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THE INTEGRATION IN EUROPE AND VALUES THAT ISLAM BRINGS IN THIS INTEGRATION

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Abstract:

In many political and sociological studies, in the recent years are being treated problems related to cultures, civilizations, integrations, assimilation, etc. In such commentaries with priority are ranked problems that have to deal with tolerance and religious understanding as well as differences and contradictions through cultures and contradictions among civilizations.

In these studies from different research standing points, when it is about civilization, in European circumstances such topics are being focused in the differences among western cultures, catholics, Islam, Slavic Orthodox etc.

The economic process intensification and technological modernization, as if sometimes remains outside the current topicality, beside conceptual dilemmas that are created from some scholars and some political personalities in their approaches, for the differences and inter-religious contradictions, or, for the tendencies of incitement of such a revival of inter-religious contradictions. If they insist to build the future of a nation in present time, relying on the mythology, you can suspect that there is something wrong in that nation and its political elites.

Euro-culture of the Muslims in Europe, led by the Islamic principles, (without inventing a deviant Islam, or 'traditional' Islam) could have enabled all Muslim people in Europe to develop a common religious culture. They could promote cultural and historical values which once presents a common value for all the Muslims belonging to different national preferences for the newcomers Muslims. In this Muslim Euro-culture, intellectual European Muslim elites, including the European citizens who accepted Islam will have an important role.

The messages of the wise men, should be guidance to understand religious, national, linguistic and racial differences, raising consciousness and awareness that one can become a complete human being, only through a real obedience to God.

The concept of the interdependence in creating of economic, political relationships, of social and cultural security between people, states and businessmen is a paradigm of the time, thus integration projects must subdue to the need to

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interact, based on mutual interests, as a human being dependent on each other, as Almighty God has created us.

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The religious, linguistic and national differences

Such approaches, to be able to admit the differences among others, in some cases are exposed to contradictions with steady human principals, when it is about integration as a process. The incitement of such contradictions and different dilemmas regarding religion, there are cases when these are contradicted with the principals of the research factography of the sociology and other social sciences as for example: pathology, political psychology, social psychology, political anthropology etc, in the investigation of the ways how to live in harmony, or in compatibility with the truth for the group of people of the same ethnicity and people of different ethnicities, considering the integration in the society for equality with others.

I am based on this research respecting deeply the religious, linguistic and national differences that people have among themselves as the Almighty God has created us, while concentrating in some of the preoccupations of Muslims in today's Europe, by understanding religious convictions as spiritual values for the people regardless of the religion or the national identity that they belong to.

Muslims in Europe, directly or indirectly, began to be exposed to some different natural factors, that are oriented or reflect towards the change of a part of their identity. As a consequence of this, we differ more influencing factors, that can be counted in normal circumstances also as factors for the shape of the new identity, that to such a reality are obeyed other people in Europe. These factors are: cultural, social - educational and economical.

Contrary to the medial pronouncements and appointed groups, for the positioning of the Muslims in Europe, that sometimes are with very pessimistic tones, also there exist research results of the analytic meditation, historical-sociological, juridical-political, socio-economical and philosophical-religious, that show that Muslims, are not involved in the swirl of a crisis of their religious identity. Beside influencing factors that were mentioned above, with the creation of the differences and approximations, for the creation of the relations between an individual and among groups, facts talk that from the deviant occurrences, aren't spared Muslims in Europe, too, although their predominant part, isn't in the crises of disrespecting the universal Islamic values such as benevolence, moral, heredity, religious values, respect and others. (*Mass Migration in Europe*, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, 1993, pp. 19-39.)

Despite the existence of different types of tolerance, not by accident, it is given a special significance to linguistic tolerance. That is because the question of linguistic tolerance can justifiably be said, is part of the right recognition of the

existence of differences among people. It is these differences and their recognition that is a major source for other tolerances, where they are not acknowledged. Only in Finland, the minority language won the same status as the majority language in the country. In 2000, Finland adopted a new Constitution based on the Constitution of 1919 and in addition to Finnish language, and Swedish language became the national language of the country. The figure of nearly 300,000 people who use Swedish language in Finland, is not a large percentage of the Finnish population, however, it is sufficient for obtaining linguistic equality in the country.

