

## GLOBALIZATION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

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*Abstract: Globalization is a process which involves giving up territorial limits, speaking a global language, technology rise, unrestricted circulation of information, uniform economy, political alignment from a global planetary government perspective, etc. Forming the European Union is considered to be the first step towards globalization.*

*Globalization is equally worshiped and disputed. Globalization implies constraint from the powerful over the weak. The vast majority are subordinated to those with power in the world.*

*There can be no encompassing globalization because although it includes many, it cannot include all. The global world can not be homogeneous because it's made up of a variety of factors such as: culture, language, traditions, social relationships, civilization.*

*Keywords: globalization, society, information, modernization, technology, innovation*

Since the earliest of ages man has found himself in a continuous territorial expansion, initially to satisfy his preservation instinct, with food as the main determinative factor. The will to dominate, to conquer is also known from ancient time, this is how the great world powers were born. Their hunger for power was manifested by raising empires and colonies. These human urges have evolved to various stages and took several names over the years. Today they are called generically globalization.

### **Globalization concept definition**

The term has been defined by various means, all emphasizing an all-encompassing process, generated and upheld by one or a combination of the following factors:

- economics (financial and commercial relationships)
- politics (a tight interdependence between international relationships)
- communications and culture (we're informed and influenced by events a great distance away, in both spatial and temporal terms)
- environment (we're dealing with global risks and by all means we should react with global measures)<sup>1</sup>

One of the most commonly used globalization definitions is the following:

"Globalization represents the process through which geographic distance becomes a lesser important factor in establishing and developing cross-border relationships, economical, political and sociocultural by nature. Relationship networks and dependencies are gaining greater and greater potential in becoming international and worldwide."<sup>2</sup>

In this definition the importance of geographic distance is diminished but not excluded. Therefore, relationships are easier to establish at an international level, societies and individuals being less protected by the borders. The definition also emphasizes the growing possibility of global scale network expansion.

<sup>1</sup> Ecaterina Cocora, *Globalizarea. Efecte asupra resurselor umane din România*, Princeps Publishing House, Iași, 2006 apud S. Dungaciu, *Avatarurile teoriei globalizării în Balcani*

<sup>2</sup> Barrie, A., *The Global System, Economics, Politics and Culture*, St. Martin Press, New York, 1995 apud Ioan Bari, *Tratat de economie politică globală*, Editura Economică, București, 2010, p. 40

Globalization is not an entirely bad phenomenon. It's an integration factor for man in the worldwide community and it offers ongoing space for new global government systems and for a global civil society.<sup>3</sup>

In the *Treaty of global political economy* there are many globalization definitions:

*Globalization refers to all processes through which the world's nations are integrated in a single world society, the global society.*

Martin Albrow

*Globalization can be defined as an enhancement of social relationships worldwide, binding remote establishments in such a manner that local events are seen as similar ones, occurring many miles away, and vice versa.*

Anthony Giddens

*Globalization is the global network which has gathered together communities on this planet, formerly isolated and dispersed, in a mutual dependency and a "single world" unity.*

Emanuel Richter

Globalization doesn't simply wish the objective process of intercommunity increase. It wishes the consciousness and subjectivity of the individual, namely the purpose and intensity of the awareness of the world as a unique space. Globalization is what people from the "third world" have, for centuries, named colonization. Globalization refers to the process through which social relationships become relatively lacking from distance and borders factors, in such a way that human life unfolds more and more in a world seen as a unique place.<sup>4</sup>

Globalization is a process which involves giving up territorial limits, speaking a global language, technology rise, unrestricted circulation of information, uniform economy, political alignment from a global planetary government perspective, etc. Forming the European Union is considered to be the first step towards globalization.

### **Globalization determinant factors**

A determinant factor of globalization is technological innovation. This especially implies communication and information technology having consequences over communication and mobility. These spectacular developments in informatics and telecommunications from the last decade have triggered to a large extent the globalization of modern economical life. The advent of the Internet was the largest technological and social event of the 20th century. The Internet is not only a technological phenomenon, but also a social one, through the actual participation of the increasing number of users. Once introduced, the Internet has produced and still produces new consequences for society, the most important of which is the globalization process.

The increasing speed of information transmission, means of transmission diversification and their enhancement, undoubtedly lead to visibility enhancement of crossborder national events. These determine an event from a country to have immediate

<sup>3</sup> Ioan Bari, *Tratat de economie politică globală*, Publishing House Economică, București, 2010, p. 41

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem

impact over another country. The events or problems cannot be kept inside a country, if they are important they become global events or global problems.<sup>5</sup>

Another determinant factor of globalization is neoliberal ideology through which markets are liberalized, the economies are decentralized and the state companies are privatized. Economic-commercial factors that have influenced the intensification of the world economy globalization process include: free transmission of merchandise, services liberalization, the release of capital markets, foreign investors accessibility to establish firms and other legislative and administrative nature factors favorable to globalization. The acceptance of neoliberal ideology has determined actions which confirm this approval as long as the world has truly acquired the subsistence rules of this ideology. In sociology, this situation can be explained by the Thomas theorem: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."

We can consider neoliberalism one of the main determinant factors of globalization but not exhaustive because not all globalization consequences are based on neoliberal reasons.<sup>6</sup>

### **Globalization advantages and disadvantages**

Globalization followers are mainly focused on the advantages generated by it: the production cost reduction thanks to global economy; the exchange transactions carried out very rapidly according to a given schedule - fax, Internet, etc.; the speed growth on commercial, financial and technological operations deployment; the accelerated expansion of markets and establishment of new markets, independent from specific sources or traditional areas. Therefore there's an increase in efficiency on all economic activity on a global scale as a result of liberalization of capitals, investments, technology and labor towards more profitable areas and zones.

