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THE REVERBERATIONS OF GLOBALIZATION

Abstract

This chapter examines globalization from a three-component, narrowing perspective: as an ideology, as a political project derived therefrom, and as real reactions triggered in response to both of these aspects. None of the conditions of globalization has been met to a sufficient extent, and none of its real forms are consistent with the declared goals and assumed effects. Globalization, treated as an ideology that reveals an end to history, shows the path leading to it, and constitutes the crowning achievement of the development of mankind, is shown to have its roots in the same way of thinking as Marxist scientific communism. We conclude that the ideology of globalization and the unsatisfactory attempts to put it into effect as one of various political projects have been replaced by responsive reactions. It is these reactions that are now shaping the emerging world of the near future.

Keywords: globalization, reactions to globalization

1. Introduction

The closing decades of the 20th century witnessed the overlapping of three major processes: globalization, the rise of neoliberalism, and economic transition to capitalism. Each of these could have occurred independently (though this is true to the greatest extent for the second process), but their cooccurrence meant that each of them informed and was informed by the remaining two. Here, it is difficult to separate the effects from the causes, let alone to tease apart positive correlations. Such is often the case for real social processes, unlike for the rules of logic that apply in the work of the analytical mind. These processes were broad in scope, embracing the political, social, cultural, and economic spheres. Above all, however, they played out in people's awareness, because what they had in common was a shared ideological form. I consider this to be their primary form.

Each of those processes would have looked quite different had it not been intertwined with the remaining two by many threads. And had it not been for their cooccurrence, their material interdependencies would not have had to hold. Globalization itself could have been based on politics, universal laws, especially human rights, and a commonly adopted axiology. Neoliberalism could have been

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narrower in scope, applied in a particular country or small group of countries, providing them with tools for overcoming stagflation, much like an adhesive bandage applied temporarily to a break in the skin. Liberal ideology would have returned to the main direction of its evolution, set forth back in the 20th century by the intellectual contributions of such thinkers as John Stuart Mill, John Maynard Keynes, Isaiah Berlin, and John Rawls.² Economic transition could have looked different and could have taken directions different from those followed by European countries. It could have resulted from choices, actual choices, as opposed to solutions imposed by others and adapted to the needs of specific societies, and from an open collection of market-economy models, and followed in politics the path that was laid forth in the golden age of capitalism and liberal democracy, retaining in the social sphere the convergence of different institutions as well as protecting the autotelic and overriding nature of culture.³ China is an example of yet another path; following it requires a change of system and maintaining the continuity of political institutions.

The combination of these three historical events created what Hegel would describe as a “moment” in the process of history, the situation of a transient, special condensation of the flow of social time that involves a clash of different trends.⁴ This combination once determined the shape of the world and the emerging future; now, a new, responsive “moment” is determining the modern era and shaping the next period.

2. Globalization as an ideology

Globalization is a polysemous, conceptually heterogenous word. It is often conceived of as a process or a state of affairs characteristic of the last two decades of the 20th century and the early 21st, expected to stretch into many years and centuries to come. Such temporal boundaries and the related periodization are nonetheless based on a certain simplification.⁵ Previously, too, the free-market and political system was characterized by a similar, global expansion. Consequently, globalization has long been observed and analyzed, though it was named

² Cf. for example A. Walicki, *Od projektu komunistycznego do neoliberalnej utopii*, Kraków 2013, pp. 335–424 and C. Crouch, *The Strange Non-death of Neoliberalism*, Polity, 2011.

³ Tadeusz Kowalik warned repeatedly and already during preparations for Poland’s transition that we should at least not try to be “the top students in class.” On importance of culture, cf. for example M. Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There no Alternative?*, 2020, Zero Books, and N. Srnicek and A. Williams, *Inventing the Future*, Verso, 2019.

⁴ Cf. Ch. Mouffe, *For a Left Populism*, Verso, 2018.

⁵ G. Ziewiec, *Trzy fale globalizacji: Rozwój, nadzieje i rozczarowania – 1870–1913, 1950–1973, 1980–?*, Warsaw 2012. See also for example R. Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital: A Contribution to an Economic Explanation of Imperialism*, the original edition of 1913, R. Hilferding, *Finance Capital*, the original edition of 1910, and the writings of N. Bukharin and V. I. Lenin from the same period.

differently – and not without reason, because it really did occur and could be regarded as a permanent factor behind capitalist development, albeit also one whose activity varied in time.

However, the globalization of the late 20th century differs from its previous forms, or “waves” as Gabriela Ziewiec calls them. It has turned into an ideology and, when seen from a somewhat different perspective, a certain utopia. This is how it is viewed by its followers and practitioners, who as a rule depict it as a necessary, natural, and scientifically confirmed stage in historical development. It has come to exemplify the laws of history.

Globalization as an ideology was presented perhaps in the broadest way by Francis Fukuyama.⁶ It is worth citing his essay, not because it was especially insightful or pioneering, but rather for opposite reasons: it had a considerable amount of influence over the world precisely because it largely voiced the day-to-day understanding of politicians and leading commentators and the casual knowledge of the public at large. Fukuyama, a professor at American universities and expert think-tank analyst, may be regarded as a leading ideologue of present-day globalization. It is in this role and from this angle that we define the most important ideological elements of Fukuyama’s essay.

