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THOMAS S. MOLNAR ABOUT THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

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Motto: *“God was and has remained the central problem of philosophy, there is no cosmology and ethics, jurisprudence and anthropology without committing ourselves in this respect.”¹*

Introduction

The debate concerning the future of Europe and the essence of Europeanity has once again flared nowadays, as witnessed from debates in relation to migration, Brexit or the procedures initiated against certain member states based on Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU). The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the following war in Afghanistan and Iraq, the economic crisis of 2008, the euro crisis of 2010, the Arabic Spring of 2011, and the migration crisis that culminated in 2015 indicate that the unipolar world order that came to be following the breakdown of the Central and Eastern European communist totalitarian regimes is shaken and is gradually transforming. This change markedly affects the global political position of the European Union, posing questions concerning the desirable direction of European integration, the sustainability of the uniquely European way of life, the substance of European values, and, as opposed to these, the functioning of the organisation of integration.

In this context, focusing our attention on the debates surrounding the establishment of the now passing world order offers a useful and due perspective. About the same time as the Central and Eastern European communist totalitarian regimes broke down, the philosopher Thomas S. Molnar (1921–2010), in an essay that hasn’t been published in Hungarian yet (*L’Europe entre parenthèses*, 1990)² had already dealt with the question as to what could be the fate of Europe

¹ Thomas S. Molnar: *God and the Knowledge of Reality*.

² The authors of this study would like to thank for the help of Máté Mohácsi dr. in translating the French text into Hungarian.

in the transforming world order, with respect to the strengthening efforts of integration, as well as the ideological effects of two previous superpowers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union. In our treatise, we would like to evoke the thoughts of Thomas S. Molnar concerning the substance of Europeanity, touching on his worries as regards the erosion of the European spirit, because, in our view, his findings appear to be more topical in the current situation than ever.

The danger of loss of identity

Thomas S. Molnar deals with the substance of Europeanity and the future of Europe in his several writings. What sets his book mentioned above apart from the rest is that he devoted it to this very topic. As yet, the book hasn't been published in Hungarian, only in French and in English, despite the fact that when it was originally published, the state censure in Hungary that kept the thoughts of Thomas S. Molnar away from the Hungarian audience had already been abolished; perhaps in the euphoria of the end of communism, many may have deemed this work – which formulated criticism against the European integration that had been much sought after, and finally appeared as a realistic opportunity – a kill-joy.

The thesis of the book is that “Europe is in danger: the obliteration of its multinational and multicultural identity in favour of a kind of desert where economy rules, and where spiritual values are even more oppressed than today. The brutal strangulation of the Western groups (the industry and the press) is already on the »market« of Eastern Europe, as a precursor to the standardisation of the continent: education, media, lifestyle, advertising slogans. A homogenic society threatens to span from the Atlantic Ocean to the Urals, under the pretence of safeguarding peace and restoring welfare. In reality, the united Europe will only generalise the materialism of a cultural landscape that destroyed the greatest achievements of the human mind.” (Molnar, 1990, p.8)

One of the main theses of Thomas S. Molnar that also appear in his writings is that the original reason for Europe becoming inconsequential is that Europe is not following a philosophy stemming from its own cultural and historical roots, but – denying its Christian roots – taking over the ideology of the two then-superpowers, the Soviet Union, which defined the leftist mentality, and the United States of America, which developed the rightist mentality in an Atlanticist direction. “Europe, which is not defined by its own philosophy, which takes sides

with the Atlanticist ideology, will abandon history, and will become a side character in another story, written by others.” (Király, 2017) As a consequence, “the ascending countries do not consider the West an exemplar, but a chance for their own enrichment that does not come with the adoption of the Western tradition, Christianity.” (Mezei, 2009, p.12)

Thomas S. Molnar recognises the substance of the world order of Yalta, namely that following the end of the Second World War – unlike the ruling narrative – the West was not the alliance of the Western free nations that stood against the Soviet Union and its satellite states, rather the realm of the United States of America and the states under its influence. Following the Second World War – under the aegis of the United Nations, on grounds of the right of peoples to self-determination – the Soviet Union and the United States of America jointly disassembled the colonial empires of the European states, dividing the world into spheres of influence among themselves, and in its own sphere of influence, it was not only the Soviet Union which led its ideology into a ruling position, but the United States of America as well.

The phenomenon of the European states gradually fading into the background as regards world politics is not a new one, as it has been around in the period following the Second World War, its roots, however, stem from a more distant past. The main reason of the outbreak of the Second World War was that the treaties ending the First World War completely ignored the losers’ legitimate interests, and true peace can only be based on justice. As Marshal Ferdinand Foch, one of the most talented generals of the First World War put it: “This is not a peace. It is an armistice for twenty years.” (Tarján, n.d.) In reality, we witnessed how the English politics focusing on the balance of power – which defined European external politics for almost a century, since the Napoleonic Wars – turned to French politics focusing on payback, whose goal was to completely eradicate the losers’ military and economic might, and to eliminate any chance for a comeback.

Historical events did not vindicate the correctness of this sort of politics at all. In fact, they only proved its catastrophic character, seeing as how Germany rebuilt its armaments industry and army following the national socialist takeover, and became able to face its European adversaries with such success that its defeat could only be brought on with the help of two out of bounds powers – the Soviet Union and the United States of America – while almost the entirety of Europe became a battleground and fell into ruin. Unfortunately, the peace system that ended the Second World War did not return to the English politics focusing on the balance of power but aimed at weakening the losers once again for a solution. As Lord Hastings Ismay, the first

General Secretary of NATO, formulated the essence of NATO: “to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down” in Europe. (Wheatcroft, 2011 and NATO, n.d.)

Of course, the European “allies” in the West and in the East had to be convinced of the correctness of this brand of politics; this goal was served by the spreading of the ideologies of the ruling great powers in their spheres of influence. The ruling narrative has an extremely substantial role in defining a country’s politics. Let us only think of the fact that according to the treaties ending the First World War, both Hungary and Turkey lost a significant portion of their territory. While Hungary defined its external politics with the motto of “Everything back!”, Turkey led by Kemal Atatürk made no attempt to reacquire the Arabian territories, thanks to wanting to strengthen his country’s European character.³ This way, both Hungary and Turkey regained almost all of their ethnic territories, but Hungary’s revisional politics was deemed a half-success by its contemporaries, whereas Atatürk is celebrated to this day as the saviour and recreator of the nation in Turkey.

In order to understand the nature and degree of the loss of identity, we should examine the question of what the essence of European identity is. This owes its difficulty to the fact that while the concept of Europeanity alludes to a geographical notion, some people believe that “Europe” does not exist at all, as it has no natural borders, no integrated cultural and historical legacy, and this is why it can only be construed as a political notion. The political definition of Europe also cannot be said to be solid. (Prieger, 2016) The European Communities, and later, the European Union have not defined the concept of “Europeanity” to this day, and defining it is not on the agenda currently either. (Prieger, 2018, pp.149–165) Nevertheless, the foreign ministers of the European Union did formulate the essence of European identity in the Declaration of Copenhagen, 1973. (European Communities 1973, pp.118–122)

For Molnar, the essence of Europeanity was not in question, however: he considered Christianity (primarily Catholicism native to Western and Central Europe) to be the common ground upon which the cultural-political concept of Europeanity can be built. Indeed, it is Pope Pius II who mentioned Europe – for the first time – as the common home of the (Christian) peoples that live there, in the days when he wanted to strengthen Christian and European identity in order to counterbalance the Osman threat. (Varga, 2010, p.663) Josef Ratzinger, later

³ We note that in the unrecovered “Turkish” territories, the victorious Entente powers created artificial states without solid historical roots, permanently destabilising the region, with consequences in the Iraq and Syrian civil wars, the rise and fall of the Islamic State.

Pope Benedict XVI also shared the view that Europe is only secondarily a geographical notion, it is primarily a cultural and historical idea. (Ratzinger, 2005) Romano Prodi, the one-time chairman of the European Commission, said the following: “there is no doubt about the fact that Christianity contributed a great deal to the creation of the values, ideals and hopes that make up European culture today. There is no point to the history of Europe without the history of Christianity, with all its strengths and weaknesses.” (Prodi, 2004, pp.320–325)

It cannot only be attributed to the ideological expansion of the two world powers, the United States and the Soviet Union that there are heated disputes concerning the nature of European identity. It must be affirmed clearly that even though Christianity used to be a historically persistent cohesive force within Europe, as a common religion in the beginning, and later on more as a mere philosophical and cultural tradition, this common ground has been significantly shaken in the last 500 years. The wars of religion in the 16th and 17th centuries resulted in grave fault lines in the Christian world, and the French Enlightenment in the 18th century displayed a strongly anticlerical, what’s more, anti-Christian ideological tradition. In the second half of the 19th century – as a result of strife against the Papal State – the Italian efforts for unification gained an anticlerical character, and at the juncture of the 19th and 20th centuries in Germany, the mythicisation of the glorious German past led to the birth of the racist neopaganism, the ideology of the blood and the earth (“*Blut und Boden*”), which saw its chief enemy in a Christianity that “crippled the German race” and “reflected Jewish mentality”.⁴ Marxism, which unfolded from the middle of the 19th century, saw an ideological enemy in every religion – especially in Christianity – (“religion is the opiate of the masses”), and it propagated a militant and philosophical atheism. Although these ideologies did not become generally accepted in society until the 20th century, they took root in the European intellectuals, and thus an intellectual stratum was present across Europe that would have gladly been rid of the unavoidable role of Christianity. These European intellectuals then became partners for the ideological expansion of the world powers.

We also need to understand that ideological colonialisation was more palpable in Central Europe – where Christianity remained an important element of identity in the first half of the 20th century, and where the Soviet Union spread its militant, Marxist atheism in its occupied

⁴ A very characteristic is a short poem by Friedrich Nietzsche, which, in his work “Thus spoke Zarathustra,” puts into the mouth of the protagonist: “’Twas once- methinks year one of our blessed Lord, — /Drunk without wine, the Sybil thus deplored: — / “How ill things go! /Decline! Decline! Ne’er sank the world so low! /Rome now has turned harlot and harlot-stew, /Rome’s Caesar a beast, and God- has turned Jew!” See: Thus Spoke Zarathustra by Friedrich Nietzsche (Nietzsche, n.d.)

countries –, and therefore the local societies offered greater resistance than those in Western Europe, where the United States spread its own ideology as the defender of European liberty, and not confronting Christianity on the level of catchwords. The first decades after the world war brought on the prosperity of Christian democracy in Western Europe, the protection of Christian values also had a role in the resistance against the Soviet Union. The fact that the Anglo-Saxon Enlightenment that defined American culture did not originally align itself with the militant anticlericalism of the French Enlightenment, and was rather characterised by a religious indifference in practice while not shying away at all from Christianity on the level of catchwords, also had a role to play in that. However, Thomas S. Molnar, who lived for years in the United States, and thus knew the American spirit from up-close, recognised it with great sense that American culture and ideology – even if it sometimes references God, the Bible and Jewish-Christian values – is not defined by Christianity to the extent that it previously defined European culture.

The first especially spectacular appearance of the European loss of identity was the case of the preamble of the Constitutional Treaty, when there were heated disputes about whether God and Christianity should be mentioned. The text that referenced Roman law, Greek philosophy and humanism (in which a citation from Thucydides served as a motto) spectacularly omitted Christianity from among the European roots, thanks to resistance from certain members of the Convent responsible for formulating the Constitutional Treaty, especially Belgium and France. (Király, 2006, pp.67–72) Miklós Király notes with reason that the lack of reference of Christian tradition is the concealment of a manifest historical fact, and as such is an attempt to re-evaluate the past of Europe. (Király, 2006, pp.67–72) However, we need to understand that – as indicated by Thomas S. Molnar a great deal earlier – this re-evaluation began earlier, and it only became more evident with the formulation of the preamble of the Constitutional Treaty. It is clear from the criticisms that appeared in disputes in the European Parliament in the last few years concerning the case of Hungary that this process reached a point nowadays where the appearance of certain elements of the traditional European Christian identity in law and politics (the mention of God and Christianity in the Constitution, the prohibition of marriage and adoption for same-sex couples, the protection of the traditional concept of family etc.) brings into question the breach of the base European values for some. This shows it clearer than anything else that – at least in the minds of certain politicians – the previous European identity was substituted for a new European identity, which is not based on Christianity, but the ban on discrimination, unrestricted individualism and deconstructionist philosophy.

The criticism of the European efforts for unification

Thomas S. Molnar looked at the European efforts for unification with a certain scepticism; not generally at integration based on the cooperation of the European peoples, but the plan for the United States of Europe. He was not concerned with the future of the organisation of integration as regards the future of Europe, but with the trends of each nation states and regions. Most of his findings have been largely validated by the nearly twenty years that have passed since, some of his views have, however, been proven false.

Thomas S. Molnar considered the European efforts for unification doomed to failure from both an ideological and a practical perspective.

His main ideology-based objection was that there was no common ideology in contemporary Europe which could provide the intellectual background for the construction of a unified Europe. The idea itself of “unity” becomes the ideological basis for unification, however, according to Molnar, “this concept of unity is an ideological Ersatz [supplement]. Europeans have not had an ideology since 1945 through which they could express their identity. Americans have capitalism, Soviets have Marxism. Pope John Paul II recently made mention of the Christian Europe of Saint Benedict and Charles the Great, but who would be the flag-bearer of this idea in the completely desacralised West nowadays? What remains, in the spirit of the defining mentality of the century, is the unity patronised by the Holy Consumption.” (Molnár, 1990, p.69) We should agree in large part with this ascertainment of his, considering the disputes regarding the European values.

Although the founding fathers of the European Communities – Schuman, Adenauer, De Gasperi – were Catholic Christian democrats, and – as admitted by even the Muslim authors – the “Christian democratic transnationalism helped with the creation and consolidation of the concept of a “core Europe”, connecting its economic content with the long-term goals of the sensible political integration. [...] In addition to this, Christian democratic transnationalism has significantly contributed to the politics of European integration [...] in a broader sense than focusing solely on intergovernmental relations”, (Arslan, 2011, p.310) and “[i]t is fairly evident that Christian democrats played a leading, if not always successful role in the political life of the European continent after the Second World War. [...] The Christian democratic idea therefore corroborates the principles of the European integration.” (Arslan, 2011, p.318)

This, however, does not mean that Christian democracy or even Christianity are such generally accepted ideas in Europe that they could provide the ideological basis for the creation of unity, the direction and substance of the process of integration. Even though the European People's Party – which originally merged the Christian democratic parties – is the biggest faction, it could never gain majority in the European Parliament, let alone a hegemonic role. Furthermore, the connection of the European People's Party to the Christian democratic idea has significantly loosened in the last few terms.

