

REVIEW OF DEMOCRACY AND ETHNIC RELATIONS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to use the language of the profession and science to highlight the current relationships and possibilities for the development of democratic principles and institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina on one hand, and on the other hand, ethnicity as a concept and phenomenon, which, according to some contemporary experts on social conditions and issues, is a significant obstacle to the development of a modern multiethnic state. Perhaps this modern multiethnic state with democratic institutions currently seems like a political utopia from the time of Thomas Hobbes, but judging by the current relations, as well as the complexity of these relations within Bosnia and Herzegovina, the construction of a multiethnic state with democratic institutions will be “on hold” for some time, most likely until the reconfiguration of the world order into a multipolar world.

Keywords: *ethnicity, modern society, BiH, democracy, multi-ethnic state.*

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INTRODUCTION

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country considered complex in international relations, viewed within a constitutional-political context. The state has existed in its current form since 1995, i.e. since the Dayton Peace Agreement, which put an end to the armed conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina that had ethnic, religious, territorial, and cultural elements.

Ethnicity and ethnic divisions serve as the main means of controlling the broader masses of citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina by domestic politicians. By spreading fear of each other among the different groups, these politicians hide their long-standing political passivity and other negative deviations, and ultimately their responsibility for the current unfavorable economic, security, and political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For democracy to function and institutions to operate smoothly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there needs to be a consensus among political representatives to enable policy-making and political decision-making.

In deeply divided societies and fragile states like Bosnia and Herzegovina, value consensus among the political elite is a crucial condition for the functioning and survival of the state. Representatives in power are tasked with the normative integration of society and fostering healthy competition within political structures. Political actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina are entirely responsible for the current state of society, including social, economic, security, and all other issues, and must therefore bear that responsibility. Ethnic conflicts and political interethnic conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina are unnecessary and extremely radical, something that the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina absolutely do not need and increasingly find uninteresting due to the economic situation.

Precisely for this reason, this paper aims to focus on the current state of the relationship between democracy on one side and ethnic relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the other. This approach will allow future readers-users of these lines to question where we are heading as a people and as peoples. It will prompt them to consider why, instead of democratically established institutions where decisions should be made with respect for everyone and the culture of dialogue, decisions are made

by individuals who, hiding behind ethnic affiliation and “national interest,” make decisions solely for their own benefit and the benefit of their close circle of associates.

1. THE CONCEPT OF ETHNICITY IN THEORY

Of course, as with many other terms in contemporary theory, there is disagreement over the very

attempt to define certain concepts, and we encounter the same situation with the term ethnicity. However, summarizing all the offered definitions, we can briefly state that ethnicity refers to belonging to an ethnic community. The first part of the word, “ethnos,” signifies something related to people and nationality, something that is national. The term “ethnos” comes from the Greek word “ethnikos,” meaning people. Ethnicity is a term found in anthropological, sociological, and sociolinguistic literature. According to a general encyclopedia, more than half a century ago, ethnicity became a strategic concept within anthropological theories, partly in response to post-colonial geopolitical changes and a wave of ethnic revival worldwide. Ethnicity encompasses the entirety of content associated with ethnos, i.e. everything related to people and nationality. It is also referred to as ethnic affiliation. The importance of ethnic affiliation lies in the creation of individual and group identities. The interest in ethnicity shows that every community, in relation to another, is in a hierarchical relationship of power and thus feels the need to strengthen the foundations of its unity and establish boundaries with others (Šupek, 1998).

Observing the current relations among ethnic groups “around the globe,” we can say that it is almost a universally accepted practice for each ethnic group to highlight what differentiates it from others and to extol the characteristic of its people that makes it unique. Communities build their identities precisely on this differentiation. Bromley believes that one of the key characteristics distinguishing ethnic communities from other communities is that there is mutual confrontation between them (Grbić, 1993). For a better understanding of the very definition of the term ethnicity, I consider Kozlov’s definition as one of the most fre-

quently cited and referenced definitions in contemporary theory. Namely, Kozlov believes that an ethnic community can be defined as a type of social grouping that arises as a result of a special historical development based on a community of territories and language (Grbić, 1993). However, looking at the development of human civilization up to the present day, we can see that Bromley's opinion of the eternal mutual conflict between ethnicities becomes inevitable. As a confirmation of this view, we can note that the vast majority of wars and armed conflicts conducted across all meridians of the world have started and been fought due to intolerance of different cultures, religions, etc.

