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INTERSECTIONALITIES IN MULTICULTURALISM, POPULISM AND THE MEDIA: UNTYING THE GORDIAN KNOT IN AN INTERTWINED DISCOURSE

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ABSTRACT

The central fulcrum of this paper revolves around the intersectionalities that tie multiculturalism, populism and mediatization. This research paper used documentary analysis and literature review as research tools to provide a comprehensive discussion of these intersectionalities. Firstly, it describes and discusses the three different approaches of multiculturalism in Europe: “homogenization” approach (French Model), the “exclusionary” approach (Central and Eastern European Model), and the “integrationist-incorporative” approach (Swiss Model). Using the lens of economics, the paper likewise peeps into how the market views multiculturalism. Are there sound economic justifications or business sense in celebrating diversity in the point of view of the market? Then, it analyzes the existing narratives and discourses on multiculturalism and examines the claim that multiculturalism is dead. Finally, the paper unties the proverbial Gordian knot of multiculturalism-populism-mediatization trilemma by examining the intersectionalities of multiculturalism, populism and mediatization. The paper concludes that multiculturalism is very much a reality of an increasingly globalized and integrated society. The media may be an ally of populism and strike multiculturalism as a foe. It plays a crucial role in shaping a genuine Habermasian public sphere where all citizens have a voice in polity.

KEYWORDS: *Populism, multiculturalism, cultural diversity, diversity management, migrants, minorities, mediatization, media, Europe.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Multiculturalism is not more than just a political buzzword. It is in fact a gripping reality in many parts of the world, with Europe and North America occupying the center stage of the discourse surrounding the subject. It should be noted that there is no single country in the world which can be considered as culturally pure or absolutely homogenous and therefore no single country is spared of the concerns attributed to diversity. Multiculturalism is a social reality that pervades the different aspects of societal existence---political, economic, social, and religious. Name it.

In the strictest sense, multiculturalism as a subject of discourse is not new. It has been within the circle of academic debate in the last 50 years.

Accordingly, multiculturalism traced its roots to the American tradition as an offshoot of the Civil War Movement in the 1960s and found its way to Western Europe (Fjordman, 2016).¹ It has been argued that multiculturalism is an inevitability of the modern world on account of the continuous process of globalization and internationalization of interactions

¹ The Civil War Rights Movement in 1960s “triggered a re-thinking of American cultural identity repudiating aspects of its European heritage to transform itself into a ‘universal’ nation.” (Fjordman, 2016)

among individuals, groups and entities. Apart from this, the ever expanding political and economic mechanisms that exist in the global power relations makes it all the more persuasive that multiculturalism is a pressing reality--an issue that calls for some introspective look in an ever increasingly integrated international community that aims for no less than more cohesive and integrated societies in general and nation-states that exist and co-exist peacefully within the universally recognized principles of amity and concord. With that having been said, it becomes more imperative to revisit the idea of multiculturalism in an enlightened, informed and reasoned discourse with the endpoint of seeing the light at the end of the tunnel, of demystifying a seemingly puzzling riddle that besets policy-making activities of various nation-states respecting goals of integration and social cohesion and of unfolding possible solutions for the so-called minority problems that affect every single nation of the world. For lack of a better phrase, multiculturalism is an anomaly of inevitability---it is surely here to stay.

Multiculturalism as a phenomenon is both highly politicized and mediatized. It can be fairly argued that multiculturalism has been a favourite recipe of narratives among actors in polity. It has become a palatable dish of political discourse among populists in Western Europe such as the Netherlands, France, United Kingdom, among other states of which multiculturalism has been an easy target and a convenient menu in political campaigns to emphasize the primacy of ethno-nationalism and to problematize issues such as national minorities, ethnic diversity, mass immigration and open borders. Populism and multiculturalism are two seemingly inseparable thread of discourse. The brand of populism that exists in Europe involves a process of “othering,” pitting the “us” against “them.” In the context of multiculturalism, it is underscoring the Manichean binary framework of the locals against the migrants, the dominant majority against the national minorities (Bonikowski and Gidron, 2013).² This Manichean framework of politics, the exclusionary discourse between “us” and “them” has become an essential component of political rhetorics among populist actors in Western Europe. It is interesting to note that the media assumes a rather intimate role in the intermeshed discourse of multiculturalism and populism. In some varying degrees, it has the quivering tendencies to either replicate anti-multiculturalism narratives of populists or re-direct the discourse in the Habermasian public

² The term “Manichean” denotes dualism or the tendency to classify and dissect everything down into good or evil.

sphere and depict the issue in an objective and dispassionate manner.