According to Molnar, the “Holy Consumption” could be the “patron” of this unity because, according to him, “the idea of the unity of Europe was created by merchants who desired American-style advantages, moreover, the publicists paid for by them, who flooded the papers with news of the yellow or red scourge. Horrified by rumours concerning a Soviet invasion, the anti-Marxist (and often ex-Marxist) European intellectuals wanted more than to join such a military pact that, by definition, could only be transitory; they demanded complete unity, forevermore. A few clearer – or simply more patriotic – minds see through the absurdity of giving up sovereignty in favour of averting an uncertain and surely temporary threat.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.68–69)

However, Molnar did not only hold the lack of basis against the unification: he also had practical doubts about it. Basically, he assumed that the national characteristics of the nations taking part in the integration denote such differences that prevent the creation of a united “European” character. “Barring the French statism or the Spanish underdevelopment, which already constitute the obstacle to economic homogeneity on their own, do we really think that the German economy – which will be supplied by the millions of workers and consumers of Middle Europe tomorrow – will adopt adjustment to the tuning fork of Greece or Portugal?” (Molnár, 1990, p.68) “France is there on the other side of Germany, ... its own virtues themselves prevent it from sacrificing itself on the altar of the dynamism of modern industrialisation. ... Do we really think that these two countries will work together after 1992, or will a new kind of man come to life, the »European businessman«, uniting one's charm (and arrogance!) with the other's effective punctuality?” (Molnár, 1990, pp.71–72) It is without a doubt that during both the establishment of the unified internal market and the implementation of the economic and monetary union the European leaders had to face that the economic differences – which can be traced back to the differing work and financial culture – have remained in a lasting manner, despite the successes of the cohesion policy. The economic crisis

of 2008 and the debt crisis of 2010 have shown that the Mediterranean states walk a very different path than Germany, despite having a common currency.

Molnar is right to recognise the central role of Germany in the Europe of the future – we will return to this below in greater detail. Molnar alludes to how the establishment of an extensive Eurasian empire – which is based on the cooperation of Russia and Germany – “one of the deeply hidden seductions in Germany, and we might be living in the dawn of another such attempt. But the growth of such an undertaking regularly goes against Germans’ inability to practice imperial matters without inciting hostile reactions. It is probable that the German element would dominate a Eurasian unit, ... Nevertheless, in the decisive historical moment, Germany finds neither such an Alexander the Great who would bring together the cultures, nor such a Caesar who could cross the brutal austerity of the legions with the freedom of Roman administration; he finds a Hitler, with his own racial and Pan-German theories that alienate nations. From this, we can conclude that a Russian-German condominium would be short-lived, even if it would be to the benefit of many.” Molnár, 1990, pp.72–73)

For this reason, Molnar believes that “putting aside the usual rose-tinted glasses, it is evident that the EEC, while satisfying the German hegemony, is heading into a dead end. ... the extremely problematic economic union would not be followed by the political unification of the continent.” (Molnár, 1990, p.67) “The illusion of placing Germany in the middle of the construction is endangered by its national projects, the economic dynamism, its potential hegemony in Middle Europe and in other Eastern countries getting the upper hand. In this respect, let us commemorate the notes of Max Weber from 1916, in which he warned Germany of the demand of hegemony of London, Paris and Moscow (Washington did not exist in a political sense). In the Weberian perspective, Germany has to use its central position to be an ally to the small nations, opposing the French, the English or the Russian demands.” (Molnár, 1990, p.146) In his view, however, Germany will not adopt this role because of its own demand for hegemony.

Molnar considers the low level of solidarity between the European peoples and nations as a threat: “why would the likes of Hungary, Poland or Romania feel that they are concerned if certain Western countries were flooded with African hordes? Eastern and Western Europe don’t make up a unit by far, neither of them rushes to the other’s aid, not any more than how North and South supported each other during history. However, this has always existed in the field of culture. As regards higher education, the old formula of migrant students whose roots are to be

found in their own home country, is much more suitable for establishing cultural networks than the propaganda invention of the Cold War: mixed degrees proffered to students blinded by the »cultural exchange programs«.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.74–75) We should challenge his statement on the lack of solidarity regarding security policy in light of current events: it makes a difference to the Central European member states, owing to the freedom of movement prevailing in the Schengen Area, what kind of internal security situation arises in the Western European member states, and the V4 member states are not only against the quotas of distribution directly affecting them, but are also firmly pushing for the defence of the external Schengen border.

Molnar also stresses that “... »constructing Europe« is not a unitary notion with an unambiguous meaning; it is not written anywhere that it will necessarily result in unity. We must repeat that this is only the pretence of a clear idea, a concept that has its roots in the prestige of »unity«, in the prestige of the »United« States, the Soviet »Union«, the »United« Nations and other such words and phrases. The main problems, which the European nations have to face currently and will have to face in the future, won’t become immediately solvable through unity.” (Molnár, 1990, p.74) “At the end of the day, European unity is a concept that will become empty through the reality of the nations, but only after the chaos stemming from it has taken shape.” (Molnár, 1990, p.75) Based on the current disputes about sovereignty, we have to agree with Molnar in that the final goal of the European integration is not complete political unity, the emergence of a new federal state, as this can’t be viewed as a solution for every problem, in fact, its creation could be the source of new problems. Whether or not the European integration will result in chaos is, in our mind, largely dependent on what kind of integration models the European peoples will follow in the future, and what kind of answers will they give to the arising questions: will they proffer the deepening of the integration as a remedy, without criticism, or will they assign a suitable role to subsidiarity and to the loyal cooperation of the states in the future – the basic treaties of the European Union provide a due legal basis for both ways.

Molnar also criticises the approach, according to which the signs of chaos and disintegration would allude to how “Europe is being built in an orderly anarchy, based on an ecosystem in which a myriad of creatures fight with and supply one another in the same geo-climatic environment, shaping it through their interactions.” (Molnár, 1990, p.75) In his view, “looking at the super-bureaucracy in Strasbourg and Brussels, it’s not the organic and spontaneous growth of an ecosystem that comes to mind. It appears this ecosystem was chosen as a comparison by an intellectual class that became jaded through Marxism, with the goal of hiding

the reality of nations whose personality would not allow them to let themselves to dissolve in a homogenous mass. ... Their statement, according to which »Europe is being built«, is nothing but a predetermination, as they cannot know whether it is actually being built or not.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.75–76)

Rather, according to Molnar, a unification attempt from above is more evident from these events. “Europe, which has never been united, has always been the most natural temptation for federators, who have nowadays – true to the now leading ideology – been relieved by the “unifiers”. This is not some kind of novelty. The rules had been drafted by the two »Romes«, the Empire and the Church, and consequently, we are talking about almost two thousand years of history. The federators were few, but commanded great power: Charles the Great, the Holy Roman Emperors from Otto until Charles V, Napoleon, Hitler. The efforts of the federation were supplied by three ideas: the universalist Roman Catholicism, the imperial idea unfolding along the North-South axis (the push of Germany to the Mediterranean Sea), and the revolutionary-Jacobinic idea (which Napoleon had also inherited). The Soviet occupation also brought with itself a fourth ideological trend: the Great Russian Advancement, which also inherited from Jacobinism, partially with Marxist assistance. In the end, however, none of the listed attempt bore fruit. The counter-wave – taking the form of national resistance – wasted no time. ... The phenomenon of the repudiation of the federator stems from the plurality that is Europe itself. ... Imperial efforts for hegemony from the 10th until the 15th centuries were met by the Church and the kingdoms from France to Hungary, Napoleon’s were met by Prussia, France etc., Hitler’s by the entire continent from one end to the other. The nations are those that stand in the way of Muscovite hegemony nowadays, too. Why would we sacrifice this national factor that resists the different gigantisms – one of which could be the united Europe?” (Molnár, 1990, pp.77–78) He also called attention to how “we can’t expect a Europe united along a model of Brussels to be free of the umpteenth attempt of some »federator«. The national, imperial, ideological ambitions sleep, but they are never buried entirely. Is any kind of guarantee possible against their recrudescence and the exhilaration instigated by them? No. Only the national sense and everything connected to it can form a lasting resistance.” (Molnár, 1990, p.78)

There is doubtlessly a lot of truth to this line of arguing. Great-power politics has always liked to think in big units, units that can be administered along unitary principles, from a single centre. For great-power politics, everything is a matter of government, even that which is a matter of life and death from the perspective of local or national interest. This is the reason why the quotas of distribution that had been drafted in response to the migrant crisis of 2015 produced such

fierce resistance from the Central European member states, and had turned to failure even before they were adopted, in the period of the voluntary quotas. People are not objects that can be arbitrarily placed on arbitrary points of the Schengen Area: they are persons with identities, hopes and goals, who can only be integrated in certain member states, whereas elsewhere, they cannot connect to anything, and even the recipient nations approach the different changes in society with varying attitudes.

Furthermore, we must highlight this idea: “[the] repudiation of the federator stems from the plurality that is Europe itself”, for this statement is validated by history. The variety of European peoples and languages, cultures and religious communities, the existence of bigger and smaller autonomous communities, the repeating failure of the creation of an empire spanning the entirety of Europe is especially evident in comparison with states like China and the United States of America, which have always incorporated the migrant masses, often consuming whole peoples, assimilating them within 2-3 generations, and where expansive empires came to be. The question of the united European basic values generated heated arguments for this reason: for European culture – even if Christianity provides a common framework for interpretation – has always acknowledged the right to a minority approach as regards the details.

However, Molnar must have erred in thinking that “it is still the forces rebelling against European unity that are crystallising around Germany”. (Molnár, 1990, p.147) He was likely led astray because he did not recognise the extent to which the German national sense had been eroded as atonement for their National Socialist past. It is true that Germany attempted to curb the premature unification and the centralisation of the European integration organisation in the Kohl era, not so much because of the national feeling, rather because of the sober conservatism and idea of subsidiarity of the traditional Christian democracy. Under the social democrat governments, and then especially between the relations of the grand coalition of the Merkel era, Germany shouldered the role of the “prime mover” of the integration increasingly openly.

At the same time, Molnar was right to recognise the globalist moving force hidden behind the idea of supranationalism and the danger of cultural homogenisation: “[w]e can act as though ... the separate efforts of the nations were no longer possible ... For example, it is said that national sovereignty is out-dated in the current situation. It is only a question of problem-solving, challenges, decision-making and working factors. We see the globalist logic appear beyond this American-technocratic jargon. If the “little organisations” of the nations are no longer viable,

why not take a step further and demand the unity of the planet? If the European nations are ready to forsake themselves, why isn't the entirety of Europe, including a young Muslim of Senegal, who said that it doesn't offer anything exciting as opposed to Islam. ... The economic unit of experts and "decision-makers" is definitely not. It is strange to say, at the very least, that every one of these experts is lamenting – while working towards an irreversible unity – the loss of the cultural variety of the continent." (Molnár, 1990, pp.146–148)

In contrast, Molnar believed the latent primacy of the national politics was coming to fruition in practice: "[n]owadays, it is hard to detect any kind of spirit that pervades the planet, if not in politicians' self-serving speeches, after which, descending from the stage, they themselves return to being the envoys of the national interest. The nation remains viable, all things considered – and ready to cooperate with other nations. Independence was attained through unspeakable suffering – I wonder who would voluntarily sacrifice independence for an at least dubious cause?" (Molnár, 1990, p.76–77) The consequence of this is, according to him, that "[the] interlacement of national efforts and tactics paralyzes the cooperation and the handling of affairs." (Molnár, 1990, p.148) A solution to this could be that "»Europe« needs to deliver an office-holder, a civil servant who is just as committed as the great servants of the state since the Middle Ages. The soulless bureaucracy, the nightmare of the anti-utopists (Huxley, Orwell, Bernanos, Zinoviev) threatens to become a reality. We will notice, then, that the long-lauded unity doesn't only create a mechanism, but an ideology that is incompatible with the European spirit..." (Molnár, 1990, p.148)

The latest developments in European politics appear to refute this view of Molnar. After the economic crisis of 2008, technocratic leaders came to power in several countries, leaders against whom the allegations, that they serve not their own nation but the interests of a global financial elite, are often brought up. Today, the class of European civil servants also seems to be coming into existence, a class that is self-sufficient, independent from national interests and values, embracing a globalist, unifying ideology. We must understand, however, that these technocratic leaders have since failed in several European states, and the representatives of these globalist ideologies have suffered sudden losses of popularity, as they couldn't handle the basic problems of their own countries effectively. We also need to see that several significant changes have taken effect in this field in recent years. Currently, it is impossible to foretell whether the renaissance of the national thought will come about in Europe, or all of this is just the final flush before the ultimate defeat.

Thomas S. Molnar prognosticated over a decade: “[...] the European unity will remain in no small part rhetorical, local interests will prevail through this, and the power on the periphery – like Turkey or Israel – will have great influence over European affairs.” (Mezei, 2009, p.13) Seeing the strengthening of Turkey’s position as regards the role it plays in the handling of the migrant crisis, and considering the divide of the European Union in this question, we have to agree with him.

The transformation of European politics

As was seen above, Thomas S. Molnar was sceptical about the process of European integration. Consequently, he was more preoccupied with how the role and politics of European nation states would shift in the future. He based his studies on the theory that Europe is made up of three bigger regions, which are Eastern, Central and Western Europe; therefore, he accepted the regional division proposed by Jenő Szűcs in one of his influential treatises. It should be noted, however, that he did not consider the demarcation between Eastern and Central Europe to be particularly important, which is why it is not completely clear which exact region he has in mind whenever he mentions Eastern or Central Europe, although admittedly, this is not unambiguous in Jenő Szűcs’s treatise either.

