

The Philosophy of Pluralism in the Neo-Albanians Development Circumstances of the 1930s

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Abstract *The work draws attention on the treatment of educational with pluralism, evaluating it firstly as a solution to the Albanian problems, analyzing educational issue connected with pluralism, making evident the Neo-Albanian views as questions and ancient responses, as well as the state and its role on the development of pluralist institutions. Generally defined, the term pluralism states institutional forms for political power (force) distribution. In order to analyze the mentioned phenomenon, it means to examine the power or the distributed authority in society. Very often the term pluralism is used to signify any situation where there are no political, ideological, cultural and ethnic ruling groups. We mean that a certain situation is characterized by the competition existing between elites or interested groups and the pluralist society allow this competition to be freely developed. In the Albanian development circumstances of the 1930s, Neo-Albanians chose the pluralism of opinions, which were introduced in that time publications, especially in the "Albanian Attempt" magazine. We could conclude that the societies, which have a stable economic development, have developed the values and the appropriate structures connected with industrialization, such as the efficiency, rationalism, re-investments and benefit; all these create the basis for the increasing rate of the integration of social groups on the basis of pluralism as a political solution. Otherwise, the Albanian society of the 21st century has not secured yet these stable economic developments, the values and structures connected with it and also because of the fragility are the democratic system and political pluralism.*

Keywords: *Education, Law, Order, Pluralism, Progress, State,*

1. Introduction

There is no question that Neo-Albanianism takes a conspicuous position in the intellectual challenge of the 30's in the 20th century. This part of the social, philosophical, aesthetic, artistic (etc.) thought was developed through polemics with the viewpoints of other currents, especially that of the "illustrious dictatorship", the legalists, the communistic viewpoints, etc.

In a more generalizing characterization, Neo-Albanianism represents an entirety of viewpoints of a democratic nature, which tend toward the prioritized evaluation of the illuminating role of knowledge, science, culture, etc. As a trend, "Neo-Albanianism" demonstrates, *first of all*, elements of a national nature that can be evaluated, and constitutes, in my opinion, the most refined and complete national viewpoint. According to the views of the main representatives of this trend, the periods when Albanian patriotism created its essential elements were the period of Skanderbeg and that of the Albanian National Renaissance. To support this idea, this trend's main representatives bring forward the argument of the existence of an ideal during the National Renaissance. In general, the need for the reemergence of such an ideal as the one that appeared during the National Renaissance was considered by them necessary, useful, and indispensable even for the Albania of the 1930's. (V. Nirvana, Magazine "Albanian Endeavor", march 1937, p.204)

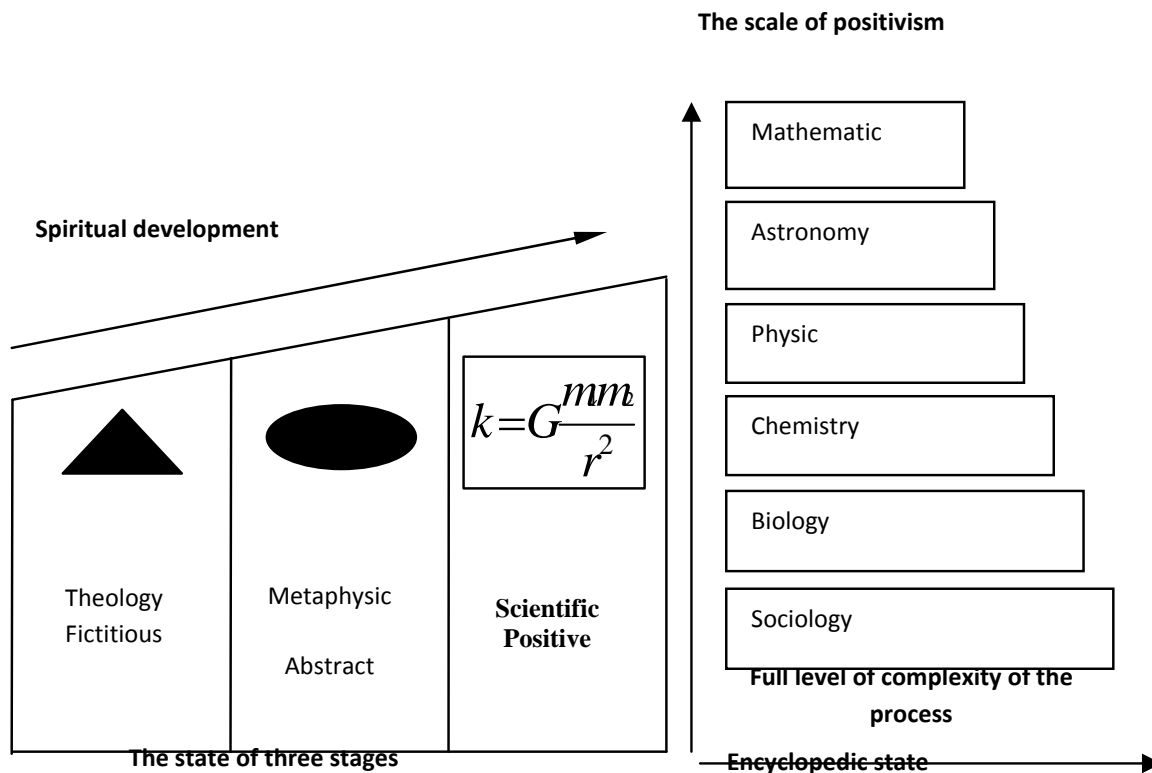
Generally speaking, they thought that the road of bourgeois development had already become the principle of progress in Albanian society and, despite its slowness, was already walking on this road. (Magazine "Albanian Endeavor", December 1936, p.176) Among other things, V. Koca would underline: "This development of the society after the bourgeois manner and without turbulences (i.e., without social unrest) suited Albania's bourgeois agricultural structure (small bourgeoisie), which lacked industry and the proletariat. Feudalism was in the process of disintegration and Albania was heading toward democracy as a cultural and economic organization" (ibid, p.176-177).

