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THEORIES OF
CONFLICT AND THE
NEW EUROPEAN
ORDER

INTRODUCTION

The entire western world, founded on the tradition of Graeco-Roman culture, Christianity, and Judaism, is anticipating the new millennium with a newfound optimism and old fears. Rome, Paris, London, New York, Sydney, and other “capital cities” of western civilization are preparing for glamorous celebrations and fireworks that will mark the beginning of the new millennium. However, on the margins of western civilization, at the end of this millennium, the last years have been “celebrated” using a different type of fireworks that have not entertained the participants. Instead it has destroyed their lives, homes, as well as those cultural and religious monuments that witnessed the presence of the above-mentioned civilization in those areas. Let us recall Dubrovnik, Sarajevo, Vukovar, and Erevan. Since such “fireworks”, on a much larger scale marked the beginning and the middle of the 20th century in Europe and subsequently throughout the world, issues of the blame and responsibility of Europe for those conflicts, and its responsibility in the new world integration have been raised. The latter may end up as “the end of history”, according to the utopian, optimistic vision of F. Fukuyama (1992), or as a “coming of anarchy” according to the catastrophic vision of R.D. Kaplan (1994). Why do we insist on “blame” and “responsibility”? For many nations and people from other continents, Europe is not only the “cradle of western civilization”, but also a synonym for colonial expansion, slavery, racism, economic exploitation, cultural dominance, and ecological irresponsibility. While we easily accept Europe's “glamour”, it is difficult to accept its “misery”. Unfortunately, what has been reproached by others as historical guilt is present in part if the current situation in Europe is analysed, that is, European North-South and West-East relations.

In such a context, it seems interesting to analyse some theoretical paradigms or models, in an attempt to forecast the main patterns of the world's future. In particular, the

future of western civilization, after the fall of the Iron Curtain, that is, the disappearance of the strictest block division in the history of western civilization. Since those theoretical paradigms also deal with conflict stemming from the collapse of Communism, this analysis will mainly focus on the impact of those conflicts on new European and world integration. Such an approach is appropriate because most of the authors of these theoretical paradigms emphasize the importance of solving and preventing conflict in Europe, as a prerequisite for new integration which in turn would guarantee a more stable Europe than that of the 20th century. Moreover, conflicts and their impact have mostly determined European integration and division during the 20th century. Empirical support for these conclusions will be drawn from studies related to the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia, and the conflicts linked to that process. The basic reason for this is not because I come from Croatia; rather, it rests on two other facts. The first is that most of the authors of paradigms and models, that will be examined in this paper, have shown a tendency to use European space and the events that took place there during the 1990s as examples to corroborate their fundamental assertions. The second one relates to historical experience linked to this area, in particular, the First World War, which broke out after the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo. This served as a warning that a major conflict could happen again at the end of 20th century due to unresolved or unjustly solved relations between actors of the conflicts in that area.

THEORETICAL MODELS AND PARADIGMS

Three theoretical paradigms and models that deal with global developments and the future of the world after the collapse of Communism and block division in Europe will be examined in this paper. These particular paradigms and models were chosen because they represent different views based on various dominant factors for forecasting European and world future. Moreover, in their examinations they use conflict as a crucial factor of their predictions.

In other words, the basic intention behind this choice is not connected to an evaluation of these paradigms and models in relation to others (which, by the way, have increased in recent years), but by the amount of public attention they have attracted and because they are most closely related to the topic of this study.

FIRST PARADIGM –
The Clash of Civilizations
by Samuel P. Huntington

In his book, *The Clash of Civilizations*, S. Huntington (1993) explains his views on a global, planetary future. The most interesting part of the book is where he explains that a clash of civilizations could determine the global future of our planet. In doing that, Huntington has borrowed a definition of civilization from the English historian and sociologist, Toynbee (1889–1975), i.e., that civilizations are in fact societies, which are born, and have their course of life. They come into being within some certain territory and spiritual framework, which is primarily determined by religion. Within this context, Huntington writes about the clashes of civilizations as an act depending on power. According to both Huntington and Toynbee, a central feature of a particular civilization is religion. Moreover, in addition, certain values that determine a civilization may include some cultural values among which language holds an important place. Thus, according to Huntington, western civilization includes classical civilization, Catholicism, Protestantism, European languages, secularism, government rights, parliamentarianism, and individualism. Huntington claims that western civilization is at the peak of its power compared to other civilizations, which, according to Oswald Spengler means that it has a tendency to deterioration and gradual impoverishment. The Asian and Islamic civilizations are, on the contrary, “dynamic civilizations of the last quarter of the 20th century”, expanding and growing. The end of the Cold War, according to Huntington, caused a new grouping of states along civilizational divides. In particular, he considers the divide between the West and the East, claiming that Europe ends “where western Christianity ends, and Islam and Orthodoxy begin”. This divide, in a European context, stretches along the border between Finland and Russia, the Baltic countries and Russia, and then cuts across Belorussia and the Ukraine (separating the more Catholic western Ukraine from the Orthodox eastern part). Then it turns westward separating Transylvania from the rest of Romania, and subsequently crosses through the former Yugoslavia almost exactly following the line that divides Croatia and Slovenia on the one side, and the rest of the states in the former Yugoslavia on the other.

