the EU. Macedonia officially received the candidate status for the EU in 2005 and in 2009 the European Commission recommended to start of the negotiation accession talks. But, even though at that time the Commission believed that that the country is ready to engage in a higher level of integration with Europe, it also stressed that further efforts are needed to be done in most areas. The 2010 Progress Report published by the European Commission pointed to the need for further progress in areas such as: political dialogue, judiciary and public administration reform, fight against corruption, freedom of expression and media, and implementation of the Ohrid

Framework Agreement (The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2010 Progress Report, November 2010).

The Ohrid Framework Agreement was signed in 2001 to resolve the ethnic conflict between the Albanian and Macedonian ethnic communities as well as guarantee the territorial integrity of the country. The Agreement guarantees the introduction of participative mechanisms when making decisions related to the communities' identity; equitable representation of the members of non-majority communities in the public administration; a high level of decentralization; promotion of the official use of non-majority languages and alphabet, as well as the communities' symbols; and higher education in the language of the non-majority communities that represent at least 20% of the population. As a result the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement represents one of the guarantees for the multicultural and inter-ethnic co-existence on Macedonia and is on the main priorities for the EU integration and for the Macedonian government according to the Framework Agreement Plan adopted in 2003 (National Strategy for European Integration of the Republic of Macedonia, 2004).

But, ten years after its signing, the Ohrid Framework Agreement has not yet been fully implemented, and the tensions between the two major ethnic groups are still very much present (Fouere, 2006; Ilievski & Taleski 2009; Ordanoski & Matovski 2007; Reka, 2007; Staniševski & Miller, 2009). This makes the dream of a multiethnic and multicultural Macedonia far from complete. Jovanovski (2010, April 27) reports that the European Union, NATO, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the US ambassadors in Macedonia issued a statement expressing concern about the separatist declarations by the local political leaders and other individuals, that contradict and abandon the Ohrid Framework Agreement. In this joint statement, the ambassadors asked the local political leaders to reaffirm their full commitment to the Ohrid Framework Agreement, redouble their commitment to inter-ethnic harmony, and refrain from any actions that could create interethnic tension. Since then, various EU, UN and US diplomats have asserted that 2011 is critical for Macedonia to start the discussions for EU accession and that if the

major points for the Ohrid Framework Agreement are not fulfilled the start of the discussion is endangered.

In order to assist the country's accession process, the EU has opened the Delegation of the European Union office whose main focus is to facilitate the development of political, economic and trade relations between the EU and Macedonia, and promote the values of the EU. After signing the Ohrid Framework Agreement in 2001, the European Council appointed the European Union Special Representative (EUSR) with a goal to contribute to the consolidation of the peaceful political process and the full implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, thereby facilitating further progress towards European integration. And, after receiving the candidate status in 2005, the EU appointed its own Special Representative and Head of the EU Delegation with residence in Macedonia, the Irish diplomat Ambassador Mr. Erwan Fouéré who served until the end of 2010. In 2011 the Danish diplomat, Ambassador Peter SØRENSEN was appointed as a new head of the EU Delegation. His goal is to mainly lessen the communication between the EU Commission and Macedonian government in order to start the membership negotiations with the EU.

On the 10th anniversary of the Stability and Association Agreement and the Ohrid Framework Agreement, held in Ohrid on April 9, 2011, the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Durão Barroso stated:

Over the last ten years the Ohrid Framework Agreement has proven its worth as a framework for ensuring a functioning multi-ethnic democracy. Through it your country is indeed providing an example which is of interest to countries around the world. Nonetheless, the enduring challenge of deepening mutual understanding between different communities and building a cohesive country remains. It cannot be ticked off.

Barroso also reminded the Macedonian government that the country must commit to joining "a peaceful Union of democracies based on reconciliation and interdependence, negotiations and compromises" but in order to achieve that goal, the country has to show respect for the rule of law, freedom of expression and good inter-ethnic relations as keys for a well-functioning and cohesive society. He closed the speech with the words of U.S. philosopher Henry David Thoreau who, as he said,

represents his wish for the country: "Let go of the past and go for the future. Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you imagined."