2. Early Questions and Answers

They appear in this familiar form:

- ✚ What provides order in a society?
- ✚ What should we consider a condition for the social cohesion of the group or society members?

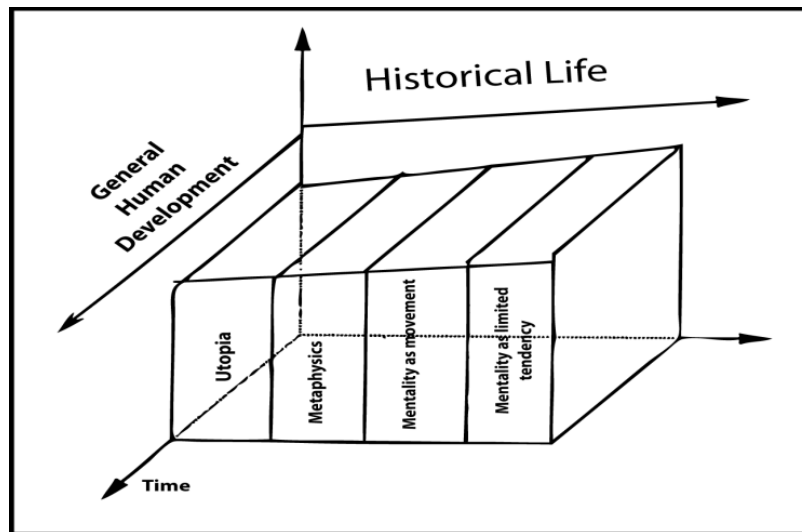
Figure 1. Conte’s views about the level of social development-DTV-Atlas zur Philosophie 1991, pg 164



In fact, these are the earliest questions that have also been treated in the views of Neo-Albanians. According to Neo-Albanians, this issue was the focus of O. Conti's attention, when he formulated the principles of the science of sociology. O. Conti's impact is very tangible on the Neo-Albanians' views, especially on the views of V.Koca. In his article, Koca writes: "First of all, in conformity with the principles of positive Sociology, we must observe and try our social organization from a subjective perspective, just as we observe and try any other vital organism"(V.Koca, Tiranë 2003, p. 84). As a supporter of Conti's views, Koca does not forget to also mention his favourite concepts, those of the *social statics* and *dynamics*, namely, what the causes are (those causes that exist), despite the fact that they may be diverse.

Like Conti's followers, Koca too thinks that the inevitability of the historical processes, tendencies, ebbs and flows is a clear event for all those who believe that the universe obeys only natural laws, which determine its being in its present form; further, as a concept, it is a vindication as well as an explanation for those who see in this uniformity, not simply something that is a given, factual and unchangeable, but the scheme, goal, ideal, the creation by the mind of a rational Divinity or a Universal Reason, the independent aesthetic entity, the metaphysical principle, the teleological vindication, the theodicy, which fulfil man's desire to know not only why the world exists, but also why is it worth existing.