The central fulcrum of this paper is to place in the proverbial spreadsheet of academic discussions the intersectionalities among multiculturalism, populism and the media.

2. OBJECTIVES

This paper determined the intersectionalities that tie multiculturalism, populism and mediatization. In so doing, it described and discussed the three different approaches of multiculturalism in Europe, analyzed how the market views multiculturalism, assessed how the existing narratives and discourses on multiculturalism and examined the claim that multiculturalism is dead. Finally, the paper untied the proverbial Gordian knot of multiculturalism-populism-mediatization trilemma by examining the intersectionalities of multiculturalism, populism and mediatization.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

By design, this research paper employed a descriptive method of research using documentary analysis and literature review as its primary research tools. Analysis of the articles published online and those published in printed media were analyzed to explore on the issues surrounding multiculturalism, populism and mediatization.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Approaching Multiculturalism: Thesis, Anti-thesis and Synthesis

There are many reasons to celebrate diversity and there are good number reasons to lament it. Multiculturalism is not a neutral concept. How you perceive and approach the concept makes the difference. It is a double-edged sword. If handled properly, the state is like a heaven on earth, but if polity failed to comprehend the paradox behind it, the state is a hellish abode improvidently handed down as a curse.

Multiculturalism entails management of diversity that exist in a particular region or country taking into account the different identity markers that differentiate one group from the others such as religion, culture, language, among other labels of differentiation. It presupposes recognition of pluralistic society within the context of an increasingly globalized world.

The researcher looked into various ways how different states approach multiculturalism. Some states recognize diversity as a pressing reality of polity and therefore the state deems it proper to homogenize and nationalize the state into a fully assimilated society, to establish common civic values irrespective of ethnic identities. Others deem diversity as a threat to the foundation of the nation-state and therefore they ignore diversity and assert the dominant culture above and over the minority culture.

Still others find the middle ground that there can be unity in the midst of diversity, that halfway the state can play the politics of recognition and the politics of difference side by side. For purpose of this paper, let the first category be named as the “homogenization” approach; the second, “exclusionary” approach; and the last, the “integrationist-incorporative” approach.

4.2. The “Homogenization” Approach of a Leviathan State: The French Model as the Thesis

The “homogenization” approach is typical of the French policy of assimilation. The approach suggests that the best way to mould the state in a stable, compact and consolidated manner with common sense of belongingness and shared values is to require minorities to participate in learning a uniform culture (typically that of the dominant culture). While this approach does not shy away in recognizing diversity in the society, it places a primordial necessity for all minorities within the state to learn a culture through instruction (formal and informal), a single culture that stresses the universal individual. The idea behind is by enabling the individual to absorb, internalize and assimilate himself to a single national culture, the individual can be freed from local prejudices and biases associated with a separate cultural identity (Broughton, 2007).

An in-depth analysis of this approach reveals that the state has the obligation to “homogenize” or “nationalize” all individuals within its territorial boundaries irrespective of their cultural and ethnic identities to fully assimilate them in a single culture. The ultimate goal is to achieve a completely assimilated society that has but one sense of nationhood on one hand, and that gives no room for isolation or separatism, on the other (Roter, 2001). In the context of the French model, for example, the end-goal is to mould all individuals to become French---to talk like French, dress like French and act like French. If there is one best way to explain this in similar line of reasoning, it is this Latin maxim which was generally attributed to St. Ambrose: “si fueris Romae, Romano vivito more, si fueris alibi, vivito sicut ibi” (“when you’re in Rome, do what the Romans do).³

³ The maxim can mean two things: (1) when you’re in foreign land, follow the customs of those who live in it; or (2) when you’re in an unfamiliar situation, you should follow the lead of those who know the ropes (The American Heritage. New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy,

States adhering to this approach emphasize the importance of a Leviathan state---that of having a centralized bureaucracy and a strong powerful state that embarks on the policy of nation-building which provides little room or an air-tight space for ethnic minorities to secede from their host-state in all eventualities. Divergence to a single national culture and promoting pluralism along various lines of identity and cultural markers are considered an anathema to the whole idea or essence of a nation-state which in French terms contradict the cardinal values of *liberté, égalité, and fraternité* (liberty, equality, and brotherhood) enshrined in the French revolution (Bleich, 1998).

