EUROPEAN SPACE AND SECURITY OF ROMANIAN MINORITIES

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Abstract: *Promoting multiculturalism and minority rights protection and security in the European face mentalities and attitudes that affect the development of the European Union, fueling skepticism and future of the Union. At the same time, we notice the emphasis of some national, at times nationalist, consolidation processes, the final target of such manifestations being often represented by the minority communities and the Romanians all over the world have to deal with various challenges in relation to the majorities of the host-countries. At present, the Romanian State must rethink its relationship with the Romanians abroad, being necessary to strengthen communication and partnerships both with the Romanian communities from the Romanian historical space and with the Romanian emigrants, the aim being to safeguard their security. The states member of the European Union was meant to create the legal framework and the necessary tools for the Union to face new threats to the security of European citizens, primarily in respect of their rights.*

Keywords: *minorities, European area, multiculturalism, ethnic communities, nationalism*

1. INTRODUCTION

It is almost impossible to state that the countries of the world are ethnically and religiously homogeneous, that the boundaries were drawn so as to cover the entire national population or only that part of the population which only represents the nation state. In reality the minority populations cohabit at a large extent with the majority of population and other ethnic groups, and factors of the present period - which is marked by the process of globalization - contribute largely to the immigration phenomenon and to an exchange of populations that leads to the creation of minorities in different geographical areas.

This situation which increases worldwide strongly marked the international politics as well as the regional, zonal and local ones in recent years, including Europe. The European Union was facing the whole complex of issues related to the rights of minorities, and the EU enlargement is somehow "counteracted" both from the inside and outside by the existence and activity of groups that accuse the loss of identity or ethnic assimilation during the integration process. Limiting our approach to the issue of the European minority problem and to the ethnic conflicts we may state that these were during the last two centuries the reason of escalating interstate tensions often leading to armed conflicts under the pretext or in trying to protect the rights of these ethnic groups.

After the World War II, Western Europe has been creating a supranational structure, the European Union, which brought economic prosperity, social stability, enhanced democracy and extended rights and freedoms. The explanation for the success of this construction was initially based on shared values and later on collective interests. The implementation of this model was an alternative to the countries of central, eastern and southeastern Europe, generating a joint effort with the purpose of achieving the unification of Europe and strengthening the awareness of a common European identity.

However, despite the efforts done in the recent years, with the European Union adopting common security policies, the main area of instability was and still is the Central and Eastern Europe where the new nation states appeared on ethnical basis. In the last twenty years at European level there have been many efforts to strengthen the rights of national minorities and strengthening mechanisms and instruments of identity protection and monitoring of minority groups, but the current regionally occurring changes require greater involvement of states in the region in defense of minority rights.

Also Romanians abroad and mainly in the immediate vicinity of Romania have managed to address various challenges in relation to their ethnic majorities and societies of the host countries.

2. THE MINORITIES' ISSUES AND THE EUROPEAN MULTICULTURALISM

Historical and social developments that have marked the evolution of Central and Eastern European countries have failed to create ethnically homogeneous states, so that after acquiring independence, sovereignty and borders delimitation it has registered an increase of the need of self-determination expressed by the ethnic minorities who remained on those territories, under the motivation of the need to respect the identity rights. To counter these slippages in trying to protect and respect the rights of all citizens and of emerging or newly created minorities, the European Union imported from the United States the concept of multiculturalism, a concept that aims to provide a framework for group identity affirmation, a step toward the cultural autonomy of minorities which is invoked as the primary element of identity preservation, but unfortunately, the cultural autonomy was sometimes confused with administrative autonomy based on ethnic criteria.

Multiculturalism means strengthening minorities in the form of virtual communities that can be found under a common identity, built on a common heritage and on cultural policies that promote modern governance and security. Thus, the multiculturalism concept can be created and promoted by every state and every citizen, the human kind having the ability to create societies that include several ethnic linguistic and religious communities. This is the only viable solution being given the fact that Europe consists of 28 states with 80 nations, which does not mean the creation of 80 mono-ethnic and mono-religious states, the states being forced to accept the political system and the values of the European federalism which is based on this idea: a supranational public authority and a multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic society in contrast with the claims of nationalists who state that democracy can function only in a cultural homogeneous space.