Figure 2. "Harmonious space time" as presentation of the historic process by V.Koca



In fact, since Conti, this endeavour has been supported by many thinkers, liberals, technocrats, positivists, and supporters of the scientific organization of society, but also by many romanticists, mystics, authoritarianism advocates, etc. This endeavour was also found in Marx, and even Spengler.

Even though, in contrast to his time, Conti is rarely mentioned today, we still want to emphasize, alongside other modern thinkers, that the change he effected in the categories of our thinking and in our understanding of the social system has been truly deep. "Our concept of the natural sciences," writes I. Berlin, "of the material basis of the cultural developments, ... is deeply indebted to his teachings and influence (i.e. to Comte's – I.N.). ... In the battle against the enemies of reason, he forged such weapons that, for the most part, continue to be deemed useful down to this day. ... He (Comte – I.K.) did not say that history is some sort of physics, or that it may be reduced to physics; nevertheless, his sociological conception leaned on that direction, namely, toward a complete pyramid of knowledge that would include all scientific knowledge, toward a single method, a single truth, a single scale of rational and 'scientific' values." (I.Berlin, 2003, p.128-129).

The merit of Neo-Albanianism and, especially, of V.Koca continues to emerge when problems of social order and cohesion, linked with the state issues, are considered.

3. The State and its Role in the Development of Pluralistic Institutions

Neo-Albanians too, relying on the tradition of examining political sociology, devote special attention to the main empirical issue that deals with the description, analysis and explanation of that special, particular structure called "state".

Referring to V.Koca on his understanding of the state, we can find a definition closely related to the historical tradition on the State, based on the views of E. Renan and *Zeitgeist*, which is related to the time when the French and German nations were formed, alongside the complexes of their imagination, namely, the unification of state and nation, otherwise known by the term of "nation-state." It is written in "Formulat e Neoshqiptarizmës" (Formulas of New-Albanianism): "Sociology, as a science, gives us a very special and independent 'definition' of the State. According to this 'definition,' the State constitutes the summation of the moral, scientific, artistic, religious, and juridical personality of a human crowd. ... A nation is nothing but a sentiment, idea, spiritual harmony, and 'social understanding'" (V.Koca, 2003, p.26-27, 30). We may combine

it here with the definition by E. Renan of the "community of the will", as he calls the nation. To him, a nation is "a big solid community, knitted together by the feeling of sacrifices and the sacrifices made in the past, which it is also willing to make even in the future[...] the being of a nation is [...] a daily plebiscite." E. Renan also defines a nation's subjectivist component: "A nation is a spirit, a mental principle" (U. Altermatt 2002, p.29). This presentation refers to an old notion that sees the presence of political institutions in almost all social relationships, so much so that it arrives at such views that equate (in the Neo-Albanian's case) the nation with the state.

In V.Koca we also find another treatment that seems to define the relations of the individual and the state, as follows: "The will of the State is the will of Man concerning his own fate, which flows directly from the Generations' continuity. The social entirety, as a conscious circuit of the same activity, cannot be understood without a historical basis, which recognizes as national only that which is true... The state, apprehended as concrete cognition, is the function of the social brain of a specific quality of people. ...The future of the present State, in opposition to that of the primitive State, depends solely on a systematic and constant political and educational action on the part of the CITIZEN MAN (V. Koca, 2003, p. 229)."

If we analyze Koca's presentation, we see that social control as a function of the state is seen by him as connected with a concept such as "the social brain," "the political and continuous action," which means that there are distinctions in the way authority and power were exercised in the primitive state, but also in the way they were exercised later on. A political system, in our opinion, is any stable model of human relationships that contains power, order, or authority on an accepted and visible scale. This also accepts that there are distinctions in the way power is used by social groups, because this is, in one form or another, a potential characteristic of almost every society. Koca lays out the distinctions by inserting as a "solution" the specific people, who save society from undefinability and the savage state.

We are dealing with the need to define state on the basis of evaluating the social definitions of institutions, which means that we must refer to the definition of state as the sole legitimate centre of authority and, alongside with this definition, comes and emerges the concept of the nation-state in modern societies. From what was said above, we can see that Koca himself does not distinguish the state from the nation, even though the history of the development of the Albanian nation differs from the classical model of the nation-state. Bearing these differences in mind, Koca in particular, but also other representatives of Neo-Albanianism, has referred to the mixed model, which entails a consideration of the western model, as well as the model that came from the modern Turkey of M. K. Atatürk.