Globalization, which reached its culmination in the closing years of the 20th century and was presented as a dominant ideology, was interpreted as ushering in the end of history, understood as the clashing of major social ideas. The process of history, in line with Hegel’s work, had just come to an end. A period of ideological stagnation and political stability had begun. Some call this a state of boredom, while others see it as cozily peaceful – history no longer guides human actions or determines their effects, because it has reached its apogee and ceased to exist. Globalization as the final stage of the process of development has three roots that must be considered together, otherwise it will be reduced to ruins as an ideology and as a practice, with chaos and regression then ensuing.

The first pillar consists of the market economy. It is an economic system centered around market self-regulation, which leads to harmony and forms the basis of rational behavior, while remaining subject to the same rules as the natural world and therefore intellectually cognizable according to the naturalist model. Studies of the market economy are scientific in their nature, with classical economics providing tools and its modern continuators formulating scientific hypotheses on par with those posited by biologists and physicists.

Upholding the second pillar is the liberal democratic system and the policies that follow from it. This is where “the liberty of the ancients” meets “the liberty of the moderns,” and a strong, complementary relationship should exist in each of them.⁷

⁶ F. Fukuyama, “The End of History?”, an article originally published in *The National Interest*, No. 16, 1989.

⁷ B. Constant, “The Liberty of the Ancients Compared With That of the Moderns,” in *Democracy: A Reader*, eds. R. Blaug and J. Schwartzmantel, Columbia University Press, 2017, pp. 108-110, <https://doi.org/10.7312/blau17412-021>

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In globalization, however, “the liberty of the moderns” has taken on special significance, namely that of “a ‘neoliberal’ ideology, or unilaterally economic liberalism (...), the identification of liberal freedom with economic freedom, and the latter with the freedom of the market. This apologia of market freedom is very often linked to the argument of the absence of development alternatives.”⁸ Democracy, or everyone’s right to cast his or her vote when electing political officials, and the equal weight of such votes (in keeping with the “one person, one vote” principle), are basic components in the foundations of the legitimization of the system of government and the right to govern. However, these foundations are now often different from how the system actually functions, which is expressed in the motto of today’s Spanish Indignados Movement: “we have a vote, but we do not have a voice.” Consequently, the ideology becomes a utopia, the ideal is not drawing nearer to empirical facts, but at best we are offered assurances that we are just one step away from its complete fulfillment.

The third pillar is formed by the scope of globalization – it must be all-pervasive, and indeed it almost is; soon, it will be entirely so. Liberal democracy will reign everywhere, and the free market will cover the whole of the planet. Presented at the beginning of the 19th century, David Ricardo’s theory of comparative advantage is becoming increasingly powerful.⁹ Globalization may now fully come to fruition thanks to electronics, the network of financial institutions, the expansion of corporations, and growing communication connections.

Globalization unites all societies, and it will secure stable peace, because such are the salubrious effects of the free market. Such assurances were made centuries ago by our ancestors, and such arguments were voiced recently by Friedrich Hayek. The foundations of globalization being created are especially strong, because the new structure of the world will in fact eliminate the division into national economies and their borders and invalidate their distinctiveness. Trade will be pursued within a single economy, not between different specialized economies. By the same token, the theory of comparative advantage will be first utilized consistently, and then overcome.

In the period in which it held sway over the minds of intellectuals (especially economists), the ideology of globalization had similar properties as the ideology that preceded it, namely that of Marxist communism, whose influence had reached its peak in the late 19th century and in the first half of the 20th. Followers of both ideologies could say: it is clear what direction the world is heading in, and we must follow suit or perish.¹⁰ Researchers of globalization, assuming the role of prophetic ideologues, announced in the spirit of the naturalist

⁸ A. Walicki, *Od projektu... op. cit.*, p. 326.

⁹ D. Ricardo, *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*, 1817, and his continuers: E. Heckscher, B. Ohlin, and P. Samuelson, authors of the most famous economics textbook in the 20th century.

¹⁰ M. Oakeshott, *Politics of Faith and Politics of Scepticism*, Yale, 1996.

historical materialism of their ancestors, “In the future, we will experience, more than once, a major slowdowns in globalization but nothing will ever stop the process. [...] Globalization [is] beneficial to mankind in total and on balance.”¹¹ This “untamed power” is discovered thanks to the analysis of history and the economy, and its disclosure is a product of science, whose authority was likewise invoked 150 years earlier, when scientism established its control in the Western culture. Karl Popper identified the consequences of that fact, and Andrzej Walicki presented them synthetically in the following way: “those who have the only correct knowledge about the meaning and direction of history have not only the right but also the duty to disregard the will of the ignorant majority. (...) They may admit a mistake on one detail or another, but nonetheless draw on ‘scientific socialism’ to get the unwavering certainty that the course of events cannot be reversed, that History is on their side.”¹² We could replace the term “scientific socialism” here with “globalization,” and the sentence would retain the same significance and acquire a fresh topicality. This is because the structure of the thought remains unchanged, though it has been adjusted to modern-day circumstances and become more nuanced. It not only explains but also makes predictions and plays the role of political programming. For example, this is why “(...) the Bush administration (...) assumed regime change in Iraq [as a result of an armed invasion launched by the United States and its allies, including Poland – PK] would promote American interests while curbing terrorism and furthering democracy in the region (...), [and] a ‘new Middle East’ is on the horizon that will accept the United States as a model of government (...)”¹³