By creating the European Union and by its enlargement, no matter how one tries, neither politicians nor the states succeeded in recreating the much promised multiculturalism, not even the countries that are pretending to be democratic and which couldn't demonstrate than declarative level the respect for minority rights. Moreover, the economic crisis after 2007 and 2008 did nothing else than to emphasize nationalist feelings but also racism, xenophobia and protectionism. Some citizens, those who were most exposed to the crisis, feel that the main causes are outside the country, responsible for this being the foreigners and they can protect themselves only by staying within national hermetic borders, a concept created at the declarative level by the politicians who support this myth of State protection, a concept fed and legitimized by the latter.

3. FROM THE EUROPEAN SECURITY AND THE SECURITY OF ITS CITIZENS

The beginning of the 21st century was and still is characterised by an acceleration of the globalisation and regional integration processes, concomitantly with the persistence and escalade of certain ethnic and inter-confessional conflicts, ending up in state fragmentation. In Europe, the security environment has been strongly influenced by some country border changes, such as the fall of the Berlin Wall (which led to the peaceful reunification of Germany in 1990), the division of Czechoslovakia in 1992 in two countries, the Czech Republic and Slovakia (according to the two nations which formed the former republic established in 1918), the dissolution of USSR in 1991 (each of the 15 component republics splitting along ethnic criteria and, subsequently, proclaiming their independence), and afterwards the division of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a conglomeration of six regional republics and two autonomous provinces which chose to separate along ethnic principles.

Taking into account the new changes in the security environment in the context of globalization and multiculturalism, security means security of every individual both in the state in which he lives and in the state in which he or she develops himself/herself. Given that countries are seen more and more as instruments in the citizen's service and the individual rights of each person are mirrored in the emergence of the citizen's sovereignty, the protection of these rights represents the essence of modern security. Although minority rights are still enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (C 326/13, 2012) in which it is stated that "the Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities" and that "these values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men are present", so far a consensus

was not reached in this direction in all European countries.

In terms of culture, identity and diversity in the European area, the emphasis is put on the diversity of national cultures in the Union, not on the diversity of national cultures. Efforts to protect national identity are visible in Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union (1992), in which the values underlying the Union (including human rights) are followed by an indication that the Union shall respect the national identities of the Member States without an explicit provision concerning the protection of minorities. The Treaty, as mentioned before, does not define identity or culture, and we can not help to ask ourselves whether these provisions protect culture / identity prevailing in the Member States, without extending this protection to minorities or immigrant cultures. In terms of immigrant integration, this approach leads again to the idea that integration is primarily a matter for the Member States and the idea of conformity with the social values must be protected. Thus, the official documents of the European Union stand out clearly that the value system of existence, such as democracy, freedom, equality and the rule of law; human dignity; rights and freedoms; national identity; civic freedom, political pluralism; property and the market economy; solidarity and international cooperation; dialogue and communication constitute the basic values supporting the European new concept aimed in Europe. In our view, these values give some authenticity to the new geopolitical perspective of all Member States which keep as a duty their protection through specific measures supported by the national security system, an integral part of European security.

4. ROMANIAN STATE RELATIONS WITH MINORITIES IN ROMANIA

Romania has always been a promoter of multicultural policies in the European space; multiculturalism being a characteristic of Romanian civilization in general. Romania was for Europe a balance point of nationalist policies that marked the center and eastern European space, a counterbalance to the attacks on minorities and on the communities created on the basis of identity. Even before EU integration, Romania was among the first countries to ratify the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Law no. 33/1995.

