



INVESTMENTS IN EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

Course: SELECTED CHAPTERS OF CZECH AND WORLD HISTORY

T10 Multilateral World and Conflicts since 1990

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MULTIPOLAR WORLD AND CONFLICTS SINCE 1990

The end of Cold War and disintegration of Eastern Block and later on disintegration of Soviet Union meant that the one superpower ceased to exist. The decay in post-Communist region was so deep that Russia left for one decade the position of World power. But United States, despite its huge economical potential, was not able to preserve position of superpower, especially after the beginning of 21st century. Meantime in so called Third World the rapid demographic and economic development meant that significance of African and Asian countries increased.

These are the most relevant preconditions that led that once **bilateral world** order switched into **multilateral world** order. In this situation the risk of breaking out of regional conflict is higher, possibilities of power to control these conflicts smaller. In one word the multilateral world means also instable world full of security risks.

Disintegration of Soviet Union 1991

When **Mikhail Gorbachev** acceded in function of General Secretary of Soviet Communist Party in March 1985, he attempted to **reform** Soviet political system. He was aware of internal problems of Soviet Union and of Soviet Block, especially the economic problems due to fact that Soviet Union had to have large army both to secure Soviet positions in Eastern and Central Europe and to wage the war in Afghanistan. That is why Gorbachev decided to cease the control of Soviet satellites and to focus on internal matters and relations with United States.

At the end of 1980s became obvious that Soviet regime is not possible to reform.

In Soviet Union **opposition** to Communist Party was formed and even in Russia Boris Yeltsin established Democratic Platform that opposed Communist Party.

Soviet Union was formally federation of 15 states and the differences between those countries were important. During 1990 and 1991 individual states declare their sovereignty, the first were Baltic countries of Latvia and Lithuania. On 12 June 1991 Russian parliament declared superiority of Russian laws over Soviet and

- on 8 December 1991

by **Agreement of Soviet Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian republics**, the originally establishing states of U.S.S.R., decided to **terminate** the existence of Soviet Union.

Transformation of Post-Soviet Territory

After the end of Cold War the territory of former Soviet Bloc went through large transformation. The most important fact was downfall of Soviet Union and transition of political systems.

Former states of Soviet Union founded **Commonwealth of Independent States**:

- **Commonwealth of Independent States**, known as Russian Commonwealth, is associations of states to support trade and security and was established on 8 December 1991 in meeting of representatives of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. The next eight countries joined on 21 December 1991; those countries were Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Later on, in 1993, Georgia joined. It meant that except Baltic republics all former Soviet republics entered commonwealth. But in 2008 Georgia due to Russian aggression left the organization.

Commonwealth is more symbolic organization, because dispose of minimum competencies and serves only for loose coordination of economic and security issues

Efficacy of Commonwealth of Independent States is small due to problems of post-Soviet territory:

- Economic recession,
- Political instability, and
- Ethnic and religious conflicts.

But Soviet Union was once superpower and disposed of number of nuclear weapons. After the downfall of Soviet Union negotiations took place in which individual states of Soviet Union **gave up their nuclear weapons in favour of Russia**. That is why Russia is only post-Soviet country to have nuclear weapon.

Transformation of Political Systems of Countries of Central and Eastern Europe

In 1989 and 1990 all countries of Soviet Bloc undertook important transition of political system from post-totalitarian regimes into democratic regimes. But pace of process differed in each country:

As first there were transformed political systems in countries that gained autonomy on development in Soviet Union:

- **Poland:** after 1980 existence of independent trade union Solidarity, in 1988 demonstrations and Round Table Negotiations, first partly independent election in June 1989.
- **Hungary:** Round Table Negotiations after mid-1989, in March 1990 first independent elections.

The process continued more slowly in other countries of Soviet Block, i.e. of countries of Eastern and Central Europe:

- **Western Germany:** October 1989 demonstration in Leipzig and in Berlin, on 9 November allowed to citizens to move to Western Germany, fall of Berlin Wall, fall of political system.
- **Czechoslovakia:** After 17 November 1989 demonstration in Prague and then in whole country, during November and December personal changes in favour of so called Civic Forum in government and in Parliament.
- **Romania:** dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaușescu, cult of personality, repression; in December demonstration of Hungarian minority, civil disorder vs. Securitate = in fact civil war, 25 December 1989 Ceaușescu executed.
- **Bulgaria:** dispute inside Communist Party in November 1989.

The most difficult was development in both Communist countries that were not part of Soviet Block:

- **Yugoslavia:** strikes from 1988, in January 1990 disintegration of Yugoslavian Communist Party (cession of Slovenian and Croatian delegation).
- **Albania:** demonstration during 1990, in July 1990 opposition allowed, but constitutional changes in 1991.