Huntington considers clash defined as such and developed civilizations as a “mini-clash of civilizations” and “clash of civilizations”. The former is related to clashes

within western civilization related to specialized weaponry, human rights and democracy, as well as immigration which is a consequence of “a global immigration crisis”. The latter is related to a “clash at a global level”, or an intercivilizational clash. A clash at the global level may occur at a local level and along the divides between neighbouring states of different civilizations, or between groups of different civilizations within a complex state such as the former U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia. In particular, a clash between the West and Islam is possible, as exemplified by the Gulf War. Huntington is ambivalent about the future of our planet. In other words, if clashes between civilizations are dominant then the future is pessimistic; whereas if coexistence is dominant, then it is bright.

SECOND PARADIGM – Social-Liberal Theory of World Development by A. Tausch and F. Prager

In their book, *Towards a Social-Liberal Theory of World Development* (1993), Tausch and Prager see the foundational future of world development in the development of the social liberalism idea. That idea, in the European context consistent with left social-democrat theory, was theoretically developed by Marxist revisionists, especially the Austrian Marxists, and applied in political and economic practice by Swedish and Austrian social democrats.

In their theoretical approach to world development, Tausch and Prager advocate a new version of democratic humane socialism. They highly value the “theory of dependence”, i.e., an approach typical of the Latin-American perspective, which is directly opposed to the theory of modernization in which the modernization of the so-called “Third World” is carried out in the interest of developed countries, the owners of capital. In other words, Tausch and Prager are opposed to the future of a world development based on directing the industrial and economic development of the Third World in such a way that it remains undeveloped and permanently dependent. They claim that this would be a continuation, rather than a prevention of different types of conflicts at a world level caused by uneven economic growth, and resulting, at a political level, in new forms of neo-colonialism.

THIRD PARADIGM –
Catastrophic Paradigm
by R. D. Kaplan

Kaplan, in his book *The Coming Anarchy* (1994) developed a paradigm of political and economic world development at the beginning of the new millennium. In contrast to Fukuyama's theory (1992), he sees the future of the world in chaos, anarchy, ethnic and racial uprisings and wars, disease and epidemics, ecological catastrophes, as well as social and national disintegration. In other words, according to Kaplan, in the next century, widespread chaos and madness awaits us on our over-populated planet. He maintains that a minority of the world population will live in cities and suburbs in a well-cared environment, where ethnic hatred is restrained by bourgeois prosperity. While the rapidly growing majority will remain locked in the past, living in huts, and their efforts to rise out of that misery, cultural decay and ethnic conflicts will be marred by the lack of drinking water, fertile land and living space. In developing countries those traumas will force people to make a political choice between totalitarianism like for example in Iraq, pro-fascist mini-states, like the Serb creations in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as highway bandits, like for example in Somalia.

DISCUSSION

The basic objective of this discussion, as stated in the introduction, has been to examine the relations between different types of conflict in the contemporary world, especially in Europe, and the directions of the new world and European integration of the 21st century after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Prior to an analysis of the basic tenets of the presented theories of conflict, it is necessary to point out some systemic factors that burden this type of analysis and make them less precise than microanalysis.

1. It can be noted that the tendency toward “globalist theories”, within the framework of western civilization is more characteristic for authors from the United States, than from Europe. Kaplan, for example, has pointed out the “Eurocentrism” of such theories, two of which are mentioned in this paper, and claims that this is the drawback of these theories. This tendency may point to a twofold conclusion. First, that the U.S. has proficiently solved issues of internal or in Huntington's words, “intracivilizational” barriers to global integrations in a better way than Europe. Second, that the U.S.

is more interested in and is more eager to approach issues of global integration.