What is problematic to this approach however is its implicit denial of the stubborn fact that despite the existence of a homogenized culture or a “universal individual” within a single national mould, minorities remained a part of an ethnic line along an existing political unit. Roter (2001) aptly captures this idea in the following exemplifications:

“In other words, any ethnic group aiming to preserve its separate group identity, different from the one promoted by the state, would find itself in a conflict situation. There is simply no room for individual group identities within the civic concept of a nation which does, however, allow for ethnic diversity for individuals, who are simultaneously members of the state, and the state-bearing nation in a civic sense; hence, the French argument, that there are no minorities in France which is in fact a denial of group identities rather than the ethnic diversity of its citizens.”

4.3. The “Exclusionary” Approach of a Multi-National Empire: The Central and Eastern European Model as the Anti-Thesis

The exclusionary approach occupies the other extreme end of the pendulum. The assumption behind this approach is that minorities are perceived as a threat, a destabilizing force that could jeopardize the very foundation of the nation-state. Minorities are regarded as “problematic” that needed to be resolved

Third Edition (2005). Houghton Mifflin Company)

as they serve as obstacles in achieving social cohesion and stability. As such, minorities are generally perceived as a threat to the dominant culture (Roter, 2001).

States that take this political stance towards pluralism and diversity operate on the presumption that a diverse society tend to create an atmosphere of distrust. Current literature suggests that diversity is a negative function of social cohesion. The more diverse a society is, the more difficult it is to establish close ties with other members of the community. Social cohesion is important as it serves as glue that lends coherence to groups and provides the forces that ties individuals both in the community and the national level.

A classic example of this is the Turkish Model in the context of the Ottoman Empire. Accordingly, Turkey in 1800s which was then a multi-national empire is a relatively tolerant society that recognizes ethnic diversity and respects religious differences among the people within the auspices of the empire. Akıncı and Kule (2014) explain that the Turkish Republic was established as a unitary state emerging from the remains of the former Ottoman Empire and that the new state chose to ignore the ethnic pluralism that exist at that time other than the minorities stated in the Treaty of Lausanne.⁴

A century later when the empire crumbled after suffering defeats and eventual dissolution and in an attempt to rebuild a one-nation-state, minorities were perceived as a threat to the nation-building process. This negative perception which was clearly antagonistic to minorities probably explains the occurrence of cleansing campaigns against the Armenians, Kurds, Nestorian Christians, Pontic Greeks and several other minorities.⁵

⁴ Under the 1924 Treaty of Lausanne signed by the Republic of Turkey, the only recognized communities as minorities were Greeks, Jews and Armenians.

⁵ Turkish Prime Minister Rejep Erdogan during the annual congress of the Justice and Development Party, held in the western province of Düzce, uttered: *“For many years, various facts took place in this country to the detriment of ethnic minorities who lived here. They were ethnically cleansed because they had a different ethnic cultural identity. The time has arrived for us to question ourselves about why this happened and what we have learned from all of this. There has been no*

This idea of a dominant culture as the model culture and a parallel exclusionary treatment of minority culture as a poke in the wheel of the nation likewise appeared during the bloody separation of former states that make up the former Yugoslavia---Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Macedonia and Montenegro. Ethnic cleansing in the Bosnian war and the mass expulsion of the Serbs in Croatia are only among the faces of the tragic crisis brought about by the exclusionary discourse of “othering,” of pitting “us” against “them.”

4.4. The Integrationist-Incorporative Approach: The Swiss Model as the Synthesis

Switzerland can be cited as a paragon of a society that has evolved and learned to think of their country “consisting not of a majority or minorities, but of a plurality of cultural groups.” The closest conception of integrationist-incorporative approach is that of liberalism in multiculturalism advocated by Raz (2014). He aptly captures the concept of the integrationist-incorporative approach through liberalism in multiculturalism in the following words:

“The truth is that multiculturalism, while endorsing the perpetuation of several cultural groups in a single political society, also requires the existence of a common culture in which the different coexisting cultures are embedded. This is a direct result of the fact that it speaks for a society in which different cultural groups coexist in relative harmony, sharing in the same political regime.”

There are three important constitutive elements mentioned by Raz (1994) in order to attain a liberal multicultural society: cultivation of mutual toleration

analysis of this right up until now. In reality, this behavior is the result of a fascist conception. We have also fallen into this grave error,” reported by Sassounian, Harut. Turkish Prime Minister Admits Ethnic Cleansing. In: The World Post. Available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/harut-sassounian/turkish-prime-minister-ad_b_208246.html (Accessed at: 5 May 2017).

and respect, effective participation within the same economic environment and effective political participation. Thus, he enumerates:

“First, coexistence calls for the cultivation of mutual toleration and respect. This affects in a major way first and foremost the education of the young in all the constituent groups in the society. All of them will enjoy education in the cultural traditions of their communities. But all of them will also be educated to understand and respect the traditions of the other groups in the society. A second element will result from the fact that members of all communities will interact in the same economic environment. They will tap the same job market, the same market for services and for goods...Finally, members of all cultural groups will belong to the same political society. They will all be educated and placed to enjoy roughly equal access to the sources of political power and to decision-making positions.”

