

National Identity and the “Great Divide” between Two Theories. Where Does the Albanian National Identity Take Part

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Abstract

According to Tom Nairn, the reason why the dispute between modernists and primordialists is not resolved is because it is irresolvable. This is because the two approaches place different emphases on different aspects of identity formation. Nairn described the debate between Anthony Smith and Ernest Gellner, as a courteous difference of emphasis. Hence, the old presuppositions of modernism are losing their hold, but no one is quite sure what new ones will replace them. The great debate in nationalism studies, is one between so-called "primordialists" and "modernists". Put simply, primordialists argue that the nation derives directly from a priori ethnic groups and is based on kinship ties and ancient heritage. For their part, modernists insist that the nation is an entirely novel form of identity and political organization, which owes nothing to ethnic heritage and everything to the modernism, and the scope of the debate between them, fail to offer a satisfactory account of the formation of national identity. In this context we need to see where the Albanian national identity takes part. This paper seeks to show how it reacted to the waves of social transition? Where it finds itself and what connects it with globalisation?

1. Introduction

Adam Lerner says: "... nation, moreover, exist in the minds of the people than in the real world ...". Starting from this statement determine national identity is the consequence of various perceptions that have various theories for the nation. This paper seeks to examine whether the theories sociological, anthropological or communication have their importance and value in explaining the reconstruction of Albanian national identity in different contexts and different time periods. Also, the paper analyzes the relationship of the nation with different variables that create identity as ethnicity, customs, heritage (tribe, race, culture), symbols (blood, flag, anthem), language, regional elements, territorial, geographic, religious (faith), spiritual constitution etc. So the question naturally arises which (s) of theories explains better idea of building the Albanian national identity as a product of all these variables.

It is said that ethnicity and identity represent something more natural than biology, and nationalism represents a certain religion to modernity. So, here we depart and say that theories worthy of national identity are to analyze the theory of explanation primordialism as fundamental variables and essential forms of the nation and modernity as a theory that departs from the fundamental elements to come to the link and contact me the cloud that leads to globalization and the fear of losing or alienating these values.

In its historical development, social and cultural Albanian society was organized in social groups or family and tribe and larger groupings based on ethnicity, religious, regional, etc. In the eighteenth century, in Europe, we have the emergence of new concepts like nation or derivation of his later collective identity and national. Obviously the latter came as human need to become involved in a more inclusive community, from which flowed even a kind of attraction with common elements.

The need to join any group and to feel the equality with others in this group, the Albanians, is as early as humanity itself, and national identity is a new phenomenon in this need, bound close to political and geographic dimension (nationalism).

When you want to give a definition for the nation, researchers analyzed initially receive the origin and the source or origin of the term. First arguments coming that ... *has been the process of modernity that did not leave room dynastic and religious authorities and has forced a new form of legitimacy for the central authorities to things.* (Giddens 2005: 1, 55-58). Adam Smith says: "... *the nation is modern phenomenon, but it also stresses that nations have not come from nowhere, but pre-modern ethnicities have been transformed into national identities*". (Smith 1998: 63).

Reverted back to Adam Lerner can say that in his nation can be seen as real and constructed, primordial and modern. Among them there is "great divide", which offers are unsatisfactory way in understanding the reconstruction of national identity through data that bring the two sides of the great divide. On the other hand, Lisa Malkki states that "*the nation Operates nor an absolute differentiator, êhich Makes Certain collusions of people and territory Appear natural and others incommensurable*". (Gilroy 1990: 114).

2. Theoretical context on theoretical aspects for national identity.

Among the efforts to find a definition of the Albanian national identity, it is the question of to what extent the nation and national identity are modern phenomenon as time dictates. And the answer to solving this dilemma is the largest division of the nation fundamental theories: primordialiste, modernist and ethno-symbolist. During work we will reach to analyze and come to the conclusion that the Albanian kombetër identity is less of both these theories.

1. **Primordialist / essentialist** - group of theorists who walks under German Romantics steps Herder, Fihte, Kant, Schiller and others who defend the idea that nations are essential, eternal entities and early forms of social group, or as a result of political campaigns nationalist, or as being top-down from the already existing states. This proves that this theory was first literary and philosophical, sociological and anthropological later. Even in Albania, during the Renaissance, if not very political, literary and cultural least this movement was alive and active, with red figures as Frashëri brothers Asdreni, Çajupi, Veqilharxhi etc.