Globalization opponents sometimes assign an absolute value to negative consequences: the abolition of the nation and of national identity; decreasing employment in developing countries or with a lower level of labor efficiency; the specialization of countries in production activities that generate pollution and request intensive labor, raw materials and energy; emphasizing economic disproportionation. There are also reported threats on the dissolution of areas, ruin of banks, the loss of economic life stability, even of some states.

The globalization is equally worshiped and disputed. Its proponents consider it to be inevitable, seeing in it the model and ideal to follow to cancel differences, mitigate poverty, avoiding conflicts, etc. Understood as development, modernization requires fast paces and efforts but it stirs risks regarding security, even the existence of communities as well.

Globalization implies constraint from the powerful over the weak. The vast majority are subordinated to those with power in the world. Yet an all-encompassing globalization can't exist because although it includes many, it cannot include all. The global world can not be homogeneous and absolutely inclusive because it's made up of a variety of factors such as: culture, language, traditions, social relationships, civilization. Humankind is like a tower of Babel with infinite identities living in their own diversity.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibidem, p. 48

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem, p. 50

Social evolution suggested by globalization cannot be smooth because the consciousness of national identity itself prevents the most subtle part needed by the global society: the consciousness of diversity nationally exclusive unjustified (unmotivated).

But the deadlock is not absolute, but one related only to the blocked mechanisms of changing generations and mentalities. Nobody however can challenge the new sensibility of young generations of moving freely on fenceless areas in any way. Globalization is not guilty for what it destroys as it is for what it defectively builds given that it is refused in the natural setting represented by the global society.<sup>7</sup>

Globalization doesn't preserve structures on ways of previous social organizing but it favors a completely new organization form in society. Thereby, work is almost an exclusive intellectual energy transfer process, blossoming in the foundations of the informational society, in which the active ones percentage manifests an increasing trend. The services from the scientific activity are so diverse and dynamic that the population occupation problem has a limit only in the level of training.

Globalization, in its current flawed form, namely, like a mondialisation of a single country's interests, polarizes wealth and poverty to the extreme, because in reality globalization endlessly multiplies the chances of access to prosperity and civilization, without, however, annihilating natural diversity.<sup>8</sup>

Sure steps in the direction of globalization are represented by regional agreements which are oriented towards the liberalization of relationships between national states. This is how the idea of "world government" emerged (the idea was developed by Israeli sociologist Dror in research projects from the Club Of Rome).

At present time cooperation agreements tend to gain a global dimension. Collaboration between regions is talked about more and more. In March 1996 in Bangkok, the collaboration between Asia and Europe started within the "Asia-Europe Meeting"(ASEM) process. The fifteen European Union (UE) member states attended the conference: Germany, France, Great Britain, Belgium, Italy, Holland, Finland, Ireland, Sweden, Austria, Luxembourg, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Denmark and the Asian states Brunei, China, South Korea, Philippines, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.<sup>9</sup>

### **The effects of globalization**

Globalization has both positive and negative effects. Globalization is an objective process that occurs regardless of whether we agree with it or not. It brings both wealth and negative effects.

Among the effects of globalization there is "cultural globalization". This means free trading culture translated by "promoting cultural diversity." Thus, every citizen of the planet can benefit from the free movement of ideas, words and images, encouraging indigenous traditions and minority languages, culture is democratized, poor and rich countries become

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<sup>7</sup> Dinu Martin, *Economie contemporană . Ce este globalizarea?*, Publishing House Economică, București, 2000, pp. 22-23

<sup>8</sup> Ibidem, pp. 34-35

<sup>9</sup> Mihai Pricop și Adrian Tanțău, *Globalizarea și strategia firmei*, Publishing House Eficient, București, 2001, p.9

equal in rights to spread their own culture. Anti-globalists thus have the opportunity to denounce the danger of world culture homogenization.<sup>10</sup>

Another effect is the globalization of religion. Fragmented in churches, religions and dogmas, the church strength is limited. Ecumenicism, viewed as a union of churches and denominations, resembles European unification, which finds purpose in the European Union.<sup>11</sup> Currently, however, there are many protests against ecumenical politics organized by various religious groups.

Globalization extends the communication channels between communities, countries. It holds sufficient ways for this purpose, such as multinational companies, NGOs, the Internet, which in the information era, are of great use for international migration and increased human contact. Meanwhile, on the downside, the Internet and computer destroy more human connections than they create, diminishing social participation. For centuries, people have enriched their experience by contact with nature and with other people. Today the world seeks new experiences on computer screens and video games.<sup>12</sup>

Another effect of globalization is the emergence of global markets (capitals market, financial markets, energy market, commodity market, human resources market). These occur as a result of inter-regional cooperation processes, processes that have the effect of integration defined as an assembly of parts into a whole.

## Conclusions

Globalization process is not and mustn't be looked at as inevitable, it's a phenomenon that appears behind people's decisions. The ideal is for it to become a democratic process in which people are in the center, not only as participants but also as beneficiaries. The process is however marked by the political implication and the domination desire of some individuals, with a positive or negative impact over the participants.

In conclusion, globalization is a reality and any country which seriously prepares its future is constrained to interfere with it. Maladjustment to the new globalization framework is not only a lost opportunity but also the risk to loose already acquired market positions. The globalization term has gained a significantly big emotional force, being considered a process with beneficial effects - a true solution for future economical development but, at the same time, the majority of authors consider this process to be inevitable and irreversible. In other words, it's stated that whatever may happen, the process itself cannot be stopped, beyond the favorable argument of globalization through which advantages would surpass the included costs.

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<sup>10</sup> Ecaterina Cocora, op. cit., p. 57

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem, p. 67

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem, p. 69

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