

Europe as a Community of Values

Autopsy reveals the British-South African corpse's poisoning by microfinance, 'development finance' and corporate finance

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Kant in his work "Ideas for a Universal History with Cosmopolitan Intent", in Seventh Principle explained the need for peace and security among the nations as the following: "That is to say, wars, the excessive and never ending preparations for wars, and they want that every state even in the midst of peace must feel-all these are means by which at first are inadequate, but which, after many devastations, reversals and a very general exhaustion of the state' resources, may accomplish what reason could have suggested to them without so much sad experience, namely: to leave the lawless state of savages and to enter into a union of nations wherein each, even – not from its own power or its own or its own legal judgment – but only from this great union of nations (Foedus Amphictyonum) and from united power and decisions according to the united will of them"[1]. In the line of the projects beginning from William Penn, Abbé de Saint Pierre and Rousseau, Kant argued the need for the Society of Nations as a way to peace for Europe.

Now, West and East of Europe are in a historical impasse expressed very well by Count Richard Nikolaus von Coudenhove-Kalergi: Divided Europe is equal with war; united Europe is equal with peace. The East of Europe has proved what Illuminist philosophy has related the dilemmas of the existence of human beings, the inclination for freedom and simultaneously the easiness of establishing despotism which, as Montesquieu wrote: "at the very beginning it is light and weak, but at the very end is fast and alive; at the beginning it shows a hand to help and meanwhile put you down with infinite arms."[2]. However, his disciple Tocqueville had added "While in despotism people are every now and then unleash and shout of joy, but in general they are brokenhearted and concentrated because they are scared."[3]. This is the reason that he concludes that "there is nothing more fertile than the art to be free; and there is nothing more difficult than learning to be free." The XXth century knew the totalitarian regime in the West and Eastern part of Europe.

We, the people of Eastern part of Europe, remember the great congresses where the working class used to applaud the decisions of the chief members of the party. They used to shout "Long life!" or "Down with!" but it was easily forgotten that "Long Life!" and "Down with!" concepts had nothing in common with the concepts of personal freedom or personal greatness. It was proved that your own freedom was not guaranteed even if you would put the others to the execution wall. Even though people used to live in wretched dirty houses, they were proud for the "Cultural Palace" and they were proud because they were governed by the "greatest leader of the world". This is how it was built the miserable part of the human beings. To better understand how this wretched part of the human beings was constructed allow me to bring two more ideas.

Around the year 1920, two years after the October Revolution, ex counselor of Kerensky

who later became a sociology professor at Harvard University, Pitrim Sorokin would warn the world about the consequences of military socialism that was being built in Russia, model that was built in Eastern part of Europe. "In my understanding the idea of an ideal "military socialist" society is a mechanism characterized by:

1. An unlimited interference of government in all areas of life, throughout relations between the ones who are governed, starting with economical relations and ending up with religious, legal, esthetical relations, etc.
2. A very limited right to autonomy in all areas of life and in all relations with the world.
3. Till to a certain point an equal despotism. In such a society the power of the government is unlimited. It does not determine boarder lines when it comes to interfering in people's lives and in ordering it. When it comes to the autonomy of the ones in power they do not have any field of action. They are like soldiers going one by one towards one obligation: to obey without any doubts to the directions of the one in power...

Therefore it is not possible to even think about individual rights. Simultaneously the private initiative, the ownership rights etc. were disappeared... so this is what the ideal military socialist society is about".[4]

To conclude I want to bring a saying of an author of protestant theology Paul Tillich. He tells us how the courage is destroyed in order to be oneself and at the very end the civil courage in a totalitarian society is still in the form of a tribal collectivization. This happens because the essence of communism is the courage to be as a part, which it gives to masses of people who lived under increasing threat of nonbeing and a growing feeling of anxiety. Thus "communism gives to those who have lost or are losing their old collectivist self - affirmation a new collectivism and with it a new courage to be a part. If we look at the convinced adherents of communism we find the willingness to sacrifice any individual fulfillment to the self - affirmation of the group and to the goal of the movement."[5].