The foregoing constitutive elements are apparent in the Switzerland model. Switzerland is a highly diverse society, consisting of 26 cantons, each of which has distinct culture and identity. While it celebrates diversity, it is still able to cast, shape and define a national identity based on the four official languages of the state, to wit: German, Italian, French and Romansch. While each canton determines the language of instruction in schools, Switzerland has the policy of offering courses on the other four languages (Grin and Schwob, 2002).

Economically speaking, the Swiss have great access to the economic wealth of the country as evidenced by the high quality of life they enjoy. Switzerland has the highest nominal wealth per adult (Ghosh, 2010). This goes to show that the Swiss are able to tap within the resources of the market.

Switzerland ensures equitable political participation in polity. In fact, Switzerland is cited for its “paradigmatic case of political integration.”⁶

⁶ The phrase was coined by Karl Deutsch, a Czech social political scientist in reference to Switzerland’s policy of multilingualism and in

Evident proofs of this are the consociational and direct democracy features of the Swiss political system. The former refers to representation in federal institutions of the various minorities, specifically linguistic, political and religious minorities and the search; whereas the latter involves a direct participation by the people in the political process through popular initiative and referendum. Switzerland likewise has power-sharing features both in the executive and legislative branches.

4.5. The Market’s Perspectives on Multiculturalism: A Midas’ Touch or a Damocles’ Sword?

On the basis of existing empirical studies, the market has a double-faced view of ethnic diversity and its relationship to economic performance. Like the Roman God Janus, multiculturalism could be viewed at two different directions depending on the context of the society upon which multiculturalism finds itself.

On one hand, there are empirical studies that show that ethnically fragmented society does not provide for a good ecosystem for economic performance. Easterly and Levine (1997) for instance, documented that countries in Africa which are racially fragmented tend to have difficulties growing economically and this explains the tragedy in Africa’s economic growth. Collier and Gunning (1999) pointed to ethno linguistic diversity as the culprit behind the lack of social capital, productive public goods and other growth enhancing policies. Alesina and La Ferrara (2002) explained that the more diverse a society or a community, the less inclined its members will be to develop close ties with their fellow community members.

The foregoing studies can be explained within the context of social capital. For instance, it is less likely to expect people to immediately be at ease with the influx of immigrants because of the issue of social trust. Trust is not an institutional endowment; it is earned through time. It is built not within a day or three. To borrow the expression, “Rome is not built in a day.” Moreover, it is well-nigh difficult to predict the behavior of the new neighbours which come from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds. This difficulty, unpredictability and uncertainty lead to a reduction of the general trust levels, which correspondingly will not provide a climate conducive for business and economic activities.

Deemed in the perspectives of the opponents of multiculturalism, it can be interpreted that in a society where there exists an ever increasing

praise of its protection of minorities within the both the legal and political framework

diversity, the growth of social capital is stunted. Social trust, which undeniably is a fundamental component of social capital, seems to erode; and social cohesion, which in turn, is a reliable indicator of social capital, appears to suffer when the society is too diverse. Trust, they argue, is more likely to develop in an atmosphere of homogeneity than it does in heterogeneous settings. The issue of trust is crucial in pursuing collective action efforts and ultimately in delivering public goods. Trust breeds when people are more familiar and similar to each other; ethnic and cultural distance provides the rift and keeps social trust at bay.

Having said that, does this mean that the society should entirely dismiss multiculturalism and throw it away in the policy garbage can? Not so fast. There is a need to look at the other side of the coin to appreciate the complexity of this issue.

Perhaps, one of the most important milestones in the academia which support the idea of celebrating cultural richness and diversity as a pre-requisite for superior economic performance in a knowledge society is reverberated in the book written by Richard Florida entitled "The Rise of Creative Class." According to Florida (2002), the creative class is composed of a group of individuals characterized by a high level of human capital capable of promoting growth of regions through productivity, creativity and innovation. This group can be categorized as either belonging to the creative core or the creative professionals. The former includes "scientists and engineers, university professors, poets and novelists, artists, entertainers, actors, designers and architects, as well as the thought leadership of modern society: nonfiction writers, editors, cultural figures, think-tank researchers, analysts and other opinion makers." The creative core creates new ideas, designs and blueprints that can be marketable as new products or services. They are agents of creativity and innovation. The creative professionals, on the other hand, are those "engaged in creative problem solving, drawing on complex bodies of knowledge to solve specific problems...they apply or combine standard approaches in unique ways to fit the situation, exercise a great deal of judgment, perhaps try something radically new from time to time." (Florida, 2002).