2. **Modernists / constructivist** - belonging to a dominant perspective where nations see as a modern phenomenon and social structures. "Constructive social 'names and entities conventional notions created by the people in a particular context and that cultural and social because people believe that there exist and operate thanks to their agreement to behave as if they existed. There are different views among the proponents of this approach, but common is the belief that nations and nationalisms are modern and contemporary phenomena. Also believe that nations are formed by radical changes in modern times, which have made it impossible to continue the rule of the time by pushing people to new forms of organization of social and political life. They explain how it was possible and necessary to imagine new forms of collective organization (nations), being the oldest became invalid under the influence of new economic circumstances, political and social, caused by modernity. (Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm). According to them, the education system and communication technology make it possible to transfer the message to the population elites. In Albania, in this direction we band of authors and researchers after 90s, who added that the introduction of new conceptions and perceptions influenced by the opening of borders to the world beyond the Adriatic. This meant that the Albanian culture already talk of a mix of cultures and values, but that essentially affiliation and rebuild in another state of the idea of national identity.

"Consequently loyalties closer instance, generated by interpersonal contact are replaced with links to wider scale impersonal and anonymous society, whose members never meet, nor have heard of the fellow most their "(Anderson, Gellner, Breuilly, Brass).

Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm defend the idea that nations as social constructs built on myths. "*History continuous and unbroken, it is often rely on fiction EEC half mythical figure, forged documents and symbols such as a flag and images, which are intended to arouse nationalistic feelings*". (Hobsbawm 1983: 12). It's difficult to test the authenticity of the common origin and means that people have mixed backgrounds, and their ideas are the common past with many imaginary, that are more myths than facts.

Myth is distinctive to the idea of a purely ethnic origin of the Balkan peoples. Here history is interpreted in a way that kontribuojëkrijimit symbols and myths of the nation and that historical events are subject to a selective process that aims to invent myths and symbols on the awareness and national origin, paving the way for the need for recreation and own national identity reconstruction. *"The figure of our national hero Skanderbeg and his war against the Ottoman Empire cooperating with other nations of Balkan, by some non-nationalist currents is used as an argument to link Albanians and Slavic Greek nationalism, while the Albanian nationalists used as proof of Albanian nationalist idea and practice."* (Ferraj 1999: 84). Thus the formation of the Albanian nation, as well as other Balkan peoples, became during the breakup of the Ottoman Empire, while maintaining a rather deep embrace to myths of history and tradition.

3. **Etnosimbolist**- scholars of national identity theorists (within modernity), under which nations are formed by nationalist elites based on pre-modern ethnic ties or affiliations to a particular population, modern character broom agree with nationalism, but claim that cultures Ethnic early provide the foundation upon which today's national identities constructed. *"While nations may be modern, their origin is not so, but their traces can be found in previous ethnicities, nations are invented out of nothing, but the processes characteristic of modernity of transform these ethnicities in the nation, but without the destroy them"*. (Smith 1991: 76).

In this context, the history of the Albanian national identity construction is very significant.

3. The common past of the Albanian people with its neighbors and its role in establishing and maintaining national identity.

If we talk about the common past of the nation, we consider the common ethnic affiliation, cultural and others. *"Often we face common belief, the moral superiority of the community, in the sense that cultural values are a central national community and are irreplaceable, something that can be traced back in time to the cultivation of previously myth of ethnic selection by pre-modern ethnic elites."* (Smith 2008: 111). According to Anthony Smith *ethnicity is a group of people with cultural identity and common language.*

Stored where written language. Referring to this worth highlighting the fact that the Albanian language as part of our culture irrefutable, knew to maintain a good part of the collective consciousness, which is unquestionably the national identity. Language, in any sense that display is tied to the essential elements that have to do with the sense of ethnicity and nation we come from. Ethnicity, Albanians, it is one of the most important aspects of cultural or social identity and therefore even more important in the creation of national identity, hence the term ethnicity is often used as a synonym for the nation. Ethnic, linguistic and religious have enough influence in the formation of the Albanian nation bearing the weight of a sense of national identity, but it is not clear the extent of their contribution to the formation of national identity.

