"You who live safe
In your warm houses,
You who find, returning in the evening,
Hot food and friendly faces:
Consider if this is a man"
P.Levi, *If this is a man* (1947)

Introduction

Despite numerous initiatives to encourage combating discrimination against race/ethnicity and cultural diversity the problem of peaceful coexistence and positive integration surfaces again when new examples of discrimination, mortification of those of different faiths or different ethnic origins arise in Europe.

Contemporary Europe is facing three main problems with regard to relations between the majority part of a population and minority groups. The first problem is related to the different kinds of minorities, and their relations within one specific national state (confessional, religious, ethnic, linguistic, etc.). The second problem concerns the relation within one national state between the majority and the different minorities coming from other European countries. The third problem concerns the relations between the majority and minorities coming from Africa, Asia, Central and South America. This threefold problem can be analysed by, or seen through, three different paradigms: universalism, multiculturalism and interculturalism. Our questions are: which can these three paradigms contribute to peaceful and positive coexistence between the majority of the population and the minority groups, and further improve a dialogue that leads to political participation? On the other hand, how can they show a risk of promoting different kinds of violence, intolerance, racism, xenophobia, etc.?

Alarming current developments make it necessary to examine more closely the theoretical paradigms used so far and analyse various forms of political-social images, discourses and rhetoric, strategies and forms of practices that issue from universalism, multiculturalism/differentialism, and more recently interculturalism in order to explore their impact on the social cohesion and conflicts in European societies. We also think it highly important to go thoroughly into the current discussion about the policy models such as assimilation, partial integration, multicultural coexistence and how these relate to different theoretical positions.

Our main question is if these theoretical positions, more or less precisely, refer to an idea of

original purity (both national, ethnic, racial, religious) rooted in a classificatory logic. The criticism of universalism has emphasized that the pretensions of universalism often have been the premise for subjection and annihilation of other civilisations and cultures. From this emerges the recent success of a multicultural mentality in Western literature, which has developed as a reaction against centuries of having to coexist under the mark of hegemony. In this way the claim of acknowledging the same dignity for all cultures appears. Within the literature of multiculturalism a part of the argumentation is about to reach its limit: when the defenders of this particular line of reasoning intend to legitimise other cultures, they defend the existence of specific cultural marks such as fundamental diversity. If it is true that differences are so pronounced, the effect could be that cultures cannot live together with mutual collaboration, but only coexist without mutual communication. In this way, we freeze diversities, we block them and we make them unalterable. The consequence is that we risk strengthening boundaries which are more imaginary than real. Differentialism accepts cultural relativism and is radicalized by the thesis of a strong form of incommensurability between cultures, communities, and ethnic groups. The result is that differentialism becomes the theoretical fundament of the new forms of racism. The question now will be which of these: universalism, multiculturalism or/and their derivations represent, when in drift, a peril to society.

By this analysis of models and theories we aim to present a new perspective on specific factors related to a kind of universalism which allows for a civic integration and coexistence of multiple diversities. We aim to open the door to a dialectical understanding of universalism and diversity, which seems to require a rethinking both of the universal values of rights and the subject of those rights, the individual. By understanding universalism not as something stemming from nature, nor as a state ideology, but rather as the expression of claims in the history of social conflicts, universalism loses its abstract-dogmatic aspect and becomes a historic-pragmatic concept. The truth of universalism changes: it is now a truth verified through practices, legitimized to the extent these practices bring about liberation, inclusion and participation. Rethinking the subject of these rights through the prism of the concept of transindividuality, as first developed by Gilbert Simondon, moreover alters the meaning of both individual and collective identities. By focusing on relationships as the primary, and individual and collectives identities as continuous processes of identification (non-given entities), the transindividual perspective moves beyond both atomistic and organic communitarian conceptions of man and society. The perception of relationships between cultures then changes as well as the very meaning of the concept “culture”. If we abandon

the classificatory logic we often use to find the "original", it is rather the complexities of our belongings and our ability to translate and transport meaning from one symbolic universe to another that come to the forefront.

This perspective therefore prevents the risk criticised by A. Sen[1], i.e. a reductionism which operates on the individual level. According to multiculturalism the definition of the individual's essential being depends on the determination of its belonging. If this is defined restrictively by the prevailing classifications such as only religion, only nationality, only ethnical groups, we risk to force or press the individual into one limited identity. According to A. Sen, we forget that each of us is a complex individual that belongs to many groups. This form of manifold identity is not rare in Europe; in fact it is perhaps the most normal. The normal is the complexity of our belonging, produced by interaction of civilisations and more or less successful "mixture". Based on readings of such philosophers as Gilbert Simonodon, Spinoza, Étienne Balibar, Paul Ricoeur, and Norberto Bobbio we try to propose a new road map for understanding and regulating relations between majority and minority groups, based on a non-essentialist understanding of man, culture, society and rights.

