

PSYCHOLOGY AND DIPLOMACY: CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

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In the history of diplomacy, as practical activity, as art or as science, prominent names of psychologists or sociologists are not specifically mentioned even if they influenced or contributed to the statutory decision at the state, nation, or international level. However, those leaders who had sound knowledge of political psychology, social psychology, psychology or communications were protected from serious mistakes, errors with negative implications on humanity.

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As a rule, the psychologists were listed among the humanitarians, both as scientific formation and efforts on the psycho-behavioral "gains".

Directly, less commonly, but more often such indirect practitioners-psychologists have found solutions and have solved difficult issues of various types. Those who have more than doubled permanently their skills because of the borderline Sciences "gains" imposed in very delicate areas - from Neuropsychology to diplomacy.

In the history of diplomacy, as practical activity, as art or as science, prominent names of psychologists or sociologists are not specifically mentioned even if they influenced or contributed to the statutory decision at the state, nation, or international level. However, those leaders who had solid knowledge of political psychology, social psychology, psychology of

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communication were aware of serious mistakes, errors with negative implications affecting humanity. Perceiving and understanding a modicum of knowledge of Psychology at the level of diplomacy seems now to be an indispensable phenomenon in the training of those in the field, but it should not be forgotten that only psycho-comprehensibility is not sufficient. Negotiators, diplomats are pre-selected and selected due to a set of habits, attitudes, intrinsic motivation in relation to this matter – and this involves a lot of personal efforts in filtering thinking, behavior, decision, voluntary acts etc.

Negotiations and diplomacy have evolved from simple practical solutions to problems with anonymous heroes who are lost in the mists of time, up to sophisticated epistemological frames.

The observation is that the negotiation is closely related to diplomacy (theoretical and practical) which imposed people "the patience exercise", "the tactic to win with the opponent's weapons", with "the balance of power", with "the veiled influences" etc. Both (diplomacy and negotiation) assume current tactics and strategies which could affect not only the international political area, but also the foreign policy (with ample negotiations) which can change over time even the fate of humanity.

In the 20th century, around the year 1956, the Swedish diplomat Dag Hammarskjöld introduced into a political dictionary the term "preventive diplomacy", thinking perhaps (after the end of World War II) that it would be the case that the states, the nations, the humanity should prevent conflicts and not await the emergence of any, even minor, misunderstandings, that trigger wars. Perhaps during the "cold war", or maybe now, when some of the socio-political transformations may influence decisions and peaceful negotiations, psychologists and sociologists can change and influence (well?) behaviour, individual attitudes, decisions etc.

However, it could be said that for a long time and for many people, the concept of "preventive diplomacy" has remained a simple term in a dictionary. While many conflicts have been aggravated, it has been an increase in the aggression between states, between nations and the "balance of power" between the major superpowers did not mean a safety balance of forces, since wars such as in Suez, Lebanon, Viet Nam, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq were not won in any plan for mankind or for our century politics.

The cooperation and the conflicts are not studied only in diplomacy or political psychology as they are important in any psychological system.

Therefore, nowadays people are becoming more interested in those abnormal situations in politics, because they do not benefit from education and from contribution of the experts in the field, so the situation often degenerates into wars, called "new conflicts" like the Balkans war or the Great Lakes of Africa war.

Even though the era of "Cold War" ended and the great powers perceived this as a period of relaxation, as a necessary relaxation, we are witnessing the emergence of new and sophisticated forms of corporate democracy, reporting systems and rules between states. In the same sense, influences are described regarding the degeneration of conflicts in wars due to untainted understanding of religions and cultures that creates internal identities of trans-cultural nature (e.g. Nigeria).

Therefore, there are various states and nations, which, under the flag of "humanitarian aids", cannot extinguish national grievances (internal), in that area arising often new conflicts, international conflicts, diffuse violence, often resulting in certain psycho-socio-cultural and spiritual contexts.