Tillich sees this phenomenon based on the three types of anxiety. I would like to mention all the reasoning of Tillich on the how the individual take the anxiety of guilt and condemnation into his courage to be as a part. Who has lived under the conditions of such a regime can understand very well this truth. "It is not his personal sin that produces the anxiety of guilt but a real or possible sin against the collective. The collective, in this respect, replaces for him the God of judgment, repentance, punishment, and forgiveness. To the collective he confesses, often in forms reminiscent of early Christianity or later sectarian groups. From the collective he accepts judgment and punishment. To it he directs his desire for forgiveness and his promise of self - transformation. If he accepted back by it, his guilt is overcome and a new courage to be is possible."[6].

Everything that was predicted above was realized in the most perfect way in our societies by spreading this way "the cholera of soul". "Cholera of soul" is related with the type of individual that comes out from a totalitarian regime. There are many agreements on what totalitarian regime is, but we can take for the most accurate one the determination that totalitarianism is the regime that works for depersonalization and dehumanization of the individual. The influences of such a regime are so great among the behavior of human beings and on their nature. It totally distorts the consciousness, the feelings, and the actions.

It links the freedom of thought and it destroys throughout thousands of procedures. All these that I have mentioned above create the essence of the “cholera of soul”.

Therefore we do not have to get surprised if we see the increase of crimes, plundering, horrible actions, paid killers, actions that aim no good, the blooming of violence, the weakening of moral and virtue, the decrease of work and its productions, the false accusations, the harshness, and the increase of ignorance.

The obligation that our society has nowadays is how to get rid of the “cholera of the soul”? Or, how can people be happy? Can it happen by deepening these vices or by manipulating people’s instincts, or by enlightening them and showing them how to use democracy? Tocqueville has explained the problem of democracy consisting in the manipulation of the instinct of crowd, and charlatans can profit in politics. In Eastern part of Europe and Balkan we see two kind of manipulations; democratic and nationalist instincts of the crowd.

Turning back to the problem of how to be safe from the “cholera of the soul”, we are left with no other way but to learn, to learn how to think. So freedom and democracy must be learnt.

Having seen that the vice is turned into a virtue and the only inciting motif of society is how to get advantage, then it is not a surprise that pessimism has invaded people’s soul and before they see how to get rid of these thoughts, they look around how to get rid of the country and find freedom somewhere else. These are the most delicate moments for a nation and only a regeneration of the soul can exhumate the society from the mud where it has fallen. Isn’t Hegel right when he says that a political community cannot be constructed without having a moral community? Wasn’t Husserl right when he talked about the crisis of Europe before the Second World War? He said that Europe can be saved only if it will create a new spiritual community. Can we get close to this new spiritual community without giving up the “cholera of the soul”? At the beginning of the First World War, Stefan Zweig has written: “We had to agree with Freud when he saw in our culture a thin layer that can die at any moment the destructive forces of the underworld; we had to get used gradually to live without mainland beneath our feet, without law, without freedom, security”[7]. Words that sound very actual when we consider what is happening in the Eastern part of Europe, especially in Ukraine.

Nowadays there are many published books and articles that delineate the nature of a totalitarian communist society, but I brought up these quotations in order to show that our society was warned before for the situation in which it would have felled. In other words, everything that happened was because the citizen had become a person who vegetates and throws away the freedom at the feet of despots. Now the problem arises how to elevate the human being to the level of the citizen who should be jealous for freedom and never throw away the freedom that has gained. Montesquieu was right when he wrote: “Citizen can die, and the man can stay”[8]. We have lived in a time when citizen died. Now the democracy needs the citizen.

The shouts for the victory of communism should be replaced by a deep process of pondering in order to comprehend the situation of Eastern Europe not as a historical accident, but as having deep roots in constructing the modern individual, because the emphasized polarization that characterizes our societies, which is growing because of corruption, can be the premise for other strange surprises in the future.

We should not forget however that nowadays we are living a deep moral crisis, which is emphasized from the spirit of taking advantage that is a distinguished characteristic of our transitional society. The fact that democracy needs to be moralized is highlighted from the fact that our life is becoming quite sad, full of insecurities, because of the increased corruption, because of non fulfillment of citizen obligations from the government etc., and this situation suffocates the mind and cut out the arms of hope.