Romania understood that identity values and promoting multiculturalism are factors of cohesion for local communities, a catalyst for progress and modernization efforts, trying to bring them in line with constitutional norms and European based values on respect for the specific identity of all citizens and minority communities. National minorities in Romania are not a unique experience; they are stories that are sometimes well-defined by regional identity. Romania promoted interethnic dialogue, multicultural educational initiatives, guaranteeing the rights of national minorities, these being only some of the preoccupations of the Department for Interethnic Relations operating within the General Secretariat of the Government. Currently in Romania there are 19 associations representing the ethnic minorities, their members actively participating in social and political life, being part of the Romanian society.

5. ROMANIAN STATE AND ROMANIAN MINORITIES' RELATIONS IN THE NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

After 1990, the relations with diasporas have become a constant concern of Romanian authorities, both in the context of deepening bilateral relations with the states in which there are communities of Romanian origin or culture and under the protection of the rights of national minorities and their protection was established as one of the permanent priorities of the post-revolutionary governments as well as for European institutions. However, Bucharest authorities support the Romanian ethnic minorities at a very limited extent and do not use fully the European and international legislation on the protection and promotion of the rights of these minorities in Europe.

Even more worrying is a clear series of tendencies to sponsor the appearance of concurrent speeches and other names for the communities of Romanians. This phenomenon of creation of new ethno-linguistic groups is extremely damaging and could concern the artificial reduction of the communities of Romanians, with multiple repercussions: the funds they should receive from the host-states, the erosion and loss of credibility of the Romanian associative environment, marginalising the Romanian identity, intimidating Romanians in order to declare themselves Romanians, affecting the potential for the development of the Romanian community. Thus, despite the prospects of integration and

Community policies in the Eastern and Southeastern Europe we identify some kind of identity issues facing the Romanian communities or the ethno-linguistic minority related. A brief analysis is not exhaustive, shows that:

In Ukraine, the process of "moldavianising" the communities of Romanians, especially in Odessa region still goes on, along with the introduction of the terminology of "Moldavian language" with the afferent didactic materials. Minority or Romanian community in Ukraine (see Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, www.mae.ro) would be the third ethnic group after Ukrainians and Russians if not be artificially divided into Romanian (151,000 people) and "Moldovan" (258,600 people). The community faces serious problems arising from access to education in their mother tongue, the official use of the Romanian language in administration and justice, funding for minority associations Romanian, Romanian-language media, keeping religious identity, representation in the government, lack of representation parliamentary restitution of property that belonged to the Romanian community etc.

We notice similar measures in Serbia. The largest part of the historical Romanian community on the Timoc Valley is placed under the name of "Vlach", accrediting the idea that the Romanians from Timoc use the so-called "Vlach" speech. The Romanian community in Serbia (mae.ro, 2015) is seen particularly in two regions, Vojvodina and the other part in northeastern Serbia, in the area known generically as the Timoc Valley. The community members are subjected to an aggression to their identity, including the artificial division into "Vlach" and Romanian. The results of the 2011 census recorded a total of 29,332 of Romanian or 0.41% of the population (compared to 34,576 in 2002 to 0.46%) and 35,330 of "Vlachs" or 0.49% of the population. According to the Romanian organizations in the territory, the 2011 census results do not reflect the real situation; unofficial estimates indicate a much higher number of Romanian ethnics[1]. As stated before, the main

problem is the Romanian minority in Serbia and the artificial separation between the Romanian majority registered in Vojvodina and "Vlachs" in northeastern Serbia and Timoc Valley, the two "communities" being treated differently.

A different situation is in Macedonia (mae.ro, 2015) where "Aromanian" community is recognized in the Constitution of this state as a constituent people. However, in practice, there is trouble in its rights in terms of the allocation of funds from the state to finance Macedonian community organizations and the organization of cultural activities[2], the right to self-identification through the use of the term Aromanian.