The ideology of globalization determines not only the direction of history, but also the order of the historical process. In the times of the aforementioned classical German philosopher, the leading role in the world was played by Prussia, as the embodiment of “historical reason.” Similarly, imitators from the end of the 20th century argue that there is now a country that is the leader of global trends. This country is the United States, led in the years of the initiation of the new globalization ideology by President Ronald Reagan and shaped by the relevant principles, as adjusted to this role. The economism of vulgar Marxism was replaced by neoclassical economics, and the rejection of political pluralism entailed laying down universal, scientific procedures of management. The United States is showing the path to others, and if a county does not want to get lost or left behind, it should be as close to this global hegemon as possible. It is no coincidence that the liberal British philosopher John Gray could write repeatedly what Tadeusz Kowalik summed up succinctly: “Globalization is tantamount to

¹¹ G. W. Kołodko, *Whither the World: The Political Economy of the Future*, 2014, p. 125. The author presents a more detailed picture of globalization and introduces contrasts between light and dark, while retaining the basis for his main hypothesis.

¹² A. Walicki, *Marksizm i skok do królestwa wolności: Dzieje komunistycznej utopii*, Warsaw 1996, p. 198. Cf. also K. R. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, 1945, Routledge.

¹³ J. Gray, *Black Mass: Apocalyptic Religion and the Death of Utopia*, Penguin UK, 2011.

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striving for the Americanization of the modern-day world.”¹⁴ Applying this way of thinking and identifying the signs of history, we could conclude that globalization in its conquest is merely speeding up a course of events which would be headed in the same direction anyway. Iraq or other Arab countries, after overthrowing their ossified and reactionary institutions of power, will become free-market-oriented, liberal and democratic, and open to the world. This will happen naturally, in line with socio-historical laws that lead everyone to globalization, and a “push from the outside” will only act as a catalyst. Ideology always, and also in this case, invokes generalized arguments to justify oppression and war. It easily conceals the richness of reality behind simplifications – countries that have been conquered or fallen into disintegration have not yet become part of the stable order of globalization. The fall of countries, civil wars, and chaos have reminded us of the experiences of social history and the achievements of intellectual history: no system of government is natural, nor does it develop all of its own under what are called objective laws.

Over time, and quite clearly under President Donald Trump, the United States has ceased to promote globalization understood in this way and started to take national interests as its point of reference; the ideology of globalization, reduced to its economic aspects, has been taken over by China. This change in the global arena does not invalidate Gray’s analyses or Kowalik’s opinion, but rather indirectly confirms them.

The ideology of globalization should also apply to other countries; after all, it was said to follow from an unquestionable megatrend of history. It was recommended in Russia, where President Boris Yeltsin along with his political and economic camp and foreign advisers tried very hard to implement it. Let us reiterate that “at the end of the 20th century, Poland, having yielded to the persuasion of others and feeling superior over the ‘sluggish West,’ welcomed with enthusiasm neoliberal turbocapitalism and globalization. We also wanted to be first and to catch up on lost time, and when US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld talked about an emerging two-speed Europe, he portrayed us as a leader and as an example, using us to shame others and persuade them into imitation.”¹⁵ We, as top-of-the-class students in the American school, tried to leave behind the old European West. All the various assurances about the emergence of a new and sometimes even great world were never clearly taken back by anyone. Yet meanwhile, we can now see that the ideology of globalization is fizzling out, and after several decades of supremacy, it must fight for its hegemony from defensive positions.

¹⁴ T. Kowalik, *Systemy gospodarcze: Efekty i defekty reform i zmian ustrojowych*, Warsaw 2005, p. 376. Cf. also J. Gray, *False Dawn*, first English edition 1998.

¹⁵ P. Kozłowski, *Przeciw systemowi: Rozmowy z książkami*, Warsaw 2020, p. 220.

3. Globalization as a political project

Globalization required relevant institutions of a universal reach. After all, it was expected to entail not only broad trade, the movement of people, and the opening up of all economies, but also something much greater: a new global system whose “equilibrium brings benefits to broad swaths of the population.”¹⁶ This was a political project that involved creating a new world, an order of a universal reach that was separate from the order that emerged as a result of World War II. It is true no single, durable construct of this sort was settled upon; indeed there were five solutions formulated either explicitly or implicitly way in the globalization project. However, their realism was inversely proportional to their global usefulness, or usefulness for all humanity. Three of the solutions listed below assume the activity of governments and the consent of citizens to the adoption of a perspective in which it is acknowledged that “[o]nly a framework of global regulation – of currencies, capital movements, trade and environmental conservation – can enable the creativity of the world economy to be harnessed in the service of human needs.”¹⁷ The system of global regulation assumes the existence of effective governance and political solutions that take precedence over the global market. It may assume several forms and be organized in various ways. The first scenario would involve establishing a global government supported by all humanity, as opposed to one or several selected societies and guided by a global rationality embracing the human species.¹⁸ Ideas of a new order on Earth are nothing new and express the dream of a great many thinkers, with both Immanuel Kant and August Cieszkowski among them. What the enlightenment-age German philosopher saw as the overriding value was perpetual peace, which means the exclusion of a state of peace “made with the secret reservation of material for a future war.”¹⁹ The Polish Romantic philosopher also prophesied the end of wars and the inauguration of an era of “perpetual peace.” This was to be attained because “the reborn humanity will organize itself – a central Government of Humanity will be formed, and so will a Universal Tribunal of Nations and an Ecumenical Council of Humanity.”²⁰ Kant called for a rational treaty to be reached between the world’s countries, whereas Cieszkowski expected a Government of Humanity to emerge as a result of historical development. Such thinking is now

¹⁶ B. Guillochon, *La mondialisation: une seule planete, des projets divergents*, Larousse, 2009, p. 7.