3.1 Which is the Clearest Indicator of a Civilized (Modern) State?

According to Koca, the indicator of a modern state is the ability to effectuate reforms. In Koca's opinion, this is related to the most innate qualities of the world's being. In one of the initiatory essays to introduce Neo-Albanianism to Albanians, Koca writes: "Nature incessantly creates new forms. The forms it exhibits today have never existed before. And the forms it possessed at one time exist no more today. Nature incessantly creates new forms. – Here, then, the inviolable Law, ever strong, ever powerful; the Law of life, the Law of the human being. For the people, as much as for the nations. But, first of all, for the nations. Nations want to live, nations want to ever hold high the name of their history, to preserve the ground of their civilization and to develop it; these nations, in almost every period of their life, are swept by a huge reformatory wave (V. Koca, 2003, p.18)."

In Albania too we find endeavours on the part of the state to effectuate reforms. But the greatest need in the reformation of Albanian society, according to Koca, is the need for an intellectual foundation. Bearing in mind this deficiency in Albanian life, Koca writes: "Every reformatory movement with a national and sociological content, in order to be serious, positive, efficient and fruitful, must have a general intellectual foundation. ... This is the law of the true activity of all the nations in the world (V. Koca, 2003, p. 19).

Moreover, Koca's arguments are not related only to the creation of a system that would include all

those important social notions, but it is also important to make way for a miracle, as he calls the work of Gustav Le Bon, "Psychology of the crowds". Evaluating the work of the French psychologist, Koca writes: "Albanian life and the Albanian soul are, from a simple psychological and sociological perspective, a *terra incognita* (unknown land) even for us, the children of this nation. This country has been suffering, for centuries, not only from a lack of unity and a conscientious national life (as some suppose), but it is also suffering, and deeply so, from a psychological anomaly. Albania, within the circle of European civilization, is a country that may be defined as a popular hospital of psychological diseases" (V.Koca, 2003, p.19).

"Consequently," writes Koca, "there is a need to create mental life. And, for Albania, mental life does not mean creating typographical spectacles, or the construction of entertainment centres, but rather, principles, steps, a courage for continual, serious research in order to analyze and explain the historical and sociological delays in national life... The work of the reforms, the preparatory work that aims at discovering the psychological and sociological laws of our national life, as basis for every reformatory endeavour on our part, this colossal work must be entrusted only to a monarchical youth (V.Koca, 2003, p.20)." V. Koca expresses his views with lucidity, yet they are not able to provide any adequate ways. Rather, they are marked more by signs of pathos and enthusiasm, than by the proper finding of the real means that would change Albanian society. This, in our opinion, is what Albanian life in the 1930's required and, despite the Neo-Albanians' faith in the figure of the king, we think that neither the king, nor the Neo-Albanians, were able to present clear programs for the reformation of society; rather, Neo-Albanians were in the habit of playing the classical role of the consumer and the commentator of what was happening, not having the courage or faith to make real that virtual reality, which they had envisioned in their minds, concerning the future of Albanian society.

Rule in a society is related to the process of law composition. Certainly, many social activities exist alongside the activity of making and specifying laws. Law effectuation has to do with the social structure, its development, as well as with the rules on which this structure is built. The issue becomes even more complex if we turn to issues such as elections in Albania in the 1930's, participation in the voting process, characteristics of interaction between economic development and economic sustainability, or the political system; in other words, all these issues make it necessary for us to perform analyses that would properly consider what Neo-Albanians said, or could not say, as well as what they could not see or observe, because we cannot realistically deny that Albanian life in the 1930's did not offer huge opportunities for information, the necessary knowledge about the manner of development, and the real possibilities for Albanian society to break free from the whirlwind of *conflictuality*, especially the social one. In a society suffering from chronic illiteracy, which carried out elections through secondary electors, which had urgent need for a radical agrarian reform, which did not have a substantial development of capitalist relations, etc., which did not have any real political freedoms, which displayed a very backward and patriarchal mentality, we should deem as very courageous the concepts uttered by Neo-Albanians (and by their most vocal publicist, V.Koca). Therefore, we must admit that there is a relationship of dependency between the political and economic development of societies, which is made public by the exhibitions of values and the level of intellectual life which, in present-day Albania, seem still far from constituting hope-giving developments.