Florida (2002) explains that the creative class tend to relocate and settle in cities and states where an atmosphere of tolerance towards unconventionally and culturally oriented people such as artists, gays, bohemians, musicians, etc. The Global Creativity Index which Florida and the Martin Prosperity Institute issue annually list tolerance, along with talent and technology as barometers of growth and prosperity. In the words of Florida: "...tolerance---or, broadly speaking

openness to diversity---provides an additional source of economic advantage that works alongside technology and talent."

In Florida's study (2002), amenities and diversity of US cities are key factors in attracting the creative class. The clustering of these talented and energetic people in cities is the fundamental driving force of innovation and economic development. These human capital externalities play an essential role in the mechanics of economic development.

Multiculturalism is hailed as beneficial to the market performance by stimulating production and consumption in a number of studies. That diversity is a productivity-enhancer is empirically substantiated. Using data on the rents and wages from a number of cities in the United States, Ottaviano and Peri (2003) found out that US born individuals living in cities with larger shares of foreign-born people earn higher wages and pay higher rents compared to those living in homogenous cities. These so-called "amenity effects" of diversity is more pronounced on production and consumption.

Ottaviano and Peri (2005) likewise found out that "... the skills and abilities of foreign-born workers and thinkers may complement those of native workers and thus boost problem solving and efficiency in the workplace." Cultural diversity creates potential benefits through an increased and enhanced array of goods, services and skills available for consumption, production and innovation.

Is the policy of multiculturalism a Midas' touch or a Damocles' sword? In my humbled view, the debate as to the pros and cons of multiculturalism is not a pure black and white affair that you love one and hate the other. In other words, multiculturalism can be good or bad depending on how a country or society handles it. The type of institutions that a society cares to create is pivotal in handling multiculturalism. Harmony and concord and eventually economic progress will take place if multiculturalism is handled and framed within efficient and strong institutions. Contrariwise, diversity can lead to further fractionalization and fragmentation and ultimately to the disaster of the market if institutions do not have strong political, economic and moral fabrics.

4.6. Multiculturalism on the Verge and Brink: Are There Reasons to Grieve Over Populist Rhetoric?

Multiculturalism has been under attack and criticisms in the last few years. Some of these criticisms were primarily from populist far right actors. Intensified and increased globalization, the ever expanding political and economic networks as well as the unprecedented events in international

affairs stimulated the creation of a political environment that is conducive for what Muddle (2004) calls an era of “a populist Zeitgeist.”⁷ The twin emergence of economic crisis as well as the biblical influx of refugees and asylum seekers which were undeniably unprecedented in European history at least after the Second World War worked as engine that provides momentum for the spread of right wing populist parties in Western Europe.⁸

It is no wonder that in Western Europe right wing populist parties gain citizens’ support because they are perceived to be the conveyor which airs people’s grievances, that they fill the demand of the common people to bring in the public sphere of discussion the issues about immigration, discontentment to the present establishment and economic changes. Ivarsflaten and Gudrandsen (2014) termed this the “supply and demand side explanation,” to wit:

Demand-side explanations are concerned with questions about which socio-economic and political developments contributed to the voters’ grievances that the populist radical right parties appeal to and mobilize. Supply-side explanations examine the institutional, strategic and organizational

contexts of these parties, and how these various contexts facilitate or hinder the growth of such parties.

The populist attacks on multiculturalism can be broadly classified in two categories: (1) on anti-immigration stance; (2) the alleged death of multiculturalism due to the failure of the integration policies of the government for minorities and migrants. The issue of accepting migrants and refugees coming from the war-torn ravaged countries mostly in the Middle East and the concomitant failure of integration policies fuel domestic political debates that had far-reaching implications in policy implications and general public perceptions.

