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## MULTICULTURALISM AS A POLITICAL TOOL

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Maintenance of multiculturalism policy as a solution of social problems in Europe three decades ago today is considered as a cause of them. The collapse of multiculturalism ideas has been determined by the speech of German Chancellor Angela Merkel in October 2010. She publicly asserted that the multiculturalism policy have failed in Germany, as the immigrants didn't want to integrate into society and to adopt the culture of Germany and its values. Merkel's statement came to be a reflection of common attitudes in the European Union and it had been supported by the leaders of the European countries, such as Norway, France, Great Britain, Denmark, and etc.

According to the critics of multiculturalism, European countries have enabled abundant immigration without demanding enough integration that has destroyed social cohesion and public trust. Proponents of multiculturalism, on the other hand, claim that the problem is not in diversity but in racism.

Nevertheless, the truth about multiculturalism is far more complicated. Multiculturalism has become a premise for other social and political issues such as identity, political disappointment, and immigration. Different countries, moreover, have followed distinct models. For example, the United Kingdom has decided to give various ethnic communities more equal rights in the political system; Germany has encouraged immigrants to pursue separate lives and tried to prevent granting them citizenship; and France has rejected multicultural policies in favor of assimilationist. The particular outcomes have also differed: in the United Kingdom there has been communal violence; in Germany Turkish communities have distanced from mainstream society; and in France, the relationship between North African community and the local authorities have become highly intense. Altogether, the consequences have been the same: fragmented societies and detached minorities.

Multiculturalism as a political tool has functioned not only as a response to diversity but also as a means of constraining it which, afterwards, provides a paradox. Although, multicultural policies accept that societies are diverse, they implicitly assume that such diversity stops at minority communities. By compelling people into ethno-cultural boxes these policies help create the divisions and separations they were meant to manage.

Consideration of the multiculturalism debate requires understanding the concept itself. The term 'multicultural' has come to define both a society that is particularly diverse and the policies necessary to manage such society.

Both proponents and critics of multiculturalism broadly accept the premise that mass immigration has transformed European societies by making them more diverse. Today, Germany is the world's second most popular immigrant destination after the United States. According to statistics, in 2013 more than 10 million people, or just over 12 % of the population, were born abroad. [1] From a historical perspective, however, the claim that the European countries are more plural than ever is not as straightforward as it may seem.

For instance, in France during the French Revolution only half of the population spoke French

and only around 12 % of them spoke it in correct form. As the historian Eugen Weber indicated, modernization and unification of France in the Revolution's aftermath required a complex and long process of cultural, educational, political, and economic re-establishment. In an address to the Medico-Psychological Society of Paris in 1857, Philippe Buchez concerned how it could happen that 'within a population such as ours, races may form - not merely one, but several races - so miserable, inferior and bastardised that they may be classed as below the most inferior savage races, for their inferiority is sometimes beyond cure.' [2] Interesting to notice that the 'races' that caused Buchez such anxiety were not immigrants from Africa or Asia but the rural poor in France.

In England many Britons also viewed the urban working class and the rural poor as the other. A pattern of working-class life in East London's Bethnal Green was typical of Victorian middle-class attitudes. 'The Bethnal Green poor' were 'a caste apart, a race of whom we know nothing, whose lives are of quite different complexion from ours, persons with whom we have no point of contact.' [3] Today Bethnal Green represents the heart of the Bangladeshi community in East London. Majority of white population see its inhabitants as the new 'Bethnal Green poor'.

Over the past years the value of class has been diminished, both as a political category and as an indicator of social identity. And culture has become an increasingly central means through which people perceive social differences. As a result, Europeans have begun to see themselves and their social affiliations in a different way. Today they increasingly define social unity not in political terms but rather in terms of ethnicity, culture, or faith and they are concerned less with determining the kind of society they want to create than with defining the community to which they belong.