To move beyond the definition of the term ethnicity, in the following written lines, I will outline the characteristics of ethnicity and explore whether they can, in certain cases, be part of cohesive elements in a multiethnic society. Researching contemporary literature, we can often see that the fundamental features of ethnicity are:

- Togetherness
- Dynamism and flexibility
- Permanence

The elements of community can be said to stem from three groups of factors: the need for a sense of belonging to avoid the fear of loneliness and the need for communication with other people; the current social situations (e.g., resistance to potential unification, assimilation, acculturation); and finally, existential differences (striving for the most efficient and productive use of life/ecological resources). Unlike togetherness, dynamism and flexibility primarily arise from the need for change and the satisfaction of interest groups. Changeability encompasses everything subject to the necessity of structural adaptation, including general living conditions (e.g., cultural adaptation-clothing, agriculture, language) and specific living conditions, such as adaptation to an interethnic environment. Flexibility is reflected in what is termed "periods of heightened awareness of ethnic identity." In line with the current interests of their group, the bearers of its identity can manipulate it. For example, the identity can be concealed by changing one's name and surname to avoid discrimination, prejudice, and similar issues.

The permanence of ethnicity is linked to its dynamic and flexible nature, as well as its history. This includes the emergence of the original identity, with the fundamental assumption that every group has always had an identity, and the continuous experience of togetherness in terms of the collective history, assuming that every group has always had an identity (Grbić, 1993).

According to Anthony Smith, there are six main characteristics of an ethnic community, or ethnicities, as he also calls them:

- Collective name
- Myth of common ancestry
- Shared historical memories
- One or more differentiating elements of common culture
- Association with a “homeland”
- Sense of solidarity among significant portions of the population (Grbić, 1993).

Theories of ethnicity explain social and political changes, identities formation, social conflicts, nation-building and assimilation. Bosnia and Herzegovina is an ideal place for theorists studying ethnicity.

2. DEMOCRACY AND ETHNIC RELATIONSHIPS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a typically segmented state and society. It is segmented by various characteristics: ethnic, religious, regional, cultural-historical. However, the structuring of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a state does not recognize this factual plurality. Misinterpreted, the *raison d'état* prevents Bosnia and Herzegovina from politically (state-wise) constituting itself pluralistically. Since the state organization and political articulation do not acknowledge this factual plurality, it is difficult to speak of democracy, especially contemporary pluralistic one based on the political subjectivity of various segments (groups, organizations, collectives, regions, ethnic communities).

National states that emerged from the ruins of communist ideologies and orders (and Bosnia and Herzegovina is one such state) have a chance for democratic organization and modern political, economic, and social development only if they do not persist in the principles on which they were constituted ethnocentrism and national exclusivity.

Emphasizing collective (national) entities and their identities and self-respect which is today a characteristic of all post-communist societies (including Bosnia and Herzegovina) neglects individual self-respect or even denounces it as an undesirable dissonance. In their protest against “socialist collectivism,” the current national collectivism is destroying even the little individualism that had begun to take root in the arid soil of socialist collectivism.

Due to the communist involution in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in most post-communist societies, and due to the lack of a democratic tradition, there is neither relevant political awareness nor real differentiation of autonomous spheres of social life. Under such conditions, there is no fundamental dichotomy between civil society and the political state. On the contrary, what is at work, in one way or another, is ideologically motivated political production of unity, formerly class-based and now national.

Facts show that communist and nationalist collectivism achieve an interesting symbiosis in almost all post-communist societies, including Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unfortunately, this is not to the benefit but to the detriment of democracy. With greater or lesser differences, conditioned by ethno-cultural, socio-historical, and other specificities, all post-communist societies have established a synthesis between ideologically transformed communists and nationalists. Such composite governing structures will not be able to stabilize the political order or remain in a forced marriage for long.