1. Cultural diversity in Europe – historical backdrop

From the early modern period Europe has been a continent hallmarked by movements across borders from one territory and nation to another, and from Europe to other continents. This had a variety of causes. In the early modern and the modern period, Europeans migrated mostly for religious and political reasons. In the "Ancien Régime" the religious reasons prevailed, later political reasons took over and coincided with unrest. The constrained homogenization during the epoch of affirmation of nationalisms caused the phenomenon of forced migration. If we consider only the period between the Balkan wars (1912/13) and the Kosovo war (1998/99) we talk of approximately 50 million refugees. In Eastern Europe it is possible to trace a particular movement among ethnic minorities toward their native countries or their ancestor's countries: this movement includes, among others, the German, Greek, and Hungarian minorities and after 1945 the movement also includes European Jews and the Russians after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Around the middle of the 19th century, the main reason for migration was economic. Work migration was a phenomenon, both internally in Europe and from Europe to other continents. This phenomenon intensified at the end of the 19th century in relation to industrialisation and

urbanisation. Workers migrated both from East to West and from the South to the North. In this period the South of Europe (Italy, Portugal, Greece, Spain and Turkey) became a starting point of work migration to North-Western Europe. For a long time Europe has been an area of internal migrations, but at the same time, Europe experienced emigration. One can argue that the history of intercontinental migration from Europe began in the 16th century; but it is also important to point out that after the Industrial Revolution 60 million people emigrated from Europe, and in addition 10 million Russians moved to Siberia and Asia. In the 20th century, from 1904 to 1914 only, 10 million Europeans emigrated to the United States of America, and about 10,000 emigrated annually to Australia and South America. This trend changes only after World War II.

After World War II there emerged a new kind of migration. The cause of this was decolonization and involved Western European colonial powers (Belgium, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands and Portugal). In this regard we can isolate two distinct groups: one consisted of a population that returned to their native country, the other consisted of a colonised population leaving their native country. Maghrebians arrived in France, Indonesians and people from the Antilles in the Netherlands, Pakistanis and Indians in Great Britain. At the same time countries like Germany, Switzerland and Sweden experienced their first wave of immigration, and a little later, due to the very positive economic development before the oil crisis in 1972, countries like Norway, Italy, Spain, and Greece also became attractive for work migrants from the Third World. After the oil crisis a halt in immigration for low-skilled workers from non-European countries has been the norm. In 2013, the enlarged Europe, counting 27 countries, is hosting 20, 4 million immigrants, i.e. people residing in an EU-Member State with citizenship of a non-member country. In addition, there were 13.7 million people living in an EU-Member State with the citizenship of another EU-Member State[2]. But no one is sure of how many immigrants have illegally crossed “the wall” and are living lives beyond rights and duties.

In the European states, unlike Canada or the United States, what is articulated as “the problem of cultural differences” is often linked to the phenomenon of migration, in recent years increasingly to immigration from non-EU countries and less so to intra-European migration. Hence intra-continental migration is increasingly facilitated and encouraged by the European integration project, whereas inter-continental immigration policy is increasingly complex despite recent attempts of coordination. It is important to remark that the attitude in the populations of Europe towards immigrants is deteriorating. This situation has worsened with the current economic crisis. The annual report of the *European Commission against*

Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) from 2012[3] highlights the effects of the economic crisis on vulnerable groups: the xenophobic political language led people to believe that immigration is the cause of unemployment and the deterioration of security. ECRI observes that welfare cuts, diminished job opportunities and a consequent rise in intolerance towards both immigrant groups and older historical minorities are worrying trends in Europe today. ECRI also states that immigrants are perceived as a burden to society and a great number of political parties use the same rhetoric: immigrants "steal jobs" or risk "capsizing our welfare system". These xenophobic parties have obtained more support in recent elections and gained seats in government coalitions and/or the parliaments of several European countries. The economic instability makes people more open to extremist and xenophobic ideologies. ECRI highlights that ultra-right extremism, xenophobic parties, self-proclaimed anti-Muslim movements, and Islamic radicalism are growing. Racist actions or violence and hateful rhetoric, in particular against immigrants, Roma and Jews, are increasing. Only last year fear pushed 7,000 Jews to leave France, a record. And that was before the recent Paris attacks that included the killing of four Jews at a kosher grocery store.

2. The policy models

Since World War II, different European countries have addressed the issue on immigration with different strategies that might be called national models of immigration policies: the model of assimilation in France, the model of pluriculturalism developed in Great Britain, the model of partial integration in Germany and the Dutch model of "communitarian multiculturalism". According to S. Sassen[4], the management of the migratory phenomenon assumed a special characteristic as a consequence of the creation of modern national states, i.e. foreigners became "outsiders", individuals without rights of citizenship and excluded from the civil society. Rooted in the ideals of the French revolutions, France developed an "assimilation" model with one precise aim: the naturalization of foreigners. The Anglo-Saxon model on the contrary has been a pluralistic model based on the cohabitation of different cultures. This difference in approach to cultural diversity can also be seen in the colonial legacies of the two states. Whereas the French had attempted to rule their colonial territories guided by the principle of assimilation, Britain on the contrary left its "civilizing" ambitions and developed the model of indirect rule, highly stressing demarcation and containerization of cultures. Germany first developed a model of temporary immigration that promoted a