¹⁷ J. Gray, *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism*, Granta Books 2002, p. 199

¹⁸ Cf. J. Pajestka, *Prolegomena globalnej racjonalności człowieka*, Warsaw 1983. Janusz Stacewicz, elaborates on this idea by stating that “the sum of partial rationalities does not guarantee overall, global rationality”, in J. Stacewicz, *Ekonomia na rozdrożu*, Warsaw 1991, p. 49.

¹⁹ I. Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay*, trans. Mary Campbell Smith, third impression, 1917. Cited from: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/50922/50922-h/50922-h.htm>

²⁰ A. Walicki, “August Cieszkowski,” in *Polska myśl filozoficzna i społeczna*, Vol. 1., ed. A. Walicki, Warsaw 1973, p. 421.

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accompanied by new circumstances: the escalating climate catastrophe, which is global in its reach and poses existential threats. It is being preceded by convulsions involving efforts to search for an ark to ensure the survival of the chosen ones.

The idea of a global government and universal harmony, centuries old though it is, has never yet been put into effect, but it was closest to coming into fruition after great disasters and the resultant yearning for global peace. In any case, sketching out plans to establish a global government belongs to the utopic realm, not in the sense of infantile fantasies and pipedreams but because it extends beyond history as we know it. Scenario two is less maximalist, but its actual implementation has been far from the announced goals and ideological justifications. It assumes the existence of a hegemon that would wield global influence and, most importantly, be guided by a universal axiology, not by its own particularistic interests. Until recently, after the fall of the Soviet Union and the rejection of the bipolar post-Yalta order, this role in the global arena was played by the United States. It led humanity in voicing and pursuing (as justified ideologically by such authors as Fukuyama) the project of a general human civilization, worked towards its materialization, and often sped up the course of the attendant changes. Before that, guided by a similar historiosophy, “[t]he former Soviet Union embodied a rival Enlightenment Utopia, that of a universal civilization in which markets were replaced by central planning. (...) Even though a global free market cannot be reconciled with any kind of planned economy, what these Utopias have in common is more fundamental than their differences.”²¹ The United States’ political dominance derived, at least in the sphere of declarations, from the optimistic Enlightenment-age ideas, which were rejected under Donald Trump’s presidency. Their axiological foundations were replaced by calculations taking economic interests as the point of reference. China, the world’s new and powerful hegemon, is likewise guided by economic gains, striving to maximize them, as well as by the cohesion of the state and the improved standards of living for the whole of society, not by variously construed, overriding and universal ideological values.

The mission of leading the world and overseeing the global order, pursued by one or two powers, appears to be losing its existing foundations as well as the related appeal. Globalization as a political project expressing the United States’ dominance has turned into a paradox and perhaps into the actual twilight of the West. The preceding “conflict between Soviet communism and liberal democracy was not a clash between the West and the rest. It was a family quarrel among western ideologies.”²²

When compared to these two projects, the third solution is narrower in scope, and its potential consequences are weaker. It is more modest, even minimalistic, but therefore also the most pragmatic of all, though most probably insufficient. It comprises a model of governance based on international agreements, or as

²¹ J. Gray, *From the Great Transformation of Global Capitalism*, London 1998, p. 3. Cited from: <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/first/g/gray-dawn.html>

²² John Gray, *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism*, Granta Books, 1998, p. 102.

Stanisław Ossowski once put it, “a system of intergroup agreements.”²³ In this text of his (originally published by the author in 1943 under a pseudonym), Ossowski stressed the importance of the groups that act as intermediaries in undermining the force of the monocentric order, one in which power is focused in a single center and decisions have the form of commands. The existence of such groups, their horizontally and vertically diversified system, their extended network, and all signs of the active presence of such bodies all increase the territory of democratic society. The need to regulate globalization determines the opposite perspective: the actual multitude of countries, institutions and problems reduces the chances for the emergence of a center of global power – and even invalidates it. But even if there is no single government for all humanity, and it does not appear that such a government will emerge any time soon, because it is unclear whether it could assume a form other than despotism, this does not mean that we should give up laying down any global rules of coexistence. In line with this thinking, let us not strive to achieve all goals, let us give up maximizing our efforts to build what should be, and let us instead oppose what is destructive, what is prone to generate conflict, and what is bad from one perspective or another. Let us reject radical utopias and replace them with moderate and goal-oriented pragmatism – let us move forward one step at a time and choose what Karl Popper described as “piecemeal engineering,” which prevents us from succumbing to the temptation of putting into effect something, which is of course the best thing, at any price. “The politician who adopts this method may or may not have a blueprint of society before his mind, he may or may not hope that mankind will one day realize an ideal state (...). The piecemeal engineer will, accordingly, adopt the method of searching for and fighting against, the greatest and most urgent evils of society, rather than searching for, and fighting for, its greatest ultimate good.”²⁴ International agreements on peace, warfare, migrations, trade, the persecution of crimes, armaments, the flow of capital, taxation, work conditions, climate, and health are necessary and are indeed sometimes made. However, skeptics have reservations: countries often do not observe the agreements they have signed, the enforcement measures are limited and many countries do not participate in them, and above all the deals do not cover crucial areas, are made with great difficulty and as a rule with considerable delay. The order of international agreements is far too minimalist in nature.²⁵

The fourth solution involves the universal free market. It should form the order of the human world regardless of the will and intentions of its participants. “The social form of activity, and also the social form of products and the

²³ S. Ossowski, “Ku nowym formom życia społecznego”, in *Dziela* Vol. 1, Warsaw 1968, p. 351.

