

The Balance of Powers at Global Level

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Frederick L. Schuman - professor of government science at William College, U.S.A., used to support the theory that *"the balance of powers is an important regulatory mechanism"* of the international system¹, and Arthur Lee Burns appreciated that *"the most stable arrangement seems to be a world made up of five or an odd number of independent powers and approximately equal*

in terms of the force they have", as these would not be easily dividable into two equal parts². Hans J. Morgenthau considered that the balance of powers is an *"international social system"*, the same as the system of European states used to be in the XIX century, based on five great powers, *"main actors"* for the working of the system³.

#1. The System of Balance of Powers - Evolution and Tendencies

The informed analysts in the field admit that one of the most appreciated researchers of the balance of powers in the international systems, field was Morton A. Kaplan, who issued six models of international, in which the following take place for the balance of powers: a. the actors prefer to increase their competition capacities, but world rather negotiate among themselves than get to war; b. the actors prefer to come to war than to miss a chance to increase their capacity of competition; c. the actors would rather stop fighting than getting to the elimination of another essential actor within the system; d. the actors are opposing to any coalition and any singular actor, which is threatening to get a prevailing position within the system; e. the actors strive to block other actors to agree with principles concerning the formation of some supranational organizations; f. the actors allow other actors - defeated or with

diminished powers - but appreciated as essential for the system, to go back into the game played by the system, as partners with an acceptable role⁴.

Analyzing the international system, that was in force after the Second World War, Kaplan noticed that it was based on the existence of *"two blocks of major actors - NATO and the Warsaw Treaty"*. Within each block, a national actor assumed the role of the leader⁵. At the same time one could notice the existence of some actors not belonging to any blocks (India for instance) or World level actors - The United Nations Organization⁶.

J. David Singer and Melvin Small launched the theory according to which *"the bigger the number of assumed obligations by the states within an alliance, the greater the war possibility within the system"*, and the closer a system is to the by-polarity model, the more do the perspectives of war increase⁷.

#2. From Bipolar System To Unipolar System (The Unique Leader)

The cessation of the cold war and the assertion of the role that Mihail Gorbaciov and Ronald Regan had in this evolution of international life determined *"new judgments*

and new conclusions regarding the present and the future of the World System".

"The end of the cold war - Henry Kissinger would say - created what some observers

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called a <<one-pole world>> or <<a world belonging to only one super power>>. But the United States of America are not at all in a better position now to dictate one-sidedly the global agenda than they were in the beginning of the Cold War". According to former Secretary of State, "America is dominated to a much higher degree than 10 years ago, but, ironically, power itself has become more diffused", so that the possibility for America to use it to remodel the rest of the world "has actually diminished"⁸. The world community is sufficiently benevolent to cooperate for "maintaining the peace", that is to establishing the policy regarding "an undisputed agreement by any of the parts involved"⁹.

But important leaders have expressed their opinion about the outlook of the world after passing from the bi-polar system to the unipolar system of the unique leader. Even in 1985, Mihail Gorbaciov, when asked for the definition of USSR – America relationships said: "we cannot but live or perish together". And he also put under debate the change in attitude and mentality to shift from a war like attitude to a peaceful mentality¹⁰. In his speech in front of the General Assembly of the United Nations, in September 1993, William Jefferson Clinton appreciated that the role of "world leader of America implies the increase of democracy in the world". The American president mentioned that: "During the cold war, we have tried to restrict a threat to the survival of free institutions. Now we try to enlarge the circle of the nations that live under those free institutions"¹¹.

The theories launched by the American president William Jefferson Clinton, have

been resumed by George W. Bush and by the representatives of the State Department even more vehemently after the terrorist attacks in September 11th, 2001. Thus in the speech in front of the General Assembly of The United Nations Organization, in September 2004, president Bush suggested the turning into life – within United Nations Organization - of a "fund of democracy that was supposed to lay the foundations in the world of the "democratic structures and regulations" and in his speech on the condition of the nation in front of the American Congress, in 2004 - reminding that America was world leader and that USA will never ask for permission to protect the safety of its own people. Replying the criticism regarding their interference in Iraq and Afghanistan, Bush said that "the number of partners America has is great" while that of the critic is small. "There is a difference between leading a coalition formed out of several states and accepting objections of a small number of them", affirmed George W. Bush in 2004.