Beginning with the 1990s (when the Cold War ended), the experts have revealed that the multiplying of forms of democracy in countries with different traditions and cultures, as well as forms of marketing can generate global positive effects for the international system. At the same time, the much discussed and disputed globalization seems to have contributed rather to raise another issue, the macro-religious (Muslim) one and exaggerated emphasis of the spiritual and cultural identities, rather than attempting to bridge them.

Recent development of tests in a cosmopolitan system of some "post-national" countries proved to be a serious mistake for those who "had granted" this privilege of initiatives.

The famous vision on "The global village" of McLuhan seems to be contradicted by the development of strong religious and ethnic areas in many regions of the world.

Although they seem strictly phenomena of political interest, they are based on an understanding or circumvention of psychological axioms. There are voices (politicians) that talk now about "total war", which is described as the ethnic factor resultant from the prevalence of national strategies that would help (without a doubt) the appearance of this frightening phenomenon that would look like an expression of extreme "ethnic purification". For this "total war," some necessary ingredients should be found: mixed civil populations, the emergence of actors of the militarist-type from non-states, large areas conflicts, as well as the diversification and multiplication of all types of weapons in all regions of the globe. Since 1990, more than 10 million people have suffered in such internal conflicts around the world.

With such changes in the political and diplomatic view of international security, traditional methods which attempt to blur the crises are defied, including even "crisis management". Psychologists should be made better and more clearly heard in relation to conflicts prevention, which becomes a problem and not just a "puzzle" solved at school.

Component of general security, the security environment is no longer strictly politicians' problem or of the world superpowers, it concerns more and more different specialists. Therefore, they proposed, and held a series of relevant concepts and methods in this regard. In the voice of the millions of victims and the possible destruction of human societies, in internal conflicts there are possible paths to follow, distinguished in order to avoid a general disaster. In our opinion, these could be: early recovery and improvement of warnings and warning actions; acquisition and improvement of skills of mediation in conflicts for pacification anywhere on the globe; facilitate reconciliations after conflicts and negotiations.

All these are not only "weapons" and strategic methods of diplomacy, but they can be and are known by psychologists, they can exhibit successfully in present conditions of permanent and dynamic social and economic changes.

Certainly there will be conflicts between states in the future. In accordance with the changes in the international environment, we will focus on "the new" internal conflicts. In what follows, we will expose a few views on the priorities for improving the collaboration between diplomacy and psychology, in order to avoid disputes and conflicts.

Violence prevention

Any manager and his followers have always the possibility of choice before resorting to violence. If you are pressured from the outside at the right place and time, one can get a positive result, even decisive in stopping the escalation of the conflict.

There are various opportunities to undertake preventive action over the course of a conflict. The success of preventive action is often hard to prove, which raises obstacles to promoting this idea. However, we can mention several cases in recent years: the intense efforts to establish the peace in Central America, which culminated in the early 1990s, with the political transition of Namibia and recently peaceful regulation of the rights of Russians living in the Baltic States.

When the conflict broke out, the escalation of violence is the more difficult to control. Many concerns appear about the safety, the arms races grow in intensity and the multiplied attacks on civilians. At the moment, there is little chance of compromise and reconciliation, owing to the opponent as a demon.

The civil war is not only human suffering, because when the conflict is losing intensity or it is brought to an end, the actions of physical rehabilitation and relief are made most often with enormous costs.

Therefore, the prevention of violence is a strong need, which leads to the search of systems to identify prior signals that appear to trigger violence

as in case of famine, floods and earthquakes. Even if these signals are ambiguous, they give decision makers the opportunity to avoid an impending crisis so that they can change direction and mitigate. Governments may call upon UNITED NATIONS' bodies and regional consultations so that the leaders of the two sides of the conflict can be identified and contacted.