Territorial Changes in Europe in 1990 to 2008

The fall of Soviet Bloc was the last period of vast territorial changes in Europe; that is why shift of borders took place only in Central and Eastern Europe and concerned only four states:

- **Germany:** Unification of Germany means termination of Eastern Germany; the territory of former Eastern Germany joined German Federal Republic as individual lands.
- **Soviet Union:** During 1990 and 1991 effort of individual states to gain independence led to foundation of seven European states: **Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia; Russia, Belarus, Ukraine; Moldova;** while Baltic Republics and

Russia had tradition of state sovereignty, Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine were “brand new states”.

- **Yugoslavia:** Gradual disintegration from 1991 to 2008, except defunct states in total seven new states: **Slovenia, Croatia; Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Serbia, Montenegro, and Kosovo.**
- **Czechoslovakia:** Division of Czechoslovak Federation in 1993 in Czech Republic and Slovak Republic, so called **Velvet Divorce**, i.e. no conflicts.

While territorial changes in Central Europe, i.e. of Germany and Czechoslovakia, occurred without any particular tensions, the fall of Soviet Union and Yugoslavia meant creation of new focuses of political crisis. In territory of former Yugoslavia the civil war broke out and territory of Soviet Union was ground for regional conflicts in Moldova (Transnistria) and Ukraine (Eastern Ukraine, Crimea) and in Caucasus region.

European Integration

After the end of Second World War the process of integration started. In its beginning it was integration of economy that led into integration of policy.

Predecessors of European Union were established in 1950s:

- **European Coal and Steel Community**, est. 1952,
- **European Atomic Energy Community**, est. 1958,
- **European Economic Community**, est. 1958.
- In 1967 all three organizations were united according to Merger Treaty into **European Societies.**

The European Societies had originally six members; since 1952 consisted of:

- **Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxemburg, and Netherland.**

The first dissemination took place in 1973 when three countries were admitted to enter the European Societies:

- **Denmark, Ireland, and United Kingdom.**

In 1981, 1986, and 1990 in European Societies entered:

- **Greece; Portugal, Spain;** (and **Western Germany**, but not as member state).

After the fall of Soviet Bloc the largest dissemination took place. In 1995 three countries were admitted (Northern Dissemination):

- **Austria, Finland, and Sweden.**

In 2004 for the first time the countries of former Soviet Bloc were admitted; the largest dissemination at once meant that nine countries entered European Union:

- **Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia.**

In 2007 were admitted two states of Eastern Europe

- **Bulgaria and Romania.**

Finally in 2013 the last dissemination took place:

- **Croatia.**

At this time there is number of states endeavouring to be accepted in European Union. Among these candidate countries are Montenegro, Iceland, Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey. The agreement on co-operation with European Union and its refusal by Ukrainian Parliament became pretext for so called Ukrainian crisis that lasts since end of 2013.

During its time integration was set not only in number of state, but also in level of connection of states into one organization.

- **Maastricht Agreement** was signed on 7 February 1992 and got in efficacy in 1 November 1998, also named as Agreement on **European Union**.
- The Maastricht criteria, i.e. criteria to be admit into European Union, were set: inflation rates, government finance, exchange rate, long-term interest rates
- **Lisbon Treaty** was signed on 13 December 2008 and in efficacy were since 1 December 2009; according to Lisbon Treaty European Union was finally set as the only economic organization of Europe due to dissolution of European Societies.

European Union has number of its organs; the highest are:

- **European Parliament**, legislative and budget authority, has its place in Brussels, Belgium, and in Strasbourg, France.
- **European Council** is representative body of member states; its chairman is elected for two and half years term of office.
- **Council of European Union**, Also Council of Ministers, is representative body of member states.
- **European Commission** disposes of exclusive right of legislative initiative and represents only interests of European Union; its sit is in Brussels.

Dissemination of NATO

After 1991 questioning reason of existence of NATO took place. It seemed that there is no reason for NATO to exist due to fact that Warsaw Pact was disintegrated. Finally NATO was not dissolved, but agreement on reduction of forces was admitted.

- After mid 1990s project **Partnership for Peace** comprised as first countries of Central Europe, Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary, later other states, today majority of European countries.

After 1990 joining of new members joined NATO:

- 1990: (disseminated of territory of **Eastern Germany**),
- 1999: **Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland**,
- 2004: **Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia**, and
- 2009: **Albania and Croatia**.

U.N. in Conflicts

After end of bilateral world order the role of U.N. increased. It was due to fact that for 1990s and beginning of 21st century there was not hostile relations between stable members of Security Council (United States vs. Soviet Union). United Nations and its forces were involved in operations to keep peace (**peacekeeping mission**); their number rapidly increased after 1988.