Albanian written language is so important in the creation of our nation and the preservation of a sense of national identity, due to the sense of historical and cultural specificity that it causes in the communities (Albanian or not) who read it. Different people define themselves in terms of common origin and language theory in practice. Language and religion are considered as the main problems in the definition of national belonging and the wars in the name of protecting this value as national identity. *"By resisting erosion of myths, which aimed to raise the notion of class in the highest category, the fact national and religious fact, find echo in the deepest part of the political consciousness of individuals Spiritual values of the features that make up the nation should not hide that was directed less noble passions, where the wild one is pride"*. (Doja, 2009: 166).

The process of recognition of national identity among the Albanians is inclusive and exclusionary because it involves people with common features and exclude others, as defined by distinct nation from the other nations represented by neighboring and that all nations have common perception of the other (the opponent), and that Albanians do not often lacked. The sense of national identity is displayed when a nation is feeling threatened by perceived enemies as such. Not always is external opponent, but he has often come from within the nation. Kadare states that *"... The problem of understanding or misunderstanding Albanian continent is basically understanding or misunderstanding of themselves."* (Kadare 2006: 49). And how many times you will talk to an enemy of the Albanians "source" should be seen first from within.

Self context of the neighborhood and the common past has left deep traces in the self-empowerment of the Albanians for their nation and consequently the national identity. The dramatic events that have shaken Europe at different times, especially these last 20 years, or even bloody conflict with the Serbs and Albanians of Kosovo and the rights of Kosovars, brought the international response to protect society model and relationships between neighboring social groups. Prof. Albert Doja wanted that *"Considering the region as a cultural area should be defined as a mixed field. Albanian populated areas are not only that of a Balkan European country ... or even country western extension of some models or on establishing local identities, but all of these at once"*. (Doja, 2009: 148).

Modernism in Albanian society are aware of shows that dynamic unity and awareness of national identity, means to delete the gap between East and West, recognizing synthetic character of European civilization, to assimilate the historical and political traditions in their cultural dimensions. Origin differences affect relationships using "real" which can remain latent and beyond generations.

4. Conclusions

At the end of this work we can say that it is very difficult to find if there is a split with a knife where the Albanian national identity is positioned between these two theories (primordialism and modernity). The difficulty stems precisely in the fact that the Albanian society displays characteristics that are specific and can take place in each of the approaches. However we think that both approaches are enough to grasp positioned Albanian national identity, since the latter itself creates a kind of correlation and relationships with national identity concept for several reasons:

- *First* origin of Albanian national identity is connected spiritually and stems from what constitutes the national culture and not only an essential support, base primordialism that are: family, tribe, origin, soil, blood, symbols, language, religion, Well irrefutable reaffirmation of the roots from which we come, regardless of the time Storm and the wars or assimilation efforts, which have done their job.

- *Secondly*, globalization, modernist theory of recent years is seeking to have its effect in this direction, then in the war between preserving national values of Albanians and therefore on a kind of reconstruction or re-conceptualization of national identity. *"Given the prospect ones that can connect with the phenomena of globalization and modernity, despite the end of national identities warned of European construction and the globalization of economic, cultural, political, social or purely instrumental character that tend to make human relations We must understand that the idea of citizenship remains very much linked to well-defined national identity"*. (Doja, 2009: 166). The phenomenon of national identity construction reflects the reality. The will to impose the model of national identity, as well as instruments of globalization, are necessarily dependent on local political and cultural economies in order to evoke the discourse on national sovereignty or fundamentalism, where the state plays a key delikapor.

- *Thirdly*, we say it is and continues to be difficult to speak today to the Albanian national identity. Political movements, taking into account the real or alleged difference of different cultures, as a result ethnicised, what does the model dominating conflict looks like a conflict to renewed acquaintance and recreation identities. That is why we think that the last storm of nationalist ideologies, pregnant and strained by various political movements, Albanians should seek and finally reach what they have in common, building a society with values that integrate the region, Europe and beyond, because, being still a society in transition, the Albanian society will continue for a long time to seek ways and means to position itself and its national identity because it says researcher Kim Mehmeti *"... we feel good where we are not: ... and Albanians still do not know where they are ..."*

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