"limited residence". When Germany recruited workers from other nations in a formal programme, the immigrants were known as "guest workers". At that time German society considered its immigrants to be temporary. And when the guest workers decided to stay, it was difficult for politicians and society to accept that Germany was a country of immigration. Like Germany, the Netherlands has had a "guest worker" programme. But, when immigration became evident, the Dutch government produced, on the basis of the Neo- Calvinist concept of sphere sovereignty (*souvereiniteit in eigen kring*), a policy of "communitarian multiculturalism" or "vertical pluralism". This policy is often taken as an extension of Holland's pillar system. Dutch society historically was divided into three pillars — Protestant, Catholic, and Social democratic. Owing to immigration, the Dutch government tackled the problem by adding another pillar: the Muslim. So people lived within their own pillar with their own newspapers, broadcasting organisations, political parties, trade unions, banks, schools, hospitals, universities, etc. The social strategies applied by these practico-political regimes have been informed by the theoretical paradigms of universalism, multiculturalism and perhaps also the less clear, and in the making, paradigm of interculturalism.

3. A «genealogy» of three paradigms: Universalism, Multiculturalism, Interculturalism

3a. The «extensive» Universalism

Can the "universal value system" be said to be universal? Are we really sure that what we call Western universalism involves all humanity? Or must we admit that the values of the great religions of universal extension, and the secular values of the French Revolution are too worn out by real history and can no longer collect unanimous adhesion? Colonialism, wars, inequality and exclusion make these values appear to be claiming to codify as universal the culture, the ethics, the world vision and the social behaviour of winners.

In European culture and history, universalistic values (religious and secular), have claimed superiority above other religions and cultures, and in many instances this claim has caused the exclusion and destruction of whatever has been targeted as "particular" identities. Universalism has in this way been defended and defined in relation to particularism: to something which was not "universal", and which represented a kind of otherness. As E. Balibar[5] highlighted, there are two lines of this "extensive" universalism: one religious and one secular. The first is typical of the great monotheistic religions based on the conversion

and proselytism: Islam, Christianity in all its sectarian differences, while with regard to the Jewish tradition the proselytism has always been a secondary factor. These are religions whose message is proposed as universal and it transcends social affiliations, ethnic origins, and cultural groupings. Historically, their proselytism took both peaceful and violent forms. They were hegemonic because they were able to establish a communication that crossed ethnic and political boundaries as the great ideal of medieval Christianity, i.e. a supreme spiritual authority can impose certain common rules to temporal political power. The other form of extensive universalism was national universalism. The purpose of the national state and national universalism was to establish peace between the different faiths and prevent different groups from destroying each other in the name of religious exclusivism. It used the law and law enforcement agencies. It built universalism around the concepts of citizenship, progress and secularism. The Christian universalisms, and the universalism of the Enlightenment, have been advanced as a means of overcoming particularistic identities, in order to be able to give a homogeneous identity to a Europe of Nations. In the course of its history, universalism has often implied exclusion, in the form of intolerance towards minorities, or violent expulsion of those who would pollute, disturb, or disrupt the community of those who live up to the universalistic values. Both Catholic and Protestant Christianity provide many instances of this. Both established international, inter-linguistic, and Europe-wide values in tandem with continuous persecutions of Jews, heretics and witches, and still the legacy of these religious universalistic pretensions provide significant barriers to the inclusion of Muslim minorities, or countries, within the communality of the European Union. In the political practices and social process of integration, the appeal to universalism has given identity to groups. At the same time universalism sanctioned the suppression of differences, and the consequent exclusion of the “others” from full citizenship and political participation. For all this, extensive universalism, having served to build great hegemonies, to build the great colonial empires, and to abolish local particularities, is a universalism of the dominant groups

At the same time, it is indubitable that universalism has included new social groups. Universalism has also introduced new forms of social integration, and guaranteed non-discrimination, pluralism, and full political membership and participation. Universalism was the theoretical basis for developing any concept of universal values. In this sense universalism expressed itself under the form of theories of tolerance and natural rights. The theory and language of human rights were elaborated in the context of a specific philosophical, religious, and political culture. These were the Classical and the Hebrew-

Christian cultures. The thinkers in the XVIII century, who stressed the metahistorical and abstract character of the notion of human nature, all agreed that the idea of natural rights, or human rights, belonged to all human beings as they were all rational. It excludes, at least theoretically, any form of discrimination and hierarchy of dominion. Pluralism, freedom of religion, and tolerance are perceived and accepted as positive values that must be transferred to the political sphere, laws and institutions. The language of human rights is generally considered as the most typical expression of universalism. The paradigm of this universalism is the Declaration of Universal Human rights approved in 1948 by UN: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights" (art.1). Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status (art.2). The Declaration testifies that the language of human rights has the capacity to be expansive, since almost all the world's political communities recognize it. But we may ask if this extensive form for universalism represent a means of liberation. Yet even in this respect, the idea of universalism is controversial: its form of liberation is a paternalistic idea of liberation, coming "from on high": such a liberation is a contradictory concept[6]. In the public debate, the principles and values underlying the theory of human rights are sometimes interpreted in different and even contradictory ways.