The root of this problem lies in the fact that the historical boundaries of these historical regions run across today’s state borders. This is because the main lines of demarcation were formed by the dominance of either Eastern or Western Christianity, as well as the differences between centralised absolutist states and feudal states, that is, those between the imperialist great powers relying on commerce and industry on the one hand, and the agriculture-based European states on the other. Thus, for example, the territory of Romania outside the Carpathian Mountains historically belongs to Eastern Europe, whereas Transylvania is part of Central Europe; Prussia, Saxony or Bavaria belong to Central Europe, while the German Rhineland should be classed more as belonging to Western Europe. Due to their European Union membership, Romania and Bulgaria can be classified as more Central European, though culturally, they would belong to Eastern Europe. It is an open question which region Germany belongs to after German reunification, it seemed Germany would rejoin the Central European region as its dominant power, nowadays, however, it seems to consider itself more as part of Western Europe.

We will hereinafter examine four major questions: the developments in Russian politics, the ascent of Germany, the changes in Eastern Europe and the waning of American influence. At first glance, Thomas S. Molnar's predictions seem not to have been fulfilled, however, it may be the case that the timespan which we can study is too short, and that as regards the more long-term developments, he is right after all.

Russia: integration or isolation?

Thomas S. Molnar offers two scenarios concerning Russia, which, however, have one thing in common: he thinks Russia will not be able to renounce its influence towards the West. (Molnár, 1990, p.61) "Moscow will either feel humiliated due to its new attempt at world domination and the failure of Marxism and will respond to this humiliation brutally with militant and Slavic nationalism, or – and this seems more likely – it will try to retain a certain level of control over its former vassal states, thereby accepting its position as part of Europe at least temporarily. The only country that can open this way for it is Germany, a reunified Germany." (Molnár, 1990, p.57) Molnar poses the fundamental question: "What interest would Germany have in doing business with the Russians? Firstly, the total unification of the two Germanies, which cannot go forward without Moscow's approval. ... Second, economic and cultural incursion into the former satellite region. Third, peace on two fronts – this instead of having to face the permanent possibility of war on at least one of them." (Molnár, 1990, p.62)

The first two considerations are definitely detectable in the period before the Eastern enlargement of the European Union: in this era – which in Russia roughly overlaps with the Yeltsin era – Russia did earnestly try to develop comprehensive relations with the European Union, which is demonstrated by the Russian-EU partnership agreement concluded on 24 June 1994 in Corfu and effective from 1997 (Juhász, 2008, p.2), which expired in November 2007 as it could not be renewed due to the Polish veto. (Juhász, 2008, p.2; Deák, 2014, p.30) It should be admitted, though, that Russia has ruled out EU membership from the early 2000s, (Deák, 2014, p.33) which the institutional structure of the European Union was not prepared for either. The Eastern enlargement of the European Union and NATO has distanced the European Union further from Russia, especially after the European Union established the Eastern Partnership initiative for six Eastern European and South Caucasian partner countries in 2009. (European Council, n.d.) The situation was further worsened by the outbreak of the Ukrainian Civil War

in 2014, related to which – due to the annexation of Crimea – the European Union imposed economic sanctions on Russia. (Deák, 2014, p.36)

According to Molnar, Russia's position is determined by its own self-assessment of its true strength: "Russia, this underdeveloped empire which in many ways lives either in the Medieval Era, according to Asian time or in many respects in the 19th century, is starting to see its fragility as an empire which strains it from within... Moscow has been operating under a myth for seventy years (to say nothing of previous times) constructed by Western intellectuals – which the United States adopted and reinforced – who were in dire need of a very powerful and extremely aggressive enemy for their crusade against "Evil", so as to highlight their glorious nature as a contrast. Without this double myth, the Soviet Union would have collapsed owing to its economic negligence." (Molnár, 1990, pp.70–71)

It is undeniable that in the Yeltsin era, Russia became timid in its foreign policy, and this period – besides the disintegration of the state and the contracting of its sphere of influence – was marked by an almost completely uncritical serving of Western interests. In the 2000s, however, there was a fundamental shift in Russia: at the start of the Putin era – after the expansion of state power – "the dynamic economic growth in Russia lessened Russian dependence and continually strengthened its bargaining power vis-à-vis the EU as well", (Deák, 2014, p.34) in addition to Russia being more active in foreign policy matters too.

The so-called Arab Spring of 2011 largely ended Moscow's influence in the Mediterranean basin owing to the collapse of allied regimes, therefore, unsurprisingly, prompting Moscow – in defence of its Latakia military base – to intervene in the Syrian Civil War on the side of the Assad government. The Ukrainian Civil War served as another occasion for confrontation with the Western allies, since what gave rise to the conflict was that Ukraine's new administration offered the prospect of acceding to the European Union and NATO after taking power, in violation of the military neutrality the country promised in the 1991 Budapest Memorandum. Russia proved to be surprisingly strong in these conflicts – Western pundits probably underestimated the bearing capacity of its population and the importance of the Russian identity.

It follows, then, that Molnar was right about Russia – depending also on the European approach – fluctuating between Europeanism and national identity, between strategic partnership and imperial isolation. He was also right about the fact that "*partnership* with Germany would strengthen Russia's position in Eastern Europe. The Moscow-Berlin condominium would

separate Germany from the alliance with the Washington-Paris-London triangle formed by Adenauer.” (Molnár, 1990, p.63) A great example of this would be the Nord Stream pipeline whose main goal is the supply of the German (and the Western European) market with Russian gas through bypassing the Eastern and Central European transit countries. Although the plan was primarily aimed against Ukraine with whom the Russians were in constant dispute over transit charges and gas prices, critics of the project contend that it enables Russia to pressure the Eastern and Central European countries dependent on Russian gas through economic means without jeopardising its Western European exports. (Kerner, 2018)

Molnar nevertheless probably underestimated the significance of economic considerations in Russo-German relations. Russia is a huge market for German industry, while also being an ample source of raw materials. Thus Russo-German economic ties are important for both parties despite the sanctions relating to the annexation of Crimea, and the political disputes do not stop the parties from making deals which affirm the great power status of both of them. (Mártonffy, 2018) It is not clear, however, whether there will arise a power sharing arrangement between the two countries, whether there will be a second Molotov-Ribbentrop pact under which the two great powers would delineate Central and Eastern Europe as belonging to the German and Russian spheres of influence, respectively, and conduct their foreign policy toward these countries accordingly. Germany’s backing of Ukraine seems to refute this for the time being, it is not certain, however, whether this will hold true permanently as American attention in the region has decreased.

The ascent of Germany

One of the most accurate realisations of Thomas S. Molnar was that a unified Germany would become the most crucial country in European integration: “the fate of the continent is in the hands of Germany. We’ve bought into illusions that have been building up layer by layer since 1945: the victorious Europe, the illusory faith in Europe, the sentiment that we can establish, we can form Europe without taking Germany, the biggest continental power, into consideration, or rather, without taking into account that Germany is not merely a country among many on the European chessboard. It, and only it, has been the subject of a rivalry between the Russians, Americans, English and French (mainly de Gaulle), each of them trying to pull it into its sphere of influence. (Molnár, 1990, pp.65–66) This conclusion of his is made all the more significant by the fact that, until very recently, Germany has refrained from being seen as attempting to

establish a hegemony within the European Union. They openly admitted to Europe being run from Berlin only in the first half of the 2010s. The main reason behind this is to be found in their tactfulness toward the qualms of the other big member states, for Germany has been the biggest member state based on their economic weight or population since 1990.

Molnar has alluded to these worries concerning German reunification: “many tracts have been written on the impossibility of German reunification, about its undesirability, about its absurdity. These asserted that the »natural condition« of Germany would be if it split up into many smaller units, and that those who facilitated a federation – Bismarck, Hitler – each time generated aggressive militarism, which ended badly for both Germany and Europe. They missed the fact that when Germany consisted of many states, Europe was Christian, and was defending itself against both the Muslim Turks and the Greek-Byzantine Russians at the same time. Nowadays, the Europe that lacks even the minimal cohesion fostered by Christianity barely manages to defend its »Asian peninsula«, and even that only with American help. All of this means that no one will defend Germany should it not defend itself. It owes it to itself to be strong and unified.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.62–63)

Molnar describes the historical arc leading to Germany again taking its well-deserved place as first in Europe. “At the outset, there was a desperate struggle for acceptance and a veneration for the Atlantic alliance, almost as if the White House was home to Charlemagne. As the positions of the German socialists were strengthened after 1969, the unimaginable became a reality: Germany began its long march towards exiting the European order established at Yalta. Wholly unsurprisingly, the other victims of Yalta have joined it and are following it in a second phase of this process. At this point, Paris should have doubled its efforts to bind the prospective giant to itself instead of accepting that they both be diluted in the nebulous Europe of the Single Market and Atlanticism.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.66–67)

Thomas S. Molnar recognised it correctly that “a unified Germany would, in all likelihood, be governed from Berlin, which would mean that Prussian dominance would prevail. The only problem of great significance lies with how a Western-style bourgeois society could merge with a Prussian-Marxist militarised state. ... In the case of Germany, the interests of the state will prevail, the mutual benefits will carry greater weight.” (Molnár, 1990, p.64) We have seen that German reunification happened more or less smoothly, and even though the differences between East and West Germany have remained, this did not stop a unified state from being

established and Germany from becoming the country with the strongest and most stable economy and with the biggest territory and population in the European Union.

In the view of Thomas S. Molnar, France did not conduct its policy towards Germany properly. At first – stemming from its revanchist policy inherited from the 19th century which proved to be ruinous to Europe in the first half of the 20th century – it was intent on impeding Germany in regaining its strength, and later adopted the idea of the dissolution of nation states, since: “with Pompidou, Giscard and Mitterand, the liberal oligarchy seized power, and they had no interest in creating a Europe of nation states, rather, they sought to reduce Europe to a huge global market which would spread from the Urals to the West Coast of the United States, to a trade-based Europe swallowed by an Americanised globe.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.66–67) Instead of this, it should have aspired to create a special, strategic cooperation in order to help Germany in its struggle for independence from the influence of the United States and the Soviet Union, even though “neither Moscow nor Washington would accept this. The importance of a Paris-Bonn axis was of such magnitude that it was placed in a framework of ‘claw me, claw thee’ discussions. Regular meeting between German and French bureaucrats will not settle the future of the alliance.” (Molnár, 1990, p.66)

Today, it seems that Emmanuel Macron and Angela Merkel want to establish just that, the strategic alliance between France and Germany, not least based on their similar views on the migrant crisis, in part to oppose to the V4 member states. We have to, however, be mindful of the fact that the future of this strategic alliance is currently fairly uncertain as the internal support of both politicians is shaky and they are in somewhat of a rivalry, too: France is incapable of giving up its claim of hegemony, albeit it being evident that France has no claim to first spot based on either its economic performance or even territory, population or its embeddedness in Europe as a whole.

The maverick nature of Central European countries

The most exciting insights of Thomas S. Molnar are, undoubtedly, the ones concerning the countries of Central Europe. Regarding Central and Eastern Europe – while acknowledging the horrific nature of Soviet occupation and that communist ideology is unacceptable – he stressed that there have been positive effects of the last half a century, namely, that “the rural and the urban proletariat now both form part of the nation. This proletariat is the one that was – contrary

to general expectations in 1945 – the most effective in resisting attempts at destroying the idea of the nation and in resisting Soviet pressure, even military pressure. It played a huge role in the quasi-liberation of peoples, as it was the source of colorful socialism, as it were, as in Poland, Hungary or Czechoslovakia, or – even if this was not the case – of at least so-called proletarian socialism which society could not ignore as it became ingrained in the national spirit.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.54–55)

In his view, the proletariat’s “future societal position and influence is impossible to predict today, but the presence of the ex-proletariat will, no doubt, create a peculiar situation in both communism and Western capitalism. ... these will not follow any known model, whether that be Swedish-style social democracy, or any other form thereof, and then even parliamentarism will not be a working formula. There are already signs and precursors of a different path, of another way of structuring organisations beyond politics, of the reinvention of corporatism...” (Molnár, 1990, p.55) In his opinion, this would “first and foremost guarantee national reconstruction after three-quarters of a century of destruction, and would then ensure modest wellbeing (making allowance for the danger of indebtedness) in the framework of societal equilibrium.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.60–61)

It is obvious that it was the successes of the Polish Solidarity that led him to believe that in the Central European region – and maybe even across the entirety of Europe – the public life dominated by parties would be replaced by corporatist politics dominated by trade unions and based upon the social teaching of the Catholic Church. History has proven him wrong on this issue, however, for – especially in Central Europe – trends have pointed in the opposite direction, with party politics having come to dominate public life and having extended its influence to areas traditionally dominated by professional bodies and lobby groups.

Nevertheless, his observation about the renaissance of pre-Soviet occupation traditions in the Central European region lending a distinctive character to the public life of these countries is correct. “Certain observers from Western Europe are surprised by the resurgence of traditions and above all how the national spirit prevails. Peasant parties, democrats, the center-right, Christians etc. seem to modernise very little or not at all. Hard truth and the power of memories reign supreme, the people don’t seem to care about the Western style or Western slogans at all. In a few years’ time, the East will declare itself different from the West.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.58–59) History has shown that it was the migrant crisis of 2015 that gave rise to this opportunity, and the V4 countries have highlighted their unique approach since then.

Thomas S. Molnar saw it with a keen eye that “during the 20th century, the peoples and the elites of Central Europe have drawn their own conclusions about Western-style – that is, conforming to American ideology – democracy. This democracy is accompanied by the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: capitalism, liberalism, pluralism and moral degeneracy. At first – and we can already witness this today – the (very much legitimate) desire for human rights and consumer goods will take precedence over all other considerations. But the cost at which this comes will shortly become clear. Western-style democracy has never been practiced in Eastern Europe, for it is at odds with the principle of maintaining national integrity in an area where independence is at risk the most.” (Molnár, 1990, p.59) It is precisely this threat which leads to the situation where “nationalism is growing stronger by the day in this region, and the churches play a role in this as well due to their national and moral function, and because they themselves bear symbols of national unity.” (Molnár, 1990, p.61)

From this maverick nature comes the fact that “the balance of power on the continent seems to be on the cusp of being disrupted, this time between a Western Europe that has become almost exclusively dominated by commerce, and – seeking to invigorate their long repressed dynamism – the remaining parts of Europe (Eastern and Western Europe).” (Molnár, 1990, pp.80–81) Thomas S. Molnar emphasises the mistaken policy of France up to this point on this issue, too: “The policy of France towards Central Europe consists of trying to cause trouble for the central power of the region (the Holy Roman Empire, the Habsburg Empire, the Russians etc.). This is where the tradition of alliances with the Byzantines, the Ottomans or the Russians stems from. Reconsidering this multiseccular policy will not be easy.” (Molnár, 1990, p.81) It is clearly visible, however, that France to this day does not consider Eastern European countries to be its real partner, even if it is on friendly terms with some of them (especially Romania).