Therefore peace does not consist at the calmness of the existent agenda but at the creation of a new one through solidarity of actions of the people in world level. Being conscious about the greatness and the urgency of this historical obligation is a sign of maturity of the contemporary individual. We can't quite have a new world without having a new economy, without the making of new ideals which should be incarnated into the new structures of the national level and be consistent to those of the European level.

For a very long time, Europe was characterized by the competitive coexistence and quite often hostile and bloody between East and West, between capitalism and socialism. Now this hostility is over to a greater ideal that we call Europe; however this project cannot be realized without taking into consideration the "spirit of Europe". I prefer the term "spirit of Europe", which include the freedom, democracy, rule of law and Human Rights, and not the term "European identity", because the term identity has the connotation of border and the fear from the others. We have to keep in mind that by the policy of fear there is not Europe.

Tocqueville, the philosopher leaves open two ways for the future of the humanity: liberal democracy or despotic democracy. Furthermore according to him "to want to stop democracy is the same as to fight against God himself and the nations are left with no other choice but to adapt to the social state that their providence impose on them".

Which one of these dilemmas are we going to choose? Of course none of us want the second, or we have to remind what Husserl said at the beginning of the Second World War: "The crisis of European existence can only have two outcomes: either the decline of Europe become alien has its own rational sense of life, the fall in the spiritual hatred and barbarism, or the revival of the Europe from the spirit of philosophy, through heroism of reason that definitely overcomes naturalism.

The greatest danger to Europe is lassitude. Fight as "good Europeans" against this danger of dangers with this courage that is not afraid either of the infinity of the fight, and then we will see out the blaze nihilistic, the barrage of despair who doubts the vocation of the West against humanity, the ashes of the great weariness, the Phoenix risen from a new inner life and a new spiritual breath, promise of a great and long future for humanity: for the spirit alone is immortal"[9].

These words deserve a deep reflection considering the challenges that faces Europe. In other words, the spirit that mentions Husserl means Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law. Such a spirit needs to be constructed in Balkan, and here is the main challenge for public and civil actors. Unfortunately, such a meaning does not exist among Balkan societies. Many actors consider Europe as source of money and not as a community of values.

It is worth to mention that in Albanian thought during 1930 many Albanian intellectuals have emphasized such a meaning of Europe and they attempted to realize such a education of Albanian individual. "The moral of the man of Occident, has written Branko Merxhani, a

leader of an Albanian intellectual movement called Neo-Albanism, is connected directly with his systematic thought. According such connection between Moral and Thought, it is born the positive values of time and work"[10]. They were able to distinguish the Europe of values from political Europe. They demanded that Europe of values to become the basis of the social and political life of Albania.

The conclusion is clear. Democracy and citizenship are not a matter of method, but matters of culture. Why do I say that they are matters of culture? Initially, the constitutional law specialists, public law, helped the European man to describe the mechanisms of democracy as a representative regime. Later, the political sociology attracted attention on some alienated phenomena to democracy, even contradictory to the constitutional principles of democracy and went so far as to suggest that these principles are illusory. Thus the citizen, and not the man of crowd, is situated in a state of worry. He finds himself caught between the principle and the formal mechanisms of democracy on the one hand and on the other hand, the reality of democracy: some real aspects of democracy seem to go against these principles, preventing, or making useless of these mechanisms. It is such the situation, not only in our country, the once civil and intellectual concern, political and scientific one of the actual democracy. Thus, while freedom will not be taught, don't be astonished if you do not see politics, but chevalier servant's gossips; do not be astonished why people change their beliefs as they change shirts in the morning for the sake of narrow selfish benefit.

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We have lack of civic tradition, in the sense mentioned above. Therefore, in any reform, whether in any field, is required to form the citizen. It remains a current call of Tocqueville to the European political elites: "It is said that the sovereigns of our time require doing great things with people. I would like them to dream a little more about how to make great people; that they can less appreciate the creation and the workman and that always remember that a nation cannot remain strong, for a long period of time, when every man is individually weak and till has not found social forms that can make an energetic society, formed by uncourageous and listless citizens".[11]If there are no citizens, then the way is opened to charlatans that are able to manipulate the democratic instincts of the crowd, and these latter, are not able to recognize their real friends. If the citizen dies and there remain listless people by the body and spirit, then history could prepare us interesting tyrannous surprises.