The kind of compromise we find in such structures is not a compromise for democracy but the one in favour of power and against democracy.

The greatest obstacle to the democratic organization of Bosnia and Herzegovina and other post-communist states (in addition to the lack of a democratic tradition) is precisely national collectivism. This collectivism

has adopted the ready-made model of communist (class) collectivism, which deprived the individual of freedom and political subjectivity. Any system that does not allow the individual to freely pursue their interests and goals, instead imposing higher interests (class, national, etc.), is undemocratic. Without this basic liberal assumption, as we have tried to show, there is no democracy.

Advocacy for democracy does not imply idealizing people. The people are always a given and existing category. Democracy is necessary for the people precisely because they are as they are: submissive, wavering, irresponsible, susceptible to manipulation, fickle, brutal. Democracy is a way to transform such a populace (the crowd, the mass) into a politically aware demo. There is no democracy without people, but there are no people without democracy either. We should strive for the best possible society and the best possible state, which is a democratically organized state. This is a state which minimises pressure and coercion while maximising agreement and consensus in given socio-historical circumstances.

The relationship between ethnic groups and the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina is multifaceted and dynamic. Ethnic identification can shape the state, but the state can and does shape ethnic identities and interethnic relations much more often than one might think. In other words, ethnicity is political in nature not only because it serves as a basis for mobilizing interest groups but also because it is a crucial factor in the creation, development, and maintenance of the most powerful political apparatus the state.

Nation-building is a particular issue for the elite when it initiates mobilization forces that support opposition to regimes. Many of these regimes strengthen the nation only if they believe they can successfully control people mobilizations from the top to solidify their central position. As it becomes clearer that nation-strengthening contains risks for central authority, such regime elites strive either to channel people mobilization into state-oriented directions or to demobilize ordinary citizens. In both cases, threatened regimes seek to strengthen state institutions and thus turn to state-building. Simultaneously, foreign interventions have also supported the emergence of state supremacy over the nation. Foreign interventions, through intergovernmental aid programs, multilateral loans,

and investments, have enhanced the role of the bureaucratic, military, and police institutions of the recipient state. It is precisely these institutions, rather than parties or governments, that are the main channels for receiving such foreign aid and investments. The political elite attempts to use such foreign interventions to replace the once-promising people activism.

States differ from other forms of political organization in that they have a monopoly on coercive power. States cannot be enduring and effective if their expansion and authority rest solely on coercion. Any elite that creates a state assumes it has the means of coercion at its disposal, which is indeed used far more often than it is usually acknowledged in the creation of most state systems.

Although it might be an additional effort for our analytical abilities, the most realistic approach to understanding the processes and ways of strengthening the state is to consider the relationships between various state bodies (bureaucracy, military, police, semi-state corporations) on the one hand and the relationship between the state and ethnic-class social stratification on the other. Ethnicity can be a very useful political tool for state regimes. The common saying is that ethnic affiliations are at best a nuisance and at worst a threat to modern governments. Ethnic identification of the population certainly presents a problem for the elite, but it has also proven to be a useful state tool that rulers skillfully use for party-building, population mobilization, suppressing opposition, and distributing rights and rewards.

The real purpose of development in Bosnian politics is the ability of existing political institutions and processes to anticipate and find relevant solutions to constantly changing public problems (Vejnović & Obrenović, 2019: 367).

Bosnia and Herzegovina is an ethnically fragmented community. Its constitution was preceded by ethnic conflict influenced by class, culture, institutional structures, and external factors. Ethnic hostilities grew from a combination of cultural distrust and power differences. They are also the product of the power abuse and, paradoxically, the lack of power. Abuse leads to the unfair distribution of state power and public services. The lack of power leads to the escalation of force without a real increase in the sense of security among ordinary citizens. Both abuse and lack of

power stem from the fact that the state elite is primarily devoted to maintaining the state order. Ignoring the role of force in shaping interethnic relations in the state means creating a wrong theory and unrealistic policy. Police and military and their interrelations are not only part of the reaction to ethnic polarization but are part of its cause

3. SOLVING THE INTERETHNIC CONFLICT IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

For any lasting resolution of ethnic conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a fundamental change in the distribution of political power and influence in society will be necessary. The resolution of interethnic conflict will not be permanent if the achieved security is only the security of the state, and not the security of every community within it.