According to Molnar, “the only truly European initiative since Yalta has been Willy Brand’s Ostpolitik in 1969, whose benefits we continue to reap today. It was a risky – and consequently controversial – manoeuvre, not being without an ulterior motive of low politics. By now, it has become irrevocable and an absolute must. The only thing that would come close to this on the part of France would be for it to join Bonn’s Ostpolitik. The advantages for Paris are salient. Primo, it could capitalise on a yet fluid situation in Central Europe where France commands enormous political and especially cultural prestige. It would be embraced with open arms, partly because it is France, and partly to work as a counterbalance to Germany and Russia, which are regional powers, so to speak. It would also encourage and keep an eye on Germany in this new adventure. This third partner would stabilise the situation and would act as a bridge towards the

West and the oceans.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.81–82) We can only truly understand this balancing role of France if we consider what Molnar thinks about how the region’s relations with Russia and Germany will change.

In Molnar’s view, German unification will bring benefits to “... Eastern countries and Russia, but to Central Europe as well, which will in this way become part of a greater whole to which it has always belonged. Since the Austrian Anschluss and the annexation of the Sudetenland, both carried out by Hitler, Mitteleuropa has existed in the uncomfortable situation of the periphery.” (Molnár, 1990, p.64) “The Europe of the future will, therefore, crystallise along the border formed by the Iron Curtain. Due to the repressive ideological and military pressure, this region became, in the literal sense, economically and mentally hibernated in 1945. Nonetheless, Muscovite influence was much too weak (if there was any at all); and Western influence lacked any sense of momentum, originality and depth, and had, in any case, been filtered by the time it arrived. Central Europe is in a good position to become a hub, rebuilding its ties with the Europe of half a century ago, but on substantially better terms.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.64–65) The V4 countries turning to the defence of traditional values in their common policy seems to validate this proposition.

Molnar stresses that “the great novelty in progress is the partial integration of Russia into Europe with the collaboration of precisely those countries which have, until now, been under the heels of Russia. Despite the contempt and the animosity, strong ties have been forged between Russia and the (ex-)satellite states.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.55–56) “Stand-off and hostile feelings, but not exactly between, say, Russia and Poland, but now rather between Romania and Hungary, or between the Serbs and the Croats. Russia, which will not find it easy to extinguish communist sentiments, continues to be a threat to these countries, merely due to its size and to the phenomenon that we could call Asian barbarism which latently always lurks in the background.” (Molnár, 1990, p.56) “Neutralising this colossus which draws its strength from its extraordinary past sufferings can only be ensured by enlisting the help of another colossus, which would be Germany.” (Molnár, 1990, p.57) “The new weight of the Eastern countries will lead to Russo-German cooperation as this will be the only way of guaranteeing the future independence of the Poles, the Baltic states, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania. ... Their geographical location makes them dependent on the development of the relationship between the two big regional powers. Hence they will be aimed at promoting the birth of the Berlin-Moscow agreement, they will be the mediators and the first beneficiaries thereof.” (Molnár, 1990, pp.57–58) “The primary interest of these countries is regional stability which can only

be achieved if the objectives of Moscow and Berlin alike are fulfilled, at least temporarily.” (Molnár, 1990, p.60)

Relations with Russia are indeed rather ambivalent in the area of Central Europe. On the one hand, the countries of Central Europe do not, having learned from history, want Russian authority, on the other hand, they wish to build good relations with the Russians as they are the primary energy exporter and a huge market for Central European goods. In addition, both Russia and Germany are stabilising factors against the excessive influence of the other. As the Hungarian prime minister, Viktor Orbán put it recently, this region lies in the “catchment area of Istanbul-Moscow-Berlin”. (Nyilas, 2018) As we have seen above, however, the Russo-German partnership entails risks, the birth of a new Molotov-Ribbentrop pact which would deepen the vulnerability of Central European countries, therefore Thomas S. Molnar probably errs in thinking that the region’s prosperity would be guaranteed by a joint barrier of the great powers. It is much more desirable that the Central European countries cooperate, and that they themselves maintain relations with all concerned great powers of the region – Germany, Russia and Turkey – on equal terms, while at the same time preventing these great powers from forming such strong ties that would allow them to mutually guarantee each other’s claims for domination over the countries belonging to their respective sphere of influence.

The waning of American influence

An essential tenet of Thomas S. Molnar is that it was not just the Soviet Union which acted as an imperial power in the territory belonging to its sphere of influence, but the United States of America as well, albeit its means were softer than those of its Eastern rival. For this reason, Molnar considers American influence in Europe undesirable, too.

In this regard, even NATO is viewed with suspicion by him. “NATO is becoming a more and more controversial entity. Nowadays, it is treated downright as a safeguard against Germany, as a means for its integration into Europe, in reality, as a threat. Things cannot go on like this in the long term. NATO might as well continue its existence as an American beachhead in a Europe dependent on American capitalism.” (Molnár, 1990, p.63) Here we have to refer to the fact that American influence in Europe today is more economic and ideological in character; and European countries – in the absence of a strong enough armed force – need the American

barrier. It is telling that President Trump calling for decreased American involvement caused a bit of a panic. (HVG, 2018)

At the same time, Molnar does not call for open confrontation but only for decreasing dependence on America: “Europe’s development towards autonomous nation states – and towards new configurations, new blocs, if necessary – would implicitly entail a »disengagement« from the United States. But what does this »disengagement« mean exactly? ... If the agreement between the Russians and the Germans were to be concluded, and if the Germans were to unify around Berlin, one of the rationales for American presence would become moot. Which would not mean that the Americans would not maintain bases indefinitely even after this in certain European countries, as in, for example, Italy, Turkey, Great Britain and Norway. The »disengagement« would only be partial; all the more so, as London would be unwilling to renounce its special ties to Washington.” (Molnár, 1990, p.79) We have to note that we can expect fairly interesting effects as a consequence of Brexit on this issue as the most Atlanticist member state will be the one leaving, although we have to simultaneously highlight Poland’s strong Atlanticist orientation and Romania’s strong dependence on American policies.

The most salient effect attributed by Molnar to the harmful nature of American influence is “the weakening of Western Europe in some measure with France being rapidly sidelined and with other countries that do not carry as much weight. Spain, Portugal, the Benelux and the Scandinavian countries are all societies which take a promiscuous path and follow the American model without having the underlying infrastructure which makes the United States strong. In a nutshell, the state is, in effect, absent from these republics and monarchies, and all national will is extinguished by abundance. ... they bind themselves to America more and more, even if the United States itself has lost its way, lacking a project of national and unifying force.” (Molnár, 1990, p.80) What we can state without doubt that American ideological influence is indeed strong in these countries, and they face several serious social problems which could undermine the functioning of the state and society.

Conclusion

All challenges we face in our time, whether we think of mass immigration, or the accession ambitions of Turkey and the Muslim-majority countries of the West Balkans, or the United Kingdom’s exit from the European Union, or the procedures started based on Article 7 of the

TEU against certain member countries for breaching the EU's founding values, pose the question of what the goal of the process of European integration is, what its real basis is, and by what means is it possible to maintain it. The insights of Thomas S. Molnar, still topical today, could very well fall on fertile ground in this debate.

Thomas S. Molnar analysed the development of European politics at the juncture of the 20th and 21st centuries by putting it in a historical and philosophical perspective. Even though not all his predictions have stood the test of time and of history, many an assertion of his is enduring and topical. He noticed with a keen eye, for example, that Russia is not willing to renounce its influence in Eastern Europe anymore, that Germany will gradually have a central role in European politics, and that Eastern European countries will soon declare themselves to be different from Western European ones.

Though he considered the idea of European unity and the establishment of a United States of Europe to be a dangerous utopia, he had utmost faith in the power of cooperation between European nation states, which would guarantee prosperity through the consideration and respect of national characteristics on the continent and would simultaneously lessen American influence. He was not optimistic about the future, however: he expected Western Europe to decline and the role of Eastern Europe to be strengthened, while also being afraid for the European loss of identity: "There is a threat looming over Europe: the collapse of its multiethnic and multicultural identity in its desertification due to economic interests, and its spiritual values being forced underground more and more violently."

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YEMEN DISPLACEMENT AND FORCED MIGRATION – CHALLENGES AND AIDS

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ABSTRACT

Migration is globally defined as the movement of a person or group of people from one place to another of the aim of place change, better life, shelter, or even for business exchange. The history of Yemen is rich of different kinds of migration. A big number of Yemenis in different periods migrates to different places inside and outside the region for many different aims like the trade for example and some other like for better lives. Yemen is located in the south-western part of the Arabian Peninsula and it is the main road connection of the international trade and migration between the Mediterranean and the Far East. Through Yemen, Spices, cotton, clothes, jewellery and other goods come from India, China and the east coast of Africa to the Mediterranean. Also, other products were brought on camels in exchange among the traders and countries in the connection line from Yemen to other places reaching far up to near Turkey. Yemen's seaports played a potential and important role in the trade between Europe, Africa, and Asia. Since that time coffee was discovered in Yemen and carried to start its historical journey within the main products in the trade. This rich history of Yemen commercial activities stopped due to the conflicts. The war in Yemen and especially the current war takes down the country into a dark life in all its sides. The diseases, death, forced migrations are the results of this war. The continuous matter of the current war is making the much loss and destruction of life-hope increases to the highest levels. This paper is about the forced migration of the Yemeni people in the current time. It explains the situation of the country and its people and the need for humanitarian aids due to the big number of homeless people who are forced to leave their homes behind and escape for their lives to stay away from war. The paper shows the impact of the war and its reflection on the Yemenis inside and outside the country and the fair of fatal destruction of life in the country if keeps continuing.

Key words: migration, NGO contribution, aid-advocacy

Historical background

The historical ruling power of Yemen in the Arabian peninsula is represented by a great king called Tubba Alyamani (Asaad Abu Karb Alhemyari) who ruled from Yemen and planned to make a great kingdom of him covering the whole Arabian Peninsula reaching to India and

China. His kingdom's expansion was stopped in China by a Chinese minister who cheated the troops of the king pushing them in a trap of death. The king ordered strongly to kill the minister. Tubba, the king, reached to Makkah and Almadeena (cities in the heart of Saudi Arabia) but stopped as well because of a prophecy that a prophet would come and the place would be a center for accepting migrants. In this king's period, many groups of people migrate from/to Yemen continuously with no stop for many reasons like for example, the interest of African migration from the Horn of Africa. To outside Yemen, a noticed big migration was by the Yemeni tribes like, Jurhom, Alazad, Alfenequeoon, Alashowryoon, Alakadyoon, Aad, Thamood, Tosom,... etc who traveled out of the country to different places reaching beyond the Arabian Peninsula to Egypt and near to Iran for the sake of better life and shelter. To an extent, the reason behind all these migrations is the destruction of Mareb Dam. These tribes made their great kingdoms and spread their own language and power. The findings of ancient life which is revealed by some historians expect that the Egyptian history of Pharaohs, the old kingdoms of Iraq and Styria started after the migration of Yemeni tribes. This means that these migrated tribes worked to establish great kingdoms and then left the traces behind. Yemen was considered as the country of power, intelligence, well capacity, and personal life development and so those who migrated to Yemen got different chances to get these characteristics. A historical documented statement explained that the escape of the prophet Moses from the Pharaoh was to Yemen for a period of time (eight to ten years) then to be powerfully back to free the people and end the injustice of the Pharaoh. Many other migrated tribes built their own places out of Yemen as well and were known by their power and development like in Algeria.

The Ethiopian occupation of Yemen in the fifth century AD caused continuous migrations from Yemen to Ethiopia and the countries abroad. A long time after and exactly at the same time of the unity of Yemen in 1990, the civil war in Somalia started and the Somali people were forced to flee to Yemen. It was highly found that a serious migration of refugees to Yemen from 1990 onwards with no objection from the government of Yemen because of being the only country in the Arabian Peninsula ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention. Since 1990 many Somalis traveled to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries through Yemen. In addition, Ethiopians especially women, basically came to Yemen as labor migrants to work as domestic workers for Yemeni families. Eritreans also traveled to Yemen as labor migrants and till today they still living but as Yemeni nationals like other refugees from Somalia and Ethiopia who became Yemeni national enjoying all the rights same as the Yemeni people. On the other hand, till 1962 and exactly during the rule of Imams (the Mutawakkilite Kingdom from 1918 to 1962 in the

northern part of Yemen), the Yemenis were freely able to travel to all over the world and the priority was to France and England for being considered as their first choice. The Yemeni was having the privilege to travel by his passport without a visa and that exactly documented during the rules of Mutawakkilite Kingdom in the 19th century. It was written in the Yemeni passport that the passport is valid to access all the world without a visa and it was a great powerful passport during that time for the best chance of free migration. The development of the political regions near to Yemen made restrictions and maintained borders by which Yemen and other country should not practice any kind of free travel and migration out of it. This was the starting action of locking Yemen to the outside and reduce its migration level and so it effects the development in the country as it is known that migration is a main factor of country development.

Yemen forced migration

Yemen passes many kinds of wars that have greatly forced for migration and refugee movements from Yemen to the Horn of Africa and other countries around especially in the current time. A big number of Yemenis fleeing the country because of the current war from 2015. The big violence and the humanitarian situation hit the door of every family leaving none of them without disease, hunger, or death. On 14 October 2015, about more than 3 million people are considered displaced in the country itself, one million of them are from Hodeidah city. In November 2015 around 166,658 travelled from Yemen to Gulf countries and the East of Africa while around 75,748 people travelled to Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan. In 2016, around 14,000 people, 38 percent are children, 25 percent are women and 36 percent are men above 18 years old, flee from Yemen to live in Djibouti for its close cultural, social and linguistic links. Most men travel out of Yemen for security reasons, avoiding forced recruitment in the troops of Huthis after they lost their income. Their migration to Djibouti is to find job opportunities to support their families inside Yemen. About 50,000 Yemenis travelled to Oman, 14,500 to Jordan and 8000 to Egypt registered with UNHCR by the end of 2018. Most Yemenis in these countries are professionals, academicians, as well as politicians who are maintaining more acceptable living standards and they also include people who have been unable to return to Yemen as a result of the coalition closure of Sana'a airport since mid-2016. Only in the year 2017, about 64,000 Yemeni refugees and asylum seekers travelled to Oman, Saudi Arabia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

reported 326 Yemenis in the first eleven months of 2018, while a total of 353 had reached Greece in 2015 through illegal routes used by African migrants.