The criticism towards the theory of human rights was resumed in the following centuries. In the XVIII century the sexist nature of the theory of human rights was criticized as well for example by Olympe de Gouges in her *Declaration of Women's Rights* (1791). It was, and still is, emphasized that the Western and/or sexist colour of the theory forgets that the rejection of war is another principle contained in the UN Declaration. It is a fact that an appeal to human rights is often used to justify some forms of war: the humanitarian wars, the war against all wars, or war against terrorism. The language of universalism is a complex inheritance within all Western civilization. In some epochs it accompanied the Western political dominion over other countries and cultures. However, it is indubitable that neither contemporary forms of religious fundamentalism, nor the vindication of the so-called Asian values, seem to really question the success of the theory of human rights as a universal language. Now it runs the risk of becoming a worldwide, hegemonic project: what Balibar calls the real universality of the globalisation.

Today the theory of rights is posed in opposition to other theories: cultural relativism, multiculturalism, and communitarianism. Critics from different theoretical approaches (Alasdair MacIntyre, Martha Nussbaum, Charles Taylor, Michael Waltzer, and Richard Rorty)

argue that the peculiar mark of the present moment is the proliferation of difference as rejecting universalistic values in the name of particular communities, or ethnic or religious identities insofar as universalism in terms of integrational policy models have been associated with the discredited model of assimilation. Perceiving themselves as the representatives of the universal, the host societies' hegemonic groups define immigrants and minorities as individuals with one problem in common: adaptation to the host culture. The ideal is a homogenous society where all members have equal rights based on that they indeed are equal, thus the equality of rights can only be achieved through giving up the right to be different.

3b. Multiculturalism and/or its derivations

We can define multiculturalism with Susan Moller Okin in this way: "Multiculturalism" is the claim made in the context of basically liberal democracies, that minority cultures or ways of life are not sufficiently protected by ensuring the individual rights of their members and as a consequence should also be protected with special *group* rights or privileges[7].

It is interesting to note that multiculturalism takes for granted the democratic-liberal context, and therefore the debate opens to the problem of human rights. The term came into public discussion in Canada and US in the seventies, as a consequence of so-called "culture wars" and the crisis of the "melting pot". During the eighties and the nineties multiculturalism became the main theme of the political debate between liberals and communitarians. Multiculturalism seemed one possible solution to problems of coexistence among individuals who no longer request the recognition of their own equality, but rather the recognition of their own difference.

Though the outline of communitarian positions is varied, it is possible to find some common topics concerning criticism of liberal positions. In general, they emphasize the priority of the common good over procedural justice; they refuse the abstract idea of right, by contrast right should be understood as the expression of identities and the consequence of a non-individualistic moral. It follows that they favour a holistic conception of society where the good of the whole (the community of belonging) is superior to the good of its part[8]. Charles Taylor began the debate about multiculturalism. It was quickly pointed out that Taylor's paradigm of recognition and supremacy of communities entails a risk: the exclusion of those

who are not members of the community; this position risks to produce a conservative and exclusivist ideology[9].
As for North American liberals, the trouble is the coexistence of individual rights recognition with the recognition of communities' rights. Kymlicka's answer is to propose a multicultural citizenship. For Kymlicka the central concept in the definition of a culture is "nation". He further distinguishes cultural pluralism through two models. On the one side there are the multinational states resulting from the incorporation of cultures or nations in a wider state. On the other side there are polyethnic states whose members have emigrated from different nations. Multiculturalism is therefore defined in an ethno-national sense, characterized by "national minorities" and "ethnic groups." These two models allow us to distinguish some kinds of rights in relation to the belonging to a group[10]. It was observed that Kymlicka seems to present a strange crossbreed of nationalism and liberalism based on the concept of republican freedom[11], and that his position is construed on a static and closed image of culture as a natural entity[12].

At the turn of the century, the debate on multiculturalism began in Europe. In Europe multiculturalism was first conceived of as a new variation of the concept of tolerance presented in all its aspects: religious tolerance, tolerance of life styles, tolerance between the different ethnic groups, and tolerance of diversities. But its limits appear: tolerance is not recognition; it is rather a negative concept or a practice of political prudence. Tolerance can be defined only if we define its limits. Recognition implies that religious, linguistic, and ethnic particularism will be considered and represented in the public sphere and not just restricted to the private sphere. In the European debate, particularly in France, the "tournant identitaire" was radicalized: i.e. in a new definition of pluralism. This pluralism – according to which belonging to a culture or a cultural group is considered an essential dimension of the autonomy of individuals – is a substitute for a classic pluralism where the difference was a difference of interest[13]. Between the 1980s and the 1990s, the so-called "identity movement" (or Mouvance identitaire) arose in France and in Belgium. This was a cultural current that had its roots in German Romanticism (Herder and Fichte), in the Pan-German völkisch and conservative revolution (Spengler, Moeller van den Bruck, etc.) and in the New Right. Its most important members were the Belgian Robert Steukers, the Flemish Luc Pauwels, the Franco-German Pierre Krebs, the French Alain de Benoist, Guillaume Faye, and Jean Pierre Vial Mabire. Their reflections joined those of regionalist thinkers such as Guy Héraud. The main idea of this school is that the individual is defined as part of an organic

community rooted in their "carnal homeland", the region, not in an "artificial" national state, held together by a "social contract". In 1972 A. de Benoist expressed these ideas in the following terms:

The region is, concretely, what the nation not always is: it is the natural framework where we recognize those who really look alike. Ethnicism is the rebirth of carnal homelands. And the carnal homeland is the region that forms the most suitable structure and horizon for putting down roots [...] The wealth of humanity is the personalization of individuals within their community. Europe's wealth is the personalization of the regions within the culture and civilization from which they are formed [...] The story changes, and those that rely on it are crazy. [...] What are the historical and fleeting homelands compared with the carnal and eternal homelands? What are the boundaries of the story compared with the borders of the blood?[14]

Identity is determined by alleged differences of cultural historical nature. The differences define the limits of tolerability and criteria of preferences that protect the identity against the "contamination" of the other[15].

We saw that the criticism of universalism has emphasized that the pretensions of universalism often have been the premise for subjection and annihilation of other civilisations and cultures. From this emerges the recent success of a multicultural mentality in Western literature, developed as a reaction partly to the US/Canadian debates from the 1970ies, but also having a perhaps less well known and much older legacy in the British form of colonial rule developed in its fullest form in the African domains. In this way the claim of acknowledging the same dignity for all cultures appears. The problem is that individuals are ascribed group membership and that "cultures" are perceived as static, pure and original entities that must not be "disturbed", thus blocking dynamics and bolstering hegemonic positions sought redressed by disadvantaged members of the group. Michel Wieviorka observes acutely that behind the distinctions of liberal, communitarian or more radical readings of cultural difference, lie some contact points regarding the issue of identity coming from the "communitarian face": It is not possible to conceive the identity without this component, however small, which pulls it to withdrawing into itself. There is no collective identity without this communitarian face, without some of its members – or a part of the

consciousness of each member – claiming that the group focuses on itself sometimes in fundamentalist terms.[16]

3c. Interculturalism

As a response to what has been called the "crisis of multiculturalism", the concept of "interculturalism" started to take shape. The term "interculturalism" was developed first as communicative practice, especially in education as a consequence of the problems of the traditional strategies. Terms such as "intercultural education", "intercultural communication", "intercultural relations" have now a great range of uses, which aim at establishing meeting points and communication with the "other". "Interculture" became a very wide term that defines many projects with different motivations and results in all of Europe; perhaps often used somewhat uncritically. Literature concerning intercultural strategies and forms of practices in educational and artistic performances is very wide, but this is not the case with respect to interculturalism as a theoretical position[17]. The term interculturalism will here indicate in general the strategies that aim to include minorities that must no longer be unrelated or foreign to the political, social, cultural, and economical body of the host society; moreover the term points to results of inclusion coming from continual communications between minorities and the host society in order to aid mutual comprehension. Tacitly these strategies imply a constitutive social rule: acceptance of dialogue. But the public dialogue and the construction of a communicating public opinion demand mutual recognition. In general therefore, interculturalism implies that the different minorities and the different communities, both secular and religious, should accept mutual recognition and mutual respect.

These intercultural strategies were resulting from the revision of the multicultural political model. In recent years countries that have pursued multicultural policies to a greater extent, such as Germany, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, took a new direction. The origin of this change is due to the German Süssmuth Commission[18]. This report proposes the concept of "leitkultur": a guiding culture, i.e. that the social and political organisation must recognise its own self in a group of shared principles which cannot be in contrast with the democratic traditions of the host society. At the same time Rita Süssmuth claims that the

myth of homogeneity must be destroyed in order to establish a road map for integration by new intercultural strategies. These new intercultural strategies for integration imply the necessity to find a common ground of rules, rights and duties accepted by all cultures and to which all individuals can appeal, and which they must respect. At the same time these strategies imply the necessity to assess and eventually reject behaviours that injure group members or third persons. One of the big problems for the intercultural position is nevertheless for example the interpretation of women's role in society. In many cultures women are in a subordinate role in the family: this role is in contrast to family law in most liberal democratic countries, where the role of genders with respect to married partners and parents is equal. Why is this a problem for the interculturalist position? Facing life forms which contravene the law (for example polygamy) or are perceived to deeply contravene core values in a host society or "leitkuktur", the interculturalist position seems to face a problem that points to a fundamental difficulty of defining interculturalism: it wavers between the concept of recognition of core values of cultures and the concept of tolerance.

