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"CLASH OF CIVILIZATION" AND "CLASH OF NATIONS" IN EUROPEAN UNION "CHOQUE DE CIVILIZACIONES" Y "CHOQUE DE NACIONES" EN LA UNIÓN EUROPEA

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Abstract

2015 is a year marked by the European's refugee crisis. The concept is descriptive of the challenges emerged for the European countries in connection with the penetration of hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants in Europe, from the Middle East and Africa.

Within the European Union has already a clash of "civilizations" which is close to the conception of Samuel Huntington. If we refer to the conclusions of Samuel Huntington, today Europe is on the verge of a clash of civilizations of the West and the Islam, caused by migrant and refugee flow. This give rise to the revival of national-populist parties in the member states, which itself manifests as a clash between nation states in the European Union, found expression in their contrary views and positions to the presence of the Muslim communities across the continent.

Keyword

European Union - Integration - Nation - Nationalism - Civilization - Clash - Islam

Resumen

El año 2015 estuvo marcado por la crisis migratoria de los refugiados en Europa. El concepto anunciado en este artículo describe los retos que plantea frente a los países europeos la temática en Europa de cientos de miles de refugiados y migrantes procedentes de Oriente Medio y África.

Dentro en la Unión Europea ya tenemos una colisión o "choque de civilizaciones", describiendo el hecho según lo descrito por el historiador Samuel Huntington. Si nos referimos a las conclusiones de Huntington, hoy Europa está al borde de una colisión de civilizaciones entre el Occidente y el Islam dentro de sus fronteras resultado del flujo de migrantes y refugiados. Esto plantea la reactivación de partidos nacional-populistas en los Estados miembros de la Unión, que se manifiesta a la vez en un enfrentamiento entre las naciones que viven dentro de los países europeos, que se expresa en sus puntos de vistas según la presencia de comunidades musulmanas en todo el continente.

Palabras Claves

Unión Europea - Integración - Nación - Nacionalismo - Civilización - Colisión - Islam

The basic principles of contemporary liberal democracy, a characteristic feature off the member states of the European Union, have been gained over the centuries after the fall of the Western Roman Empire. They are essential for the functioning of the European Union and determine world development directions.

One of the main ideas for the development of the European integration processes since mid-twentieth century, was overcoming war as the primary means for resolving confrontational relations between countries in Europe and worldwide. The principles of the liberal democracy, which democracy according to Francis Fukuyama's book "The end of History and the Last Man" is the final stage of social development, comprises tolerance and pluralism – political, cultural as well as religious. Considering the comprehension concept of Samuel Huntington about what a civilization is, so liberal democracy is civilizational tolerant. Today, this creates challenges for the European sociality and determines the clash between European tolerance and other civilizations in regard to migration flows in Europe, which in turn creates conditions for the resurgence of extreme forms of nationalism in Europe.

Mostly, nationalism is perceived as a political ideology. According to lan MacKenzie, owing to the ideologies, the complex social relations in the world we live are being comprehended and perceived more readily, as they have the ability to provide a description of the society, the environment and the reality. Carrying out this function, we are able to find our way and choose our own standpoint in the complex social environment which surrounds us. A characteristic of the ideologies is that they contain a combination of political ideas. These political ideas must describe and build up a concept and a picture of the best form of human management and society organization. Following the presented, ideology should incorporate at least two components: first, a notion for the reality – a description part of the existing relations in the social and political spheres of the society, and second, a notion for the ideal society – the way of how they must be organized.¹ In this regard, the ideology of nationalism presents a description of current reality in the light of the superiority of nationality over the other components that form the specific society.

Liberal democracy in Europe, built on the aforementioned achievements of social development, now meets unknown until now challenges. However, it is necessary to draw attention on the main feature of the contemporary world and especially Europe, which is the nation identity. Nation states are the main subject in contemporary international relations.