Few conflicts have no basis. Evidence of imminent violence gathers such as clouds before a storm. We know that the genocide in Rwanda in 1994 could be considered anything but not unexpected. UN agencies and non-governmental organizations had all sent reports that signaled the rising tension and extremist speeches. In this respect, it is important to have a process of learning. Reports drawn up by the United Nations and the various committees that addressed the role of the United Nations and other external actors in the catastrophe in Rwanda, as well as in Srebrenica massacre (1995), in the former Yugoslavia from a critical perspective, should serve as important reference points for the future.

There is a fundamental dilemma related to the response to imminent violence signals that we need to understand better. Why the evidence of a conflict about to erupt and an imminent human disaster is often rejected?

Why we are not prepared to do what we see in the eye before any humanitarian action develops into a large-scale military operation? In other words, how can politicians be helped to take rational decisions, since such decisions are the most difficult ones? The questions above have convinced us that it is worth studying the dynamics of perception in this regard because, for example, the signs of crisis are often dimmed by other more spectacular events worldwide.

Findings and experience gained in the field of psychology could play a more important role and bring the contribution of relevant mechanisms of awareness. Psychologists might have a special contribution to the correlation of signals of crisis and preventive action.

Although the UN Charter is based on the experience of interstate conflicts of World War II, it makes no difference between the various threats to peace and security. Therefore, the Charter proved a surprisingly broad applicability to internal conflicts. Dag Hammarskjöld once even said that the UN is "... a living organization, able to adapt constitutional patterns depending on various needs ...".

Article 33 of the Charter of the UNITED NATIONS is a collection of peace solutions and a catalogue of measures that may be taken. Negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement and recourse to regional agencies, all of which constitute measures which may be applied with the same success in case of internal conflicts. Due to various reasons,

including political respect towards the member states and the lack of means, the United Nations has proven so far unable to fulfill the task of mediator of conflict resolution peacefully.

Thus, the international tolerance toward the widespread suffering of civilians tends to deteriorate by the day. Solidarity does not stop automatically at the border, but also extends to those who need it.

Given the cruelty of the civil wars, as well as the role of the ethnic factor in the outbreak of the conflict, the efforts of the defense of human rights have gained increasing importance. Since its inception, the United Nations has adopted the principle that this protection must be consistent with universal systems of rules.

In the light of the great complexities of today internal conflicts, the adoption of special measures for the protection of minorities during conflicts and peace agreements is fully justified. In our opinion, an important concern is the issue of leadership and mediation and defective.

When "the genie from the bottle" escapes and the widespread violence begins to manifest, the conflicting parties are forced to follow the path of negotiation. At this point, limitations and dilemmas appear again. Civil wars features make them more difficult to solve than the wars between countries. First, some of the actors involved in the local wars could get a profit from the war and are interested in continuing it. Examples in this regard can be found in Europe and Africa.

Secondly, it is very likely that the parties involved in a conflict do not drop their inconsistent goals. In these circumstances, the defective-some called "pathological" in the light of certain well-known contemporary examples, is a factor which seriously hinders achieving a compromise. This driving high levels of unpredictability and suffering from overwhelming sometimes.

There are numerous obstacles to the preservation of peaceful path after negotiation of an agreement. Speeches in favor of the war and the ideas that make the enemy want to rule on the country may continue to exist. The distance between fear and a touch of trust seems to be extremely high. "We" and "they" are sometimes at astronomical distances.

Democracy is often considered a favorable environment and a tool in mitigating conflicts. However, political and economic transitions mean benchmarks of stability. There are numerous examples in different parts of the world, which show that in the early stages of democracy, ethnic and religious considerations are those that led to the emergence of loyalty and political mobilization. A typical example would be the former Yugoslavia. When the election is held, after a political agreement, parties must be

convinced that the winner of the election is not going to use the victory to seize everything.

Internal conflicts are smoldering years and companies already devastated by war are often susceptible to violence. Life has shown that if you do not act on the main causes of the war, violence will occur over and over again. Also, if there is not precedence to disarmament on the basis of a peace agreement, the weapons will continue to be kept handy in case of new conflicts.

