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Rethinking Relation between Unity and Plurality through Solidarity

Abstract

Having taken the prevailing political discourses into account, the concept of unity and plurality now occupies a notable position ever than before. Dominant political discourse can voice itself through various means from either a foundation in which one is patterned from the many or to establish a foundation suiting to the many. In this study it is our objective to claim that attempting to establish a foundation suiting to the many would better cater for the real life condition and it is also a requirement to establish politics on the pillars of this foundation.

Keywords: Justice, Many, One, Plurality, Poverty, Solidarity, Unity.

Birlik ve Çokluk İliřkisini Dayanışma Üzerinden Yeniden Düşünmek

Öz

Birlik ve çokluk düşüncesi günümüz siyaset düşüncesi söz konusu olduğunda önemli bir yerde durmaktadır. Siyasete hâkim olan söylem ya birin çok üzerinden kurgulandığı bir zeminde ya da *çoka* uygun bir zemin bulma yolunda çeşitli dile getirmelerle ifadesini bulmaktadır. Bu çalışmada *çoka* uygun bir zemin bulma çabasının hayata uygun olacağı ve bu zemin üzerinde siyasetin inşa edilmesi gerektiği temellendirilmeye çalışılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Adalet, Bir, Birlik, Çok, Çokluk, Dayanışma, Yoksulluk.

Unity and Plurality have been one of the fixed domains of intellectual world since the age of antiquity scholars and philosophers. As we mention the *one* and *many*, Heraclitus and Parmenides deserve to be recalled. Heraclitus and Parmenides were two major thinkers and philosophers having questioned the link between the one and many. Heraclitus' "Hen Panta" can safely be translated as "Unity is the equivalent of plurality" or "(U)nity exists in all things". Concepts such as *single*, *one* and *many* mentioned in these translations lay the ground of our paper. Parmenides on the other hand referred to the Hen, or *Single* in other terms, to emphasize that plurality and plurality-driven change are mere illusions and his arguments rendered major impacts on the ensuing philosophical tradition. It can thus be feasible to claim that history of philosophy can be construed as the history of clarifying that conflict. Within that context we can argue that, 'philosophy is the struggle to clarify the relation between the real ones and ideal ones' because the foundational challenge is expressing the 'real' in thoughts and that would correspond to describing the reality as the ideal. In a sense that is the struggle to unite in our thoughts the reality that is the equivalent of plurality. Unification of Plurality is likewise attaching the plurality to a concept. We should create concepts in such ways that they would be on par with the reality. That would call for conceptualizing in accordance with the reality but what is this reality/factuality? We could term it as nature, or history, or cosmos, or life events or life itself; reality as always represents one tick above of its corresponding / suiting intellectual pattern in our minds; hence it becomes feasible to construe reality in a myriad of ways.

On politics however, we can claim to have discovered ourselves on a historicity in which unity idea is dominant over plurality or made dominant intentionally. Almost an entire record of human history stands before us as the attempt to make the unique one dominate over the many. The current atmosphere in these days provides a crystal-clear exemplification. What is emphasized in the One is not an exaltation of the uniqueness or singularity of each human life, or the exclusiveness of individual souls. What is meant with the One presently is an exaltation that nullifies the differences of every human being and veils such differentiations. As a political argument *one* refers to

the attempt of clothing the *many* with a specific single one. Asking all the others to view the life, globe, real events through our perspective and seeing only what we can see inevitably enforce subjecting the different other/others to our personal life stance. The correspondence of this attempt on political platform equates to a single authoritarian and totalitarian administration.

However what is meant by solidarity in such a scenario is clamping all together around a single One, single leader, single group, single sect, single ideology, single faith, and single party. That being said, all differences are abdicated for the good of the single one which would eventually fuel a social structure dominated by de-differentiation. Society is then moulded by the same logic of de-differentiation. All possible means are utilized to serve that end. The media and political establishment set all the required conditions for its emergence. At that point what is different is not seen with an "approving sight" and being different is not welcomed.