2. Different globalist paradigms, as evident from this analysis, emphasize the dominance of one factor over another, in discussions of their influence on future world integration. Specifically, Huntington emphasized the significance of religious and cultural factors, whereas Tausch and Prager paid attention to economic ones while Kaplan accentuated demographic, economic, and ecological factors.
3. All the authors of these paradigms in regard to the future of world development, discuss the relationship between the center and periphery of civilizations. According to their interpretations, this is an important factor. First of all, their definitions of center differ. For example, for Huntington, the center is mainly defined by religious and cultural value orientations, whereas the center is primarily determined by the wealth and geopolitical position of particular countries in the other two models. However, in the case of western civilization, regardless of the different approaches used to define center, with few exceptions, authors agree that in a territorial sense the U.S. and Western Europe constitute the center.

Thus, in general, religious, value, cultural, or economic-population factors should mainly determine our future. Predictions range from utopian visions of the “end of history”, and a victory of “liberal paradise” in which we will be all happy and rich, to world catastrophes that remind us of “Doomsday”. It is not difficult to conclude that this is the basic reason for this kind of diametrically opposing viewpoint of global levels from which the world's future is considered. We can use, in this sense, an analogy. It is well known that that the further we fly up into the air in an airplane, certain realities of the Earth's surface assume new meanings since they can be interpreted in different ways. For example, a road may be confused with a river or a mountain may appear as a mere hill. The objects on the Earth become smaller and they are less visible from higher levels. At a certain point they totally disappear from sight. In other words, our total perspective of “down below” is determined only by the bulkiest realities. Moreover, as the example of the road and the river shows, the total perspective cannot be correctly perceived.

This analogy may be applied, within the context of the above mentioned theories, to a discussion of dominant and less important factors which according to the authors of the mentioned paradigms determine world and

European future with regard to the relation of the center and periphery. With regard to the criteria for the territorial formation of a civilization, Huntington has ascribed an important role to religious factors “supported” by some cultural ones. He draws supporting material for his basic hypotheses from conflicts which are based on the differences of those factors between states or ethnicities at the margins of civilizations defined in this way.

It is a fact that at the margins of these civilizations there were conflicts, not only after the fall of the Berlin Wall, but throughout history. For example, during the breakdown of Yugoslavia, which Huntington often uses as his favorite example, members of the Orthodox and Islamic civilization, as called by Huntington destroyed hundreds of churches and cultural monuments of exceptional value that belong to the heritage that Huntington calls Western Christianity. This happened in front of the centers of western civilization. They did not see the clash the way Huntington did; because if they had, that conflict could have been prevented or the outcomes could have been less devastating. However, Huntington gave no importance to some factors which, independent of his views, also had a decisive influence on the conflict, and which could be used as support for the Tausch-Prager paradigm. Namely, it is well known that neither the first nor the second Yugoslavia came into being as a manifestation of the political and democratic will of different peoples of its former territory. They were established on the basis of global and some European interests and world circles as well as the will of different national or ideological distinctive elite. Thus, the will of citizens from populations to which they belonged was not a decisive factor when making decisions about joining the union. For this reason, both Yugoslavias were marked by totalitarianism as the dominant political and ideological paradigm based on repression and economic exploitation. In contrast to the Tausch-Prager analysis, economic exploitation or a colonial relation in the former Yugoslavia did not come from the West and spread toward the East. On the contrary, its direction was from the East to the West. Since the centers of western civilization viewed the conflict “from high above”, it was easier for them to explain it away as a religious and cultural conflict, according to which the categories of blame were applicable to all. The West failed to recognize that the crisis has deep roots that are related to the exploitation of one “intracivilization” over another in the context of a common state. The center of that “intracivilization” was in Belgrade, in the east of the former Yugoslavia, that today still has not come to terms with the fact

that it has lost the possibility to exploit using the totalitarian model of authority, but continues under new state circumstances to engage in conflicts. For example, the current clash between Serbia and Montenegro over issues of Montenegrin independence can also test the importance of economic factors in the social-liberal theory. The religious and cultural factor, in a Huntingtonian sense, cannot be recognized as the dominant factor in the Montenegrin desire for political independence since aggressors from this area destroyed Dubrovnik. The dominant factors are linked to the neo-colonial position of Montenegro in the new-old union. The example of Macedonia can be added to this. Although it is situated in the east and belongs to the intracivilization that is similar to the present Yugoslavia, it separated from the former Yugoslavia as soon as its citizens could do this in a democratic way.