In the period after World War II a series of peace agreements were signed. Some of them could very well be written in sand. Angola's UNITA started again the war after the elections in 1992, and the Red Khmers violated agreements on Peace in Paris, after originally signed them in 1992. Also the Habyarimana, before the Rwandan genocide, refused to implement the provisions of the Arusha Agreements.

In the light of these experiences, psychologists can be of great help in reaching better understanding of how the system of rewards and punishments act in case of implementation of treaties of peace.

In this context, we would like to emphasize the fact that reconciliation is a long-term goal. The duration of conflicts is a reason enough to insist on finding strategies for reconciliation.

Conclusions for a culture of prevention

Bearing weapons, sidestepping differences and rebuilding political and economic systems is not easy. Conflict prevention is as difficult as necessary.

It has been suggested that in many ways, such as the wave of nationalism and the importance of the problems of minorities, the current situation is similar to the one after the World War I. We are reminded that a conflict is fundamentally a human phenomenon, according to the abstract nature of the game theory of the Cold War.

Today peace and security are no longer just questions governed exclusively between states but they have become a part of the social context. Internal conflicts are often caused by the needs, values and aspirations. The identity of the individual and the group enters the scene, and the stake is frustration among Kosovo's economic and social consequences.

The end of the cold war and the nature of internal conflicts have made the relationship between diplomacy and psychology more comprehensive and relevant. Psychology and other social sciences are required not only to refine the methods and practices but also to describe and conceptualize new security environment.

Language is the main instrument of the diplomat's work and can be used to give assurance, to persuade or coerce. Words can be powerful, ambiguous or filled with violence. According to an old saying, "Without

language there's no poetry, no war". In a context of multi-cultural mediation, the language may not be considered comprehensive in itself. Psychology can have a major contribution to clarify how different interpretation of a crisis situation work within a culture or another.

In short, from the perspective of diplomacy, we would like to suggest four priority areas to advance the frontiers of knowledge in area of mutual interest for psychology and diplomacy.

First, because of the complex nature of conflicts and the possibility of outbreaks of violence on a large scale, there is an urgent need to find methods to prevent them. Our ability to prevent violent conflicts will slightly improve in the future so that one will manage to make the correlation with signs of impending violence action taken in advance. We need to know more about the psychological factors, and not only. This constrains the decisions and opinions of the public to be able to respond more positively to the signals of impending violence.

Secondly, democracy, human rights and pluralism are universal bases for a peaceful development of our society. However, these values are challenged in many parts of the world. Psychology has played a decisive role in the knowledge of phenomena that can lead to violent conflicts. We would like to suggest that there should be emphasis on the need to expand our understanding of reverse perspective, such as the conditions conducive to resolving the conflict and achieving peace and sustained development of democracy.

Thirdly, while the former, by tradition it was preoccupied in particular geographical borders, today conflicts forces us to take into account the "internal borders" of the people. In a world of diversity we must build an agreement peace path to co-existence among participants with a sense of fundamental physical protection. Weak rulers proved very skilful in exploit, create and maintain an atmosphere of insecurity. One of the biggest challenges of the 21st century will be, without a doubt, the acceptance of the cultural and the religious diversity within and across our societies.

Fourthly, international involvement in prevention requires a high degree of cross-cultural actions and abilities. As far as we understand, the ways and conditions of negotiation in various cultural contexts must be developed so as to identify ways to encourage the parties to respect the agreements.

Preventing conflicts is clearly in our interest, but its supporters' groups must be strengthened. Common ideas "positive and edifying myths" are beneficial and may even be necessarily in all human communities as the basis for consensus and survival. Contributing to building a positive image of the UNITED NATIONS (the only universal forum empowered to take care of our common future), it should manage to strengthen the structures of cooperation and peace support throughout the world.

Concluding, we believe that the time has come to go forward and use a more systematic approach in order to prevent the spread of fear and violence to reduce fear in all regions of the globe. We need to create a "culture of prevention". Scholars, politicians and diplomats, as well as those in the media and business are natural supporters of such cultures.

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