The anti-immigration stance of populism is evidently a discourse of “us” against “them.” In order to appeal to the common people and to gain trust of the electorates, populist actors anchor their platforms, propaganda and manifesto on grievances, discontentment, and disillusionment of people over the existing state of affairs and project an anti-establishment stance on issues involving migration and refugee crises. At times, they even inspire fear to the populace by painting and conjuring images of the migrants and refugees as threats to the natives, that they are in danger of losing their jobs, imminent invasion of their cultures and the possibilities of staging terroristic attacks--- all these can potentially cause disorder and social unrest in the society.

Geert Wilders of the Party for Freedom in Netherlands; Marine Le Pen of the National Front in France; former Italian Prime Minister Silverio Berlusconi of People of Freedom Party, among other major populist actors in European contemporary politics are teeming of political descriptions of the migrants. Wilders, like Donald Trump, pushed for the cessation of immigration from the Muslim countries. He called for putting an end to the “Islamisation” of Netherlands and even suggested a tax on headscarves worn by Muslim women (Surge for Anti-Islam Freedom Party, BBC News, 2010). Le Pen likewise called for the de-Islamisation of France and considered multiculturalism a failure (Hollinger, 2011). She also campaigned to put an end to illegal immigration and promised during the political race to repeal laws allowing illegal immigrants from becoming legal residents.⁹

⁷ “Zeitgeist” is from German words Zeit which means “time,” and Geist which means “spirit,” or “ghost.” It generally means the “the intellectual, moral and intellectual climate of an era.” The first known use of the word was on 1835. (Merriam Websters Dictionary. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/zeitgeist>). Populism Zeitgeist refers to the widespread of populism across the different parts of the globe, more particularly in Europe and the US as the distinctive intellectual, political and moral spirit of the contemporary era.

⁸ The Pew Research Center explains that what fueled the rise of populism in Europe is the migration crisis as documented in its report released on December 8, 2016 entitled “Populism and Global Engagement: Europe, North America and Emerging Economies.”

⁹ But then she clarified that her opposition to illegal immigration is not founded on hatred. She said: “I’m not my father...our party is not based on hate towards others, but on love for

Berlusconi is well-known for the passage of anti-immigration laws. The Bossi-Finni Law of 2002 provides for the immediate expulsion of illegal foreign immigrants and detention of illegal immigrants without valid identity documents.

The Brexit phenomenon, the Hungarian referendum on the rejection of the proposed refugee quota system, among other recent political events were claimed to be acts of populism.

Apart from anti-immigration stance and policies, multiculturalism has been declared dead by a number of political actors. German chancellor Angela Merkel once declared that multiculturalism has utterly failed and that it is a disillusionment to think that the Germans and foreign immigrants could "live happily side by side." She declared:

"We kidded ourselves for a while that they wouldn't stay, but that's not the reality...Of course the tendency had been to say, 'let's adopt the multicultural concept and live happily side by side, and be happy to be living with each other'. But this concept has failed, and failed utterly... Germany should ... get tougher on those who refuse to integrate before opening itself up to further immigration." (Angela Declares Death of German Multiculturalism. The Guardian. October 17, 2010)

Horst Seehofer, state premier of the Christian Social Union in Bavaria, echoed the same sentiment. Seehofer also claimed that "multiculturalism is dead" and announced that rightwing parties were bent to a "dominant German culture". He further claimed that Germany could become the "world's welfare office," if it did not revisit its policies for immigrants. Seehofer, thus remarked:

"Integration is the achievement of one who has integrated ... I don't have to recognise anyone who lives from the state, rejects that state, refuses to ensure his children receive an education and continues

our own country." (as reported in the article entitled "Le Pen says she's no Wilders. Radio Netherlands Worldwide. <https://www.rnw.org/archive/le-pen-says-shes-no-wilders>)

to produce little headscarfed girls...A large number of the Arabs and Turks living in this city (Berlin) has no productive function other than selling fruit and vegetables. Turks are conquering Germany in the same way as Kosovars conquered Kosovo – with a high birth rate." (Angela Declares Death of German Multiculturalism. The Guardian. October 17, 2010)

David Cameron of Britain in a speech delivered in Munich on February 5, 2011 declared that the doctrine of state multiculturalism has failed and that Britain must adopt a policy of what he calls "muscular liberalism".¹⁰ Cameron's speech in Munich which was made in the context of Islamic extremism and radicalization sparks fury of reactions from across different sectors. Cameron has emphasized in part the following in his speech:

"We have failed to provide a vision of society [to young Muslims] to which they feel they want to belong... We have even tolerated segregated communities behaving in ways that run counter to our values. All this leaves some young Muslims feeling rootless. And the search for something to belong to and believe in can lead them to extremist ideology."