Interculturalism concerns the culture's transformations resulting from the population's movements. Interculturality concerns the processes of cultural change produced by the exchanges between minority cultures and the host culture, and the consequent production of new cultural objects or hybrids objects, whether they are related to symbols, artefacts, languages, food practices, religious beliefs and so on[19]. But as J.L. Amselle points out, hybridization has its starting point from the premise of the existence of discrete cultural entities called "cultures". This vision has the disadvantage of relying on an issue that presupposes the existence of originally pure or homogeneous societies (isolates), which would have become a crossing or hybridization[20]. Therefore, by focusing on the crossings of cultures this position does not escape the essentialist understanding which more or less vaguely refer to an idea of original purity (national, ethnic, racial, religious) rooted in a classificatory logic, in a form of essentialism that does not differ from the essentialism which characterize the extensive universalism and communitarian position.

4. Universalism as praxis – historicizing universalism and non-atomistic individuality

Facing the crisis of classical integration strategies, it is necessary to open up the theoretical framework to overcome the insufficiencies of paradigms hitherto used to explain this problem. Is it possible to find another way of reflection that in the best way promotes

liberation and understanding of the creativity minority groups possess in relation to their original belonging and to the host society? Is it possible to develop an image of society that avoids the risk expressed by Chandran Kakuthas[21]? He argues that the juridical protection of cultural specificities blocks each group in its present form and obstructs an inner revision of the group's own culture. If languages, traditions, cultures and religions are different per se, what is then the basis for communication?

A first step in this direction can be found in the paradigm of translation[22]. Translation allows transportation of meaning from one symbolic universe to another. Translations played and play a formative role in the development of new cultural identities. This paradigm also allows giving credit to the thesis of non-incommensurability of differences. In this way it opens the door to a dialectical understanding of universalism and diversity. Universalism now loses its dogmatic aspect and becomes a pragmatic concept. The truth of universalism changes: it is now a truth verified through practices. But also the relationships between cultures change, or to go even further, the meaning of the concepts of "culture" and "belonging" change. We could understand the complexity of our belonging, as produced by interaction of people with different sets of mother tongues, cultural practical backgrounds, beliefs, skills and ideas who are able to relate, to learn, to assess, to translate and embrace or accept or reject or condemn both that which is new and that which is old and already familiar to them. The premises of discourses developed within the classificatory logic – and therefore also the multiculturalist discourse – fail to respond to the problems arising from this complex belonging. They fail to conceptualize the possibility that certain individuals or groups do not recognize themselves in the original culture, the culture to which they are linked through their national, religious and ethnic origin. Perhaps that culture of belonging does not offer sufficient resources for these individuals or groups to fully identify with belonging to it, or some event causes them to waive all or part of their identity, or they want to become "someone else", a member of another culture or another religion.

What are the conditions for organizing the ideal space for diversity taking into account these complex identities and the practice of translation? There should be articulation of the particular identities, the language of universalism and the expression of individuals. In other words we need to rethink both the universal values of rights and the subject of those rights, the individual.

Let us return to Balibar's distinctions with respect to universalism. Along with the extensive universalism we also have what the French philosopher called intensive universalism: "intensive or qualitative Universalism is a universalism of liberation, non-discrimination, it is basically – it seems to me – an ideology of the dominated"[23]. He goes on to specify that this kind of universalism does not exist by nature, it is not a state ideology; it is basically the expression of a claim of equality beginning with the expression of a revolt against discrimination, revolt against inequality, revolt against the prohibitions, revolt against the obstacles to freedom of expression or other freedoms, individual or collective. Much of the discussions about universalism fall into ambiguity and obscurity because they tend to confuse the two. This intensive universalism has a long history both before and after the two historical French and American Declarations. This universalism does not need an "absolute abstract foundation".

Norberto Bobbio has explicitly recognized the impossibility of finding an "absolute foundation" of human rights or fundamental rights[24]. The origin of rights is historical and it has to be sought in the process of claims and in the history of social conflicts[25].

According to Bobbio the language of universal rights is a "Copernican revolution" and represents a radical revolution in the secular history of morality[26]. The archaic and traditional codes were codes of duties (or obligations), not rights. With the language of universal rights we moved from the code of the duties to the code of the rights. This means that the relationship between rulers and ruled is seen no more *ex parte principis* but *ex parte populi*. Human rights have developed through three major generations: right to liberty, political rights and social rights. This historical dynamic creates new categories of rights by intersecting with the combined effects of globalization and cultural pluralism.

From this conclusion, Bobbio suggests that the validity of their evidence is not relevant for the implementation of universal rights. What really matters is to spread the ' language of rights ' as an expression of social demands and expectations. The language of universal rights can open the possibility of a symbiosis of horizons. Beyond its "Western" origin it can be attractive in its form of "claims": the oppressed and discriminated subjects belonging to the "other cultures" could recognize the possibility to make claims, to express and affirm their dignity by the Western language of rights. And they could conceptualize their needs and interests and protect them, in new forms coming from their own culture. This language can be an emancipatory language even if it was historically developed by their oppressor. In line with Bobbio's understanding we know that these rights are historical and there is no need to identify the essential basis of them; what is important is rather how we implement them, the

qualities and contents we give them. The flaw of the assimiliationist paradigm, which opens for chauvinism, seems to be its tendency to articulate these abstract, “eternal” ideals as already finished, long since completed framework of the very state itself. Hence the immigrant could neither give nor take something, they could let themselves be included in this universal state through assimilation, or let themselves be excluded from it by rejecting or simply not being able to become “western”. In contrast pragmatic universalism suggests a historic consciousness that informs praxis in the changing realities of concrete social formations, insofar as the legitimacy of these rights is to be found in the life forms they inform and the possibility that new groups could appropriate them and making them their own. As is quite obvious, universalism as praxis has a dual legacy, both very powerful: a reactionary exclusivist legacy from so-called extensive universalism, and a subversive, inclusivist legacy. All the great struggles in modernity have fundamentally been between reactionary and subversive practices of universalism: the labour movements, the feminist movements, the independence movements, the democratization movements etc. Are the gaps between cultures or between people attempts at promoting opposite versions of the praxis of universalism?

