The multicultural utopia, or On the relation of minority rights to human rights

Because of the waves of immigrants arriving from Africa and South America, their settling permanently and the obtaining by many of them of new citizenship, the multiculturalism of the states of Old Europe is a demographic fact. Supporting its ideals was acknowledged as a declaration rejecting an homogenous vision of a nation in favour of accepting the equal status of all cultures. Its premises were regarded as an expression of due social sensitivity, the acceptance of ‘othernessnes’ and evidence of being worldly. To start with, the approval of ‘otherness’, which lay at its basis, pretended to constitute a civilisational requirement and, according to its followers, was to be a moral condition for the dignity of any human, whatever their skin colour, ethnic origin or creed. The article bears a conviction that, as a civilisational ideal, multiculturalism is emburdened with defects. One which is fundamental is the putting of the basic axiological principles on the line. Multiculturalism generates tensions between minority rights and human rights, which hinders attempts at creating a common, civic platform.