So, even though some progress has been made, the latest European Commission report and the speech by its president shows that the full implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement remains as a guarantee for the multi-ethnic and multicultural existence of Macedonia and one of the major obligations for the county to acquire EU membership. Since the basic goal of the Ohrid Framework Agreement is to promote peaceful and harmonious development of the civil society, while respecting both the ethnic identity and the interest of the all citizens of Republic of Macedonia, the country needs to implement the principles of multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity in every field of the social and the political life in accordance with the aspirations for European integration (Jovanovska & Stojmenov, 2010).

II.   *Urgency of the Study: "Failure of Multiculturalism"*

Besides its relevance in Macedonia, "multiculturalism" has generated a heated debate both in the EU and the US as well. The major reason behind this debate has been the nationalist attitudes towards immigration that according to some analysts have entered the political mainstream on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. As a result, ethnic and religious minority populations are constructed as problems as migration makes cultural diversity ever more visible and national cultural identity is perceived as being under threat (Caroll, 2010, October 25). This situation was compounded when the German Chancellor Angela Merkel told a gathering of young members of her conservative Christian Democratic Union party that "multiculturalism has utterly failed in Germany" (Weaver, 2010, October 17). Merkel's claims were later supported by the British Prime Minister David Cameron who also attacked the British policy of multiculturalism, saying that it has encouraged "segregated communities" where Islamic extremism can thrive (Burns, 2011, February 5).

A survey conducted in 2010 in Germany shows that nearly a third of Germans believe that their country has been overrun by foreigners (Siebold, 2010, October 17). Also, Austria was accused by the Turkish ambassador in Vienna for

treating Turks "like a virus" asking the Austrian government why they have given full citizenship to 110, 000 Turks and at the same time treated them as second class citizens (Traynor, 2010). Further, even the French president Nicolas Sarkozy, who himself has immigrant roots, has turned the issue of immigration into electoral politics, by rounding up Roma, introducing France's fifth immigration law in seven years, banning Muslim women from wearing the niqab in public places, and launched a national debate on what it means to be French, led by his new ministry of immigration and national identity (Chrisafis, 2010).

While most scholars consider the idea of "multiculturalism" consistent with EU norms, the meaning of this concept was vague and contested within the EU countries even before the immigration debates took place. Most of these countries have very differing understandings and definitions of the concept of "multiculturalism" that transpire in the ambiguity of the EU foreign policy. For example, countries like Germany, France and Great Britain use different models for multiculturalism according to Aggestam & Hill (2008) that sometimes even contradict each other. As a result, the EU has poorly articulated issues of human rights and minority rights in several occasions.

Besides the ambiguity and the current immigration discussions, this ambiguity is currently increasing as a result of the dimension of border protection arising out of a fear of terrorism, and the need to counter very serious threats and strengthen national security of the member states. This ambiguity makes it especially hard for countries like Macedonia struggling to gain accession, to understand what exactly EU means with "multiculturalism" and apply this concept. It is even harder when such a concept—which lacks a coherent definition—presents one of the main preconditions for EU accession for Macedonia. So, both the EU and the Macedonian representatives remain largely unaware of the differing conceptions of the term within their own communities. This ambiguity affects the way the people living in the country and the Macedonian government responds to one of the main terms set by the EU to meet the precondition for accession to the EU. Even though "multiculturalism" in Macedonia is not related to any immigration issues, since the majority of the ethnic groups in this country have been here since antiquity, this kind of ambiguity affects the way the people of Macedonian and the government responds

to one of the main terms set by the EU to meet the precondition for accession to the EU.

III.   *Method*

In line with Black (2003) and Delgado (1999), who assert that the use of new rhetoric through ideographs has the potential to influence social change, the following ideographical analysis is conducted for the purpose of raising awareness about the importance of the diverse cultural conceptualizations of such terms, as well as the meanings that arise as a result of the differing cultural values, experiences, and perceptions among all the parties involved. The ideographical analyses of "multiculturalism" in the discourse between the EU and Macedonia helps reveal the interpreting systems of Macedonian and EU public motives, as well as the way these ideographs act as forms of political rhetoric to shape the reality of the people living in Macedonia. This process is crucial to understanding cultural and historical influences in the intercultural dialogue between the diverse parties living in the country as well as the dialogue between the country and the EU.

I believe that one of the best suited areas for examining intercultural interactions such as the dialogue between the EU and Macedonia, in this case, is intercultural rhetoric. Rhetoric is a multi-layered process that accomplishes multiple functions simultaneously. Rhetoric forms the medium through which community understandings and priorities are directed. As such, it is fundamental to the creation, negotiation and contestation of culture. Intercultural communication is about having a vocabulary about culture so that we can understand when those intersections occur.