When all the aforementioned political figures have been burying multiculturalism to its final resting place in their speeches, what is there to expect in the future of multiculturalism? If this death were true at all, is this an implied admission that integration policies are likewise a failure? Are multicultural-centric European public policies to be considered an "abysmal failure" to borrow the words of British Prime Minister David Cameron?

While there are reasons to grieve over these powerful obituaries of state actors in Western Europe announcing the death of multiculturalism, there is much to ponder upon about the issue. Considering the intricacies, historical complexities, as well as the modern ramifications of globalization, multiculturalism is not a too simplistic issue and a reductionist approach of looking into it is

¹⁰ David Cameron Speech on Radicalisation and Islamic Extremism. February 5, 2011. Munich.

tantamount to ignoring the huge icing in the cake. A monolithic perspective to multiculturalism will only give one a short-sighted outlook, if not a myopic one. Torres (2013) in response to the soothsayers of multiculturalism has this to say:

Multiculturalism is far from dead; it is our current world and our future. We must focus our efforts on building a social-justice-oriented multicultural education system in order to overcome the contradictory implementation of current policies and practices or the creation of a 'straw man' theory that is easily pulled apart, particularly by the neoconservatives in this country and abroad. The politics of anti-multiculturalism — anger and hate — predicated by those who still live in the Stone Age, are not the way to move forward."

Very much indeed, multiculturalism is a reality of life. It is very much alive in flesh and bones despite denial and criticisms from across various sectors. The economic and political explosion brought about by globalization which brings forth inevitable spatial movements and interactions across the different parts of the globe had all the more created the necessity of existence and co-existence in a political society where there exists a wide array of cultural groups. Considering the trends of historical events, it is here with us to stay.

8. Media, Populism and Multiculturalism: Untying the Gordian Knot of the Trilemma

The media in this analysis of intersectionalities of the three (media, populism and multiculturalism) happened to be at the crossroads. As one of the gatekeepers in the public sphere, will the media side with populists' stance against multiculturalism or praise multiculturalism to High Heavens? In the alternative, will it sit in the middle of the fence and moderate public narratives to bring to light the issues in an informed, intelligent and enlightened manner?

Let me briefly untie the proverbial Gordian knot by looking at the possible three scenarios just mentioned.

The media can choose to be populism's conveyor to drive ideas against multiculturalism. It may serve as a practical propaganda tool that will re-echo and strengthen the narratives of populism against migrants and minorities. It is not unusual to hear politicians uttering toxic narratives about migrants describing them as "bacterial," "viral," or naming them "parasites," "microbes" or "cockroaches."

Chadwick and de la Baume (2015) documented some political discourses against migrants and some of these may vary from moderate to extreme. For instance, Marine Le Pen of France described the influx of migrants as similar to the "barbarian invasion" of the 4th century. Jarosław Kaczyński, former Polish prime minister and head of the Law and Justice Party accused the migrants of bringing illnesses such as cholera and dysentery to Europe, and "all sorts of parasites and protozoa, which ... while not dangerous in the organisms of these people, could be dangerous here." Speaking of the migrant crisis in Calais, British Prime Minister Cameron referred to migrants as "a swarm of people coming across the Mediterranean, seeking a better life, wanting to come to Britain." Slovak Prime Minister claimed that his country is "built for Slovaks and not for minorities." The Federal Secretary of Northern League's Party Matteo Salvini of Italy was caught saying: "TB and scabies do not come from Finland. Unfortunately with a backward health system in North Africa these people reported illnesses that we had defeated for years." President of Poland Andrzej Duda warned of "possible epidemics" that can be caused by migrants on the "physical and financial security as well as health." Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban wrote: "We shouldn't forget that the people who are coming here grew up in a different religion and represent a completely different culture. Most are not Christian, but Muslim."

Playing the devil's advocate, the media can further the spread of narratives of hatred and anger towards minorities, migrants and refugees which populist politicians ignite and can potentially inspire fear and emotionalize an issue. In effect, the media can contribute to the further fragmentation of the already divided society when they just duplicate anti-migrant and anti-minorities discourses. Anger, disappointment, alienation, indifference---they can be the offsprings of media's unfair depiction of the migrants and sensationalized and image-conjuring portrayal of minorities. Mediatizing the migrant and refugee issues in bad light can lead to the further dehumanization of migrants and the demonization of all Muslims from all parts of the world without distinctions. Media's portrayal can in fact legitimize or "normalize" the populists' over-generalized claims of migrants as threat, burden or source of anarchy and destruction. The constant feeds of negative mediatization can lead to further polarization and divisiveness in the society.