After the etymology of the "nation" term, it is associated with the words birth, origin, people, species, race of people (lat. *nationem*/nom. *nation*). Political sense has gradually inclined to the racial meaning "large group of people with common ancestry". Defining the term "nation" is really contradictory. One of the classic definitions of the concept is "a large body of people united by common descent, history, culture or language, inhabiting a particular state or territory", having united self-awareness³. National identity, this would be the sense of a nation as a cohesive whole, as represented by distinctive traditions, culture, and language.⁴

Many theoreticians talk about the end of the nation state, but the social reality nowadays is a proof for the solid strength of the nation as a social structure, within which

¹ Eccleshall, R. and others, Political Ideologies: An Introduction (Psychology Press, 1994), 1

²http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?allowed in frame=0&search=nation&searchmode=none

³ http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/nation

⁴ http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/national-identity

social problems are being placed and solved. The nation state remains the primary level the politics functions on, and within the range of the global development of social blocks, nation states still remain the principal actors. The nation state remains the form of social organization which people feel attached to and which they identify to. This can be explained by the desire to be identified with a specific place, time, historic community etc. It is a fact that this kind of problems now often go beyond the borders of the states, encompass larger circles of social strata and sometimes, states themselves turn to be unable to solve specific problematic situations.

Back in history, Europe has traditionally been a location for conflicts caused by nationalism, going over the romantic nationalism of XVIII – XIX century, to the totalitarianism of the XX century, for a long time the strong sense of nationality has been present at the continent, connected with language, ethnicity, history, religion.

Contemporary nationalism manifesting nowadays in Europe, is mainly associated with the integration process of the member states of the European Union and especially today, with communities of different from the European civilizations and cultures. Extreme forms of nationalism, which manifestation has been increasing in recent years, create peculiar barriers for the processes of enlargement and integration, as well as the successful implementation of European policies.

Integration deepening within the European Union and the successful development and implementation of the EU policies, is essential for the creation of a European identity and culture. That is why nationalist parties in some of the European countries make for provoking European identity crises, which have destabilizing consequences for the societies and countries. This is notably tangible on the background of today's reality which includes migration flows and refugees, seeking their place in Europe. The European Union as a new type of alliance of countries and possessing qualitatively different from other international organizations characteristics could not develop its integration and implement effective policies for the development of the societies when there are in evidence national, ethnic or religious conflicts within its borders.

If the time of national and state conflicts in Europe is over, so the ethnic and religious ones, that we stress in the era of globalization turned out to be no easier to overcome. It is this kind of clashes currently creating tendencies of increasing tension, misgivings and fear like never before, urging nations in the European Union on opposing each other once again. Within the European Union has already a clash of "civilizations" which is close to the conception of Samuel Huntington.

In 1993, "The Clash of Civilizations?" article by Samuel Huntington has been published in Foreign Affairs magazine. The response caused by the publication gives the author reasons to write the book "The Clash of Civilizations and the Remarking of World Order, published in 1996.

In his book, Samuel Huntington analyzes the concept of civilization, the issue of universal civilization, the relationship between power and culture, the changing balance between civilizations, the indigenization of non-Western societies, political structures of different civilizations, conflicting relations caused by the universalism of Western society, the Muslim bellicosity and the desire for political endorsement of China, as well as the responses to the rise of the Asian country. The issues related to the reasons, causing war conflicts and disintegration of states, the future development of the Western civilization and

others, have been also discussed. It has been paid attention to the extremely important issue of the impact of global population growth on the development of the instability and the balance of power in the world.

One of the most important conclusions of the author is that "clashes of civilizations are the greatest threat to world peace, and an international order based on civilizations is the surest safeguard against world war".⁵

According to Samuel Huntington, the major contemporary civilizations are: Sinic, Japanese, Hindu, Islamic, Western, Latin American, African.⁶

A broader interpretation of the thesis represented by Samuel Huntington gives reason to assume that the most significant conflict in the post-Cold War period would be between the Western and Islamic civilizations. In this regard, the author says that the main political ideologies of the XX century – liberalism, socialism, anarchism, Marxism, communism, social democracy, conservatism, nationalism etc., are products of the Western civilization, and "no other civilization has generated a significant political ideology".⁷

The Western world however, has never generated a major religion, which are products of non-Western civilizations and, in most cases, precede the Western civilization. In this sense, coming out of the time of the Western impact, its ideologies go through a decline, and in their place "is taken by religions and other culturally based form of identity and commitment". As the author says, "the intracivilizational clash of political ideas spawned by the West is being supplanted by an intercivilizational clash of culture and religion.⁸

One of the main problems in the development of the European integration is the "clash" of Western and Islamic civilizations, which evokes the revival of the influence of the nationalist-populist parties in the member states in the European Union. These tendencies have emerged as well as a result of the effects of the economic and financial crisis in the second half of the first decade of the XXI century.