As McGee (1980) asserts, it is through rhetoric that we as intercultural communication researchers can reveal the interpreting systems or structures of public motifs. These structures have the capacity to both control power, and influence the constructed realities of community members. The use of specific vocabulary can either unite or divide, and as such represents a concept that cements rhetorical criticism as perhaps the best-suited perspective from which to approach the study of intercultural interaction.

Michael McGee (1980) is one of the many scholars who have contributed to the development of ideological criticism (Foss, 2009). He asserts that political language, characterized by slogans and a vocabulary of ideographs, has the capacity to dictate decision, control public belief and discourse, and shape reality (1980). Ideographs are defined as historically and culturally grounded commonplace rhetorical terms that sum up and invoke identification with key social commitments. Ideographs provide a link between rhetoric and ideology, and present a means through which ideologies are unconsciously shared to organize consent to a particular social system (Cloud, 2004). The "ideograph" is defined as an ordinary language term found in political discourse that represents a collective commitment to a particular, but not well defined, normative goal (McGee, 1980).

Foss (2009) grounds McGee's ideological criticism in the basic conceptualization of ideologies and how they function. Every culture is composed by multiple ideologies with the potential to manifest in rhetorical artifacts. Discovering and interrogating the ideology embedded in an artifact becomes the primary goal of rhetorical criticism. The role communication plays in creating and sustaining ideology must be understood, and the interests represented in that ideology discovered.

In this study I draw from studies in ideological criticism that focus on how relationships of power within societies are embedded and reproduced in acts of cultural creation in order to examine the ideology behind the concept of "multiculturalism" examining the impeded ideologies in it. I believe that culture consists of everyday discursive practices that embody and construct ideology. Speeches given by official representatives of states thus become legitimate sites for interrogation because that is where ideological struggles take place.

Ideographic analysis is useful for the study of concepts such as "multiculturalism" that are used by various parties engaged in conflict in dialogs of negotiation. The processes creating and sustaining ideology, and the interests represented in the ideology, must be discovered and understood in order to uncover oppressive relationships in the usage of this concept and find opportunities enabling emancipation. Ideographs generate a series of usages that unite the communities that use them, but consubstantially function to separate communities implementing them

by holding certain meanings and intentions unacceptable to other groups. This is precisely why I decided to conduct an ideographical analysis of the concept of "multiculturalism," and I especially focus my attention on the points of separation that this ideograph generates between the communities that use it. I focus on the way the ideograph of "multiculturalism" guides behavior and belief into channels easily recognized by a community as acceptable or unacceptable (McGee, 1980).

I conduct an ideographical analysis of the vocabulary used by the EU and Macedonia from the year 2005 to the present. I have selected several speeches given by the head of the EU delegation in Macedonia, Ambassador Erwan Fouéré, Macedonian Prime Minister, Nikola Gruevski and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Antonio Milosovski. These speeches precisely tackle the issue of multiculturalism and multiethnic stability of the country and contain the ideographs that will be analyzed in the paper. The main ideograph is "multiculturalism", whereas "interethnic tolerance", "interethnic dialogue", "interethnic cooperation" and "interethnic stability" will also be included as synonymous terms or concepts that at least have some relationship to the main ideograph of "multiculturalism."

IV.   Analysis

According to Aggestam & Hill (2008) while the EU was founded under an inherently multicultural idea of 'unity in diversity', imagining the promotion of cultural diversity of its member states and at the same time promoting common values for all, EU's idea of 'unity in diversity' is quite ambiguous for the purpose of making it acceptable to all the member states. The concept of multiculturalism in EU entails many tensions between "the European and the national, and between the national and the individual" (Aggestam & Hill, 2008, p. 99). The EU members states differ greatly in their minority policies and the tension for having a unified concept of multiculturalism are becoming even more prominent with the EU membership expansion.

Even though "diversity depends on unity," it is "always about groups desiring to preserve themselves against a coherent unit" and therefore the concept of cultural diversity or multiculturalism is used in various different contexts with various meanings and not so clear intentions (Von Bogdandy, 2008). Due to all the above

mentioned issues, the EU currently is promoting an identity that has more to do with the continuous process of self construction rather than with the projection of universality of values, envisioning more a community of inclusion than exclusion which implies a continuous negotiation over the precise meaning of European identity and the understanding of multiculturalism (Aggestam & Hill, 2008). This ideology is clearly vivid on the speech that Ambassador Erwan Fouéré gives at the Graduation Ceremony of the SEE University in Tetovo, on June 9, 2009.