Without recognition of language differences, we do not recognize any right of tolerance. Thus, the recognition of differences is the right step towards mutual understanding, towards the willingness for dialogue on the regulation of relations between individuals and different collectivities in the same state. It is time the leaders of political parties in the Balkan countries to devote serious attention to this issue, and to follow best practices in the EU and to encourage citizens to build language competence, in order to be multilingual.

Cultural factor – Differences between the European citizens

In this direction, if we analyse the cultural factor, we can conclude that it is spoken about a process in which the European citizens that belong to the Islamic belief, began to gradually adapt to the way of living, behaviour and activities, clothing, the acceptance of the environmental language, music, cultural life, wherein except facing with the Muslim religion value estimation, face also with the admission of the circumstances which in a continued form are affectors of the personal life. These affections can be met also in relation with the family life, husbandry, in relation between parents and children and in a broader range which belong to the national and religious relation. Here we come across with the first problems, where it can be investigated an easy getaway from the national identity, but not also from the essential part of which it is the belief, or to happen a conveyance of the Islamic religious ethnos.

Third generation of the former Muslim immigrants

It is more than clear that Muslims in Europe, cannot obey Islam as in the Islamic countries, willing or nilling they must admit rules and regulations of the countries where they live, a natural integrating process. In these influences, especially the social and educational factor implies the Muslim participation in the necessary educational process, because reasonably they will not accept the fact to remain uneducated, but even all this has an influence in the other aspects of the social life in the new surrounding, having a tendency to gradually happen a quiet linguistic assimilation, but not also resigning from the religious Islamic identity. Muslims of today's Europe their national identity, can be protected while living in familihood according to the Islamic rules. Facts show for the third generation of the

former Muslim immigrants, regardless of which national identity they belong to, which now are citizens of Europe, in the protection of their national identity, that language and national history begin to be amongst the influencing factors, towards the obedience and knowledges they have preserved for Islam (Abdulqarim Zaydan, Individual and the state in the Islamic Shari'ah)

In research to these influencing factors, there should be taken into consideration rules or regulation in the frame of EU but also countries where Muslims live. Having in mind the factors, for the Muslim population that live in the member countries of EU (6 million Arabs mainly Algerians in France; above 5 million mainly Turks in Germany and around 4 million Muslims with Asiatic and African origin of the Great Britain etc., population which further continues to be considered as newcomers and economic emigrants, although the majority of them, as for their fatherland consider the same countries where they live. (W. D. Chapin, 'The Turkish diaspora in Germany', *Diaspora*, 5(2) (1996), pp. 275-301.)

Muslims in today's Europe

When there are in the focus some of the challenges of the Muslims in today's Europe, I don't intend to outline the periods of colonization of the Muslim lands (19th and 20th century) from some of the European countries, the colonialist period that reflects or which is as a consequence of the populating Europe with Muslims. But, we should respect the fact that the predominant number of the Muslims, that Europe counts today, have their origin from those former colonies from France, Great Britain and Netherlands, etc... According to the statistical data that are also public, the even greater number of Muslims is in the member countries of EU, where the predominant part from them are with the citizenship, and a minor number are awaiting to gain their status of having the European citizenship. When we talk about Western civilization and an Islamic one, Islam in Europe should not be understood as something extraordinary, if we make a brief view of the European Islamic identity throughout the history. As some Islamic scholars assess Islam, they confess that Islamic Universities in Spain and worldwide were for about hundred years the only source of the scientific knowledge, when the stock of the Cordova libraries – one of the Islamic centres of civilization in Spain, reached the number of hundreds of thousands books.

It is understood in this regard that in no way I attempt to object to the natural social influences, where it can never be excluded the standards which establish rules of the reciprocal interest, among different cultures, among people to live in meaningful levels of the religious tolerance among themselves.

It is known that in today's Europe, people cannot avoid the values which can be also common, supported by the principals of economic, social and cultural interrelation etc. However, I think that religious Islamic intellectuals should oppose the daily political activities which have the tendency to ignore and make fun of religious values and the Islamic religious interest.

