Relationship between ideology and political parties in Kosovo

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Abstract

Previous studies have attempted to codify the ideological profiles of political parties in Kosovo, but it was noted that their categorization in a specific category was almost impossible. All previous studies have profiled political parties as it had stated the leader of the subject. This is without prejudice a profile dictated from the top, because those parties are organizations that are subject to a hierarchy where decisions are made by a small group of senior officials. Even countries that have a long tradition in democracy are difficult to categorize political parties in one or another ideology, not to mention a society that has emerged from the war that still is trying to consolidate its statehood. The purpose of this paper is to study the report between Ideology and Political Parties in Kosovo.

In general, it notes that there is an uncertainty in the structuring of the report of political parties with ideologies. Often, political parties define programs not in accordance with the political wing of ideological matrices that they claim are belonging to. The same situation ambiguity appears in the relationship between political action and demands resulting from the political side they claim to belong.

Keywords: political parties, ideologies, KDP, DLK.

Introduction

A part of political scientists, defend the thesis that dualism, "left"/"right" is a historical-, natural- and logical aspect. Remond (1967) highlights the constant presence of these trends in political life. The findings of the electoral sociology, confirmed the outcomes of historical analysis of Bonn (1943), who by making the balance of electoral developments in France, showed an opinion of dualistic structure, well rooted in the behavior of voters.

In this context dualism is seen as part of the citizens' attitudes. However, semantic and historical analysis of dualism "right"/"left" does not hide its fundamental ambiguity.

Regardless of this fact, a reference to the duality becomes unavoidable because it helps to understand the different political issues that distract us." This often helps us in analyzing and understanding the political reality.

On this approach, political scientists could not agree on the content and nature of ideological competition, but they cannot agree that some ideological framework is used to organize political discourse and analysis. Typically, these guidelines are often discussed or summarized in terms of philosophies; left/right or liberal/conservative (Fuchs & Klingemann 1989; Barnes 1997).

Collective distribution of opinions represents a more realistic indication of where a political party stands, and what the voting trend can be expected to have with their

representatives in the legislature.

This lack of ideological identity can only be explained by considering the fact that the political parties in Kosovo were established during liberation efforts. Parties were formed by groups that were mobilized during the war or resistance that joined them through profession or family relationships.

Therefore, we can say that the parties gather around them an equal share of individuals with leftist leaning, liberal or nationalist, because these were not their criteria for initial alignment.

Evolutionary development towards the profiling of political parties was delayed even more because Kosovars have not governed the country in most of the postwar period. For a long time, Kosovo was administered by the international community, which deprived the political elite to govern the country. Since Kosovo is not a UN member, its foreign policy also cannot afford to take a stand on issues of international importance.

By comparing the relationship of the ideology with political parties in Kosovo, we note that there is uncertainty in the structuring of the report that was conditioned by social, economic and political factors, such as the resolution of Kosovo's status (by 2008), structural dynamics of social groups, effects of standard reforms imposed by the EU, mediatisation of politics as a result of development of technology information, the insufficient role of NGOs in terms of organizing and mobilizing citizens to protect partial interests of specific social groups, the lack of elites structured by ideological wings and the effects of globalization.

This purpose may also include an explanation of the underlying cause of this study. Most parties have not yet moved from normative statements, which show the desire of leadership in what direction the party intends to develop in the future. They demand profile which does not correspond with the position they have on various issues or history of voting in the Assembly. Worse, the party's top leadership is not in the orientation map to transform naming specific ideological guidance on how to vote and to deploy officers at lower levels and its supporters.

Whether the Party is going to reach in the destination specified by its leading bodies, this depends on the opinions of a wider group of leaders.

It is essential to analyze the thoughts of a wider circle of officials and influential party activists.

Consistency attitudes of political parties are essential in transition, as parties are transformed gradually from being tools for the realization of interests of specific groups to being representative of a stable base of voters with specific common interests.

A stable profile will contribute in its party discipline. Currently, the popularity derived from the names of specific and when a senior goes to another party, he /she takes his/her supporters.

If popularity originated from policies that pursue party, and where individuals would be only a personification of a long-term political identity, then the parties would be more immune to damages caused by such crossings.

An individual who protects, let say, the policies of individual freedom, he/she can hardly join a party which does not fit his/her positions. While ideology would strengthen party discipline, consistency of opinions may limit the discretion of

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individual managers and would strengthen internal party democracy.

Our initial hypothesis is that the average ideological coordinates within each party does not differ much from one party to another. The parties are pragmatic, therefore the distribution of individuals fluctuates across the ideological spectrum - so there is no support for any particular position on political issues. In cases where political parties proclaim an ideological label, they reflect more the desire of their leaders as how their party is seen from outside.

Lack of coherence does not mean that the parties move from one side to the other of the spectrum, it means that political parties have no coherent position.

The short tradition of democracy in Kosovo has managed to produce a low level of democratic procedures. The majority in the Kosovo Assembly wants to have sufficient numbers to defeat the opposition, and the main parties never try to reach consensus no matter how important the issue is on the agenda. Polarization, blocking and political crises have become more frequent, and the parliamentary majority often relies on many small parties to provide MP numbers.