The UN has its giant humanitarian help in different aid programs to support the Yemeni people as the recent knowledge by all that Yemenis are relying on imports to survive. Around 11 million children in Yemen are in need of humanitarian assistance to survive and approximately about 400,000 have been suffering the most severe kind of malnutrition and impending death. Hodeidah city is the “single most important point of entry for the food and basic supplies needed to prevent famine and a recurrence of a cholera epidemic,” the UN has said. The port is welcoming around 75% of the imports but the people of the city are considered as the most who are living in severe malnutrition and diseases and famine. You can expect that the average of death in the city is much more than in other cities. Death is at every door checking a sick person or a very tiny body almost half dead to take him or her off. The UN finds its way of work mainly on the forced migrated Hodeidian people who are without shelter in near to the cities of Aden, Lahj ... etc in the southern part of the country. The establishment of camps (like Alrubat camp in Lahj city) and food supply is seriously conducted and a plan of medical supply is in its way of distribution. In Hodeidah, the very poor people who are not able to flee out of the city are cutting the leaves of trees to eat after cooking them. The lack of food and medicine in Hodeidah is caused by the tough war minimised in the city because of the port. In 2018, Saudi forces, along with the UAE forces, attacked all Houthi forces and locations that were hidden inside the neighbourhoods in the centre of the city and caused lots of killings of innocent people and increased the humanitarian needs. The lack of medicine and the absence of good and qualified hospitals are the reason behind the high level of death in the city. The good incomeed people take their sick people and travel to the capital city for medication while the poor cannot and so face the poor medication in the city and many of them have been dying. This fatal destiny in Hodeidah city make the International NGOs directly work on rescuing the people. In Hodeidah, there is another seaport smaller than the main port called Alsaleef. Through this port, some of the aid and the commercial imports enter and that helps to provide food, fuel, and medicine to survive. The non-stop war in the city and the no understanding of the fighting parties about the access of humanitarian agencies makes the continuous migration of the people a serious decision without any thinking to be back one day especially after the disobedience of the ceasefire. “The coalition and Houthi forces now fighting for Hodeida have atrocious records abiding by the laws of war,” said Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. “The UN Security Council should urgently warn senior officials on both sides to provide

civilians access to desperately needed aid.” During the sit for the Hodeidah agreement, UAE informed all the humanitarian organisations to leave the city within three days. The United Nations and other humanitarian organisations send out many of their staff, but the UN aid chief, Mark Lowcock said, “It is our plan, intention and hope to stay and deliver.”

Around 120,000 more people have fled their homes in Hodeidah, bringing total displacement in 2019 so far to more than 300,000 people on top of the millions forced to flee in previous years. Houthis deal with the food aid the same as they deal with the people they arrest. They continue to divert and steal food assistance, including from the WFP by closing on it and preventing the civilians or to sell in the black market. They also delayed 1.1 million barrels of oil tankers in the seaport of Hodeidah that assessed by the United Nations up to being a threat to spill it in the Red sea. David Beasley, Executive Director of the World Food Program (WFP), partially suspended aid deliveries to Sana’a due to the redirection of shipments. On the crisis, he said that more than two-thirds of the country's population currently lives in a state of food insecurity and about to face famine. In addition to this, on the humanitarian situation, the representative of the Dominican Republic noted that 500,000 new cases of cholera have been reported this year and added saying “We cannot allow hunger to be turned into a weapon of war,” after he noticed that the agricultural lands are full of land mines and improvised explosive devices. The recent disease of Corona has also its way in the county but the records are not seriously taken. The only true thing is that the Corona Virus cases are in increase and strongly existed.

The NGOs contribution and aid

For the rescue purpose and the humanitarian needs in Yemen, there are many local and international organisations, big and small, old and fresh new ones, have been doing multiple works of aid for the civilians wishing to reduce the current humanitarian crisis. Under the airstrike inside the country, the organisation which work are as the following;

1. Yemen Hope and Relief

In this organisation, Ahmad Algothbary works on rescuing children suffering from severe malnutrition and famine. The families seek his help which he is ready to offer through the funds

he asks and the donations he advertises for. His helping program is to provide the home and transportation during the treatment of the children at nutrition clinics and that is only in the big cities Yemen,

2. MonaRelief

The aim of this organisation is to provide food for families by the funds collected from outsiders and some of the financially capable people. Fatik al-Rodaini is the concerned person who makes those well-organised and distributed for the families in need.

3. ICRC

This International Committee of the Red Cross is a well-organised operation in the country. Its programs are to deliver food, clean water, and essential household items to needy families. ICRC reached 4 million people with basic aid. This organisation has well-working sides covering all sides of the conflict.

4. International Rescue Committee

Lifesaving emergency aid is aimed to be provided. Clean water and medical care are planned to reach millions of people in Yemen who are affected by violent conflict and a growing health crisis.

5. Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

The NRC works to respond to the emergency needs in the country in many cities by providing communities with services, resources, and information that enable self-sufficiency and dignity. Sometimes the NRC gives a kind of cash aid program distributed for the very needy people to make them able to buy their own basic needs and stand in their lives.

6. Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation

It is based in Washington State, the USA works to providing help and support to Yemeni families in desperate need. It works through a network of local volunteers from inside the country who are all focused on the goal to reach out to the needy families in urban areas, villages and refugee camps as well.

7. UNICEF

UNICEF in collaboration with local authorities and non-governmental organisations is working in all cities of Yemen for the goal of filling and responding to the needs of children by providing food, shelter, education and health facilities. It helps children to stand in their lives, survive and grow to their full potentials.

8. Oxfam

Oxfam provides aid in both parts of Yemen. It has reached 1.4 million people across the frontlines since July 2015. The services given are like providing clean water and sanitation services by making and repairing water systems and building latrines as well. This organisation supports families with cash payments to buy food in the local market or livestock, and cash for work programs, so they get a possible source of income.

9. Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders)

The Doctors without Borders has 1,600 staff members across Yemen, including 82 staff members from abroad, working in 13 hospitals in the country and supporting 18 other hospitals as well. The organisation's medical workers have shored up Yemen's failed public health system and have been instrumental in combating the cholera epidemic that swept the country in 2017.

10. Yemen Aid

It is founded by a Yemeni American in New York. It provides assistance and resources to Yemeni people in order for a positive change, and ultimately save lives.

Advocacy groups that work to end the war in Yemen

Groups of the Yemeni national outside Yemen have been working on broadcasting talks about the disadvantages of war and the welcome of peace. The advocacy focuses on calling the political parties to a one-same- benefit that could help for the stop of the war. Many social activists connect their contact with foreign expert activists, journalists and donars to seek a positive push. Some of the advocacies are as the following:

1. Friends Committee on National Legislation

It lobbies Congress and the Trump administration to advance peace, justice, opportunity, and environmental management. It has done campaigns to urge the US to withdraw its support from Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen.

2. Mwatana Organisation for Human Rights

This group is placed in Sana'a, the capital city of Yemen. This group's programs are to defend and protect human rights. Furthermore, it conducts field investigations about human rights violations and stands against them. This advocacy group also works to provide support and justice for victims and to help craft legislation and policies which prevent such violations.

Yemen Peace Project

It is a US-based advocacy group that supports Yemeni individuals and organisations working to create positive change, defending the rights of the out of country scattered Yemenis, and rise up the understanding of Yemen in the wider world.

Conclusion

The big number of Yemeni migrations in the different periods of time in the history of the Arab peninsula started from the side of Yemen which was the potential centre of trade that has been linking the chain between the Asian countries, one of them is India, and all sides and places in the Arab peninsula. Yemen is the main road connection of all the trades and migration between the Mediterranean and the Far East through which spices, cotton, clothes, jewellery, and other goods come from India, China and the east coast of Africa to the Mediterranean. In ancient times people were using the camels. The products were brought on camels in exchange among the traders and countries and so Yemenis were in the normal chance of travel and migration. The playing part of the rule of Yemen's seaports in the trade between Europe, Africa, and Asia gives the chance of Yemen coffee to fly to many countries and exists its historical fame. During that period the Yemeni migrants had the chance to settle anywhere in the Arab Peninsula and open their markets. Another privilege was in the rule duration of the Mutawakkilite Kingdom from 1918 to 1962 in the northern part of Yemen. The Yemeni passport holder was able to travel all over the world as was written in it. The wars in Yemen end all kinds of privilege especially the current war of Huthis. The Yemenis are highly in need of humanitarian aids and rescue from different fatal diseases and death. The Yemeni migration level from 2015 till today has been marking in the UN. The UNHCR and other big world international organisations are recording the Yemeni people migration and Asylum issues stating that Yemen is facing fatal destruction and death and the current war if it keeps going on, it may lead to the end of the country in all kinds of life hopes.

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MOVIE ANALYSIS: THE LAST SAMURAI. EVOLUTION INTO ONE HUMAN CULTURE

Lou Lauren Manalo

In this world, it is biologically impossible for someone to have the same brain or mind. With everyone being born different, why then are differences between each other seen as a bad thing and in terms of superiority over another? Is it not that being different is normal and babies all come out of their mother's womb with no labels of superiority? Yet, many wars have been fought between religions, cultures, and nations over the years due to ideological differences. Cultures and civilisations clash in rejection of such diversity, and many are killed in the process.

The battle of cultures have always been present throughout history. Many cultures die out, and generations are continuously put in a situation wherein adaptation of Western values and culture is seen as the best way to increase "fitness" and not get left behind. This negotiation of one's own identity is a constant struggle that everyone faces in the midst of increased globalisation and interconnectedness in the world. In Director Edward Zwick's movie *The Last Samurai* (2003), Captain Nathan Algren, an American military advisor played by Tom Cruise, learns to embrace the Samurai culture that he was hired to eliminate; consequently making him go against his own people to protect the Samurai culture. This phenomenon shows that increased exposure to another culture can actually increase tolerance – if not acceptance and adaptation – of another culture, and decrease the ethnocentric tendencies of an individual.

The Samurai, in Japanese, mean "to serve." Samurai are, therefore, warriors of Japan who serve their lords with unwavering loyalty, self-discipline, and honour. These warriors use martial arts and antiquated weapons – such as swords, spears, and bows and arrows. Through their military strength, the Samurai made up the ruling class of the Japanese Edo Period between 1603 to 1867. This culture eventually declined in the beginning of the Meiji Restoration Period in 1868 when the Japanese government stabilised through strides toward modernisation and away from feudalism.

Based on this historical period, the movie depicts the battle between the Japanese Imperial Army and the Samurai rebels. It shows how the Meiji Emperor was welcoming in foreign

traders to increase progress in the nation, while the Samurai were resistant to the change due to their belief that the Japanese businessmen were manipulating the Emperor to open trade to foreigners for their own capitalist interests. In effect, the Samurai revolted in “service” to the Emperor.

Cultural death or evolution?

The conflict within the film was not *between* nations but *within* the nation. Japanese men were basically fighting against each other. According to British historian Arnold Toynbee (1988), this loss of social unity in the society can lead to the fall of a civilisation. As can be seen in the movie, the Samurai culture did die out when it lost the war. It is important to note though that the Samurai culture did not actually reach the point of civilisation despite being empowered for several centuries since conflict between clans in the historically feudal eras prevented the culture from thriving and creating a central political system. Hence, the culture was, in a way, destined to die.

Similar to human development, cultures also have a lifespan. Cultures, according to German historian Oswald Spengler (2006), go through several stages: birth, growth, maturity, decline, and eventual death. The Samurai culture traces its origins to the Heian Period from 794 AD to 1185 when it was necessary for wealthy landowners to hire warriors for protection against other independent and powerful landowning clans in the feudal settings of Japan. The importance of this culture grew, as landowner Minamoto Yoritomo won supremacy over the whole country and established a military government in 1192. Since then, the Samurai culture reached its peak in its life cycle and ruled Japan for over 700 years. It was only until the Edo Period between 1603 to 1868 when there was a period of peace for approximately 250 years that the Samurai culture reached the decline phase since the necessity for such martial arts skills declined. As the film demonstrates, Japan’s Samurai culture eventually came to an end, following the defeat of the Samurai in the Battle of Shiroyama in 1877.

This inevitable death of the culture, however, does not imply that everything about that culture will be lost in history. Culture is constantly undergoing a process of evolution by which it adapts according to the challenges that it faces. As historically accurate as the death of the culture is in the movie, what was inaccurate was how the Samurai’s last battle, the Battle of Shiroyama, was depicted. In the movie, the Samurai rebels carried their antiquated weapons until the end.

However, *War History Online* presents historical illustrations of the Samurai using modern weapons and Western uniforms instead of the traditional *katana* sword and Samurai armor. Although the movie failed to show the Samurai's adaptation of Western cultural objects during the battle, it did show that the Samurai people decided to fight the battle until the very end – instead of killing themselves due to the tradition of preserving their honor through suicide. The Samurai people were thus not inalterable people who could not see that their ways were outdated; they knew that they needed to adapt another culture to face the challenge.

To illustrate this evolutionary process even further, the movie provides hints to how the Samurai culture adapted the dominant Western culture and acquired Western values and objects. Mr. Omura, a Samurai and one of the Emperor's advisors in the film, was filled with optimism regarding Western values; thus, making him want to emulate the West's economic progress. With this aim, he advised the Emperor to open trade to other nations and build a strong army with Western military weaponry.

Omura, along with Japanese imperial soldiers, also abandoned the Samurai or Japanese fashion in favor of Western clothing. As a cultural object, fashion has more implications than simply a sense of style. In the book *Culture in the Vanity Bag*, it is written that “[clothing] is part of the national personality, it is one expression among others of a distinctive culture. Therefore no one can change his clothes until there has been, in part or whole, a transfer of cultural allegiance” (Chaudhuri, 1976, p.73). The adoption of another culture's fashion, therefore, denotes cultural allegiance or basically the submission of one culture to the authority of another. In the movie, Captain Algren was a prime example of how adopting another culture's fashion eventually became synonymous to submitting to that culture. After becoming a hostage of the Samurai after the first battle, Algren was placed in an inferior status to his captors. Eventually, he started using the Samurai fashion to assimilate with the group.