Some of the Muslim challenges in today's Europe

Which are some of the Muslim challenges or preoccupations in today's Europe? The question I raised, needs to be studied, with which Muslims will face in EU 'Christianity' in the future? Which are the challenges of the Muslims, who centuries in a row defended their Islamic identity? Which are the European challenges which embraced Islam? It is understood that surviving as an Islamic identity in assaulting challenges and with assimilating tendencies, Muslims of this part of the world were imposed with the reason to face with the challenges which will bring along the new social order with worldwide trend after the years 1990! One of the greatest and most important challenges is the Islamic religion survival. (A. Brah, (*Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting identities*, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, pp. 82-183).

If we look back to Robert Schumann, an ideologist of an integrated Europe, or United Europe, former French minister of foreign affairs, who didn't hesitate in the 50s of the past century in his book "For the Europe" to write that, democracy as a civilized value is a fruit and value of crystallization. (Spiering, M. (1999), 'The Future of National Identity in the European Union'. (National Identity, II)

This theory was certified thoroughly from the history and time. It is understood that for the today's circumstances, such evaluation doesn't have an effect upon the European identity based on the religious identification and determination of Europe. We can conclude that such evaluations were useful until before one century, but Europe today is neither fully white nor thoroughly Christian (John Mc Cormick, "THE EUROPEAN UNION", Politics and Policies; Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis; 1996).

. From the intellectual and academic western European circular pronouncements it is accepted by the new European reality, because Europe today is with a conglomerate of cultures, civilizations, religions, languages and nationalities that comprise Europe from Turkey to Iceland. Documents of the European council and the European Union have to do with the Human Rights with a number of other documents for the ethnic tolerance, religious and linguistic and for the war against racism and xenophobia, testifies that Western Europe is now being built upon values of the new reality of civilization, where the differences are accepted and upon their respect are being built projects for defining common values among people which lead towards a new Europe, however with the new identity.

Beside xenophobia of some European circles towards Islam, the reality of understanding, in the setting of respecting the elementary human rights, the respect towards Islam religion have expressed all capital European cities with the building of the mosques but also some centres and Islamic institutions. Islamic believers in today's Europe have expanded their activities, for the commitment of their religious obligations wherever they live. As an example of respecting the

inter-religious values, as well as primary Islamic values can be considered Austria, Great Britain, Germany, Switzerland and Belgium.

European citizens who embraced Islam

European citizens who embraced Islam and Muslims of the south-eastern Europe, and especially those of the Balkan, regarding the adjustment and adaptation, or integration in the conditions of the determined values of the interrelation and inter-religious dialogue, as common values with the citizens of the Christian belief, must insist for a higher level of cooperation with so ever dose of dejection for any tendency of assimilation. Especially, Muslims of the south-eastern Europe (Muslim Albanians, Bosnians, Turks and others) should be promoters of a tied movement or integrated euro - Islam which could have had its roots in Islam, while respecting the differences with the others. The Islamic culture of the European Muslims in general, could have an important role for the citizens who belong to this belief, could have determined the features and the Euro-Islamic identity which could find the support in the Holy Quran.

In this context it is worth emphasizing that the rules to understand and live with Islam are mentioned also in Cairo Declaration for Human Rights (1990). In relation to this, I will quote line 2 of the Article 1 of the Declaration where it says: “. . . There is no privilege for someone above the others except in case of devotion (justice) and good deeds”. When there are treated topics about Muslim challenges in today’s Europe, its integration absolutely must be searched by the political history of the events after the Berlin fall (1989). Social, economic, political and safety changes that happened in Europe influenced even in the rules of the ‘New World Order’.