If we refer to the conclusions of Samuel Huntington, today Europe is on the verge of a clash of civilizations of the West and the Islam, caused by migrant and refugee flow. This give rise to the revival of national-populist parties in the member states, which itself manifests as a clash between nation states in the European Union, found expression in their contrary views and positions to the presence of the Muslim communities across the continent.

Each one of the principles of the modern liberal democracy has been criticized, but the latest events, related to the European Union, the migration flow and the manifestations of the nationalist parties, provoke particular one of them and that is pluralism and the resulting tolerance - particularly the religious one. The religious norms, along with the moral standards and legal regulations, regulate public relations. In this sense, the norms of the two major monotheistic religions – Christianity and Islam, are at odds with each other because

⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of world Order, (Penguin Books India, 1997), 321

⁶ Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking... 45-47.

⁷ Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking... 53-54.

⁸ Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking... 54.

of the secularism in certain societies, especially in Europe, and particularly in the European Union.

2015 is a year marked by the European's refugee crisis. The concept is descriptive of the challenges emerged for the European countries in connection with the penetration of hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants in Europe, from the Middle East and Africa. But does it exist a crossing point between the European way of live and the different culture of migrants?

Immigration in Europe is not a recent phenomenon. For years, it has been exerting influence over the development of the continent. The current wave of migration have begun immediately after the World War II, laying the foundations of today's contrasts and contradictions, and causing particularly conflicting sentiments and debates. The main distinction between the migrant waves from the past and those we have witnessed for the last few years is the fact, that for the first time Europe has faced with this numerous groups of people coming across the continent as refugees. Today, within the European Union's boundaries confrontational differences have arisen and the fact that most of the migrants profess Islam, is being perceived as a challenge for Europe's identity as an open society. Today, European societies face with the trend of changing views as a result of immigration. At the background of the tolerance of the distinctions and the encouragement of the functioning of the free movement of people in the European Union, it seems paradoxical that it is the free movement that suffers from negative sentiments in the member states themselves. Now, the growing opposition between countries and groups of countries in Europe causes increasingly distinct and evident political tension the Alliance will have to manage with.

All of that puts pressure on the European Union's motto "United in Diversity", and it is directly connected with the multiculturalism. The concept of multiculturalism first appeared in Canada in 60s of XX century and refers to the two main ethnic groups there – English and French. Multiculturalism soon became one of the leading concepts for those involved in the migration of peoples of the XX century and seeking recognition of their subjectivity and equality of rights. Multiculturalism today is a policy aimed at preservation and development of the cultural distinctions. In the 80s of XX century, the multiculturalism principles entered into the political practices of the most European countries. Over the past 30 years, multicultural policy of different forms has been held in almost all of the European countries. Basically, the multicultural idea lies on the acknowledging that all human cultures are equal and deserve respect.⁹

The European society today is divided in regard to the implementation of the multicultural model in practice. Despite of the existing support for the multicultural model from the majority of the political elite in European Union, under the fringe, it causes tension among Europeans. The Schengen Agreement itself, allows citizens and immigrants from the European Union to travel freely through the 28 member states with relative ease. Multicultural policies, uniting ethnic groups, languages and religions, stand up for the various cultures, peacefully co-existing. When the events in Paris and Belgium in January 2015 happened, a large majority of Europeans began mistrusting the success of multiculturalism. In fact, this is not a recent process and a problematic issue. As a response, the European leaders denounce the terrorist attacks, but take a stand for the multicultural policies. Some of them believe that these events have no bearing on the nature of Islam as a religion and

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⁹ http://www.europedirect.cci-bl.org/docs/book2015.pdf, 8.

determine attackers as a radicalized minority. As a result, waves of empathy with the victims have occurred among the European societies, and the influence of nationalist and populist parties has increased. The "National Front" in France, led by Marine Le Pen, the Hungarian "Fidesz" party¹⁰, headed by Prime Minister Victor Orban, the "UK Independence Party" and the catching on popularity "PEGIDA"¹¹ in Germany, are only a part of the influential political formations with nationalistic character.