...it is those who have a vision, who are innovative, who dream of things that have not been, who say why not and who get to work – those are the ones who will succeed. It is this kind of vision that has inspired the founding fathers of the European Eunion...The EU embodies one of history's most successful attempts to enable countries and peoples to overcome division, to shape a future based partnership and cooperation.

The ambassador continues to say that once it gets accession, Macedonia will bring many assets to the EU, such as a multiethnic society and a strong spirit and determination of all the people, united in the aspiration of joining the EU.

However, EU's ability to poorly articulate issues of human rights and minority rights in several occasions enables EU member states to hold differing positions on issues of multiculturality and interpretation of minority rights, and illustrates an incoherent conception of the ideograph. France for instance, according to Carmon (1995) has an assimilationist model of multiculturalism favoring solidarity and acculturation while expecting that minority groups assimilate to the dominant culture of the host society. Germany and Austria on the other hand have a more exclusionary model of multiculturalism, treating minorities as guest workers with very limited rights with the belief that they will ultimately return to their countries of origin. Whereas, some European countries like Britain, Netherlands and Sweden, recognizing the increasing levels of multiculturality within, use the multiculturalism proper model which celebrates diversity and considers it a permanent rather than e transitory model. This model promotes civic unity only under the condition that it seeks to accommodate the multicultural diversity of the society (Aggestam & Hill, 2008).

These examples illustrate the differing approaches to the concept of multiculturalism within the EU as well as the reasons for its ambiguous definition and conception in their foreign policy. While this ambiguity is currently increasing as a result of the dimension of securitization which arises out of fear from terrorism, and the need to counter very serious threats and strengthen national security of the member states, it makes it especially hard for countries like Macedonia to understand and apply the concept. It is even harder when such a concept presents one of the main conditions for the EU accession, and at the same time lacks a coherent definition by the same party that placed it as a precondition.

EU's conceptualization of "multiculturalism" in Macedonia is illustrated on this part of the speech that Ambassador Erwan Fouéré gives on an event for the lunch of the project Support to the Secretariat for Implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement (SIOFA), on April 27, 2010. Here, he urges the Macedonian government to pay careful attention to "the spirit" of the Ohrid Framework Agreement as a collective responsibility of the entire government.

....Interethnic relations are about more than only the letter of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. Apart from the more political and administrative measures undertaken directly in reference to specific obligations under the Ohrid Framework Agreement, non majority communities' issues are also about cultural and religious diversity, and – real or perceived – difference of status in the society. Therefore there is a need to provide to the non-majority communities better access to policy decision-making, education, work, medical care, etc.

Whereas in a speech given at the Promotional Conference of Projects for Cultural Heritage Rehabilitation – "LJUBLJANA PROCESS", in September 28, 2009, Ambassador Erwan Fouéré speaks about the importance that the EU attaches to the protection of cultural heritage as a critical element for preserving the multiethnic character of the Balkan Region and promotion of multiculturalism. He claims:

Different ethnicities, religions, languages, and cultures are a trait of the region of Southeast Europe and particularly this country and they form the essence of the rich multicultural identities that are found here. It is a rich heritage from which the people must be justly proud. This multicultural composition of the population

implies a vital role for the protection of cultural heritage that belong to all different ethnicities and religions in the country and contributes to the development of intercultural dialogue, communication and trust between the different communities.

However, despite this rhetoric from the EU, tensions and anxieties between the two communities still remain high. Polls conducted after 2001 suggest that there is a huge ambivalence among ethnic Macedonians to the Ohrid Framework Agreement which is a result of the top-down and even under pressure policy innovation. Though, the same polls suggest that there would have been no chance of policy of cultural recognition of the other ethnic groups from bottom-up. A UNDP poll conducted in 2003, two years after the Ohrid Framework Agreement, showed that 12% of Macedonians perceived that it would be ideal for them if there were no ethnic Albanians in Macedonia, whereas in a poll conducted in 2006 63% of Macedonians believed that Albanians do not experience Macedonia as their homeland whereas 78% of Albanians consider themselves permanent citizens of Macedonia. Moreover, a more recent UNDP poll conducted in 2008 shows that 53% of Macedonians and 54% of Albanians believe that the members of their ethnic group feel anxious when they constitute a minority in the community, and 69% of Macedonians and 42% of Albanians claimed to refuse to send their children in schools where the majority is constituted from another ethnic group.