This acculturation or merging of different cultural values and objects is something every culture must be open to do if it wants to thrive despite modernisation pressures. Since people do not live in a world isolated from other cultures, foreign influences cannot be avoided and remaining open to welcome changes in one's own culture is not necessarily bad. In the film and in history, the Samurai were rebelling due to their fear of change. They felt that foreign influences were invading the Japanese culture and threatening their concept of “identity”. American sociologist George Herbert Mead states in his symbolic interaction theory that there could not be a self-concept simply by itself (Wood, 1997). People constantly renegotiate their collective and

individual identity through social interaction and enculturation. Hence, the so-called “collective identity” that the Samurai were trying so hard to protect from foreign influences had actually already undergone change through the course of its development – whether they remember it be so or not.

Samurai culture: an evolution of different religious ideas

The Samurai may have forgotten, but their very code of honor is a prime example of merging several different ideologies into one. The code of *bushido*, which the Samurai faithfully follow, is actually a combination of three different Eastern ethical religions: Shintoism, Confucianism, and Zen Buddhism.

The Shinto beliefs and devotion to rituals is reflected in the Samurai’s strong belief in tradition and dedication to fight for their homeland (Aoki, 1974). The film portrays this belief and dedication several times. For example, the movie’s Samurai chief Katsumoto Moritsugu held a lot of traditional values – such as accepting his fate and place in life, being religious, and exhibiting patriarchal leadership. In many instances, Katsumoto expressed to Algren that he was willing to die if it was his destiny to die while fighting. Algren would also see Katsumoto praying in the temple various times. Aside from those instances, the Samurai culture was portrayed to be highly patriarchal since Katsumoto as a male leader had the authority to order his sister-in-law to care for Algren even if it was Algren who killed her husband. The Samurai’s strong belief in traditional values and in fighting for one’s homeland is in essence rooted from Shintoism.

Meanwhile, Confucianism’s emphasis in unfaltering respect for authority have made the Samurai’s loyalty to superiors unwavering (Friday, 1994). In the film, viewers can see how Katsumoto continues to respect the Emperor’s wishes. Others may argue that the Samurai rebellion is not in the interest of the Emperor and, therefore, contrary to this belief that Samurai have unquestionable loyalty. However, Katsumoto and his group actually regard the rebellion as “service” to the Emperor who they believe is slightly misguided. In fact, Katsumoto demonstrates this loyalty by saying that he will gladly lay down his sword or die if the Emperor orders him to do so. The Samurai also practice *seppuku*, which is a practice influenced by Confucianism; this consists of committing ritual suicide through disembowelment if the person would bring dishonor to himself, his father, or his lord in any way (Daily History, n.d.). The

movie's use of the concept of "shame of defeat" to explain the beheading of a Samurai after the initial battle clearly shows evidence of this Confucian-rooted practice in use.

This suicidal act in relation to shame is, according to the Samurai, a way to preserve one's honor. For the Samurai, honor is the core of their collective identity, and thus they would willingly risk their lives to defend it (Ikegami, 2003). In other words, they would rather choose death instead of having to admit shame and submit to their enemies. This belief was demonstrated numerous times through Katsumoto's willingness to commit suicide in the face of defeat.

Furthermore, Samurai values and traditions can also be traced in Zen Buddhism. This Buddhist sect's emphasis on meditation can be seen in the movie through Katsumoto's daily rituals of meditation atop a mountain or in temples. Zen Buddhism also shares the ideas of *samsara* or the idea of continual rebirths and *karma*. (Eisai, 2004) This ideology was embedded in the Samurai's code of *bushido*; thereby making them respect life and initiate only few atrocities in history. As shown in the movie, Samurai do not mistreat their enemies who they capture as hostages. When Algren was held captive by the Samurai, he was treated respectfully and taken care of. While other captors might prefer to kill Algren especially when he was rude in the beginning, the Samurai ate with him, let him walk freely without any chains, trained him in martial arts, and even engaged him in friendly conversation. The fear of *karma* has thus made the Samurai follow ethical pursuits.

The Samurai's mental module and culture are thus guided by three different religions all in one code of conduct: the *bushido*. Following this code, the Samurai fought with honor for their people and land, while respecting the social and political hierarchy in Japan and the lives of their enemies. This code – that dictated what the Samurai's collective identity should be composed of – is thus not homogenous, but not a bad combination for that matter. In creating this *bushido*, values from different religions mixed together in some sort of "melting pot" and the product of that mixture is a "collective identity". Recognising the dynamism of identity – especially in this increasingly interconnected world – should be key to lessening ethnocentrism and conflict, and finding value in what can be learnt through interaction with other cultures.

The challenge of ethnocentrism

Of course, it is not easy to just abandon one's self-concept. There will always be some dissonance in the face of change, and this resistance is a tough challenge to overcome due to the persistent exposure to ethnocentric modules.

In the beginning of the movie, Algren was hired to train Japanese soldiers to suppress the Samurai rebellion and turn Japan into a "civilised" nation. There were counter-concepts that the United States was a "civilised" culture, while other cultures – such as that of Japan and the Native Americans – were "uncivilised" and "savage". The progress that the "civilised" culture seemed to have in terms of military weapons and economic advantages further intensified this division to the point that the so-called "uncivilised" culture ends up wanting to imitate the Western culture at the cost of losing its own.

In his captivity and forced interaction with the Samurai culture, Algren was initially considered an "outsider". The Samurai people were nice due to their ethical principles, but in some way still unwelcoming. When Algren would pass by, parents would pull their children away as if Algren was some sort of bacteria that they should stay away from. As time passed, this mental module of ethnocentrism was altered; first, with the children. Since the children were young and still undergoing early phases of their social evolution, the counter-concept of "us versus them" was not as deeply ingrained in their minds as it was in the older generation. Hence, Algren started to play with the children first. Although the adults finally allowed him to do so, they were always watchful and wary. Eventually, the adults also warmed up to him and included him in their sparring activities.

For this group acceptance of Algren to have happened, Algren obviously needed to adjust his own mental module and way of behaving as to accommodate the other culture. At first, he had many questions and considered the Samurai values to be strange – such as beheading a group member and taking care of the one who killed one's lover all in name of the "shame of defeat". Katsumoto initially refused to answer Algren's questions unless Algren told him his name. After some time, Algren conceded. In his interaction with the one assigned to guard him, Algren kept trying to converse but the guard who he named "Bob" could not speak English and would not speak a word. Eventually, Algren tried to learn the captor's language and culture instead of expecting the Japanese Samurai to speak his language. Algren's actions illustrate that getting past a person's ethnocentric tendencies and integrating into a foreign culture are possible, but

compromise is needed to accommodate the other culture and find common grounds with which all can work with.

Conclusion

“No mind,” says Nobutada, the son of the Samurai chief in the movie, in his attempt to teach Algren the Samurai’s sword-fighting technique. Interestingly enough, this phrase that calls for an individual to empty one’s mind is not only useful in sword-fighting but also in how someone should approach a person from another culture. By emptying his mind, Algren was able to see things more clearly and anticipate his opponent’s moves. Similarly, if individuals empty their mind from all the prejudices that were engrained in them since childhood, then they can see a person based on who he/she is rather than the cultural or religious differences that define and differentiate them. After all, people are all essentially just human beings outside of their social evolution and all different from one another. Eliminating the ethnocentric syndrome is thus possible through increased intercultural awareness and an open mind to interact with each other as one collective identity – as human beings – and not through counter-concepts of “us versus them”.

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HISTORICAL COMPARISM OF POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA UNDER MANDELA AND NIGERIA'S POST-INDEPENDENCE SOCIO-ECONOMIC POLICIES: THE MANDELA LESSONS FOR NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria and South Africa are often described as the two major powers in Africa, with each dictating the pace of socio-economic and political activities of their various sub regions. However, with the role played by Nigeria in the liberation of South Africa from the minority White rule especially as it relates to land policy and use, it would have been expected that Nigeria's policy on Land (having also experienced almost similar land policy under the power of imperial Britain, especially as it relates to the poor and peasants) would have been such that would empower them. Unfortunately, while Nigeria (since independence) have continued to suffocate the peasants and poor under the compulsory acquisition of land without compensation, the post- apartheid South Africa especially under Mandela, continue to fight for the restoration of the peasants rights back. The research which is a basically a comparative analysis between the two countries, with the aim of establishing some lessons Nigeria could learn from Mandela's post-apartheid South Africa, is thus an attempt at examining how and why the situation has developed as well as possible solution to this growing threat. The qualitative method is used for this particular research. Data obtained from primary and secondary sources were deployed to carry out the study with an analytical and narrative historical approach. This includes historical, descriptive and analytical approaches based on gathered evidence. The primary source for this research is based on field investigations conducted in the area and surrounding territories. Among other things, the data collection process includes semi-structured interviews with individuals. The research also uses historical documents from the national archives, relying on previous research conducted on issues relating to socio-economic policies in Nigeria and South Africa during the period under study in addition to documentary data taken from newspaper accounts, diaries, letters and verbal reports.

Key words: apartheid, Nigeria, South Africa, independence, socioeconomic policies

Introduction

A comparative analysis of the history of both Nigeria and South Africa, clearly shows that both countries suffered almost similar socio-political and economic fate under British Imperial rule (colonialism) and White minority rule (apartheid). As in the case of South Africa, where apartheid denied the Blacks land in favour of the minority White population Colonialism in Nigeria also took possession of the land and other resources of the people, putting it at the disposal of the crown.

In the case of Nigeria, it has been argued that when British conquered the pre-colonial polities of Nigeria, it made show it took absolute control of her land and mineral resources. This was made clear in the first official British land policy statement made on 1st January, 1900, in which the representative of Her Royal Majesty in Nigeria, Lord Fredrich Lugard declared that all the land bought previously by the Royal Niger Company now becomes the property of the Queen (Adeleye, 1977). With this declaration, the crown took full control over the lands and other properties associated with it as the sovereign power. However, the first step of compulsory acquisition was further consolidated by the Acts that were to follow subsequently, starting with the Niger Lands Transfer Act no.2 of 1902 and with Native Rights Act of 1916 section 3. According to this provision, all native lands and all rights of the Nigeria were declared to be under the control and subject to the disposition of the Governor. On the issue of the resources on and below the land, the Minerals Act of 1916 section III, gave a clear definition of its ownership under the colonial system. The Act unequivocally provided thus:

“The entire property and control of all minerals and mineral oils, under, or, upon any land in Nigeria, and all rivers, streams and water courses throughout Nigeria is and shall be vested in the Crown.

It is important to state that the natives and their chief did accept this without resistance as they rightly refused to accept the claim of most of the Royal Niger treaties on the ground that such lands were leased, and not sold to the company. It was the application of threat and force that led to submission by the people. This was clearly stated out from the onset by Lugard, when he warned the chiefs in 1900 that;

“It is up to you to fulfil all your treaties and their stipulations with the Royal Niger Company to the Queen. If any one goes against such treaties and stipulations, the Queen will take it up with him as well also.” (Adeleye, 1977)

In the case of other parts of Africa (especially the south), a survey of history reveal that fact that the region had her own share of the bitter ordeal and in most cases even more brutal. For example, Alexander Fuller (2002), gave the account in Zimbabwe thus;

The 19th and 20th Centuries, saw Europeans more or less brutally seizing land from indigenous inhabitants...Hundreds of African men, women and children were displaced before and during Zimbabwean war for independence. African land was seized, huts were burned, cattle were taken, crops were destroyed, women and men were beaten and arrested. Of course there was resistance, most famously from the Tangwena people of the Inyanga area who had lived there for hundreds of years and who, were forcibly evicted to make way for European farmers-

However, in the case of Nigeria, all these were only reverted back to the people by 1960, when the country gained political independence from Imperial Britain. This aspect has also been emphasised by scholars, who have argued that by the abolition of such Acts by 1960, the land in the country became the properties of the people, held in trust for them by the government of the Federation. Emphasising this, Usman and Abba, (2002, p.13), opined thus:

...This conception of the basis of Nigerian nation-state and of its democratic system, codified in the Constitution, is strengthened by the provision of the Land Use Act, entrenched by section 315 of the Constitution, which vests the ownership of all land in the Federal Republic of Nigeria in the people of Nigeria, as a whole, and not in any ethnic, or, religious community. It allows every Nigerian citizen, who collectively shares in the ownership of all land in Nigeria with all other Nigerian citizens, to individually acquire rights of occupancy in any part of the country, irrespective of any ethnic, regional, or, religious, origins and affinities.

South Africa under the apartheid regime

Scholars have argued that apartheid by its nature did a number of things; that apart from the dehumanising aspect, it also reduced the capability and productivity of the land. Under this system in South Africa, the Blacks were forced to depend sole and use already marginal land, resulting n overcrowding, resource scarcity, decreased in the amount of available labour to help support farms and townships, as well as created widespread poverty (Durning, 1990). Under the system as it affected the Blacks, the areas chosen to become the Homelands were in part

based on the Land Act of 1913, in which (apart from the fact that the Black areas were already on marginal lands), the borders of the Homelands were drawn with care not to include natural resources, valuable mines, lakes and rivers. The original territory of the KwaZulu tribe likely stretched from the coast of the ocean across the Natal state, but the KwaZulu Homeland was a patchwork of loosely connected geographical locations that purposely exclude any land or infrastructure of value (Durning, 1990). For clarity, the area referred to as Marginal lands are lands that have a thin topsoil and are not resistant to erosion. In its natural state the land is stable and could support the local wildlife, but at the slightest disturbance these lands degrade very quickly. Furthermore marginal lands are rocky and have uneven terrain, making farming difficult and the soil itself devoid of nutrients. It is also typical of these areas to receive less precipitation than normal (Durning, 1990). The lands allocated to the Blacks were poor in substance to begin with but Black farmers had no choice, they had to cultivate and attempt to tame the land if they were to survive and support their families.

