European values and Islam

MEETING IN BRUXELLES 21-23 NOVEMBER 2018 REM PROJECT

PLURALISM

▶ Pluralism→ atomization →threat to civil cohesion.

▶ foreigners - societal fragmentation

▶ endeavor to strengthen societal cohesion through the pluralist and tendentially universalistic framework of contemporary constitutions

▶ essentialist and imaginary identities→ reassessment of the more substantive, institutionalized and specific national features.

Christianity and Islam
social cohesion or fragmentation

▶ **Religion** **with a central role** for **social cohesion and ideal lightning conductor for reactions against social fragmentation**.

▶ repositioning of religions in the public space.

▶ **Religions get back their role of factors of social cohesion or of fragmentation** (and States cannot be indifferent towards them).

▶ **Christianity and Islam**.

▶ **Christianity less in the private sphere/ more cohesive factor into the public – institutional sphere**.

▶ **Islam more in private-communitarian cohesion /strong fragmenting role in the European public sphere→ Islam has become the «natural adversary» of European Nation States**.

▶ Islamic threat →**pluralism reduced** →**mediation of constitutional rights more difficult**.

Affection of the right to religious freedom

▶ **Selection of the actors qualified to enter the public sphere**

▶ **Reduction of the space for religious diversities** by **indisposition** of State legal systems to 'see' and accept them.

▶ Constitutional secularism→ under stress.

▶ **selective 'doublestandard' approach by European Nation States**

▶ **changement in the right to religious freedom due to double-standard secularism**

▶ →IN EU legal space   2 opposite weaknesses emerging : too abstract consideration of constitutional rights and religious identities/too large a space left to national margins of appreciation

▶ European Union law could make the universalistic approach of the Council of Europe more effective and concrete.

▶ **A crucial role will be play in rediscovering the role played by civil and religious communities, by municipalities and religious associations in shaping dynamic and always changing relational models**

At the end of the Second World War → The recognition of pluralism and **recognition of constitutional rights**→
under **a veil of ignorance**, men do their best
pluralism in the books/pluralism in action
Reluctancy by European Nation States to attenuate their monopolistic customs.

- from a 'multiculturalism of hope' to a 'multiculturalism of fear'
- United States born from pluralism, European Nation States pluralism more as a threat than as an opportunity
- In the past →privatisation of religion by the European Nation States → but cultural homogeneity
- Today-→ pluralism →identitarian reactions VS. non-traditional identities in the public sphere.
- The political powers → more sensitive to 'national identities'
- Role of jurisprudence

Use of constitutional secularism-doble standard

- ▶ double-standard secularism →

- ▶ discretional – and discriminatory – use of constitutional secularism.

- ▶ Big support and inclusion towards traditional religions,

- ▶ exclusionary towards non-traditional religions specially Islam

- ▶ Strenght to and public spheres.

The European Mission

▶ 1. keeping modern liberal cornerstones →effective multiculturalized constitutional secularism;

▶ 2. role **played by schools** →communication between traditional and new identities →enforcement of a culture favourable to multiculturalized constitutionalism; **and on this point the REM project is intervening with actions aimed at social cohesion based on constitutional values;**

▶ 3. more involvement of the European Union in giving the right to religious freedom more substance and efficacy, making it a real paradigm of a pluralistic society, the result of the confluence of the interpretations of States, individuals and communities