²⁴ K. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Princeton University Press, 2020, p. 148

²⁵ One variant of governance based on international agreements is the concept presented in the first half of 2020 by Russian President Vladimir Putin, who refers to the historical Yalta Conference and proposes a deal that would be made now by the most important countries of the world and would form the political construct of globalization. See V. Putin, “The Real Lessons of the 75th Anniversary of World War II,” *The National Interest*, June 2020.

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involvement of individuals in their division, appears here not as their mutual relation, but as their subjugation to relations independent of them.”²⁶ For Marx, the free market culminated in the capitalist phase of historical development, and its deceptive objectivity resulted from the expansion of alienation. Advocates of the free market saw it as having similar characteristics, but these characteristics were beneficial and truly extrinsic and therefore “objective.” Whether consciously or inadvertently, they invoked the thinking of the 18th-century theologian William Paley, “who believed the market to be a secular Providence.”²⁷ References to this were also made later in the statements of such activists as Richard Cobden and John Bright, leaders of the Anti-Corn Law League, who argued – literally, not metaphorically – that “Free Trade is the International Law of God.”²⁸

Friedrich Hayek, the 20th century supporter of the market and one of the ideological parents of globalization as its product, continues this line of thinking. As the Austrian-British economist argues, the market should harmonize various individual interests and transform them into drivers of all-pervasive development.²⁹ It has catalectic properties, it is inclusive, it applies to everyone, and it turns enemies into friends. It also constitutes the center of general human rationality, which overcomes individual, class, national, and state particularism. It accumulates the knowledge acquired for generations, which surpasses in its depth ongoing attempts and achievements. The market here fulfills functions similar to those of the heritage of the past in the thinking of classical conservatism. Hayek and other supporters of *laissez-faire* believe that the global market embodies and guarantees freedom, and it emerges spontaneously, so any limitations are artificial and invariably inauspicious. It has self-regulating properties that cannot be accomplished in any other way. It must therefore be non-political, and it leads to the eradication of politics and the conflicts it generates.

It is not difficult to notice that historical experiences as well as the modern era have dispelled these illusions, denying the existence of a market that is free, accessible to everyone, and equal, fosters development that brings peace, creative collaboration, and distributes all market goods in a fair way.

The fifth and the last of the solutions that have been posited and tested aims to replace ideological politics with detailed policies, with skillful management. Here, irrational politics in the strict sense is replaced with rational leadership. The

²⁶ K. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 1859, trans. S.W. Ryazanskaya 1993, cited from: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/index.htm>

²⁷ A. Walicki, *Od projektu...*, *op. cit.*, p. 344.

²⁸ Quoted after J. Gray, *Black Mass: Apocalyptic Religion and the Death of Utopia*, Penguin UK, London 2011. Gray elaborates on this thought and concludes that “[t]he free market became a religion only when its basis in religion was denied” and it was proven scientifically that it is natural in its character. See also R. H. Nelson, *Economics as Religion. From Samuelson to Chicago and Beyond*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001.

²⁹ F. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, first edition of 1944. Also F. Hayek, *Constitution of Liberty*, 1960, and *Individualism and Economic Order*, 1948.

4. Globalization as a source of responsiveness

Globalization causes reactions whose initial apparent randomness transforms into more or less crystallized forms; these responses are sometimes formulated by their participants in a conscious way and further elaborated, sometimes manifested spontaneously and thoughtlessly. All of them are aimed against globalization as an ideology and its illusory pledges. They are also signs of the non-fulfillment of globalization as a political project. If we return to Hegel, mentioned by Fukuyama, we see that globalization has provoked authentic mental and physical activity. Such activity was expected and as a rule not new, or in other words possible to predict and therefore “natural,” if we consider the metaphorically understood norm occurring in socio-historical processes.

The first of the responses to globalization is the increased eagerness to defend, or even to intensify identity: both one’s own, individual identity and collective identity. Globalization has crumbled all the forms of existing identities without offering any new ones; after all, it was expected to render the individual, along with its links to other people and to symbols, fully mobile in the social, economic, and spatial sense. The effects included the acutely felt loss of the safe sense of being oneself and in one’s own place, and therefore growth in the value of identity and something that could be described as a yearning for identity. When self-definitions are identical with one’s life experience, self-image is consistent with the necessity of fulfilling externally imposed requirements, and the names that have been used so far and internalized are linked to the vocabulary promoted by the leading institutions of the new world, namely corporations, media outlets, and educators – all these things stimulate efforts on the part of those who are harshly affected by the breakdown of cohesion and the loss of the sense of belonging. Shaking individual identities and causing them to disintegrate leads not only to confusion but also to social anomie. This is coupled with the intensification of anxieties, a growing need for security, and the treatment of the satisfaction of this need as the most important task in life. This socio-psychological process also results in political efforts to organize collective life in a way that makes security the primary goal. This is no coincidence, because the sense of a minimum level of existential certainty rises in importance and is therefore greater than the value of individual freedom, spontaneity, expression, the choice of one’s life path, and personal development.