Apartheid and selected poverty/hardship of the Blacks

The apartheid policy of forcibly migrating millions of Blacks to the homelands began after the Promotion of Black Self-Government Act in 1958. The influx of new and poor residents into the KwaZulu homeland strained it to the brink. Thus by the early 1990s more than half of the country's majority Black population (around 16 million people) which represented 37% of South Africa's total population was forced to live on 13% of its most marginal, least productive land, and they could not leave (Durning, 1990). The population density in these areas easily reached 10 times the population density of White areas (Percival & Homer-Dixon, 1998), and the heavy pace of human traffic, large footprint of waste, and the increased efforts of subsistence farmers to improve their crop yield by overexerting their land caused the already unproductive lands to degrade even further. It was estimated in 1990 that South Africa has irretrievably lost 25% of its topsoil and 55% of the country is under threat of desertification. This results in an annual loss of more than 400 million tons of soil per year (Percival & Homer-Dixon 1998). Overcrowding seriously taxes the infrastructure of a city or urban area and results in a mismatch of service and food supply to the demand. One particular case was the lack of adequate electricity to the homes of the Black Homelands so families would cut down nearby forests in order heat their homes or cook meals. This resulted in widespread deforestation, and

a lack of trees loosens the soil enough to be more easily blown away by the wind or washed away in floods, increasing soil erosion.

The situation and the inability of this land to sustain life led to a situation in which Black homelands suffered from a lack of labour, as the highest percentage of employable Black youths had to move away from home to work in the White-owned cities, mines and factories as low-level wage earners. This they did to be able to cater for their daily needs as well as those of their dependants and since there was not enough work for them to stay in the Black Homelands they had to sell their labour for peanuts. It should be noted that this was not accidentally as it reflected the true design of apartheid policies, which was tailored in such a way to guarantee a steady flow of cheap labour as long as the Black Homelands were kept economically dependent on the Republic of South Africa (Percival & Homer-Dixon, 1998). South Africa would also not have to worry about passing any type of minimum wage laws or legal rights to the workers because they were not technically South African citizens. The lack of labour in the KwaZulu Homeland meant that there was no opportunity for domestic businesses to start or for Black farmers to get help making their fields more economical and environmentally sustainable. (Durning, 1990). In a more graphical form, Durning (1990), described the situation thus;

This leeching of the labour force and the inability of KwaZulu Natal to become economically independent enabled extreme poverty to grip the lives of all the Black residents of KwaZulu-Natal. The intense poverty barred young Blacks from attending school in order to go to work in South Africa for less than \$100 per month. Over 50% of the Black population was illiterate, compared to a 99% rate of "White literacy. This not only relegated them permanently to doing cheap manual labour but prohibited them from using educational resources and tools to manage their lands better. With only \$150 of disposable income per year, the average Black farmer could not afford to rotate crops, fence in grazing areas, terrace fields to slope properly, or plant trees to prevent wind erosion. The Homeland government was also so cash-strapped that it could not offer any assistance to help prevent land degradation, eventually all of the homelands reported a steady loss of crop yield year after year. In the Homeland of Bophuthatswana, the crop yields decreased since the 1940's from 110kg of maize and sorghum per person to 50kg per person in the 1970's. In KwaZulu-Natal the situation was undoubtedly worse due to pre-existing erosion and a higher population density than Bophuthatswana.

Nigeria and the struggle to end apartheid in South Africa

At independence, Nigeria maintained as her foreign policy, the role of playing a big brother in relations with African states. It was this in mind that led to her involvement as a founding member of the OAU and often channelled major policy initiatives through that organisation. It was therefore in line with this that the country saw as her primary commitment to liberate the continent from the last vestiges of colonialism and to eradicate apartheid in South Africa. This commitment was pursued most actively after Murtala Muhammad successfully backed the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola's ascent to power in Angola in 1975 by providing the swing vote in the OAU decision to recognise the MPLA. Nigeria had played a role in the independence of Zimbabwe and in the late 1980s was active in assisting Namibia to achieve independence of Namibia. In the latter case, it contributed about US\$20 million to assist the South West Africa People's Organisation in the 1989 elections and other preparations for Namibian independence. To make sure that South Africa was liberated from the shackles of apartheid, Nigeria contributed financially to liberation movements in South Africa and to the front line states of Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, which were constantly harassed by South Africa. Threats to fight for southern African liberation were made but not acted on, but Nigeria did give military and financial aid to the African National Congress for its efforts against the apartheid regime in South Africa and provided military equipment to Mozambique to help its struggle South African-backed guerrillas (CIA World Fact Book).

In more specific terms, the regime of Murtala-Obasanjo, being in the frontline for the realisation of freedom and total fundamental liberties of South Africa and ending in the area had to nationalised the local operations of Barclays Bank in Nigeria, after that bank ignored the strong protests by Nigeria, advising it, not to buy the South African government bond, which would be in violation of the economic/trade embargo on the racist South African regime. Similarly, the administration nationalised the British Petroleum (BP) for supplying oil to South Africa. Also, to help South Africa gain independence, Nigeria led a boycott of the 1978 Games in protest of New Zealand's sporting contacts with apartheid South Africa, and 32 of 59 nations from Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean joined a Nigeria led boycott of the 1986 Commonwealth Games due to the Thatcher government's attitude towards South African. Nigeria, a member of the common wealth mobilised its diplomatic influence, and led majority of the common wealth countries to boycott these common wealth games as a show of solidarity to South Africa and to send a message to the White country members in the common wealth and in the world generally, that it truly stood for a liberated South Africa. Nigeria is also

reputed to have provided secret military training at the Kaduna first mechanised army division and provided other material, financial and diplomatic support to African National Congress guerrilla forces. (Okoson, n.d.) In an attempt to give a picture of this role, Okoson (n.d.), argued thus

South Africa is a country, whose people would still have been struggling to eke out a meager existence in the Black waters of their own country, had Nigeria not embolden herself and flex her muscles to rescue brother and sister Africans, who were deluged with oppression and humiliation in the southernmost tip of the motherland continent.

On the level of commitment the Nigerian people and government to bring an end to apartheid in South Africa, Obasanjo in 2012 at a Banquet dinner held in his honour by the South African chapter of the Nigerian in Diaspora Organisation (NIDO), publicly declared thus;

“Nigerian government donated about N25 million towards the liberation struggles in the Southern African Region, and Nigerian civil servants were made to voluntarily donate five per cent of their salaries to the South African Relief Fund, ...After the Soweto massacre of 1976, the ANC decided to take some young Black South African out of the country to get education...Nigeria had a huge number of those Soweto boys educated in various Nigerian educational institutions; most of those Soweto boys are today university professors and top government and ANC officials.(Vanguard, 2012)

The Mandela legacy and South Africa

The journey into Independent South Africa, was one in which the new administration had in front of it a huge disparity in wealth and services between White and Black communities. This was because out of a population of 40 million, around 23 million lacked electricity or adequate sanitation, 12 million lacked clean water supplies, with 2 million children not in school and a third of the population illiterate. There was 33% unemployment, and just under half of the population lived below the poverty line (Meredith, 2010). Government financial reserves were nearly depleted, with a fifth of the national budget being spent on debt repayment, meaning that the extent of the promised Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was scaled back, with none of the proposed nationalisation or job creation. It was as a way of tackling this and making reality of the promise of liberation that the administration of Mandela devoted more

time to the welfare of the people. To achieve this, the administration increased welfare spending, such that by 1996/97, it was 13%, and 1997/98, 13%, and 7% in 1998/99 (Houston and Yvonne, 2000). It also embarked on parity in grants for communities, including disability grants, child maintenance grants, and old-age pensions, which had previously been set at different levels for South Africa's different racial groups (Houston and Yvonne, 2000:37-68). By 1994, it focus on provision of free healthcare which targeted children under six and pregnant women, and was made accessible to all those using primary level public sector health care services in 1996. Going by this pace and dedication, within a span of less than a decade, the administration, was able to provide over 3 million people access to telephone lines, while over 1.5 million children were brought into the education system. Also within this period over 500 clinics were upgraded or constructed, while about 2 million people were connected to the electricity grid, and another 3 million provided with potable water. In the area of accommodation and housing, the administration achieved the construction of over 750,000 houses for nearly 3 million people (Meredith, 2010).

One of the major issues under the apartheid government as it affected the Blacks was the land issue. However, with the establishment of Land Restitution Act of 1994, those who became victim of the notorious Native Land Acts of 1913, which dislodged them of their property, were empowered to claim back their land, thus leading to the settlement of tens of thousands of land claims. It also went on to enact The Land Reform Act 3 of 1996, which safeguarded the rights of labour tenants who live and grow crops or graze livestock on farms. This legislation ensured that such tenants could not be evicted without a court order or if they were over the age of sixty-five. In the area of employment and skill acquisition, the administration's Skills Development Act of 1998 provided for the establishment of mechanisms to finance and promote skills development at the workplace; while the Labour Relations Act of 1995 promoted workplace democracy, orderly collective bargaining, and the effective resolution of labour disputes. Similarly, the enactment of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997 improved enforcement mechanisms while extending a "floor" of rights to all workers; while the Employment Equity Act of 1998 was passed to put an end to unfair discrimination and ensure the implementation of affirmative action in the workplace. (Houston and Yvonne, 2000; Meredith, 2010)

This success of the administration in the above was clearly acknowledged by the Central Witwatersrand Metropolitan Chamber (1993), thus;

One of the issues that becomes clear from the outset when examining land management in South Africa is the vast array of land use management and planning legislation. At the national level, there is an uninviting range of policy that has come to pass over the last 14 years. The wide variety of Acts include the tenets of the Constitution and its requirements and obligations regarding housing, land, property, and the principles of social justice; the Development Facilitation Act of 1995; the Housing Act (1997); Housing Code (2004); the Municipal Systems Act (2000); the various shades of papers from Green to White of Development and Spatial Planning (2001); and the Land Use Management Bill (2006). Each of which purports the noblest of intentions: to create urban areas that dispel and rid cities of apartheid's segregated planning ideals, and reconstruct cities of integration and equal economic and social opportunity.

Although some analysts have argued that the program have not been able to achieve hundred percent success, however the point is that the government realising the importance of land to the survival of any people, have set the ball rolling for redistribution.

Nigeria, liberating South Africa and entrenching apartheid: a contradiction

Unlike the case of South Africa, were at the end of the apartheid regime, the government pursued vigorously the policy of popular land usage and employment, After independence the Nigerian state actively promoted the development of both domestic and foreign capitalism, and in the process had promoted the transfer of resources from rural to urban areas, from the poor to the rich and from Nigerians to foreigners. (Williams, 1980; Toyo, n.d.; Olorode, 1987; Olorode, 1987) This is very much obvious in the various government policies and the way some of these government officials divert public funds and resources to the developed world. Peasant production in the agricultural economy had “produced the wealth of the nation but only by the impoverishment of the people. (Williams, 1980) In the opinion of Irele (1981) the colonial departure from the scene was not really a departure.

Immediately after independence, the nation went into the crises of political actors and their acolytes, who were pursuing ethnic power agenda; however, the 1970s and 80s, lands and other aids of a solid agricultural economy has been the large-scale confiscation of land from the peasantry and its allocation to foreign transnational and local Nigerian retired and serving public officers, who paraded the corridors of power. This was done on the excuse that the peasant had failed to produce enough food and raw materials for local consumption and for the

industries. The rule elite and their comrade-in-arm have also argued that the peasant has failed to evolve new techniques of modern production in such a manner as to integrate agriculture with industry and thus provide jobs to an ever expanding army of reserve labourers. On the basis of these reasons, the Nigerian state made conditions favourable for big business to acquire large tracts of land in order to overcome the alleged pitfalls of the peasantry. (Alkali, 1985; Andre & B. Beckman, 1985). In support of this view, Nnoli (n.d.) wrote;

The poor in Nigeria are neglected, oppressed and humiliated in more ways than one. In addition to their degradation in the spheres of political decision-making and the distribution of the wealth of the nation, their contribution to national progress is inhumanly suppressed. The impression is given that the achievements of Nigeria are the handiwork of isolated leaders and groups, the influential members of the society, the rich, educated and politically powerful members of the society. Alternatively, pride of place is given to non-human forces such as capital, technology and managerial know-how. The positive role of the poor is neglected. There are no national heroes among them. No monuments are built in their name; and no streets are named after them. They do not feature in press conferences and the numerous current affairs discussions of the mass media. It is generally assumed that the history, politics and economics of Nigeria can be understood without examining the views, conditions and activities of the poor majority of the country. In most cases the political activities of the poor are presented in a simplistic and superficial way as characterised by apathy, resistance to innovation and, therefore, against the grain of historical progress. In addition, they are presumed to be submissive to antiquated, outmoded and even anachronistic institutions; suspicious toward all and sundry; and politically negative, atavistic, anarchic, and largely embodying the dark and ugly sides of humanity.

In line with the above, Alkali (1985), argued that the state in neo-colonial countries in general and Nigeria in particular have played a great role in the oppression of the poor. In the case of Nigeria through their policy, they play the role of further impoverishing the peasants through the stealing of their land. This they have been able to achieve in collaboration with selected traditional rulers, who they installed for the purpose of perpetuating evil (Okello, 1987). This not only result in impoverishing the poor, perpetuate inequality, but has further led in the process of agricultural underdevelopment by promoting policies that entrench distortions within the system of land ownership and production process.

To achieve the above, they have devised different ways of entrenching the land apartheid system in post independent Nigeria. This is because the land question (i.e. land ownership,

distribution and usage as determined by the state) is of utmost importance in recent times especially the processes by which the peasantry is systematically being dispossessed of this important means of production. It is important to note that the processes of land confiscation in recent times against the ordinary folk in the country are of the types. The first has been a process whereby acquisitions are made by the state itself, that is, local, state and federal governments for various projects and programmes such as the Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs), and infrastructural construction. Once this is done, the original land owners are either poorly paid in the name of compensation or left uncared for, since according to those in-charge, it is for national development. This is clearly brought out by the extensive quotation below:

...one of the salient features of the post-colonial state was its unflinching commitment to the creation of a local capitalist's class. Precisely arising from this and in response to monopoly capitalist pressures this class relies on a combination of primitive and 'modern' forms of accumulation in their struggle to establish roots in the economy. Historically speaking therefore, in the early 1960s the state was more active in defence of the comprador class; the import-export magnets; commission agents; Licensed Buying Agents (LBAs) and other intermediaries who were constantly in alliance with and depended on foreign multinational corporations... In the period since 1973, the state through a number of programmes and policies provided bases and conditions for the emergence of a small but powerful agrarian bourgeoisie. These included the establishment of the Nigerian Agricultural and Co-operative bank in 1973; the launching of the Operation Feed the nation (OFN) in 1976 and the subsequent enactment of the Land Use Decree in 1977. In 1978, the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme Fund (ACVGSF) was created under the Central bank. This was immediately followed in 1979 with the preparations for launching the Green Revolution Programme. All these serve to open up the agricultural economy for eventually take-over by capital, both foreign Agribusiness and local comrade –in-arm farmers.