There are several reasons why a person joins a party, (a) sympathy for the leader, (b) geographical proximity, (c) personal interest, (b) wartime loyalty, (e) chances that one party can win elections or (f) chances for personal benefits. Consequently, the same opinion on public policy preferences ranks far down the list of priorities.

Leaving aside political platforms, chances for personal benefits are much more important than formal policies or official platforms.

Until recently, politicians are largely based on getting votes from a particular geographical area, reflecting a loyalty to structures based on friendships and family ties. However, it is important to identify the features of the political culture that would encourage voters to identify the politicians who share the same opinion with them regardless of their geographic origin.

Political parties in Kosovo

The development of political parties to establish consistency in their positions is closely related to the path of Kosovo towards modernization policy. With the fulfillment of basic needs (infrastructure, water, sewage), promises that rural Kosovars are waiting to be fulfilled are less tied to geographic boundaries.

The same thinking that connects young Kosovars have to do with the profession, gender, hobbies, ethnicity or age group. This expands the way each member targets specific profiles voters throughout Kosovo, which is enabled by the fact that Kosovo is a single electoral district.

Finally, it seems that an increasing number of major elected officials are recognizing the need to re-formulate their main priorities and to keep their constituents based on political solutions which they are doing.

Parties with meaningful goals (whether ideological consistency or not) will be supporting the interests of specific groups opposed to sporadic policies that surely push forward the interests of party leaders and their networks.

Parties can grow up and gain new voters if they make voters easier to hold their representatives accountable for performance in implementing these policies. Only

when political discussion becomes focused on specific issues, MPs can become the target of lobbying groups with membership. The result will be a deputy gives more accountability to voters than political leaders, and it leads to greater protection of the interests of citizens.

Next section describes the political parties in Kosovo and how they identify with specific ideological profile. Unlike the survey, here are described when they clearly identify themselves with an ideological position, typically found in the statements of the party leadership, the party program, or implied through their efforts to join the pan-European party groupings.

Democratic Party of Kosovo – DPK

Democratic Party of Kosovo (DPK) was founded on 14.5.1999. It was established from the political wing of the Kosovo Liberation Army, and led by Hashim Thaci, a former KLA member (Balkan Insight, 2010). DPK is mainly defined as a center-right party across the political spectrum, and a combination of liberal policies in economic terms but also socially conservative ones; for example, supporting free trade and low taxes as well as the preservation of traditional values (Zulfaj, Mulliqi, 2008). A good example is the commitment set by DPK about the privatization of Post and Telecommunications of Kosovo (PTK) despite some dissenting voices within and outside the party.

DPK also had occasional tendency towards the left. DPK, first defined itself as social democratic, near the Labor Party (Labor) of the UK and the Democratic Party in the US (Balkan Insight, 2010).

DPK manifest features contrasting ideologies. On the one hand, supports the full privatization of public enterprises (a right policy), and on the other hand has a huge public administration, which is a description of left policy. Also, it appears as leftist in the case of subsidies for agriculture, which increased significantly during the administration of DPK.

Democratic league of Kosovo - DLK

DLK in the political spectrum takes place primarily as a center-right party, which is a combination of economic liberalism and social conservatism. This is demonstrated through the membership of the LDK in the European People's Party (EPP), which identifies itself as "political family of the center-right".[1]

DLK is more liberal than the center-right parties in dealing with economic issues. In social terms, DLK describes itself as conservative, even though it keeps an individualist position in the field of human rights, emphasizing equality "regardless of gender, age, ethnicity and religion".

DLK is seen as a traditional party still controlled by the elder generation, who are in politics for a long time. The party is seen as too rigid when it comes to its internal reform and attracting young people. DLK strongly supports privatization of public enterprises, but, like other parties, does not oppose the provision of free health care.

[1] European People's Party, Who Are We?: http://www.epp.eu/who-are-we.

Conclusions

General political scene takes place on the left side of the center in terms of economic and fiscal priorities. The political spectrum is portrayed through different models at different times, ranging from one-dimensional model created by parliament after the French Revolution, where seats were held by "left-wing" and "right-wing".

Most parties have not yet moved from normative statements, which show the desire of the leadership in what direction the party intends to develop in the future. They demand a profile which does not correspond with the position they have on various issues or history of voting in the Assembly. Worse, the party's top leadership is not the orientation map to transform the political parties naming specific ideological guidance on how to vote and to deploy officers at lower levels and its sympathizers. Whether the party will reach the destination specified by its leading bodies depends on the opinions of a wider group of leaders. In this sense, it is essential to analyze the thoughts of a wider circle of officials and influential party activists. Consistency attitudes of political parties is essential in transition, as parties gradually transform from being tools for the realization of the interests of certain groups by being representatives of a stable base of voters with specific common interests.

A stable profile will contribute in party discipline. Currently, the popularity stems from the individual, and when a senior goes to another party, he/she usually takes with her/him the supporters.

If popularity originated from policies that pursue the party, and where individuals would be only a personification of a long-term political identity, then the parties would be more immune to damage caused by such crossings.

An individual who protects, let's say, the policies of individual freedom can hardly join a party which does not fit the positions of his/her. While ideology would strengthen party discipline, consistency of opinions may limit the discretion of individual managers and would strengthen internal party democracy.

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