On the other extreme end of the spectrum, the media can choose to be pro-multiculturalism by praising it gloria in excelsis and highlighting its significance to the society as a whole. It can play the role of being a grand advocate of pluralism and enthrone the ideals of equality, solidarity and

fraternity in pedestal to the extent of being absolutely absorbed to its virtues and being completely blind to its faults. It can depict multiculturalism in hallowed and sacred grounds, so to say, and castigate populists' sentiments against multiculturalism by naming "names." This media stance can be potentially equally dangerous as that of being pure contra-multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is not without faults. The populists' rhetoric that spread across Europe may be labeled as such but it does not necessarily follow that they stood on no grounds. Some of the accusations against populism being against multiculturalism may be true but one cannot entirely dismiss the whole spectrum of their arguments. They may be irrational at some points, but that fact alone does not invalidate their claims entirely. Some of their claims of fear and anxiety towards migrants and minorities which beleaguered Europe in biblical proportion in the past few years hold water that should not be ignored. To ignore it is to refuse to acknowledge that the issue of multiculturalism is a two-sided affair that admits of dualism.

Finally, the media can choose to shape public perception, encourage reasoned debate and define public sphere in its true essence which in the words of Hauser (1999) ought to be "a discursive space in which individuals and groups associate to discuss matters of mutual interest and, where possible, to reach a common judgment about them." If the media is willing to present the issue of multiculturalism pro et contra, it can be an engaging instrument of intelligent, reasoned, enlightened and informed discussion that presents the issues in dispassionate and objective manner, without appearing too partisan but is willing to balance arguments within the scale of rationality and yet still in touch with reality. The Habermasian formula of public sphere can work best in this type of ecosystem, i.e., "a society that is engaged in critical public debate," where the following integral components are present: formation of public opinion, access of citizenry, conference in unrestricted fashion about matters of general interest free from economic and political control, and debate over the general rules governing relations (Habermas, 1962).

With that having been said, open dialogue is definitely needed to thresh out issues, to separate the wheat from the chaff, to see the trees without missing the entire forest. Robust and genuine debate unlocks hidden and implicit assumptions that should be heard in order to be properly addressed in the light of sincere, diplomatic and mutual arrangements that characterize a civilized world.

5. CONCLUSION

Diversity is an inevitable fact of life. There is no way nation-states can shun pluralism and diversity in the society. Globalization and globalism

in polity and the market are stark realities of the modern world. In a more and more interconnected society, the question of peaceful existence and co-existence in a community characterized by pluriversity remains an enigma in the years to come.

There are various ways through which nation-states approach by way of public policies the issue of multiculturalism. As varied as the concept of diversity itself, these approaches were products of historical antecedence. They are not static or rigid. They continuously evolve in the context of a dynamic society that grapples with the sphinx of diversity and pluralism. To approach diversity in linear and singular manner can spell unimaginable disaster to the well-being of the society. What is good and desirable, what is acceptable and not acceptable are defined within a universe of contexts taking into account the specific demands of the time and the circumstances. Dynamism and fluidity when the times call for it may not solve the riddle of diversity, but it can enlighten the infallible human understanding of the issues surrounding it.

Populism and multiculturalism can be likened to the genetic twin strands that are intertwined. With the emergence of refugee crisis, which co-incidentally occurred almost in simultaneity with the economic crisis that struck Europe, the issue of multiculturalism is almost an inseparable thesis of populism. Far-right populists in the continent may have already sung their elegiac verses to multiculturalism bidding farewell to integration, but saying adieu to multiculturalism is too early yet and is premature at this point. An envisioned sweet parting to multiculturalism is an affair European democracies may never attain because multiculturalism is here with us to stay not sooner to depart, but will be and even ever be with human society so long as diversity as a societal reality exists. Nation-states may run from it, but they cannot definitely hide from it.

The media can be an ally of populism and strike multiculturalism as a foe. It may also refuse allegiance to both populism and multiculturalism but instead serve as a moderator between the two to create public space for reasoned discussion that will allow a genuine public sphere to emerge where all citizens can voice their ideals and aspirations, optimism and anxiety, propositions and dissensions, without fear or favour.

In this paper, using political and economic lens, we were able to see multiculturalism in various shades and textures. We had also split hairs of the multiculturalism-populism-media trilemma. Be that as it may, there are still a great number of gray areas in the field. Further research on the impact of populism on multiculturalism on policy perspectives and general social attitude of the people can provide

added dimension to our understanding the interplay of policy and public opinion.

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