The second type of land confiscation from the peasantry has been a process whereby lands belonging to individual peasant families and communities are expropriated in favour of a large-scale private farmer or a company. Examples of this can be found everywhere in Nigeria-Lagos, Abuja, Niger Delta, Bakalori among others. The traditional rulers and their agents play an active role in this process. This is because the traditional rulers and their agents who are supposed to hold the land in trust for the community, give them out to the colonial firms without due consideration of the consequence of their actions on the economic life of the people.

Presently, larger numbers of Nigerian peasants are systematically being deprived of land, which would, undoubtedly, result in great land hunger in view of the rapidly expanding population in the country. As a matter of emphasis vast chunks of land are today under the direct ownership of transnational corporations, local Nigerian agents and retired and serving public officers. The process has further aggravated the already acute inequalities in the distribution of land and property relations. Thus, through direct state policies the bourgeois regimes in Nigeria, especially in the 1970 and 1980s, have made possible the rapid transfer of wealth and resources from the poor to the rich thereby exacerbating the underdevelopment of the vast majority of the people, a process whose social implications are grave; and which pose serious threats to political and social stability and progress within the context of regimes that uphold the capitalist system even though it has been shown that the system could ultimately only lead to great soil explosions.

A good illustration of the above is the Bakalori land seizure by the government and the attendant crushing of the peasants in April 1980. This land which was naturally blessed with abundant water stretching for a long kilometre range and the only source of livelihood for the dominantly arid area, was compulsorily acquired by the Federal Military Government. When the land of these peasants were taken over by the authority, it was said that it was meant for the building of Bakolori Irrigation Project through the Sokoto Rima Basin Development Authority (SRRBDA), at the cost of N200 million. This was done with the promise that the villagers of Bakalori (which was then in Talata Mafara Local Government area of Sokoto state), would be adequately compensated with about N3.5 million as early as 1978. However, when the peasants did not receive any compensation and dare to ask for such, wanting to claim the compensation as they began to sense some abnormalities in the distribution, which was tilted in favour of those close to the government, they were crushed using Federal Might. Thus In the early hours of April 26th, 1980, when the villagers were still on their beds, armed anti-riot policemen invaded the villages, sealed off the area and ransacked the whole area, opening fire indiscriminately killing as many of the villagers as they wished including children. Those who were lucky to escape death were arrested. This military action continued throughout April 26th and lasted till April 27th. At the end of the operation, both the dead and the injured were transported to the Talata Mafara and Gusau General hospitals. But almost immediately, the state Ministry of Health issued a directive to the hospitals instruction them to mass bury the dead bodies, if possible within the hospital premises, while those bodies found to be decomposing (some bodies were discovered several days later) should be buried on the spots they were discovered.

The purpose of such a directive obviously was to make sure nobody or organisation (particularly the press) knew the actual number of the villagers who died as a result of the police shooting. Unfortunately, this did not achieve a hundred per cent success. (Usman, 1982). This act by the government, led to the massive dislocation of the peasantry from their settlements and farm lands, also caused the people a lot of hardships, because they never got the promised compensation for the land and at the same time lost their properties. (Abba A et al, 1985, p.31) Okello (1982), posited that at the end of the government action, it was established that a total of 386 people died as a result of the raid. Despite the money spent on the land and the blood of the peasants and their families shed, nothing meaningful came out of the exercise, rather at the end of the day, the land allocated for the project went to the project officials and rich absentee farmers, with the bulk of the land worked by the project itself, in form of inefficient estate farming (Okello, 1982). Beckman, 1985 whose figure seems slightly highly gave his account thus;

The situation was worse in the Bakalori incident of 1980. As a result of N200 million irrigation project financed by the Federal Government in the Sokoto area of Bakalori, the original small farmers of the area faced the prospects of being displaced by absentee farmers made up of bankers, civil servants, military personnel and other elements of the rich classes. On April 26, 1980, over five thousand poor peasants took direct action to stop work on the project. In reprisal the Government engaged the farmers in a three-day battle that left an estimated one thousand peasants dead or wounded. Other peasant communities did not rally to the aid of their class comrades. The Bakalori peasants were isolated and crushed.

In his analysis of the condition of the peasant, Nnoli (nd), with specific reference to the Bakalori crushing posited thus;

Although the Nigerian small peasant does not confront an immediate social overlord and generally is not land-poor, he is implement-poor and hence often enters into unequal relations in cooperative production and other forms of relationships. In such relations surplus is transferred from him to richer farmers and money lenders. ...In addition to this exploitation of the small farmer in voluntary production and exchange relations he is also exploited by the Nigerian state through forced labour, as in the building of the railways and in the so-called community development projects; in their forced contribution to the funds of Marketing Boards and the various levies imposed by the state; and forced enclosures of his land as in the Bakalori, Hadeija and Kadawa irrigation schemes that paved the way for the penetration of capital to the adjoining countrysides.

The case of such compulsory acquisition did not stop with the Bakalori, as it gradually spread to other parts of the country. This was the case of Maroko, in which the people face forced eviction from their traditional and ancestral homes by Lagos State Government agents during the Administration of Raji Rasaki, on July 14, 1990 (for eleven days), when a fleet of about 30 heavy duty bulldozers began pulling down houses and crushing the roofs and walls till the buildings fell. The impact was that over 300,000 Lagosians of the Maroko Community were left homeless (Oputa Panel Report). The people were forced to leave the land and their homes, under the excuse that the land was not habitable as it was close to the sea. Shortly after the people had been evacuated, the powerful in the society began the sand-filling of the area at the public expense and parcelled out to the favoured and the well-connected. The evacuees were left to fend for themselves. Today, Maroko, re-named Victoria Island Extension to erase its ghastly history from memory, stands as one of the more opulent neighbourhoods in Nigeria, a monument to the dispossession of the disconnected for the benefit of the privileged (Dare, 2012). Closely related to the case of Maroko, is the evacuation of the Makoko area, a fishing community in Lagos. The settlement which is an ancient one lacked infrastructure and instead of providing such for the people and making the place habitable, the government gave the people 72 hours to vacate the area (Gbenro, 2012).

Similarly, it has been established that a large chunk of the land on which the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja is located was also acquired through such means, from the indigenous Gbagyi (Gwari) people. The indigenes accuse the government of forceful demolition of their homes, farmlands and communities, including haphazard relocations and land-grab by government officials and wealthy land speculators, without compensation (Omoniyi, 2012). In the case of Abuja, the situation is slightly different as it was acquired for the building of the Federal Capital, however, the use to which some of such lands have been deployed have made it one that brings out the situation of taking from the peasants to give to the rich. This is because most of the land space have been cornered for private usage, thus creating another Elite territory from the property of the poor. This is clearly demonstrated in the table below, which shows how land allocated for the building of schools were converted to illegal use in Phase I, Abuja as far back as 2003

Table: Diverted Land in Nigeria's Federal Capital, 2003.

s/no	Plot no.	Cadastral Zone	Original Plan	Current Usage	Allottee	Stage of Development
1	598	Central Area	Night School	Hotel	Private	Completed
2	749	AI, Garki	Primary School	Housing Estate	Private	60% completed
3	307	A3, Garki II	Primary School	Residential	Private	Developed
4	501	A3, Garki II	Primary School	Residential	Private	Developed
5	582	A3, Garki	Primary School	NUJ Secretariat	Government	
6	663/4	A3, Garki	Polytechnic	Residential	Private	Partially Developed
7	55	A3, Garki II	Police Training School	Residential	Private	Partially Developed
8	556	A2 Wuse I	Secondary School	Wuse Market	Government	Completed
9	892	A2 Wuse	Primary School	ERC	Government	Completed
10	1035	A6 Maitama	Primary School	Housing Estate	Private	Developed
11	1238	A6 Maitama	Primary School	Housing Estate and Primary School	Private	Developed
12	1501	A6 Maitama	Primary School	School and Residential	Private	Developed
13	1685	A6 Maitama	Secondary School	Housing Estate	Private	Developed
14	168	A7 Wuse II	Primary School	Mosque/Shop	Islamic Private	Partially Developed
15	273	Mabushi	Nursery School	Two Houses	Private	Developed
16	97	Kado	Religious Institution	Private Residence	Private AB583	Developed
17	603	Katampe	Educational	Petrol Station	Misc. 9972	Not Developed
18	84	Katampe	Educational	Commercial	Misc.11529	Not Developed

Source: MFCT, Report of the Committee on the Demolition of Illegal Structures within the Federal Capital Territory, September 2003; Abba, A (2003), Saving the City of Abuja from Dirt, Faeces, Garbage and Disease, Analysis, Vol.3, No. 5, Nov-Dec, 2003, .

Most of these structures belong to highly placed government functionaries including heads of law enforcement agencies. Some of these people have resisted attempt to correct the anomalies by employing the police to beat up enforcement officials (Abba, 2003). While the government and other members of the ruling class are busy cornering the land for personal use, they

(government officials) have always hidden behind the ready excuse of adhering to the “Master Plan” in every demolition exercise embarked upon. This has adversely affected the Gbagyi indigenous people as the exercise leads to the demolition of their houses and uprooting from communities. There are also serial allegations by the authorities of corruption by the Gbagyi leadership, whom they accused of reselling properties allocated to them as compensation and subsequently returning to protest against the same government for maltreating them (Omoniyi, 2012). This allegation and counter allegation between the government and the ruling aristocrats confirm the collaboration between those in authority against the peasants. In his analysis of this situation, Abba (2003), opined thus;

this happens in Nigeria, because those that have been empowered by the law to control and manage public land violate every facet of the planning. Thus instead of judicious use of the land and investing public money to develop infrastructures, they devices a short cut by carving out plot in the more spacious Government Reservation areas to build additional houses, they encroach into Green Areas and other related spaces for public use.

The effect of this is that it is the peasants and other poor people in the society that bear the brunt of this. This is because they will have no means of survival, no space to build their houses and money to spend. In some other cases, land that was allocated for national agricultural projects were later reverted to personal agricultural land as was the case of the administration under the military in the late 1970s.

Implication for economic development

From the Political Economy point of view, no meaningful socio-economy development can take place when land which is the main means of production is alienated. This was the situation the Blacks faced under the apartheid regime, leading to a situation in which out of a population of 40 million, around 23 million lacked electricity or adequate sanitation, 12 million lacked clean water supplies, 2 million children not in school and a third of the population illiterate. There was 33% unemployment, and just under half of the population lived below the poverty line. This was largely because more than half of the country's majority Black population (around 16 million people) which represented 37% of South Africa's total population was forced to live on 13% of its most marginal, least productive land. This was what the Administration of Mandela realised and quickly upturned immediately in came into power. Ironically, the same Nigeria that fought for liberation of the Blacks and restoration of their lands have failed in this

direct. The immediate impact of the above, is that unlike the precolonial period when Agriculture was able to sustain the society, there is presently over dependence on oil. Ewegbemi (2014), described the Nigerian situation thus;

in short the lure of easy money without hard work which the new elites , the pen robbers in the civil service and their accomplices in the contracting business was just too attractive for anyone to want to go into farming. So as the old peasants died off with no one ready to replace them as everyone too to the cities in search of paid employment such as messengers in the office for those not educated beyond primary school, many Nigerians born after 1960 have lost touch and connection to the land, and it is now more convenient to sell off the farmlands to the rich elites who can turn them into buildings to rent to the ever- growing lumpen proletariat or turn them into saw-mills , anything that has nothing to do with feeding the people.

Also, the situation in Nigeria has led to a situation in which the country imports almost everything from food stuff down to industrial materials. Most of these food items that are imported are products that can be cultivated. However, since there is no incentive in farming, all the able bodied youths that would have supported that agricultural industry (like the Black youths in the days of apartheid) have found their ways into the cities, riding Okada for a living. Those that have not been able to fit into the motor bike (Okada) transport scheme and have also not found any suitable economic venture have become ready tools in the hands of politicians to perpetuate violence. The makeup of these groups are largely constituted by street boys such as petrol hawkers, motor park touts, and to some extent the “self-liberated” almajirai (in the case of northern Nigeria, while in the south, they are made up of school dropout and addicts). By nature of their exposure and the type of activities they partake in, a large chunk of this group are criminal in one way or the other. It is this criminal tendency in the youths that politicians find convenient for exploitation (Umar, 2003).

Finally, this has adversely affected the economy of the nation. This is because the over dependence on importation, does not build the economy rather it depletes the nation’s foreign reserve. Except for the recent rebounding of the nation’s economy, South Africa and Egypt has always been at the lead of Africa’s economic rating. According to world rating, Nigeria is ranked 30th (40th in 2005, 52nd in 2000) in the world in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at purchasing power parity as of 2012 and the third largest within Africa (behind South Africa and Egypt). Although it has been argued that by the recent rebound exercise, Nigeria is on track to potentially becoming one of the 20 largest economies in the world by 2020. This

has however been doubted by the people who argue that, it has not translated the good living among the large majority.

Conclusion

From the discourse, it has been made clear that although the Nigerian government fought seriously to liberate South Africa from the shackles of apartheid, however she continually perpetuate crime against the poor, the peasantry through the systematic denial of their means of livelihood. Thus while the post-apartheid South Africa under the leadership of Nelson Mandela continually fought for the rights of the poor through enactment of Acts that guaranteed their means of livelihood, the Nigerian state on the other hand in collaboration with her overseas partners in the name of Multinationals have continued to make the poor, poorer, These were besides the direct confiscation of produce, livestock and losses of land, which Nigeria's peasant producers ubiquitously suffered from during the colonial era (Tukur, 1976). This has been responsible for the violent uprising among various organised movements such as the Labour Movement, the youth movements, the peasants' movements and the movements of women. The paper is of the view that although the nation gained independence in 1960, the state economic policies still have elements of the colonial masters as expressed in victims of the brutal repression of both the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial forces starting from Bonny and Akasa in the 1880's, on the Plateau, at Iseyin and Sokoto early in the 20th century, in Aba in 1929, in the Iva valley in 1949 and across Nigeria since the mid-40s continued in the anti-SAP resistance of the 1980's, anti-military struggles from the late 1970s, Bakalori, Potiskum (1980s), forces of anti-democracy in the 1990s and the deregulation government of the 2000s to the present day (ASUU,2002).

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