Nevertheless solidarity has always been construed as the solidarity among the members of a single group. This group could be a guild or party or a single sect, or single ideology. And yet we, human beings, are social members of the largest group; so everybody must act with solidarity on the basis of humanity. It should be kept in mind that the largest group, humanity, is also one subgroup of life. Thus acting responsibly in all life-related events is the liability and duty of each human being to the other one. That is only possible via sensing the life and living harmoniously as it dictates.

In Turkish tradition we have an old saying that demeans the many and plurality: "Wherever is plurality, there is the sh*t!" As clearly exemplified in this saying there is a negative perspective on the many & plurality in our culture & tradition. Some may claim the opposite and point to the existence of plurality in certain domains, which indeed is far from reflecting the truth. As we evaluate plurality from a quantitative aspect we may claim the presence of plurality. There indeed exist many ideologies, many parties, many sects or "cults", many faiths, many media channels, many cultural structures. However from a qualitative outlook it is feasible to detect amongst them many common linkage points with life itself. Hence it would be unwise to claim the

existence of differences. That is because what regulates social life at this stage is the constant pressure exerted by the *one* on the *many*. In fact life resists against this idea of uniqueness and such resistance is observable in all life domains.

The widespread conviction is that poverty is one of the most significant global problems and the ultimate way to solve this problem is establishing justice. Establishing justice can be viable by integrating solidarity culture to all domains of life. However it is for certain that current conditions prevent us from being optimistic. How on earth can we achieve solidarity in the prevailing atmosphere that fails to connect us not in joy or sorrow? As we witness the brutal reality that while some are suffering somewhere on earth, others are simply watching and even nodding approvingly; is it by any means likely to practice in reality the spirit of solidarity? People remain callous in the face all things happening around. In society, particularly among our geography and country, people seem to have developed numbness to all things going on. People lost their connection with factuality. There is a gigantic chasm between the factuality they advocate, view or want to view and experienced factuality; the very life itself. The way to close this chasm and help humans to question existing conditions poses a substantial problem! Unless this problem is overcome, it simply seems infeasible to secure solidarity, eradicate poverty and establish justice. Despite all things happening justice is the foremost ideal we simply cannot forsake. If sense of justice is impaired and turns into a void idea that is the time life becomes the loser party; humanity becomes the loser party. After all we, the humans, created a good number of global problems; still we have the power to solve these problems, we, as the human beings. Unless we activate this power in real life we are collectively doomed to lose this game; doomed to lose the world and life. We should resolve not to impose the *one* and *single* idea we created on the other *many*'s. We are not the only living ones on earth and the universe does not revolve around us. It is high time we grasped this fact.

What we should do today is, upon realizing the position of *many* in real life, seeking a political ground that accords with the many. There simply is not another salvation path other than building a social lifestyle in which humans are free willed

participants of life rather than masses, since life is the union of *many*, *plurality*. This plurality is not reserved for humans solely; where there is life, there is plurality. If we fail to establish a lifestyle that is congruent with the many in life itself, we are doomed to continue fighting with all the problems present today. Deprivation and poverty imposed by the *one* against the diversity of life will continue to exist. To fight against this deprivation and poverty it is imperative to establish solidarity among the many existent in life. Justice can only be established in this way via building a political unity and social lifestyle congruent with the *many*!

On the other hand it has always been the philosophers and artists who assumed the greatest responsibility in the face of global conflicts. Philosophers at all ages criticized themselves on the emergence of problems and they directed the most severe criticisms to themselves. Yet in fact the two parties that accept no liability on prevailing atmosphere bear the greatest part of responsibility for all things happening. These are the politicians and 'men of faith' since both parties have equally strong effects on manipulating and impacting the masses. However, we are also collectively responsible for all things happening; not just these two parties alone. If one day we all assume responsibility and act sensibly and responsibly with a full awareness of ourselves as well as surrounding life events then can the world change into a totally better place. Poverty could be reduced to an insignificant level unworthy of mentioning; the spirit of solidarity may infuse into all domains of social life and justice can –as much as possible– be established.

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