

When everything fails, from what will you hold on to?

It is common knowledge that according to the International Relationships theory in order to have balance in the world it is imperative that balance of "power" throughout the international arena exists. In the past the man with the most powerful weapon would more often than not rule. This may not be entirely true nowadays. Because what would you do if you had such a devastating gun that could destroy everything, while it would most likely backfire some pretty serious consequences at you? Remember that during the cold war both of "the strong ones" had the same "lethal guns" and no one did even dare to fire. The modern weapons such as missiles, chemical substances and nuclear bombs can only lead to hollow victories, since the only thing that they leave behind is wasteland, contagious diseases, and DEATH.

The question that has automatically risen is... Now what? What will we use in order to conquer? To get richer? To force our ideas and our point of views into the others? What will we use in order to prevail?

The answer to that all is money!!!

According to Carl Philipp von Clausewitz "War is not merely a political act, but also a political instrument, a continuation of political relations, a carrying out of the same by other means". Unfortunately he never clarified which these "means" would be.

Nowadays, it is not the first fallen hero that signifies a state of war, it is the first locket that shuts a multinational corporation down, the economic degradation of hard working people, the high rates of illiterate people. How can you explain to someone that we are in an era of peace, and still there is hunger, child labor and no economical prosperity for the middle class -if there is any middle class left to be found...

So what is going on? Can we be in a state of war that we have not realized yet?

Or is this normal? Is corruption normal? Maybe poverty, genocide, starvation can be normal.... Did you know that despite advances in the world literacy, there remain 34 countries with over 80% illiteracy? Or that 1.1 billion people, are living in absolute poverty? And last but not least, did you know that military spending worldwide are being estimated to reach well over \$2 billions a day? Alternative uses of tiny fractions could produce meaningful change in education, health care and nutrition. For example the cost of one nuclear submarine could educate 160 million schoolchildren in twenty-three developing countries. Bearing in mind all the above, do you think that this is the sane way to act? Is this, as I have previously mentioned the normal way of evolving?

Although "normal" can have such a vague meaning, don't you agree? It doesn't have a steady and crystal clear definition, or maybe not as clear as "law and profit" has. Nowadays if everything is being done by the book it is ok! If something is constitutional and legal it is fine. Bankruptcy is legal, but I don't think that this makes it pretty. Also making profit is ok, it is more than ok, it is divine, even when it is being made on the loss of someone else. For example Greek politicians knew where the country was marching, but they were making profit and they didn't want to take the fault for the situation - this would not be much profitable, would it? Same thing happened with Germany and France; they knew perfectly well what was going on in Greece, but "why rat the Greeks out? We are exporting to them,

we are making profit, why put that on hold? This would not be sane!! A similar thing is happening to the "Romas" all around Europe; they are not offering much to the society, so EVICT them! Why play the role of the humanitarian? Why to provide them food and shelter. It is not that much profitable. Did mother Teresa (Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu) became rich? Did Mahatma Gandhi had an easy life?

Karl Marx used to believe that there are no nations, only social classes. Can this be true? Can there be a war between social classes instead of nations? Communism has failed, but apparently capitalism has as well.

Power corrupts but absolute power is kind of cool..... That is the quote of the 21st century. The unsatisfiable lust for wealth and power haunted many notorious people during the centuries, but it is today that this plague of humanity has gained epidemic size. Its weapons of choice are economy, business, banking and asset, strangely but also true, these are some of the instruments that mankind has invented and used throughout the centuries in order to prosper.

But each "Chimera has it's Velerefonte" as history has taught us. Consequently, can cultural diplomacy be that "Velerefonte" and save the future? Our future? Culture has been called "the hidden dimension", unseen yet exerting a pervasive influence on the behavior of individuals, groups and societies. A remarkable demonstration of that influence is the "Astoria Affair", where culture was the deceive factor so that a new leaf was being turned in Japanese-American relations.

As we all know we do live in an interdependent world. Interdependence can be thought -among others- as the spillover, typically unintended, of one country's or region's to another. Thus domestic issues can easily become transnational. For example, the Chernobyl disaster raised Soviet requirements for imported food, reduced Soviet food exports, pushed up world oil prices, put a damper on nuclear arms talks and caused one of the biggest one-day drop in stock prices Wall Street had ever experienced. The accident also continues killing and poisoning people in Ukraine and other countries. So, we have to find things that can and will link us together, things that have the ability to cross borders, to bring down walls that separate us, things that will unite us and help us prevent such phenomena. In this point it is crucial to mention that the "glue" of humanity should not be fear. According to many conspiracy theories, which it is up to you whether to lay credibility on or not, wars, terrorist attacks, even economical crises, may have been created, coerced, or used in order to promote unity in the name of a common enemy or a threat. I tend to reject most of them since if we all start being that thorough and suspicious we will end up in a war of everyone versus everyone.

As wisely Pope John Paul once put it: "the greatest obstacle to ending underdevelopment is unacceptably exaggerated concern for security", therefore we have to learn how to trust people, we can't afford any more skepticism regarding this subject. According to a world bank director "What the world badly needs today is a new vision for this ailing planet". Generations are needed who will be more concerned with human values rather than bureaucratic regulations and constraints. The struggle for power and profit that goes on at the international level is very much a struggle within each person to determine

just what it is that makes us feel secure. Unfortunately we have met the enemies and they, is us. Consequently don't you think that it is high time we start trying to unite people and setting in use that enormous power of cultural diplomacy? Why don't we start to communicate, share our points of view and see the world and everyday life from someone else's eyes?

So.....

- Let's evolve
- Let's have stability
- Let us have peace.

We may come in a variety of shapes, sizes and shades but our capacities and potentialities are astonishingly similar. Our each one's culture is a fundamental property of information, a grammar for organizing reality, for importing meaning to the world. Culture is the realm of the given and the undeniable that shapes a group's view of the world, enabling it to live together and survive in a certain habitat. Cultural diplomacy is the way.