4. Education and Pluralism

According to one concept, industrialism as well pluralism is related to education as one of the ways that helps maintain order and stability in society.

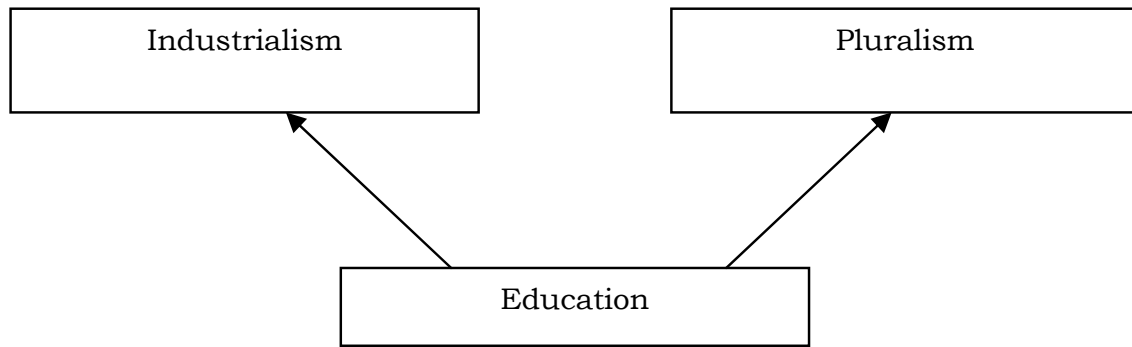
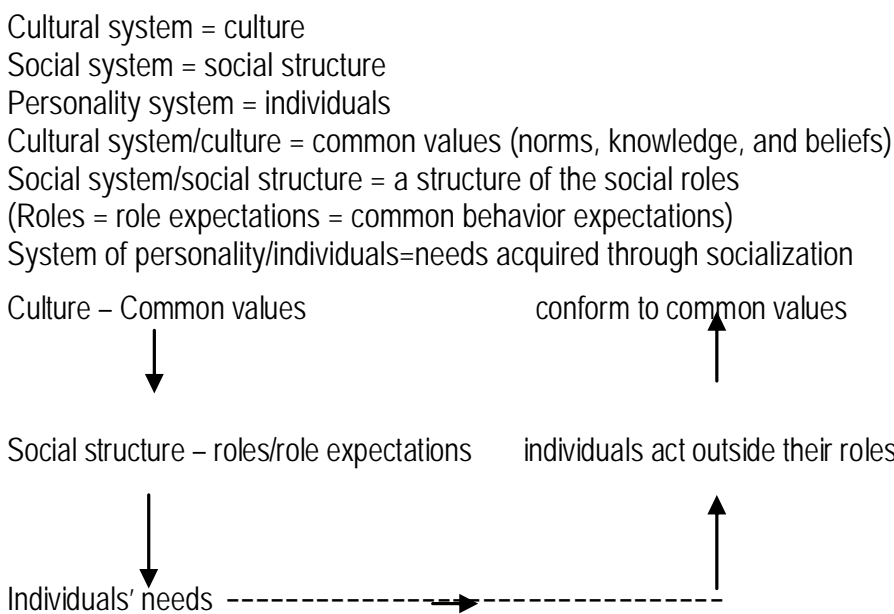


Fig. 3. A hypothetical relationship between industrialism, pluralism and education as causal relations.

Education, as an important institution in society, fulfils a number of irreplaceable functions and beyond that – consisting of systems and subsystems – it assures the successful socialization of the members of society as well as their conformity to the fundamental values and norms of the culture where they belong.

Schools play an important role in the socialization of the individual and in the assignment of roles that the individual will play in the society. School is a socialization intermediary, which means that it is an intermediary through which individual personalities are trained to adjust motivationally and technically, in order to later demonstrate their roles as adults. School’s socialization functions develop commitment and capacities in the individual, which aspects are essential prerequisites for the demonstration of their future roles. Thus, in this way, education contributes to the maintenance of the consensus of values.