This kind of logic also confirms our conclusions concerning the relationship between the center and periphery in the former Yugoslavia in terms of economic exploitation. The same context helps to explain why Croatia and Slovenia, the most developed western republics of former Yugoslavia were the most motivated to leave the old union. This is also the reason why “the center”, of economic exploitation using Yugo-institutions in the country and abroad, tried to keep by force, at least, Croatia as the most economically developed and culturally “the most western” republic in that structure.

However, it is more difficult to apply the same logic in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this case, it seems to be easier to confirm Kaplan's and Huntington's theories, as opposed to the social-liberal one. Namely, the intensity of the conflict, its nature, the number of sides in the conflict, motives of the clash and the difficulties the international community has encountered in its attempt to impose a lasting peace, indicate that the international community did not recognize the true nature of the conflict on time. In addition, the international community cannot predict the conflict's outcome regardless of the political measures and economic initiatives. Yet, it would be a mistake to oversimplify and talk about a tribal conflict in Huntington's, or ethnic conflict and population expansion in Kaplan's sense. Namely, a more thorough historical, political, and geopolitical analysis seems to indicate that one may, albeit with more difficulty than in the case of the entire former Yugoslavia, recognize a division between the West and East in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At that level of observation, the clash can be explained in terms of Huntington's theory more precisely than the clash that occurred in the entire

former Yugoslavia. Huntington himself has failed to do so, since his map of western civilization does not include any part of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Naturally, if we view the center of Europe from this type of perspective, the same theories may lead to similar conclusions. Who could deny, in such a context that similar logic may be applicable to the relationship between Northern Ireland and Great Britain, Basque country and Spain, Northern and Southern Italy. Of course, such conclusions in imaginary situations can only be drawn if a clash within those European countries occurred and that some of the mentioned regions have achieved a certain type of internationally recognized state sovereignty. Undoubtedly, it can be assumed in the context of the mentioned theories, that authors from Northern Ireland, Basque country, and Southern Italy would draw similar conclusions.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

This analysis has led to three general conclusions:

1. Theories of “global destiny” have been proposed in an attempt by their authors to bring more light and order to the globalisation process. However, the fact that these theories are positioned along a continuum that range from extremely optimistic to extremely pessimistic, is valid evidence against their significant scientific validity with regard to a more precise prediction of dominant factors that determine global world development.
2. The theories have used almost the same group of events that occurred after the fall of the Berlin Wall to substantiate their credibility. However, the way these events have been interpreted points to two types of fallacies. One stems from “the height of the plane from which the author predicts global developments”, and the other is related to the positionality of the author considering the “inter” and “intracivilization” criteria of interests to which he/she belongs.
3. A view from the “periphery” used as an example of support to theories of global development seems to indicate that, on the basis of objective indicators, each of the mentioned theories can be both justified and refuted. Moreover, an imaginary example of possibilities applicable to these theories in any part of Europe has also been set up. This could be also done for all the other continents.

European integration and conflicts, as a part of world integration and conflicts will depend; it appears, equally on cultural, religious, economic, population, ecological, geopolitical, historical, and other factors in the future. Moreover, it seems that dominance of some factor in conflict or integration will depend on two criteria. The first one is related to the real situation in the area of conflict or integration, and the other relates to the interests of the actors in the conflict or actors of the integration process. As conflicts most often occur at the margins of civilizations (in the sense of some of the mentioned theories), and integration models stem from the centers of the same civilizations, it can be generally concluded that integration processes stand a better chance than conflict and chaos, insofar as the integration actors while establishing peace in the margin regions do not proceed from their own interests and have “an airplane” view of the margin areas. This means that they should proceed with an analysis of the real causes of conflicts as well as investigate the consequences, which imposed models of conflict solution, consistent with integration actors' interests may bring about in the near future. For this, “a view from an airplane that flies low over the periphery” is of more use than “a view from an airplane that flies high over the center of a civilization” that does not differentiate roads from rivers, mountains from hills and people are seen as a reflection of the interests of the “intracivilization” to which they belong. Presumably, in this way, a paradigm could be established in which “coexistence between civilizations” is more probable than total anarchy. Moreover, the dominant principle would be the principle of equal justice whereby the relationship between the center and periphery is based on interest(s) and within a context of characteristic features based on religious and cultural factors. Needless to say, it seems that such a paradigm, just like those of both Fukuyama and Kaplan, has utopian, rather than real character.

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