So who is the subject of this demand genesis of rights?

With this question we touch upon the theoretical centre of our proposal: individuals are the “carriers” of these rights. It is the individual that expresses him or herself, that can cross borders more or less freely, that can look for a job regardless of skin colour, or his or her ‘belonging” to a genre. The individual is the “carrier” of a certain culture[27]. According to Bobbio, the Copernican revolution of the age of rights is linked to the affirmation of the individualistic conception of society: without the “ontological individualism, which assumes […] the autonomy of each individual with respect to all the others and the equal dignity of each individual, and the ethical individualism, according to which each individual is a moral person” [28] the point of view of human rights becomes incomprehensible.

Bobbio defends here the idea of the primacy of the individual. But how should we understand the conception of the individual? Extensive universalism may well refer to an abstract and atomistic conception of the individual, as a distinct, independent and rational being, but intensive universalism cannot. In history, the claim to enforce these rights, and therefore to acquire freedom, is necessarily collective, or better trans-individual. The transindividual has become one of the key concepts of contemporary critical philosophy. The concept, developed in the second half of the last century by Gilbert Simondon, gradually acquired centrality in contemporary philosophical debate by the reflections proposed in the works of Etienne

Balibar in France, Paolo Virno and Vittorio Morfino in Italy. The concept finds its philosophical foundations in Spinoza's ontology of relations and Marx's theory that man is defined through his relations. By focusing on relationship, the transindividual is allowed to leave both the possessive individualism that dominates the neoliberal ideology of our time (society is the sum of atomistic individuals) and the organic conception of the individual and society (society, or the cultural group is primarily a monolithic totality).

In his work *L' individuation à la lumière des notions de forme et d'information*[29], Simondon started from the question: what is an individual? This question is soon after reformulated in the following terms: what is this something that allows individualisation or the formation of a distinct identity? His answer is that an individual is not an entity, but a continuous process. An individual is never defined once and for all, but keeps becoming, and in a sense never stops becoming. We should then speak of processes of individualisation, rather than individuals as given once and for all. Simondon overturns the ontological priority that tradition gives to the individual. The pre-eminence is now on the process of identifying the individual.

Vittorio Morfino and Etienne Balibar[30] underscore Simondon's statement on "the primacy of the relationship over the terms of the relationship itself." In other words, the relationship that gives rise to the process of identification is not a relationship of "intersubjectivity" between monads or substances in the meaning of hypokeimenon[31]. The individual is not a substance or foundation, it is the result of a process, "relationship of relationships". In the process of individualisation, an individual emerges from all that precedes him, all that passes through him and makes him possible. At the same time, even when the individual reaches an equilibrium, he continues to maintain in himself a permanent activity of individualisation

In this, Simondon follows Spinozistic themes, though he does not refer directly to the philosopher of Amsterdam. According to Spinoza, the process of individualisation is a bodily process, it is an affective process and therefore it forms the imagination. The concept of individual changes as does the concept of society or cultural group. The concept loses its essentialist characterization. Morfino expresses very clearly this point when he analyses the question of imagination in Spinoza as a process of psychic and collective individualisation. Thinking the collective imagination in terms of transindividualism allows for giving an account of the multiple temporal layers that determine the collective imagination's history, therefore it avoids levelling the collective imagination into a contemporaneity that essentially eliminates all differences[32].

5. Conclusion

Through a genealogical examination of the major paradigms hitherto employed to understand and regulate relations between minorities and majority populations in Western Europe: extensive universalism, multiculturalism/differentialism and more recently interculturalism, it becomes evident that for all their differences they nevertheless share one central premise: an essentialist and classificatory notion of difference.

By shifting attention to the complexities of belonging and the praxis of translation, a) articulation of particular identities can be understood through the notion of the transindividual, b) the language of universalism can be understood as the spread of the language of rights, i.e. the expression of social demands and expectations, c) the expression of the individual can be understood as an on-going process of individualization – forming both the ontological basis for a non-essentialist understanding of man and culture, as well as the ontological basis without which the notion of human rights becomes incomprehensible.

Stressing contacts and connections, instead of differences, a road map to non-extensive universalism is proposed. Through a dialectical understanding of universalism and diversity, universalism loses its abstract-dogmatic aspect and becomes a historico-pragmatic concept whose truth is verified through practices. Such a reorientation is in line with Balibar's notion of an intensive universalism, and can promote universalism as a praxis of liberation, inclusion and participation.