Collective identity, as linked to the individual belonging to it, grows in importance in situations of danger. In reaction to globalization, the pendulum swings away from *Gesellschaft* (society) towards *Gemeinschaft* (community), or away from a group brought together by interests, calculation, contracts, and the division of roles, towards spontaneity, emotions, full individualism, and mental warmth.³²

³² F. Tönnies, *Community and Society*, trans. Charles P. Loomis, Michigan State University Press, 1957

The significance of collective identity manifests itself in the return of nationalism (in the Anglophone, or descriptive, sense of the concept, as opposed to the judgmental and pejorative sense) on the social scene, with “uprooted” individuals, just like after the breakup of feudalism, starting to find themselves within the imaginative community formed by the nation.”³³ It is therefore no coincidence that we can observe – as a result of deliberations on modernity – the appearance of hypotheses about “the absolute centrality of nationalism in our experience” and its role as “the constitutive element of modernity.”³⁴ In crisis situations, or a more intense sense of the loss of security, people return to the nation, which may be seen as the exemplification of the psychoanalytic theory of regression, but the thing is that despite the ideology of globalization they have never really left the nation. Nation-states have not disappeared, not only in the psychosocial realm but also in the realm of political action, just as the global processes have not blurred their borders. The 2020 pandemic crisis is a particularly powerful illustration of this, including in the context of the behavior of the EU member states. The nation, awareness, and national ties have not lost their function; they have turned out to be vital and irreplaceable. Struggling against the nation in the name of globalization or post-modernity or for other reasons proves counter-effective, and declaring its end is as justified as the belief that the global open market entails the end of warfare and the emergence of joint action taken by everyone. This is why the way in which we understand the word “nation” and choose to define it is especially important and carries political consequences. The response to fears about the loss of national identity does not have to boil down to the ethnic nation and to ethnonationalism, which glorifies it, but can also involve understanding the nation as a pluralistic community composed of smaller cultures, groups, and styles that communicate with one another and make it possible for people to choose their life paths, a community that is open to others and respects the autonomy of individuals. In other words, the nation – defined in keeping with liberal nationalism, which does not always give an unwavering sense of certainty, but does not engulf anyone in full – as Czesław Miłosz put it, does not “consume” anyone and “leaves room for free self-determination” for everyone. It ensures an “identity that can be consciously shaped and changed.”³⁵

Identity has many forms, not only ones that refer to individuals or nations. There are also vigorous group identities – religious, moral, sexual, ideological, local, cultural, and so on. Consequently, what emerged simultaneously was “identity politics,” similar to “a prism refracting a single beam of light into its constituent colors, producing a rainbow.”³⁶ Showcasing identities has divided

³³ J. Szacki, *Historia myśli socjologicznej*, Warsaw 2002, p. 173.

³⁴ L. Greenfeld, *Nationalism. Five Roads to Modernity*, Harvard University Press 1992.

³⁵ A. Walicki, *Naród, nacjonalizm, patriotyzm*, Prace wybrane, Vol. 1, Kraków 2009, p. 407. See also A. Walicki, conversation with P. Kozłowski, “Polska–naród–Europa” in *Zdanie* no. 3–4, 1997.

³⁶ M. Lilla, *The Once and Future Liberal: After Identity Politics*, New York 2017, p. 9

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society into groups and made them closed, and the requirement of being oneself has supplanted politics treated as an irreplaceable type of human creativity. Concentration on the defense of one's own, individual or collective "self," prompts others to behave in a similar way, with the open democratic community transforming into a collection different communities that clash with one another. Intransigence and peculiar fundamentalism prevent any dialogue, not to mention consensus. The ability to give up part of one's identity was, for instance, a condition of the Polish Round Table deals that led to the end of communism in the country. When identity-related pressure is intensified and identity politics is cultivated, on the other hand, maintaining deliberative democracy and social cohesion is difficult, if not impossible. There are many ways in which globalization affects it and the supranational European community, whose current "nationalism (...) is a reaction to problems, not the beginning of them."³⁷

Emphasizing identities may be treated as a reaction to the globalization-related uprooting, to (what Zygmunt Bauman saw as) the fluidity of the post-modern world, uniformization, and alienation, which causes a sense of threat. Other responses to globalization as well as the question posed therein include the rebirth of populism and the attractiveness of authoritarianism.