If we refer to a classical theory on the relations between the cultural, social and personality systems, it would have the following presentation:



Referring to V.Koca, we find that he expresses the view that educational change in Albania is to begin, first of all, with the boys, and this requires the reorganization of Albanian education, which has a pile of problems in terms of function and structure. In the pages of *Demokratia*, April 1929, Koca writes: “How will it be possible to achieve social education, family nurture, the highest state understanding of our people, and how shall we awaken in the spirit of the crowd the feelings of solidarity and religiosity, which are the theoretical bases of

the religious national idea of the future, unless we do not connect all our views with the main work that is required for the reorganization of the Albanian School? The present school does not cater to the progressive needs of the present national circuit. And this is due to the fact that School, at present, is not the product of pedagogical preparation, but simply the product of sometime circumstances, which just happened... Let us put it bluntly: if we shall not desire to achieve a close relation and cooperation between the educational concerns of the National School or the vital needs of national life, the reformatory endeavour of our generation is destined to evaporate within the dream of hope, just as all other stupid and vain undertakings that lack a program, depth and direction. The state is, finally, obligated to form its own educational policy (V.Koca, 2003, p. 38)."

In terms of distinctions, V.Koca underlines the changes in the level of society development by a number of indicators that, according to him, appear in this way: "This small psychological piece for the Boy, in general, will be needed later as a basis, when I shall broadly develop my views on the scientific foundations on which the 'New School' will be constructed.

But within the circle of our ideas there is something called 'the biogenetic law.'... I mean that the pedagogical system, which is good and proper for the 'Neo-Albanian School', cannot be imported wholesale from Europe, as some suppose. The only thing that we may, and should, acquire from Europe is its science. But it is up to us to find a way to apply it; we must try to adjust the means of our scientific activity to the psychological, biogenetical and sociological conditions of our country. This working system, the only true system, especially in relation to this very important pedagogical subject, will only be generated by a constant and watchful consideration of the spiritual dispositions of the Albanian Boy. By considering and studying our boys' spiritual life, we shall learn many more things than the Boy would ever be able to learn from us! (V. Koca, 2003, p. 39-40)"

Thus, in Koca's views, his judgment on education as socialization appears, which thing is related to the development level of society; this creates the conditions for consensus and reduction of the level of conflict in society. His tendency is to view society as inevitably driven by the positive conditions of its development, which the development of education enables it to have in the dimensions described by Koca. We would also observe that Koca, as well as the view on which he relies in general, does not identify the problems that threaten such a society that relies on consensus; we remind ourselves that this consensus may be false, manipulated, imposed, or represented by a minority. The other problem that we notice in this viewpoint is related to change; thus, change is either of an undefined origin (it is impossible to detect which are the social carriers of change), or even less substantiated is the separation of the society in people of action and of thinking, which thing adds to the problems of the bases of the Neo-Albanian viewpoint.

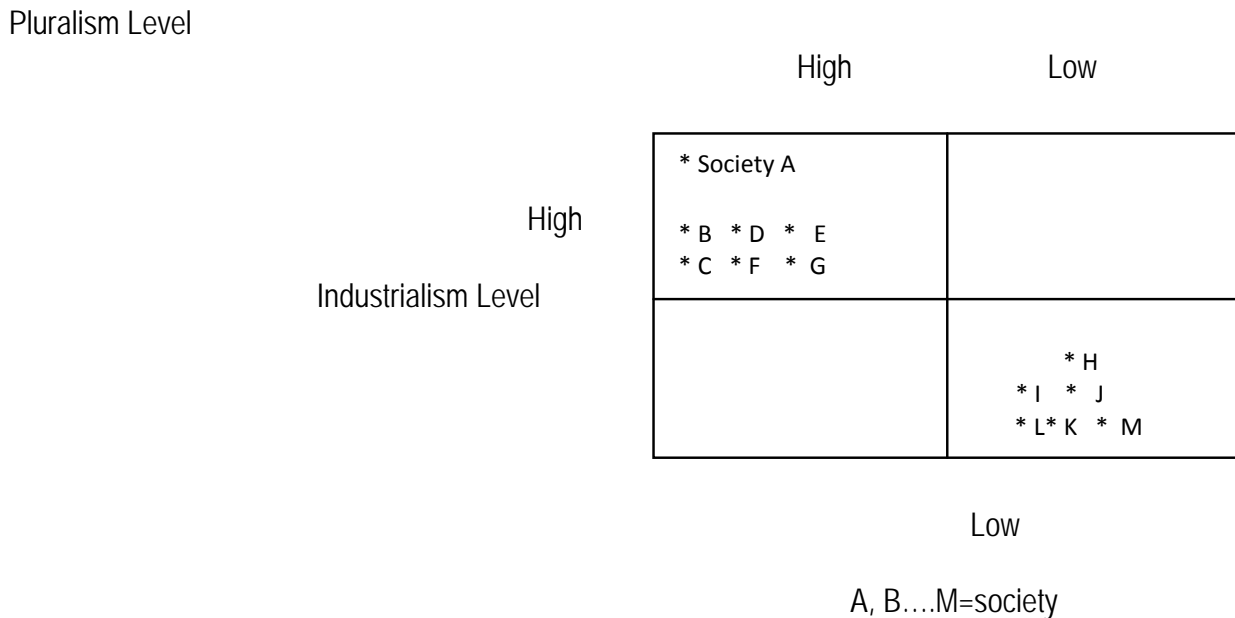
5. Pluralism as a Solution to the Albanian Problematics in the 1930's