Assuming the role of "unique world leader" after the Cold War, was subjected to some critical analyses made by some reputed researchers. For instance, Francis Fukuyama - one of the best political analysts of the global system, and most of all, of the role the United States play within this system - says that "the Bush Administration did not anticipate the negative reaction as to his exercise of <<illuminated hegemony>>. The apparition of a "unipolar world after the Cold War transformed the American hegemony in a source of concern even for the closest allies of the United States"¹².

#3. The Modified Balance of Civilizations

Samuel P. Huntington said that "after the Cold War the balance of powers between the civilizations has been changed: the influence of the West is in a relatively declining; the Asian Civilizations expand their economic, military and political force; the Islam demographically explodes, with devastating consequences for Muslim countries and for their neighbors; non-Western civilizations reiterate generally the value of their own cultures"¹³.

In the opinion of that known analyst, it is to be seen that "the countries are grouping around powerful states or the core of civilization to which are belonging, and the universal claim of the Western World is putting it more and more in a conflict relations with other civilizations, in particular with Islam and China"¹⁴.

The terrorist acts in September 11th, 2001 in U.S.A and March 11th, 2004 in Spain gave

new dimensions to world confrontation in which the religious confrontations have been given an important role. Acts and facts, as well as public declarations amplified the suspicions of the Muslim World. In this spirit, at the beginning of 2006, the publication in Denmark of caricatures of Prophet Mohamed generated waves of protests in the countries with mainly Muslim population.

On September 12th, 2006, in his speech held at Regensburg University, Germany, entitled "About Faith and Ration" in Christianity and Islamism, Pope Benedict XVIth cited the words of Byzantine Emperor Manoil IInd, the Paleolog, uttered in his discussion with a Muslim wise man: "Show me what elements of newity brought Mohammad – asked the Emperor the Muslim wise man – and you will find only means and inhuman things, like the imposing by sword the belief promoted by him."

The protest of the Muslim world faced an unprecedented development. Most Muslim leaders declared that the Pope should publicly apologize. They have reminded the Pope that the Catholic Church was responsible for all crusades and of deeds of Inquisitors, while "waves of blood were flowing". A couple of days after, the Pope's speech published by "The New York Times" underlined that "The world listens carefully the words of any Pope. And it is tragic and dangerous when, deliberately, or due to negligence, you propagate pain. The Pope must present profound and convincing apologies, proving that words could also heal."

There is no doubt, that peace and cooperation would prevail on global level if the leaders of the world will be ready to abandon all practices of confrontation and would promote the relationships based on cooperation¹⁵.

NOTES

¹ Frederick L. Schuman, *International Politics*, 4th Edition, Mc.Graw – Hill Book Company, New York, 1969, p.273.

² Arthur Lee Burns, *From Balance to Deterrence: A Theoretical Analysis*, World Politics, IX, July 1957, p.505.

³ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, 4th Edition, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1967, pp.165 și urm.

⁴ Morton A. Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics*, John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1962, pp.22-23.

⁵ The United States and, respectively the Soviet Union.

⁶ Morton A. Kaplan, *op.cit.*, pp. 45 și urm.

⁷ J. David Singer, Melvin Small, *Alliance Aggregation and the Onset of War*, David Singer (Ed.): *Quantitative International Politics*, The Free Press, New York, 1968, pp. 248 a so on.

⁸ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, 1994, p. 704.

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ Mikhail Gorbachev, *An Interview with Gorbachev*, Time, 9 September 1985, p.23.

¹¹ William Jefferson Clinton, *Confronting the Challenges of a Broader World*, United Nations, New York, 27 September 1993.

¹² Francis Fukuyama, *America at the Crossroads Democracy, Power, and the neoconservative legacy – America la răscruce. Democrația, puterea și moștenirea neoconservatoare*, Editura Antet XX Press, 2006, pp. 14-15.

¹³ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Simon & Shuster, 1997, p.27.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵ See Dumitru Mazilu, *European Diplomacy*, Lumina Lex Publishing House, Bucharest, 2008, p. 7.