The Romanian community in Bulgaria (mae.ro, 2015), according to the census of 2001, numbered 1088 Romanians, and under the name of "Vlachs" or "Macedo" there were 10,566 other people. The census forms mentioned in special boxes the ethnic group and the mother tongue, but "Vlachs" and Aromanians were not specified, although they are recognized as such and Romanians (unrecognized as ethnic group) and Romanian language not mentioned. According to the appreciation of the Romanian leaders of some associations from Bulgaria, the Romanians in the country are on the second place after the Turkish minority, counting for about 150,000 people, who can be found especially in localities situated along the Danube and in the northeast, in the former Quadrilater. Bulgarian Constitution does not recognize the existence of national minorities, but ethnic groups, "Vlachs" and "Aromanians" are recognized as ethnic groups to the Romanians in Bulgaria who have this status.

Romanian Community in Greece (mae.ro, 2015), according to estimations, because the Greek state does not recognize national minorities, consists of approximately 100,000 people, of which approx. 5,000 people who live in this country.

Romanian minority in Hungary (mae.ro, 2015), according to the Hungarian census of 2011, are a

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[1] According to the 1921 Census, states Adina Berciu-Dr ghicescu in his book *Românii din Balcani*, 231,000 residents lived in Yugoslavia with Romanian language, thus distributed: the Yugoslav Banat - 67,896; Craina districts, Požarevac, Timoc and Morava - 145,000; and the rest of the country - 18,143. The Yugoslav Banat, Romanian living in about 80 villages, and 35 of them were in the majority. In 1919 there were 66 primary schools Romanian (18 were religious), with 43 teachers

and 48 schools with 62 communal Romanian Institute. In 1939, the Yugoslav Banat operated 33 state primary schools teaching in Romanian, the courses are enrolled 4,324 students, and teaching was supported by 79 teachers (40 were Romanian and Yugoslavian state pay 39 coming from Romania state expense Romanian).

[2] Direct or in collaboration with other institutions, the Minister of Foreign Affairs has helped support related community in the Republic of Macedonia including the publication of journals and the second volume of the Linguistic Atlas of dialects Meglenoromanians.

total of 26 345 people, of which 13 886 people have said Romanian language is their mother tongue, while 17 983 people have said they use Romanian language as a communication tool. In addition to local Romanian ethnics in neighboring settled over the years, with a particularly positive trend after 1990 Romanian citizens, especially in western country, which were integrated into the Romanian community in Hungary, data produced Hungarian institutions revealing that more than 100,000 were Romanian speaking Hungarian citizens.

Related to the foregoing, redefine a European historical space is difficult and influenced by the nationalist tendencies of some states contrary to their statements of promoting multiculturalism and supporting the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all citizens of the Member States. Romania should continue its policies of protecting ethnic minorities' rights on its territory while reconsidering the position of ensuring Romanian minority' rights and security by strengthening communication and partnerships with both the historical communities of Romanian in Balkan neighbouring countries and with those countries with new Romanian communities

6. CONCLUSIONS

The security environment is continuously changing in the vicinity and within the European Union due to the existence of long-standing disputes, many of which are determined by the need to preserve minority identity in a space of majority. The idea of a united Europe built for Europeans means a review of national policies to ensure minority rights in terms of every European citizen rights. European unification and expansion can not, however, only preserve, promote and cultivate cultural identities. The ethnic, national and cultural identity can be "sacrificed" in exchange for economic prosperity imposed by globalization. Consequently, for the sake of its survival, the European Union must be a multi-identity one, a union marked by tolerance and understanding among all ethnicities. That Europe has become a viable one for all its citizens, it is necessary to remove all barriers that prevent access to freedom, the rights of all citizens, respecting community that must ensure the protection of fundamental rights of all citizens, wherever they are in the Member States.

The importance that the European institutions attach to human rights issues and, in particular, the rights of persons belonging to minority / ethnic communities is part of the "basic pack" that any democratic state with European aspirations should take so all states in the region who want to integrate the European Union must assert and prove the options open to this. We consider that the Romanian state should reconsider its position against Romanian citizens abroad and to try the approach in bilateral relations with the States in which there are Romanian ethnic communities in order to support their rights and freedoms. Unfortunately until now the Romanian state could not create a viable strategy and concrete historical space adjacent to the Romanian minority or diasporas strategy to connect the security interests of Romanians in the Community with European multiculturalism policies.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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