As the conclusion it is worth to remember the ideas of Montesquieu and Voltaire regarding the foreigner policy of the State of Europe. They were totally against that the European diplomacy to be build upon the theory of balance of powers and *Raison d'état*, because Europe will be faced with the wars in the future. Considering the situation in Balkan area, Europe has to implement its spirit and not the policy of *Raison d'état* or the theory of balance of powers which have had catastrophes consequences for the Balkan countries.

Finally, before Europe is posed again the capital question raised by Paul Valéry in 1924 and 1930: "Europe does will keep its pre-eminence in all genres? The Europe she will become what it is in reality, that is to say: a small tip of the Asian continent? Or will Europe do what it seems, and this to say: the valuable part of the terrestrial universe, the pearl of the sphere, the brain of a vast body?"[12].

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Notes

[1] Kant, *Opuscules sur l'histoire*, GF Flammarion, Paris, 1990, p. 79.

[2] Montesquieu, *De L'esprit des lois*, Flammarion, Paris, 1979, p. 132. "...qui est toujours lente et faible dans ses commencements, comme elle est prompte et vive dans sa fin; qui ne montre d'abord qu'une main pour secourir, et opprime ensuite avec une infinité de bras".

[3] Alexis de Tocqueville, *De la démocratie en Amérique*, Flammarion, Paris, 1981, V.II, p.274

[4] Pitirim Sorokin: *Les amers moissons du Mars*, Temps nouveaux, Nr. 51, 1990.

[5] Paul Tillich: *Main Works*, De Gruyter, New York, 1988, p. 185.

[6] Paul Tillich: *Idem*, p. 188.

[7] Stefan Zweig, *LE MONDE D'HIER Souvenir d'un Européen*, Belfond, Paris, 1993, p. 21. "Nous avons dû donner raison à Freud, quand il ne voyait dans notre culture qu'une mince couche que peuvent crever à chaque instant les forces destructrices du monde souterrain, nous avons dû nous habituer peu à peu à vivre sans terre ferme sous nos pieds, sans droit, sans liberté, sans sécurité".

[8] Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois*, Flammarion, Paris, 1979, p. 275. "La société est l'union des hommes, et non pas les hommes; le citoyen peut périr, et l'homme rester".

[9] HUSSERL, *La crise des sciences européennes et la phénoménologie transcendantale*, tel Gallimard, Paris, 1976, p. 382-383. "La crise de l'existence européenne ne peut avoir que deux issues: ou bien le déclin de l'Europe devenue étrangère à son propre sens rationnel de la vie, la chute dans la haine spirituelle et la barbarie, ou bien la renaissance de l'Europe à partir de l'esprit de la philosophie, grâce à un héroïsme de la raison qui surmonte définitivement le naturalisme.

Le plus grand danger de l'Europe est la lassitude. Combattons en tant que « bons européens » contre ce danger de dangers, avec cette vaillance qui ne s'effraye pas non plus de l'infinité du combat, et nous verrons alors sortir du brasier nihiliste, du feu roulant du désespoir qui doute de la vocation de l'Occident à l'égard de l'humanité, des cendres de la grande lassitude, le Phénix ressuscité d'une nouvelle vie intérieure et d'un nouveau souffle spirituel, gage d'un grand et long avenir pour l'humanité : car l'esprit seul est immortel ».

[10] Branko Merxhani, *Vepra*, Plejad, Tirane, 2003, p. 238.

[11] A. de Tocqueville, *De la démocratie en Amérique*, Flammarion, Paris, V. II, 1981, p. 394

[12] Paul Valéry, *Variété 1 et 2*, idées/Gallimard, Paris, 1924, p. 24. « Europe va-t-elle garder sa prééminence dans tous les genres? L'Europe deviendra-t-elle ce qu'elle est en réalité, c'est-à-dire: un

petit cap du continent asiatique? Ou bien Europe restera-t-elle ce qu'elle paraît, c'est-à-dire: la partie précieuse de l'univers terrestre, la perle de la sphère, le cerveau d'un vaste corps? ».

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