Modern populism – born out of or at least strengthened by globalization – is a manifestation of the radicalism of democracy and the refusal to agree to "the pathology of representative politics."³⁸ Populism refers to direct democracy and is averse to existing institutions and political representation. This is because the main reason for its existence is the broad sense of strong disappointment caused by the existing leadership elites in society and the state, which resulted in wide disparities and the accumulation of wealth in the hands of few, the erosion of the "middle" of society and its material polarization, the negation and commercialization of the public sphere, and the governance of selected experts and managers incapacitating citizens and transforming them into "corporate human resources." Everyone was supposed to see improvement and live better lives in a wiser world led by the best, but that did not happen, and "contemporary representative democracy is tired, vindictive, paranoid, self-deceiving, clumsy and frequently ineffectual."³⁹ This is the democracy of viewers who are not satisfied with the show. The ratings of its directors and trust in the political elites and institutions are dwindling, and the disappearance of the sense of agency is not compensated by results of the governance of elites that are good for everyone. Consequently, populism does not treat them as guides or even mere allies but rejects them all in light of growing disappointment. It expects a fundamental change "from the bottom up," because

³⁷ U. Guérot, *Der neue Bürgerkrieg: Das offene Europa und seine Feinde*, 2017, Propyläen Verlag.

³⁸ P. Taggart, "Populism and the pathology of representative politics," in: eds. Y. Mény and Y. Surel, *Democracies and the populist challenge*. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2002, pp. 62–80.

Demokracja w obliczu populizmu, eds. Y. Mény, Y. Surel, Warsaw 2007, p. 33.

³⁹ D. Runciman, *How democracy ends*, London 2018.

we have witnessed the arrival of “a populist moment,” as Chantal Mouffe puts it, using Hegel’s terminology.⁴⁰ Populism as a reaction to post-politics and post-democracy sets the world in motion, aiming to dismantle the tracks on which it has recently been driving, showing aversion to its current organization. We may be at a crossroads, and “(...) the ‘populist moment’ points to a ‘return of the political’ after years of post-politics. This return may open the way for authoritarian solutions – through regimes that weaken liberal-democratic institutions – but it can also lead to a reaffirmation and extension of democratic values.”⁴¹ It does not determine the methods or results of transformations, be they left- or right-wing ones. It merely expresses the old conviction voiced by the Polish revolutionary Jan Wacław Machajski, who argued that leaders managing the state’s institutions are, in defiance of their public assertions, in practice guided by their own interests and striving to maximize their benefits, not by concern for a majority of society, and they do not feel obligated towards others, those whose positions are lower, to repay the debt that they owe them or even to practice a pragmatic engineering towards creating a homogenized, harmonious, and open society.⁴²

Another reaction to the crisis of democracy in the times of globalization involves a shift towards authoritarianism. This means not the radicalization of democracy but its rejection, the withdrawal of citizens from co-participating and co-deciding, or from agency and political empowerment. Power is ceded to the few who control bureaucracy, institutions, laws/regulations, and the power of the state, and are expected to maintain order and stable security, exercise supervision, look after the development of the whole, and mete out justice. Authoritarianism is often linked to the old belief in the paternalistic duties of those in power and to ethnonationalism, in which citizens are transformed into the community of “our people.” Autocracy imposes cohesion on the world, and the patriarch leading it expresses concerns about those he has under his care and offers them as a sense of security, which also embraces their future. At least that is what he professes, alleviating the tension and unrest that follow from the threat and risk inherent in a world that is unclear and dominated by few market players. At the same time, “the authoritarian measures that are everywhere in place could have been implemented within a political structure that remains, notionally, democratic.”⁴³ This is favored by tensions and crises in such fields as nuclear weapons, migration, health, and climate. In this way, thanks to authoritarianism, people are given the impression that things are under control or at least a certain order is present, not thanks to their own actions but many people do nonetheless feel mental relief. Others replace them in this role and are sometimes listened to.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ See Ch. Mouffe, *For a Left...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 6–7

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴² J. W. Machajski, *Pracownik umysłowy i inne pisma*, Warsaw 2016.

⁴³ M. Fisher, *Capitalist...* *op. cit.*, p. 1.

⁴⁴ J. Reykowski, *Rozczarowanie demokracją: Perspektywa psychologiczna*, Sopot 2019, p. 238 and elsewhere.

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An authoritarian regime is a response to ever-closer threats on the part of other countries, corporations, domestic elites, societies (migrating newcomers), economies (resources and energy), as well as growing natural and climate-related threats. It may but does not have to draw closer to what Herbert Spencer described as a military society: characterized by discipline imposed from the top, centralization, and strict order.⁴⁵

Populism is collective activism, an authoritarian regime is an individualized absence; the former expresses its readiness to take the matters in its own hands, whereas the latter entrusts the course of events to a caring father, preferably a charismatic one. Both solutions reject the existing system, because it has disappointed them.

A different, third response to globalization involves protectionism, which is starting to gain appeal in the economic sphere, but it is not termed so in a clear way. Similarly, the withdrawal from a liberal democracy is not defined openly, and in such cases a restricting adjective is added to this term to announce that what we are witnessing is the arrival of real democracy or at least something that is very close to it. Different manifestations of reemerging protectionism are defined elliptically, for example as relocation or “asymmetric trade policies.”⁴⁶ Many characteristics of economic policy aimed at changing the economic system in a specific country and creating distance to neoliberal globalization refer to the foundations (albeit not to the historically and situationally conditioned details) of the arguments that were put forward in 1791 by Alexander Hamilton and referred to the protection of America’s “infant industries.”⁴⁷ The platform proposed by Hamilton, which was one of the three Federalists, included many instruments protecting the development of the country’s economy against competition on the part of more powerful players. His recommendations, which for understandable reasons essentially pertained only to industry, were as follows: protective tariffs, import bans, subsidies, export bans on key resources, duty drawbacks on imported semi-processed goods for the industry, rewards for innovation, the standardization of production quality, the development of transportation infrastructure, and the network of financial institutions.⁴⁸ Today, we can add tax preferences and sanitary barriers on borders – aside from that, none of these measures have become outdated.