These polls illustrate some of the anxieties that both parties still experience even several years after the Framework Agreement as well as the long road that Macedonia has to walk in order to be considered a truly multicultural society. These data show that after the 2001 conflict Macedonians remain anxious, blame Albanians for their troubles and negatively perceive the political stability in their country. While the Ohrid Framework Agreement has made Albanians more content with the changes made in the political system, they still remain rather anxious as well. The feeling of insecurity and tension is clearly articulated in a speech that Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski gives at the 45th Munich Security Conference on February 8, 2010. Here he addressed the identity issues of Macedonia with its neighbors, its the discourse with Europe, and the interethnic troubles within. He states:

Undoubtedly it is correct to say that Europe thrives in its diversity" said Chancellor Angela Merkel and concluded that the quality that enabled Europeans to

make the most of diversity is tolerance. "Europe's soul is tolerance." But is Europe's diversity possible without freedom? How to explain to the Macedonian people that their country in the European home, a home of diversity of identities, will cost them their freedom to express who they are? Will cost them their identity?

Furthermore, we also have to be aware that the ideological content or the meaning of the "ideograph" can shift over time in response to historical exigencies and struggles among groups attempting to claim the ideograph (Condit & Lucaites, 1999). In the case of the usage of "multiculturalism" in the discourse between EU and Macedonia and within the diverse groups in the country, the ideograph has undergone many changes in response to the historical events described above and as a result of the differing or contradicting political and societal exigencies. Moreover, besides the meanings of the ideograph being changed, the ideograph itself is being replaced by various other vocabularies such as "inter-ethnic tolerance", "inter-ethnic dialogue", "inter-ethnic cooperation" or "inter-ethnic stability," which sometimes serve as synonymous references to the ideograph of "multiculturalism" and other times are filled with additional meanings and references that further problematize the discourse of multiculturalism.

Even prior to the 2001 inter-ethnic conflict, Albanian and Macedonian social/political identities have constantly been under re-construction and re-articulation by both the internal and international elites and this has affected the differing meanings of nation, citizenship and multiculturalism (Adamson & Jovic, 2004). It should be taken into account that these identities have been strongly influenced by the Marxist paradigm and its Yugoslav official interpretation whereas in the process of transition from socialism to democracy the old paradigm was combined with liberal democratic concepts with nationalism in the vacuum due to the wars in the region and the process of nation building. Looking at these issues "through the spectacle of Yugoslav identity politics, the current conflict reflect older conflicts and is understood through categories that have developed according to a language of politics developed through the Yugoslav Period" (Adamson & Jovic, 2004, p. 306). As a result, Macedonian nationalists refuse to recognize that the two ethnicities should have the same status within the country and continue to consider

Macedonia as a purely Macedonian nation-state, not a multicultural one. A truly multicultural approach as defined by Barry (2001) would require for Albanians to be treated as equal citizens of the country in which they live and not as an unequal minority.

In addition, the institutionalizing of discursive practices in Macedonia is a difficult process due to the existent tensions among and between ethnic groups in the society and require transformations of already established cultural practices which need much more than only adoption of new policy frameworks (Staniševski & Miller, 2009). Such transformations of cultural practices would require "(re)socialization of different cultural practices, change in social thinking, and the emergence of viable new political identifications that transcend ethnicity" (p.569). Multicultural discourses have the potential to increase perceptions of social inclusion and forestall an escalation of intercultural tensions, and by opening the dialogue on cultural differences may offer the opportunity for bridging cultural divisions and developing gradual change in social perceptions and political identities.

On the other hand Guzina (2001) asks the question if it is logical to expect that the western practices of liberal pluralism and ethnocultural justice be promoted as means to solving ethnic tensions in the Western Balkans. This is in line with Rustow's (1970) claim that a country can successfully transition to democracy as long as it has achieved a certain level of national unity. For Guzina (2001), because there is lack of national unity in conflict torn societies such as Macedonia, it is hard to achieve a full democracy and the multiculturalism discourse is used by the government only for tactical purposes of legitimizing the country's position internationally which usually happens with the Macedonian government.