Among the most extended myths is that the governments implemented multicultural policies because minorities wanted to pick out their differences. During the late 1940-50s a massive flow of immigrants from the Caribbean, India, and Pakistan came into the United Kingdom to get job places. It resulted at the fear of British officials that the immigrants might undermine the country's sense of identity. However, the immigrants preserved their traditions and customs; they were not meant to distinguish their cultural differences and did not consider culture as a political tool. Moreover, there was not a desire to be treated differently but the fact that they were treated differently. Racism and inequality were their key concerns and they tried to represent it. In the following decades, a new generation of immigrant activists has formed groups which organized strikes and protests that involved such issues as deportations, workplace discrimination, and police violence.

As a result, British authorities recognized that unless minority communities were given political rights in the system, such strains would continue to threaten urban stability. And this is how the multiculturalism policy emerged: the state adopted a new strategy of inclusion immigrant communities into the mainstream political process. The policy allows specific organizations or community leaders to represent their interests. Today, surprisingly, the concepts of racism and equality have been reviewed: racism now meant not simply the denial of equal rights but also the denial of the right to be different; and equality no longer caused possessing rights that exceeded race, ethnicity, culture, and faith as it meant affirming different rights because of them. One of the main causes of the implemented policy crisis in the United Kingdom and Germany was that governments failed to recognize the complexity and elasticity of identity.

Considering the example of Muslim identity, today there is a vigorous debate in European countries of a so-called Muslim community. But to account this tendency the main formation steps should be find out. The first generation of North African immigrants to France was broadly secular, similar as the first generation of Turkish immigrants to Germany was. In contrast with the first wave of South Asian immigrants arrived in the United Kingdom after WWII that was more religious. Although religious, they did not show their faith lightly: many men drank alcohol and only few women wore a hijab. Members of the second generation of Britons with Muslim backgrounds were even less likely to identify with their religion. The organizations that gather immigrants together were primarily secular and often political.

Only in the 1980s the issue of cultural differences became significant. Ironically the westernized generation turned out to be the more interested at maintaining its expected

distinctiveness. The reasons of this tendency are complex: partly they are based on a wide range of social, political, and economic changes over the past half century, such as the collapse of the left parties and the rise of identity politics and international developments, and partly they are caused by European multicultural policies.

Multicultural policies try to build a bridge between the state and minority communities by looking to particular community organizations and leaders to act as intermediaries. Rather than perceiving Muslims and other minorities as citizens, political authorities tend to assume the genuine loyalty of minorities to the ethnic community. Such leaders are, however, rarely representative of their communities as they are sometimes more different between themselves than with the white population.

Two different policy responses to the fragmentation of the society are multiculturalism and assimilationism. And both of them have had the effect of worsening the process. Kenan Malik, The International New York Times journalist and writer, on his latest paper proposed three main suggestion of resolving this problem:

- 1) Diversity as a lived experience should be separated from multiculturalism as a political process.
- 2) Disregard to racial differences should be distinguished from disregard to racism.
- 3) The link between peoples and values should be strongly differentiated. [4]

Multiculturalists argue that societal diversity destroys the possibility of common values while assimilationists suggest that such values are possible only within a more culturally homogeneous society. Both regard minority communities as homogeneous complex with a particular set of cultural faiths, beliefs, and values, rather than as constituent parts of a modern democracy. Following the proposals of Kenan Malik, “an ideal policy should take multiculturalism’s embrace of actual diversity, rather than its tendency to institutionalize differences, and assimilationism’s resolve to treat everyone as citizens, rather than its tendency to construct a national identity by characterizing certain groups as alien to the nation”. [4]

Concluding all mentioned above, I would like to point out the following: multiculturalism policy from its early beginning has been formed as a political tool and it was aimed to response to diversity but ended up by constraining it and helping to create the divisions of cultural differences of immigrant nations. That, eventually, caused the factor of the multiculturalism failure. Although, the real integration is shaped primarily by civil society, individual relations, and the organizations they establish to their shared political and social interests. It is the destruction of such values that leads assimilationist policy failures to multicultural ones and explains why social indifference is a feature of the whole society. Until the revision of the system of multicultural policies the crisis of it will continue and increase the following threats and dangers.

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### **ЭВОЛЮЦИЯ СТРАТЕГИИ ПРОДВИЖЕНИЯ ЛЕВОГО ПОВОРОТА В СТРАНАХ ЛАТИНСКОЙ АМЕРИКИ**