Democracy is always, in all its aspects – conceptual, moral, and empirical – a compromise. All these aspects can be viewed in the compromise between the requirement that no person can be governed or imposed rules of behavior without their consent and the imperative of respecting general consensus. We do not need democracy as a decoration. We do not need it because we are equal, free, and virtuous, but precisely because we are unequal, unfree, and flawed. Democracy is neither harmony nor a guarantee of general concord, but it is certainly the most appropriate form of organizing relationships within a community, where the unequal will be less unequal, the unfree less unfree, and the powerless less powerless than in any other order.

One of the fundamental problems of democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina is how to replace actual pluralism with political democratic pluralism. How to resolve objective diversity and conflicting interests according to agreed-upon rules of the game, rather than through violence and repression. This will not be easy, as we have been practicing the latter for decades, not the former. Unlike totalitarian regimes, democracy does not hide or eliminate differences, disagreements, and conflicts, especially not by force. Democracy is also the habit of “coexistence” with differences, disagreements, and conflicts. In the democratic process and dem-

ocratic order, conflicts are legitimate and completely natural. Democracy is recognized by how it relates to and manages conflicts. A permanent and perhaps most important problem of democracy is in the following: how to continuously develop and preserve all the virtues and advantages of representative democracy and the principle of majority decision-making, while simultaneously protecting against the “tyranny of the majority,” which, like any other tyranny, can jeopardize democracy itself and the values it protects and promotes.

The national principle of state and political constitution cannot ensure either a democratic order or the protection of ethnic minorities. The national principle of constituting the entire order inevitably leads to national totalitarianism, for, among other things, the individuality that is the foundation of democracy is subordinated to the collective, supra-individual entity, while all other ethnic minorities are desubjectivized and discriminated against. Respecting the human rights-based criteria is not a secondary goal but a “superior” national goal.

A certain degree of hatred among different ethnic communities is still present in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a consequence of the war. Hatred as an integrating factor of a nation proves to be a limiting factor for the development of democracy. Hatred towards other peoples can homogenize one nation, but at the same time, it doubly handicaps it for democratic processes.

As a state in transition, Bosnia and Herzegovina is experiencing difficult times. It needs a democracy that guarantees peace, tranquility and good decisions, the democracy that entitles citizens to judge (and change) the quality of those decisions, the democracy that implies the rule of the public that makes public judgements, the democracy in which “personalities” do not rule, but laws, the democracy in which voters should liberate themselves from the tyranny of party organization, and people from the burden of the money and monopoly power, the democracy that resembles the old kitchen composed of elements that have been in use for two and a half thousand years.

Democracy, among other things, primarily means the equality of citizens to speak freely (...there is no wisdom without freedom of thought, and there is no public freedom without freedom of speech: it is the right

of every person, as long as it does not violate or hinder the rights of others; this is the only constraint that may limit it, the only boundary it should know. This sacred privilege is so crucial for free governance that the security of property and freedom of speech always go hand in hand, and in those unfortunate countries where a person cannot call their own language their own, they can hardly call anything else their own) and equality before the law.

Unlike all other forms of governance, democracy includes procedures for making collective decisions in a way that ensures the fullest and highest quality participation of interested parties. The minimum requirements of democratic procedures are as follows: “equal and universal suffrage for adult citizens, majority rule, and guaranteed minority rights, which stipulate that collective decisions must receive the approval of a large number of those entitled to make them, the rule of law, and finally, constitutional guarantees for freedom of association and expression, as well as other freedoms that ensure that people expected to make decisions, or to choose those who decide, can choose between genuine alternatives (Keane, 1995: 234).” In Bosnia and Herzegovina, democracy is under attack from various undemocratic tendencies such as legislative bodies weakening and the expansion of secret agencies and organizations, as well as other forms of state censorship.