The speech of the Macedonian Minister of Foreign Affairs given at the forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, on April 6, 2010, is an illustration the tactical purposes the government uses in promoting the multicultural aspect of the country internationally, while the reality on the ground remains much different. In this speech he stresses "multicultural trait" that that Macedonia possesses, which according to him makes it "a model for the ability of cultures to complement each other and function together in a democratic society". While in another speech given at the conference of Western and Muslim countries "Common World: Progress

through Diversities," on October 17, 2010 in Astana, Milosovski claims that Macedonia represents multiethnic democracy that has coped with a number of challenges in the past few years, and can serve as an excellent model of how dialogues among members of diverse cultures and religions is established and preserved. He concludes that:

...diversities should be utilized as an instrument for promotion of coexistence, tolerance and understanding......political leaders should unite their efforts in creating a world where dialogue of diversities and mutual respect will say 'no' to lack of communication and misunderstanding.

Guzina, 2001 considers the clash between achieving democracy and nation building as a major roadblock to achieving multiculturalism in the society, usually leading to the usual circular argument –"in order for them to become democratic local elites have to give up on nation-building, but in order to do so, they have to be democratic" (p. 6). Thus, by applying external pressures in order to democratize Macedonia and ingrain multicultural values, the EU use failed countries like Macedonia as experimental grounds for learning about conflict management and democratization techniques. These countries and especially the majorities within them, which in the case of Macedonia is the Macedonian ethnic group, view multicultural integration as an ideological export that is either completely out of context or as just a catchy phrase replacing the old fashioned policies of ethnic control. This perception is mostly due to the fact that EU uses approaches in a "template-like fashion rather than tools that should be fine-tuned to fit the concrete conditions in the area" (Guzina, 2001, p. 7).

This is mostly the main issue with the issue of the ideograph of "multiculturalism" and the other synonymous concepts utilized by all the different sides in the dialogue between EU and Macedonia. While EU has imposed the ideograph of "multiculturalism" on Macedonia as one of the main preconditions for EU accession, it has done so by utilizing the same strategy they use in imposing all the other reforms the country needs to make to get accession and that is by providing a template-like conception of the ideograph of 'multiculturalism." What is more concerning is that the EU representatives in Macedonia, or the other diplomats

involved in the talks are unaware of the differing understanding and conceptions of the ideograph of "multiculturalism" within their own countries, and how such ambiguity affects the way the struggling country of Macedonia achieve one of the main preconditions for starting the discussion with the EU. EU requires Macedonia to reach a certain level of multiculturalism, that the EU itself believes it has or that it has achieved, and it is unaware of the huge conceptual differences of such term within its own member states. While the EU asks the different communities living in this country to achieve some kind of coherent understanding of the concept that would represent the "European spirit", it is more than clear that the EU has a rather vague definition of this concept.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, I argue that both the EU and the Macedonian government should strive to provide a "thick moral vernacular" (Houser, 2008) of the ideograph of "multiculturalism" in Macedonia if they want to achieve success in the democratization of the country and unified understanding and acceptance of the ideograph by all parties. Houser (2008) defines "a thick moral vernacular" as a language that "summons cultural memory embedded in a people's language, national history, and significant expression of tradition and belief to inspire allegiance and support" (p. 458). Such an approach would rely on native assertions of identity and right and might provide an alternative authority about their human rights and the national interest in respecting them. As Houser (2008) asserts a "thick moral vernacular" represents a "rhetoric of conscience" calling for personal genuineness and group solidarity and is translated into the culture of individual rights, collective identity, historicity, and the primacy of agency of being a human" (p. 459).

A thick moral vernacular of "multiculturalism" in Macedonia can represent a call for both civility and responsibility. EU should strive to use concepts and terms closer to "multiculturalism" that are consistent with the cultural memory, history and tradition of all the ethnic groups living in Macedonia. Such concepts should strive to tackle the identity issues within and with the neighboring countries and give the parties involved the authority to reinvent them and use them. This approach has the potential to provide the parties involved a feeling of inclusion by the superior power of the EU and a say in achieving something that will benefit themselves and their

own country first, not only the European Union. In this way, such conceptualization of the ideograph of "multiculturalism" can represent and urge for responsibility for a common good, not only one groups interests over another.

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