These parties take acutely their stand against the pro-immigration politics of the European leaders for tackling the refugee crisis. Generalized, their attitudes are qualified with xenophobia – in particular islamophobia, authoritarian tendencies and desire for ethnic grounds mass propaganda involvement, as well as taking strict precautions against legal and illegal immigration. Their standpoint reveals the disruption between the European leaders' policies and the contradictory sentiments of the majority of the European sociality.

Although it is not clearly stated, the trends in nationalistic manifestations are being characterized by opposition to the current public peace of cooperation in favor of a public peace of division and isolation. The nationalistic rhetoric criticizes the ideal of liberal democracy, expressed by the dialogue with other cultures, religions, races, ideas.

Not a few people speculate in the failure of the model of diversity in Europe. According to others however, the European Union must continue to support the variety for the 28 member states, which have their distinct cultures and languages. Perhaps that is the reason why European leaders continue to support this development approach and model.

The basic multicultural issues in Europe are due to immigration and assimilation. The most part of the migrants come from countries where the predominant or major religion is Islam. The number of Muslim migrants in Europe is increasing at very high rates. Relations between Christianity and Islam in Europe have their historical premises.

The European Union protects its different types of freedom and way of live through institutions and mechanisms of the state, as well with the identity of its societies. On the other hand, according to Samuel Huntington, "the absence of an Islamic core state is a major contributor to the pervasive internal and external conflicts which characterize Islam. Consciousness without cohesion is a source of weakness of Islam and a source of threat to other civilizations".¹²

Talking about clashes, it is not necessarily to accentuate on the material confrontation. A clash is also a result of interaction, an interweaving of cultures, conceptions, beliefs, pursuits. On the continent, there is a confrontation different from the one now forgotten between West and East blocks, between French and Germans, made severe wars with each other, but found reconciliation in the name of the mutual European future.

The natural population growth in Europe tends towards zero, which compared to the higher birth-rate of the immigrants, lead to the conclusion that they would be the main source of population growth in western societies. As a result, Samuel Huntington says, "Westerners increasingly fear "that they are now being invaded not by armies and tanks but by migrants who speak other languages, worship other gods, belong to other cultures, and, they fear, will take their jobs, occupy their land, live off the welfare system, and threaten their way of

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¹⁰ The Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Alliance

¹¹ Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West

¹² Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking... 177.

live". These phobias, as is indicated in the book, rooted in relative demographic decline, "are based on genuine cultural clashes and worries about national identity." ¹³

The issue with social disparities in Europe and across the world is extremely topical. The society division grows bigger – we have rich and poor people, we have East and West, local people and immigrants, people whose attitude of mind and way of life are radically different and all of that is a prerequisite for threatening the existing public relations.

This kind of contrast are typical of the whole world, it exists different standards of living, social status, opportunities. These are facts that actually give a partial explanation of some of the events, which are a normal consequence of an abnormal status quo.

The sentiment that Europe is for the Europeans will spread faster now with the rise of the nationalist inclinations and the aggravation of the migration and refugee crisis, heightening the anti-immigration sentiments which occurs even in Germany – the most pro-immigrant-oriented country in Europe.

The migration flows to Europe and in particular to the European Union, radically change the internal political process into the member states and in the Alliance as a whole. This is a challenge not only for the existing public peace in the European Union, but also for the liberal democratic model of society.

Tolerance is a fundamental value, but in relation to it, reciprocity is needed; it should be a two-way model, as the freedom ends where another person's freedom begins. International public law lies on that, but different civilizations and their geographical movements calls these principles into question.

It is a fact however, that the reality reveals to us the inevitability of the coexistence between different view of life, philosophies, cultures and religions. Member states of the European Union, now more than anything committed with the globalized world, will have to think about the inevitable mutual future.

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