Unlike totalitarian regimes, democracy does not hide or eliminate differences, disagreements, and conflicts, especially not by force. Democracy is about getting used to “coexistence” with differences, disagreements, and conflicts. In the democratic process and democratic system, conflicts are legitimate and completely natural (Vejnović, 2014: 183). Democracy is recognized by its attitude towards conflicts and how it manages them. The concept of interests implies conflict, so in a society of free interplay of interests, conflict is an integral and legitimate part of that interplay. According to the concept of liberal democracy, interests are controlled through political governance by means of powers division, respect for human rights and freedoms, and the right to opposition. The prerequisite for all this is free elections.

In today’s transition period from political monism to political pluralism, liberal-democratic values are becoming the “political axis” around

which almost the entire planet revolves. These values are primarily:

- economy liberation from political tutelage,
- civil society creation,
- citizens constitution,
- Legal state and the rule of law,
- systematic control of political power holders,
- division of powers,
- parliamentarism and political pluralism,
- democratic type of electoral system,
- institutionalized public and freedom of information,
- participatory democratic type of political culture and civil society.

Social upheavals globally, as well as those in Bosnia and Herzegovina, increasingly demonstrate the “need for the state”; the dangers of new statism and totalitarianism are present and the demand for democracy and a democratic order is posed as an imperative (Vejnović & Obrenović, 2019:345).

4. DIALOGUE AND TOLERANCE CULTURE IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Dialogue and tolerance are powerful barriers against the rule of unilateralism. Nowadays, dialogue and tolerance are demands of the time, as the world is divided in all possible ways (Šušnjić, 1990:155).

People, things, and ideas move in both horizontal and vertical directions, and it is no wonder they feel the need to know and understand each other. There is room in human reality for all differences and oppositions. The demand for tolerance indicates that the main contentious issue that needs to be addressed is, in fact, the issue of communication among people.

Speaking publicly about the need for dialogue means to acknowledge that not everything is right with the relationships between people in

society. One must understand the essence of dialogue and tolerance to see to what extent a given society has failed in everyday human relations. The degree of democratic development a society has reached can also be measured by its attitudes towards dialogue and tolerance. People are tolerant only when they are capable of listening, thinking, and adopting something from another person who agrees with them. Today, the scope of democracy, as well as culture, can be measured by the boundaries of tolerance and the manner of conducting conversations. There is no dialogue where social consciousness is tabooed, where apologetic thinking prevails and all imagination is banished. Such societies push dialogical subjects and their opinions to the margins of social life and the overall social communication is tied to a predetermined type of consensus. Some subjects of communication are presented as myths and thereby, it is communicated to everyone else in advance that they are not, nor can they be equal in communication with them. The absence of dialogue is most drastically manifested in those societies where only those who are predetermined to speak are heard.

Therefore, we must first strive for communication among equal social subjects, and then set an even higher goal—fostering social dialogue and dialogue within society.

Historical times, which we understand to be those marked by the spirit of change, typically set certain “categorical imperatives.” One such imperative nowadays in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in the entire world, is dialogue. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, where multiple religions and nations are condemned to live in the same space, a foundation is either created for mutual tolerance or mutual extermination. If we cannot live with each other, we could at least coexist: mutual tolerance is a necessary condition in a society of religious and national diversity. But the key to all our troubles lies in the manner of communication: people in this country do not know how to have a conversation, but they know how to wage war! Dialogue is the only way to avoid all evils. It is also the way to prevent thought from being confined to a system and life from being imprisoned: every closed system tends to disintegrate, whether it concerns a person, society, or culture. Every disintegration of a community is nothing but a break in communication, a wasteland in human relations. When a community disintegrates, no one wins and everyone loses.