- In 1988 there were 9000 men of Blue Helmets in world,
- in 1993 it was 80 000 men.
- Enormous involvement of **U.S.A. and United Kingdom**.
- **UPROFOR**: from March 1992 to December 1995, in total 38 000 men.
- **UNAMIR**: from October 1993 to March 1996, in total 6000 men.

But the next reason was fact that in multilateral world there was inadequacy of control of escalation of tension from the side of powers (United States and Soviet Union).

First Gulf War 1991

The first major war after the end of Cold War was the Gulf War, or so called First Gulf War, that took place in 1991 (but in fact in 1980s the Iran-Iraq was called as Gulf War).

- **Causes of conflict** laid in economical (Iraqi financially exhausted) and political (territorial claims on Kuwait) situation of Iraqi regime under Saddam Hussain. The Iraqi armies occupied Kuwait on 2 August 1990.
- U.N. declare embargo on Iraq and under forces of United States military operation were commenced with aim to liberate territory of Kuwait.
- **Operation Desert Shield** was commenced with aim to protect against potential expansion of Iraqi aggression. Especially Saudi Arabia was afraid of being attacked by Iraqi forces.
- **Operation Desert Storm** was military operation with aim to liberate Kuwait. Operation was commenced on 17 January 1991; in its first stage was conducted as aircraft operation to paralyze ability to conduct armed forces; in its second stage as land operation with aim to destroy armed forces of Iraqi was commenced on 24 February 1991 (as **Desert Sabre**), during 100 hours Iraqi army defeated.

Genocide in Rwanda 1994

Rwanda was state of two nations, **Tutsi** that comprises ca. 20 % of population and **Hutu** that comprises ca. 80 %. While Tutsi were supposed to be higher and paler, Hutu were smaller and darker.

Since 1950s when Rwanda reached independence relations between these two nations deteriorated badly. Each citizen of Rwanda was compelled to be marked as Tutsi and Hutu; in their IDs was statement with nationality.

Since 1990 relations worsened into civil war.

- That is why U.N. Operation **Turquoise** with aim to separate both hostile sides were commenced.
- Assassination of presidents of Rwanda and Burundi on 6 April 1994 became pretext for realisation of **genocide of Tutsi**: From April to July ca. 800 000 to one million Tutsi were killed by Interahamwe troops.
- **U.N. could not avert genocide** and Rwanda Genocide became remainder of U.N. failure.

Disintegration of Yugoslavia 1991 to 1992

During 1980s the relations between nations and of religious of Yugoslavia got into crisis. Yugoslavia was **federation of six states** and very sensitively reacted to change of situation. In Yugoslavia lived:

- Members of Slavs, i.e. **Slovenians, Croats, Bosnians, Serbs, Montenegrins**, and **Macedonians**, who speaks nearly the same language,
- but also members of other language groups, especially **Albanians**.

But Yugoslavia was also multi-religious country with members of:

- **Catholics** (in Northern; Slovenians, Croats, and Hungarians),
- **Orthodox** (in Southern and in the middle; Serbs, Montenegrins, and Macedonians), and
- **Muslims** (in Southern; Bosnians and Albanians).

Except these differences there were huge economical difference between **rich North** (Slovenia and Croatia), and **poor South** (especially Macedonia and Kosov).

In June 1991 **Slovenia** and **Croatia** declared independence that caused clashes between Croatian and Yugoslavian forces. Yugoslavian forces left Croatia but Serbs in Croatia resisted and declared independent states; the war in Croatia became civil war between Serbs and Croats.

The dissolution of Yugoslavia continued. In November 1991 **Macedonia** declared independence and in March 1992 **Bosnia and Herzegovina**. Within Yugoslavian federation left only Serbia and Montenegro

Civil War in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1993 to 1995

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina** the internal situation was most complicated; three **ethnic** and **religious** groups lived:

- **Serbs** (Orthodox), **Croats** (Catholics), and **Bosnians** (Muslims)

In January 1992 independent Serb republic was declared, later also independent Croatian republic. But their territories claimed Bosnians that declared independence on Yugoslavia in March 1992.

All three groups attempted to create its own homogeneous territory:

- Ethnic cleansing in which all fought against all started. The symbol of these cleansing became **Srebrenica Massacre** that occurred in July 1995. Despite the fact that near Srebrenica U.N. troops were located, U.N. soldiers did not intervene; the Srebrenica Massacre became another failure of United Nations.

In November 1992 tripartite negotiation ended up in **Dayton Peace Treat** that led to federalization of Bosnia and Herzegovina on ethnic principle.