In a general sense, the term *pluralism* specifies the institutional forms for the distribution of the political power. Analyzing this phenomenon entails analyzing the power, or authority, distributed in the society. Frequently, the concept of *pluralism* is used to designate any situation in which there are no groups of political, ideological, cultural or ethnical rulers. We realize that a given situation involves competition between elites and stakeholder groups, and a pluralist society allows the free development of this competition.

In the backdrop of the Albanian developments in the 1930's, Neo-Albanians chose the pluralism of viewpoints, which they publicized in the press of the day, especially in the "Përpjekja Shqiptare" (Albanian Endeavour) newspaper. According to Neo-Albanians, the formula Albania needed was *progress-order-rule* and, viewed from the perspective of conditions in Albania, this meant that progress could be advocated and achieved by any bourgeois-type regime. Neo-Albanians in general were of the opinion that the path of bourgeois development was already the principle of progress in the Albanian society and, despite its slowness; it was already walking on this path. Among other things, V. Koca underlined: "This development of the society in the bourgeois way and without troubles, viz., without social unrest, suited Albania's agricultural

bourgeois culture, which lacked industry and a proletariat. Feudalism was heading towards disintegration and Albania was moving towards democracy as a cultural and economic organization (Albanian Endeavour Newspaper, No. 3, p.176)."

Fig. 4. Hypothetical relationships between level of industrialisation and pluralism (Dowse and Hughes 1972, p. 11).



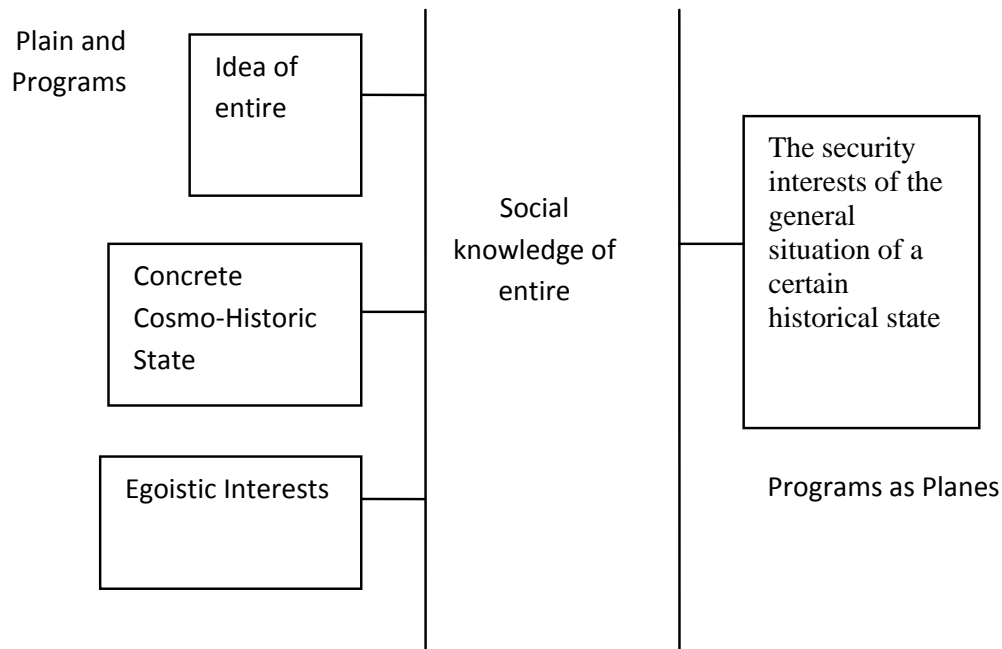
Neo-Albanians have been careful to express their views concerning the need for the development of pluralism not only in the general aspect, but also in concrete developments in the Albanian life. It was not easy, in the Albanian milieu, to provide the support and inclusive significations related to pluralism.