However, so much printer's ink has been wasted on "the need for dialogue" and "the necessity of dialogue" that it would be enough to print all the written thoughts across the world for at least two years, and words, as is known, become sluggish and helpless from overuse, so that even dialogue itself becomes problematic and questionable. One does not need to discuss what is necessary, but it is essential to discuss what is possible. A dialogue that does not mediate between the real and the possible is not current and has no fuller significance for the culture it pertains to. Those in power turn all questions of possibilities into questions of necessity. They impose as fate what we have experienced as choice, essentially abolishing the true possibility of conversation. Therefore, it is necessary to move from a culture of speech to a culture of conversation, i.e. from a culture of fate to a culture of choice. Concepts such as hierarchy, necessity, coercion, power, despotism, structure, dogma, fate... dominate in the culture of speech. Conversely, in the culture of conversation, concepts of freedom, equality, cooperation, discovery, pluralism, choice, imagination and play prevail. In a society where only speeches are given without conversations, we have relations of power, not those of cooperation. This is evident from the very words of the messages, which more closely resemble the spirit of penal law than the beauty of free choice (Vejnović, 2014:176). When invoking freedom, those in power worship necessity, because without the concept of necessity, they cannot begin anything. They do not know, cannot, and do not understand how to converse because conversation implies equal interlocutors not subjects. But when a society truly feels that conversation is replacing speech, it is a sign that society is moving from necessity towards freedom, from structure towards culture, from fate towards choice. The transition from one way of thinking to another is also associated with abandoning one way of living in favor of another. Therefore, conversation as a way of living, not just as a method of thinking. This is why Professor Dr. Dragan Koković rightfully says that ... the entire human life requires tolerance among people as a connective tissue, as the juice of life. The assumption of all communication should be genuine tolerance, the expansion of its boundaries, the building of cultural pluralism. If these forms of pluralism are perceived only as a temporary and transient state, which must eventually be endured

and tolerated, while on the other hand everything is done to remove them, then there are certainly no prerequisites for building dialogue and tolerance (Koković, 1996: 156).

When it is known that the culture of dialogue not only requires the culture of the interlocutors but also presupposes democratic consciousness, a developed environment, and the habit of verifying everything that is assumed or hinted at, it becomes clearer why dialogue in Bosnia and Herzegovina, achieved through various “principles” and means, often remained helpless because it had no other ambition than to monologize. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, it has long been forgotten that one interlocutor acknowledged the superiority of the other’s argument. This could undoubtedly have been done many times, as it is a prerequisite for creative cooperation and the essence of dialogue. As long as interlocutors use cynicism as the last weapon of the powerless, it is difficult to expect the dialogue to be fruitful. In an atmosphere where there is no healthy confrontation, where there is no dialogue as an active consciousness and deeper meaning, where there is no creative play and search for ways to achieve more comprehensive human understanding, there is no progress in social and cultural life.

Being ready to engage in conversation means rejecting any thought of violence. As long as people are conversing, they are beyond any violence, misfortune and evil. “In conversation, every violent relationship is reduced to the framework of a dispute or conflict that can be managed without severe consequences. The moment individuals and groups reject violence as a way of resolving disputes and conflicts, their imagination and spirit open up to finding new paths for they can no longer rely on the old path of achieving goals, the path of violence. The way out of prolonged and severe violence, even in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Vejnović, 2014: 197), can only be found in another method of resolving conflicts. That method is dialogue, understanding, and negotiation (Šušnjić, 1994: 168).

Conversation is an attempt to discuss and resolve social problems by crossing evidence, not swords. It has already been said that human relationships occur in two forms:

- As power relationships
- As relationships of cooperation.

Consequently, a dialogue can be conducted either from positions of power or from positions of equality in the conversation. As long as we communicate with each other from positions of power, there can be no true conversation. “It now becomes evident as never before that dialogue is not merely a technique of conducting a conversation, but the realization of a different way of life and a different understanding of human beings in their self-awareness” (Šušnjić, 1994: 168).