In the computing time and the dizzy development of the contemporary society it could be illusive that Muslims of Europe are based on the concept or traditional nostalgia. It is understandable that in the circumstances with which Muslims have faced in the past that had its meaning, that the *‘The stone weights more in its own territory’*, but now the interdependency factors in the creation of inter - human relations in the national, regional and world levels create their new rules. In relation to this, I will quote part of the article 12 from the Cairo Declaration for Human Rights, where it says: *“Every human being has the right to move free choosing the suitable dwelling-place for him/her, within his/her place or state”*. If we take into consideration that the concept of interrelation in the creation of the economic, political, social, cultural relations among people, states, neighbours, is a time paradigm, and then mandatory the integrating projects should bend to the necessity to cooperate, based on reciprocal interests, without bending to the religious and national assimilation. Then as such, while being built personal values, as human beings depending from one another, with different religious and national preference, should live in re-building reciprocal interests same as the Almighty God has created us.

In the integrating values, those states (regardless of the religious Islamic or Christian preference) that has the possibility of influencing in the international relations should bend to the norms and conventions that deal with the protection of the laws and human rights, for which today's world has a great need. All the norms that advance the liberal values of democracy, bending to the competition values in the academic – educational, political, economical and other levels, should be a target to promote values which straightforwardly have to deal with the defence of the individual rights of every person, regardless of the religious preference or his individual behaviour which with nothing harms or endangers anybody. The competing values can be found in the Maastricht Treaty (1991) and especially in the Amsterdam Treaty (1997), where for the EU citizens are guaranteed personal rights and freedoms in the whole region of EU, the rights of the free movement, social right, labor rights, election active and passive right, same as citizen of the state where one is a resident. It is understood that in these fundamental values, they should be incorporated and find themselves also as Muslims who live in the member countries of EU.

Regarding Muslims of the Southeastern Europe, we should live with the reality that the religious multiculturalism is a treasure and not deficiency. We have cases when people of different religions with centuries in a row live closer to one another, without having the least clashes between them. This we can illustrate with many examples of multiculturalism of the Albanian population (Cf. E.E. Jacques, *The Albanians. An Ethnic History from Prehistoric Times to the Present*, McFarland & Company, Jefferson, North Carolina, and London, 1995, pp. 287-308;), Islamic, Catholic and Orthodox believers, who historically among themselves haven't had any friction or disagreement.

Conclusion

A Euro-culture of the Muslims in Europe, led by the Islamic principles, could have enabled to all Muslim people in Europe to develop a common religious culture, even they could promote cultural and historical values from the origin countries for the newcoming Muslims, which once presents a common value for all the Muslims belonging to different national preferences. In this Muslim Euro-culture, an important role will have intellectual European Muslims elites, including the European citizens who accepted Islam. Thus, it will be created a kind of European cultural and religious multiculturalism in the operating life conditions in the new Europe. One shouldn't motivate intolerant deeds which could have led straight to civic western clashes Christian and Eastern Islam.

The creation of the circumstances for a meaningful inter religious tolerance, is also the finder of a steady base for co-existence, which it can be today one of the greatest challenges of Europe, but not only for the Muslims of Europe.

Messages of the wise people, should be guides to rightly understand (religious, national, linguistic and racial) differences, while rising the conscious and

awareness that only through the real bend towards the God, a man can become a complete human being. If it happens such a consciousness in the greater number of the Muslims in Europe, then certainly the space of dilettants who joke and speak in the name of Islam will get tight.

Turkish diplomatic circles, Arab diplomatic circles and other Muslim states, would be in the interest of humanity, if they prove the affirmation of economic integrating projects between the nation of one "Economic community of states". Formation of economic community where Turkey and peoples of the Muslim states, should insist on the creation where they see mutual economic, social and security interest, similar to the European Union integration project.

In the last fifteen years, many facts indicate that uncontrolled migrations of people from several Arab countries in western Europe, hoping for a better life, carry the effects of different social crises. Despite such difficulties, surely that majority of these people hold the hope that one day to return to their homeland.

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See <http://www.refugeenet.org/education/grids_access.html>. Fees may be reduced if an asylum seeker has been living in the UK for more than three years, or if granted an exceptional leave to remain (ELR) in the UK. 'Finance and benefits for international students wishing to study in the UK', <<http://www.namss.org.uk/internat.htm>>.

Cf. <http://www.refugeenet.org/education/grids_access.html>; S. Theil, 'Idle by law', *Newsweek*, 13 August 2001.