Among other things, we may adopt the position stated by V..Koca concerning the critiques published by T. Zavalani in "Bota e Re" (New World): "According to this gentleman, 'Përpjekja Shqiptare' [Albanian Endeavour] would be a good periodical only if it limited its scope solely to the treatment of general issues in the natural and social sciences. Freedom of individual thinking is unlimited. Concerning the social elements, we must be orientated by the needs of social life. For example, as people of free thinking, we may not believe in anything" (V.Koca 2003, p.29).

Among the deficiencies of the intellectual life and discussion, Koca identifies the absence of *public opinion* and *critique*. In his opinion, these components are necessary to show in real terms the development and progress of the Albanian society during that period. It is in this same framework that Koca opines: "It is true that, in present-day Albania, we do not have a "public opinion" that would be strong and crystallized enough to demonstrate itself a formidable, leading, force in the development of our social life. Furthermore, it is a fact that we also lack such a "mental movement" in which, nobody would read critical publications that were not written by competent people and anybody would be able to understand better than any intellectual that the product of mind called "critique" does not entail maligning or praising a person, or even his work." (V.Koca 2003, p.403). To a certain degree, this view also represents the contours of the ideological conflict in the Albania of the 1930's. If we consider O. Conti's words, we may acquire a better grasp of this ideological conflict. In *Positive Philosophy*, O. Conti wrote: "Ideas govern the world or disintegrate it in chaos. The great political and moral crises seem to develop outside the intellectual debate... but every time that the necessary agreement on the most crucial principles has been achieved... the causes of chaos and disturbance have been discontinued." Koca has shown the lack of integration among the parts of Albanian society by primarily

identifying the backwardness in the development of the capitalist industry and commerce. Once achieved, this development would be accompanied by a population shift from rural areas to urban centres, whose legal and civic regulation is more systematic and accords these social groups a much wider autonomy than before. Thus, the authority structure of the Albanian feudal-bourgeois society in the 1930's would change and would rely on the pluralism of the basic local units, which, given more competence and autonomy, would better govern the local governmental units with more efficiency.

Fig. 5. Social recognition of concret cosmo-historical situation by V. Koca



6. Conclusions

- In philosophy treatises, it is a recognized need to analyze the development phenomena, by taking into consideration, first of all, the social groups, not just the individuals that comprise them. In Kocawe find, more or less, the same foundation, except that his view relies heavily on positivism and E. Durkheim. Here is what he writes: "Society is not an entity that consists simply of the totality of people comprising it. Society is an entity that is created by social feelings, by the common conscience. It is not a mixture of diverse elements, but an inner synthesis, such as, for example, the chemical matter. Thus, the social entirety, which is thus formed as a unitary quality, as an egocentric content, as spirit and as form, is totally different from the individualistic form of the specific individuals that comprise it" (V.Koca, 2003, p.31).
- Here, we would also like to examine the achievements of New-Albanianism in the framework of this discussion. Concerning the suggestions offered by the refinement of the road of development followed by advanced societies, we can say that societies that have a sustained economic development have developed proper values and structures related to industrialism, such as efficiency, rationality, profit reinvestments, development of business organizations of large dimensions, etc., all of which create prospects for the increase of the social groups' integration rate. Otherwise, the Albanian society of the 21st century has not yet acquired these sustained economic developments, whose values and structures were previously mentioned.

- Therefore, the transition period has enabled the creation of groups and quasi-groups that carry strongly the characteristics of the societal time that formed them. The harshest feature of this transition was the massive exodus of the rural areas population toward suburban areas and urban centres, but also the affluence of certain very limited segments of the Albanian society. Several scholars have pointed out the temporary character of these social groups, a character that is unstable, undefined, and open to other groups, and just as degradable. And this strengthens our opinion that certain parts of the Albanian politics, under the influence of a vulgar subconscious materialism, are not able to appreciate the almost irreplaceable need for sociological studies that should be considered with all the proper respect and attention, which thing shows that politics operates in an antiquated culture that does not enable the creation of conditions for the resurgence of advance social relations in the Albania of the years 2000.

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