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Present condition and perspectives of development of contemporary civilization : (Different options and alternatives. Personal reflections)

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Putting the serial number of our philosophical and social annual “Civitas Hominibus” (Community of the People) of 2012 in readers’ hands, I should underline that its main topics are the issues of present condition and perspectives of development of contemporary civilization in the beginning of 2nd decade of 21st century.

At the turn of 21st century various expectations, regarding the future shape of the New International Order after the termination of the Cold War between East and West, the collapse of world communist system and the expansion of globalization processes in the contemporary world, were devised. The prominent—mainly American—scholars have announced in 90ties of 20th century the different paradigms on international relations and political sciences and they argued that we live now in the new—maybe much better than before—contemporary world.

For example, having typically Anglo-Saxon name, the professor from the United States of America (USA) Francis Fukuyama proclaimed in his book *The End of History and Last Man*¹ alleged end of history and final victory of western liberal democracy and another professor from USA, who died recently, representing apparently the best university in the world—John Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts—Samuel P. Huntington published the book “The Clash of Civilizations and Remaking of New World Order”² in

¹ F. Fukuyama, *Koniec historii* [*The End of History*], Kraków, 2002—Polish edition.

² S.P. Huntington, *Zderzenie cywilizacji* [*The Clash of Civilizations*], Warszawa, 2007—Polish edition.

which he firmly noted that when the cycle of ideological wars supposedly had been finished the contemporary world was divided into 9 antagonistic civilizations which want to confront their forces in civilization and military conflicts in the near future.

Professor Huntington suggested that “wars of worlds” will begin from the encounter between the civilization of Judaic-Christian West and Asian-African civilization of Moslem Islam and in further consequence the conflict between this West and Confucian civilization of State of Midst—People’s Republic of China (PRC). Another eminent American scholar Benjamin R. Barber—the author of the book whose title reflects its essence and consignment.

*Jihad contra Mc World*³—formulated similar view that the conflict between world of jihad, it means Muslim East, and Mc World, it means Christian West, will be perhaps mortal, but the question is for whom?

How in the beginning of 2nd decade of 21st century and in conditions of deep economic and financial crisis in the highly developed West—which absolutely was not anticipated by the best American economists with the Nobel prize winners in the foreground like for example Milton Friedman—we should judge the above opinions about the present situation and prospects of development of contemporary civilization, with special reference to the West which Poland is an active member of?

Personally I have no doubt that we observe now the new directions of radical political, economic, social, military, cultural, ideological and civilizing changes in the contemporary world. This world is based on the New International Order whose the most important factor is “Pax Americana” (American Peace), that means the full domination of the USA as a single super power in contemporary world after the tumble of The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1991⁴.

The first question is if above-mentioned “Pax Americana” was, is or will be realized in contemporary world? Maybe, beside or instead of “Pax Americana” could also perform: “Pax Islamica” (Islamic Peace) with the crucial role of Muslim states after imaginable prostration of American hegemony in present world or more probable “Pax Sinica” (Chinese Peace) with the vital status of People’s Republic of China after collapse or in spite of continuation of power position of the USA in some regions of our planet: Latin America, Africa, Europe and partially in Asia.

Then evaluating now the present condition and perspectives of development of contemporary civilization it is necessary to analyse and to discuss the following important questions:

³ B.R. Barber, *Dżihad kontra Mc Świat [Jihad contra Mc World]*, Warszawa, 1997—Polish edition.

⁴ See more: A. Chodubski, M. Malinowski, E. Polak, P. Trawicki (eds.), *Kształtowanie się Nowego Ładu Międzynarodowego [The Formation of New International Order]*, Gdańsk, 2007—Polish edition and M.J. Malinowski, *Pax Americana—rzeczywistość czy utopia? Główna opcja geostrategiczna Nowego Ładu Międzynarodowego w perspektywie XXI wieku. Próba prognozy [Pax Americana—reality or utopia? Main geostrategic option of New International Order in perspective of XXI century. Test of prognosis]*, in: M.J. Malinowski (ed.), *Świat w okresie przemian [The world in period of changes]*, Gdańsk, 2000—Polish edition.

- dynamically expanding globalization processes;
- real or imaginary “diminution” of contemporary world;
- growing challenge from the proliferation of mass destruction weapons;
- thunderous expansion of the Islamic fundamentalism and international terrorism;
- continuation of the economic and financial crisis in economically highly developed countries and increasing poverty and backwardness in economically under-developed countries, at last more and more universal the contestation by large sections of society the competence and capacity to be in authority through current leader elites⁵.

The analysis of each above-mentioned important questions should be matter of voluminously large and reflectively keen glances in result of which the directions of different changes in contemporary international relations would be illuminated. At the same time these problems are an object of heated discussions and polemic statements in the course of which numerous questions are placed. It is not easy to answer these questions because there are so many variables in contemporary world whose scale and force of interaction are very difficult to estimate. Recapitulating my present considerations I would like at last to express the hope that the newest edition of “Civitas Hominibus” would be intellectual contribution to fresh disputation on actual condition and perspectives of development of contemporary civilization.

⁵ See more: A. Chodubski, H. Dobrzyńska, M. Malinowski, A. Modrzejewski (eds.), *Regionalizm a globalizacja* [Regionalism and globalization], Gdańsk, 2007; E. Halizak, R. Kuźniar (eds.), *Prawo, instytucje i polityka w procesie globalizacji* [Law, institutions and politics in process of globalization], Warszawa, 2003; M.J. Malinowski, R. Ożarowski (eds.), *Współczesne problemy świata islamu* [Contemporary problems of Islam world], Gdańsk, 2007; M.J. Malinowski, R. Ożarowski, W. Grabowski (eds.), *Ewolucja terroryzmu na przełomie XX i XXI wieku* [Evolution of terrorism on the turn of XX and XXI century], Gdańsk, 2009 and A. Durska, W. Konarski, S. Bachrynowski (eds.), *Kryzys przywództwa we współczesnym świecie* [Crisis of leadership in contemporary world], Warszawa, 2011.