It is certainly reasonable to demand tolerance here in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to speak and write about it, to direct and warn people about all the evil that stems from narrow-mindedness, ambition, and willfulness. Tolerance is inseparable from freedom and autonomy, which can truly be realized only in dialogue with others. In multicultural and multinational societies, which are not homogeneous nationally, religiously, or culturally, the issue of tolerance is very important. Hence, the demand for tolerance arises in the entire social life, politics, ethics, social criticism, pedagogy etc. Considering this, tolerance begins to be understood as enduring and tolerating in a common human life related to a person or community, opposite beliefs, declarations, and actions of individuals and groups. These patterns are not suppressed or forbidden but tolerated. This applies to all areas of social life and different value orientations—religion, worldview, science, art, politics, customs etc. A community that does not instill and develop the need for conversation and the habit of tolerance towards others and the different, in its new generations has no prospect of a better future. However, such community could have a bright future if the upbringing and education of its young members are directed towards dialogical thinking, the advantages and values that arise from differences. What is the task of education today, in light of the urgent need for mutual understanding and cooperation among people? What should an individual learn to become a good citizen? New cultural diversity represents a much more direct challenge to traditional culture and education. Tolerance and dialogue are a new way of presenting the issues of pluralism and cultural diversity. New circumstances and transformations

require new knowledge and attitudes, paths, and relationships towards the environment (Šušnjić, 1994: 169)

Education for dialogue and tolerance must primarily consider the possibilities and the right of choice, from choosing a spouse to nationality, religion, and citizenship. Rejecting the habits of one's predecessors and introducing innovations should not be condemned. The task of education is to teach people to be prepared for changes. Tolerance and dialogue are the state of mind in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in modern society in general, allowing its smooth progress. It has long been recognized that intolerance is a product of the times, but more so a consequence of incorrect upbringing and education. There are increasing efforts to include the issues of tolerance in educational content. It is significant for all forms of knowledge, desires, sensitivity, sociality, and spirituality. Tolerance is an essential component of upbringing. In fact, an intolerant upbringing is the same as no upbringing at all.

Talking nowadays about the mutual interpenetration of cultures, about understanding and tolerance in Bosnia and Herzegovina, rejecting the intercultural dimension while openly promoting monoculturalism may sound utopian and seem Sisyphean. Knowing and understanding other cultures and establishing positive relationships of exchange and mutual enrichment among different cultural components within one community (whether it be a state, a community of multiple states, or the entire world) is the essence of tolerance. Enabling tolerance means promoting cultural diversity, embracing cultural pluralism as an opportunity to express our personality and human potential more comprehensively as well as fighting against all forms of exclusion and exclusivity.

Tolerance is a necessary condition for the possibility of coexistence with others. Since individuality cannot exist outside of community, individualities are directed toward mutual coexistence. It is impossible to be free without others. In this sense, freedom is nothing more than individuality affirmed in relation to others. Without others, our individuality is unrecognizable and faceless. Consequently, a struggle for the freedom of one's own identity also manifests as the struggle for the freedom of the identity of others. Tolerance is a non-antagonistic relationship, both group and individual, which allows the coexistence of differences within

the community. The condition for tolerance is the freedom of the individual, for only a free person can be tolerant and only a free person can be tolerated. In the absence of freedom, tolerance turns into forgiveness and mercy which leads to nothing. For tolerance to be likely to occur in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is necessary to achieve awareness of differences, the right to differences, openness to dialogue and readiness for cooperation. Only in this way will living alongside and with others not be a living hell.

CONCLUSION

As we have observed, all decision-makers in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) profess their commitment to democracy and respect for institutions which should be based on achieving political consensus to fully respect the ethnic diversity of BiH. We often hear or read professional and academic opinions suggesting the introduction of consociational democracy as a model for regulating ethnic relations in BiH and institutions functioning based on democratic principles, for precisely this model of democratic functioning of institutions is recommended for ethnically heterogeneous, post-conflict, divided societies. Of course, for this model of democracy to take root in BiH, it is primarily necessary to establish a culture of tolerance for others and their differences and nurture a culture of dialogue about diversity. Otherwise, the issue of ethnicity in Bosnia and Herzegovina will become even more visible in all parts of society.

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