Kosovo War 1999

In Yugoslavian Federation Kosovo was autonomous territory of Serbia. For long time **Albanians demanded independence** on Serbia and in order to reach state sovereignty established Kosovo independence army. This army was in fact terrorist organization that induced civil disorder in 1997. Kosovo army controls one third of Kosovo territory by mid-1998.

End of 1998 Yugoslavian army commenced counter-offensive, but also Albanians drove out. In 1999 NATO tried to mediate peace talks, but failure. That is why on:

- 24 March 1999 NATO commenced air assault to Yugoslavian positions.

On 10 June 1999 Yugoslavia capitulates and NATO troops were placed in Kosovo. But during comeback of **Albanians massacres of Serbs** took place.

Finally in 2008 Kosovo **unilaterally declares independence**. Some states did not accepted this independence, some did. Up this days question of Kosovo sovereignty represents one of the most controversial issue of Balkan Peninsula.

Terrorism

After 1990 the real threat to world democracy was no more Communism, but new war tactic and new type of organizations seeking for power – terrorism.

Terrorism could be defined as Form of struggle with its aim to **intimidate opponent** by performing terrorist acts; terrorism aims at civilian inhabitants. During history number of terrorist organization was founded:

- According to their affiliation the terrorist organizations could be:
- **Radical Left**, number of these organization that were founded in late 1960s and in 1970s; many of them exists up this days. The most famous became Rote Armee Fraction in Germany (Fraction of Red Army), while the most distinguished member of radical left terrorist movement is supposed to be Carlos the Jackal.
- During 1990s number of so called **Eco terrorist** organizations and movements were founded, while

- **Fundamentalist terrorism** represents the most dangerous type of terrorism since 1970s.

Since civil war in Lebanon (1975), Islamic revolution in Iran (1979), and invasion to Afghanistan (1979) expansion of fundamentalist terrorism took place: **Hezbollah, Hamas, al Qaeda** etc. During these day the most known is **Islamic State**, terrorist organization that in fact transformed into state form.

War against Terrorism 2001 to 2011

Impulse to commence the war against terrorism became terrorist assaults on 11 September 2001:

- Co-ordinated attack of **al Qaeda**: kidnaping of four airplanes and using them for suicidal assault.
- Two planes hit against W.T.C. in New York, next fall on Pentagon building, and third crashed in Pennsylvania

Long-term strategy of U.S.A. to eliminate terrorist threat (term used by George W. Bush on 20 September 2001) that comprised operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, Somalia, and the Philippines etc.

After 2001 controversial so called **U.S.A. Patriotic Act** was issued. It is statute that broadened competence of executive power regarding security issues.

The war against terrorism comprises also War in Afghanistan 2001:

Operation Enduring Freedom with aim to defeat Taliban and to capture Osama ben Laden was commenced on 7 October 2001. In the first stage aircraft assault to selected targets were involved, while in the second stage land operations took place. Among the decisive fights there was attack on **Mazare Sharif** on 9 November. Soon after that Taliban left Afghan Capital, Kabul. The harshest fights took place on **Tora Bora Complex** from 12 to 27 December 2001. During spring 2002 conventional phase of war ended and Taliban switches to **guerrilla warfare**.

The next largest war was **Second War in Gulf** that lasted from 2003 to 2011. Operation was led by United States and coalition of ca. 40 countries. In first stage of war coalition had some 300 000 soldiers. After beginning of 2003 diplomatic pressure to Iraq to end production of weapons of mass destruction took place, but without results. That is why military operation was commenced on 20 March 2003. Base of operation became Kuwait. In this operation the land assault began at the same time as aircraft assault. The last fight against Iraqi army was the Battle of Tikrit that was

finally captured on 14 April 2003. Then, on 13 December 2003, the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein **captured**. Despite the fact that Iraqi army was defeated resistance of fundamentalists continued as **guerrilla warfare**

The major problem during both wars, Afghan and Iraqi, was fact that modern army is able to effectively destroy enemy power, but have serious problems how to respond to civil resistance.

Provisional summary

In 1989 and 1990 world entered the period that still forms our present day situation. To sum up the last quarter of century is difficult and that is why the last chapter of Selected Chapters of Czech and World History is only provisional.

Multilateral world order set situation of new sources of international tension; those sources are religious fundamentalism and nationalism. All of conflicts could be defined as asymmetrical. The only struggle, when encountered equal armies, was during Gulf War in 2003. Conflicts of 21st century, especially Ukrainian Crisis and Islamic State War, are also conflict with high level of involvement of media.

Despite some failures it seems that role United Nations in world increased. But there is a question whether its significance will still be increasing in the future.

In all world conflict there is high level of engagement of U.S.A. But since Barrack Obama commenced his office gradual decrease of significance of U.S.A. took place, especially after 2010 when so called Arab Spring struck Arabian states.

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