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[1] Cf. A. Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*. Issues of our time, W.W. Norton & Co New York 2006.

[2] *Migration and migrant population statistics, Data from May 2014,* EUROSTAT. Cf. the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Migration_and_migrant_population_statistics#Main_statistical_findings

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[3] Cf. the following website: www.coe.int/t/dghl/.../ecri/...Reports/Annual%20report%202012.pdf

[4] Cf. S.Sassen, *Migranten, Siedler, Flüchtlinge. Von der Massenauswanderung zur Festung Europa*, Frankfurt am Main 1996

[5] E. Balibar, *Quel universalisme aujourd'hui*? Cf. the following website: http://www.cerclegramsci.org/archives/balibar.htm

[6] Cf. Balibar, *Ibid.*

[7] S. Moller Okin, "*Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?"* In *Is Culturalism Bad for Woman?* Ed.by Joshua Cohen, Matthew Howard,and Martha C. Nussbaum, Eds.Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1999, p.10-11

[8] Cf. A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue,* University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1981; J. Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1982 ; D. Bell, *Communitarianism and its Critics*, 1 Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1993.

[9] Cf. Z. Baumann, *Community. Seeking Safety in an Insecure World*, Polity, Cambridg, 2001; F. Baroncelli, "Hanno le culture diritti sugli individui? Sul liberalismo olistico di C. Taylor" in "*Ragion pratica*" 2, 1994, pp. 11-31.

[10] W. Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995

[11] Cf. E. Vitale, *Liberalismo e multiculturalism, una sfida per il pensiero democratico*, Laterza, Roma-Bari,2000

[12] Cf.M.L. Lanzillo, *Multiculturalismo*, Laterza, Roma-Bari, 2005

[13] Cf. L. Bouvet, « Le tournant identitaire américain. Du 'pluralisme-diversité' au 'pluralisme-différence' », in Denis Lacorne, dir., *Les Etats-Unis*, Paris, Fayard, 2006, p. 233-244

[14] A. de Benoist, *Réflexions sur l'enracinement* [1972], in A. de Benoist *et al.*, *Qu'est-ce que l'enracinement ?*, Grece, Paris,1975, pp. 68-71.

[15] Cf. É. Balibar, *Droit de cité*, PUF, Paris 1998

[16] M.Wieviorka, *La difference, Paris* : Les Éditions Balland, 2001, p. 189

[17] A wide approach to the problem is presented by Penas Ibáñez, Beatriz / López Sáenz, María Carmen, *Interculturalis. Between Identity and Diversity*, Peter Lang International Academic Publishers; Bern ; Berlin ; Bruxelles ; Frankfurt am Main ; New York ; Oxford ; Wien: 2006 that collects papers presented at the Conference

in Madrid in October 2003. This book analyses the relation between identity and diversity: two central concepts for pointing out the positive and negative sides of intercultural dialogue. Jagdish S. Gundara in his *Interculturalism, Education and Inclusion*, SAGE Publications California/New Delhi 2000 discusses basic issues and practices in intercultural education, interculturalism in Europe, Asian and in a global perspective, the role of the state and the building of a common and shared value system and knowledge.

[18] Bericht der Unabhängige Kommission « Zuwanderung », Berlin 2001. Cf. the following website: www.bmi.bund.de

[19] Cf. G. Baumann, *The Multicultural Riddle: Rethinking National, Ethnic and Religious Identities* Lectures in Social Anthropology Routledge, New York, 1999

[20] Cf. J.L. Amselle, "Métissage, branchement et triangulation des cultures" in *Revue germanique internationale* 21,2004, p. 41-51

[21] Cf. Ch. Kukathas, *Are there any cultural rights?*, in *Political theory*, 1992, 1, pp. 105–39

[22] Cf. P. Ricoeur *Sur la traduction*, Bayard, 2004

[23] Cf. Balibar op.cit.

[24] Cf.N. Bobbio, L'età dei diritti,Torino, Einaudi, 1990, pp. 5-16

[25] Cf. Bobbio, Ibid.p. 53-56
[26] Bobbio, Ibid, p. 60.

[27] Cf. Balibar op.cit.

[28] Bobbio, op.cit., p. 60

[29] PhD thesis discussed in 1958 with Georges Canguilhem as Thesis Director, of which the first part was published with the title *L'individuation psychique et collective*, Aubier, Paris,1989

[30] Cf. É. Balibar and V. Morfino: *Il transindividuale. Soggetti, relazioni, mutazioni,* Mimesis, Milano-Udine 2014

[31] E. Balibar,"*Individualité et transindividualité chez Spinoza*", in Architectures de la raison. Mélanges offerts à Alexandre Matheron textes réunis par P.-F. Moreau, ENS Editions, Fontenay-aux-Roses, 1996, p. 35-46

[32] Cf. V. Morfino, "Immaginazione e ontologia della relazione: note per una ricerca" in *Etica & Politica / Ethics & Politics*, XVI, 2014, 1, pp. 142-161