The United States on the threshold of its birth and England in the period of the emergence of industry and capitalism protected their economies, and also today “the countries that are economic powers are setting up barriers against the inflow of products from countries characterized by poor or medium development.” Such

⁴⁵ H. Spencer, *Principles of Sociology*, first edition: London 1876–1879.

⁴⁶ J. D. Sachs, A. Warner, “Economic Reform and the Process of Global Integration,” *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, 1995, Issue 1, p. 17.

⁴⁷ This term, or essentially this theory, was then popularized by Friedrich List, who initially supported free trade but later concluded under the influence of Hamilton’s ideas that free trade was only good for countries with similar levels of development.

⁴⁸ A. Hamilton, “Writings,” *The Library of America*, New York 2001, pp. 679–708.

restrictions apply in particular to the imports of food and textiles, or what these countries can offer to more advanced regions on competitive terms.⁴⁹ One particularly significant modern-day form of protectionism is the protection of a country's own R&D-focused intellectual property, which means various inventions and innovations that determine the success of a knowledge-based economy. Hence the program of implementing the concept of an "entrepreneurial state," formulated by Mariana Mazzucato, an economist respected in today's global arena. This agenda appeals to the ideas of Schumpeter and Keynes, and many governments have been attempting to put it into effect to a smaller or greater extent.⁵⁰

Calls for reindustrialization, relocation, and greater independence, which have intensified since 2008 and also in connection with the 2020 coronavirus pandemic, require the state to act, rebuild its agency, and adopt its own strategy – in other words, to abandon the recently professed globalization ideology. Such an approach is justified, because, as the French economists argue, "[c]ontrary to the current description of semi-achieved globalization, we are currently living in an era of mere 'semi-globalization', since numerous indicators of world integration are surprisingly low. Only 2% of students are enrolled in foreign universities and 3% of the inhabitants of the planet live outside the country in which they were born. Only 7% of the directors of the S&P 500 companies, the companies quoted on the American stock exchange, are foreign. Finally, exports only represent 20% of world GDP."⁵¹

Protectionism, whether camouflaged or open, is alive and kicking and one can see reasons for its development. It is embracing individual countries or regional associations thereof. Its durability has sources similar to those of the expansion of identity politics, because "[t]he world is actually very open and could find itself undermined in the future by protest votes of people who felt themselves excluded, tempted by the prospect of isolationism through withdrawing behind their own borders."⁵² Let us point out that the pandemic in 2020, which could be described as a globalization of viruses, has immediately caused the reestablishment of borders, also within the European Union, as well as across-the-board measures taken by governments in the territories subject to their legal authority. The need for security comes from numerous sources, it grows and becomes increasingly pertinent in different situations.

⁴⁹ A. Sopoćko, "Globalizacja: Odwracające procesy," in *Przyszłość Polski w dobie globalizacji: Tezy, Komitet Prognoz "Polska 2000 Plus"* PAN i PTE, Warsaw 2020, pp. 16, 17.

⁵⁰ See M. Mazzucato, *The Entrepreneurial State: Debunking Public vs. Private Sector Myths*, Anthem Press, 2013. The Polish edition, *Przedsiębiorcze państwo: Obalić mit o relacji sektora publicznego i prywatnego*, Poznań 2016, included an introduction written by Mateusz Morawiecki, who then served as deputy prime minister in charge of the economy (and at the time of writing is prime minister), identifying with the content of the book.

⁵¹ J.-H. Lorenzi, and M. Berrebi, *A Violent World: Modern Threats to Economic Stability*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, p. 96

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 97.

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Another, or fourth clear reaction to globalization in this responsive catalogue involves the closing of space. Globalization, by definition and in practice, aimed at the full opening up of space, and the lifting of the Iron Curtain and the fall of the Berlin Wall were expected to hold significance that was not only real but also symbolic: freedom also means the freedom of movement and the freedom to choose where one resides. The ideals of the French Revolution and the demolition of the Parisian tollhouses were brought to completion, as it was hinted, by the lifting of all borders that shut off fragments of the common world all over the globe, especially in the West.⁵³ In reality, despite the ideology of opening, we can notice the return of borders in the form of walls, wires, barriers, devices detecting sound and heat, reflectors, and other measures, whether new or old. There are plenty of local reasons, and all of them boil down to the fact that outsiders, all those unwanted newcomers, pose a threat to the locals. These or other barriers indeed appear to be more abundant now than they were in the era before globalization. The borders between Mexico and the United States are “referred to by some as ‘the Iron Curtain,’”⁵⁴ there is still a minefield between North Korea and South Korea, and many other countries are erecting new walls or modernizing the old ones on the most sensitive sections of their borders. This has been done by such countries as “India, Botswana, Costa Rica, Peru, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Israel, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Bulgaria, Hungary, Spain, Lithuania, and Russia...”⁵⁵ Let us add the (obviously temporary) restoration of borders within the European Union in 2020, the reinstatement of border controls between the UK and the continent, and Switzerland’s pledge to reestablish its borders with the EU countries.

A border is not only a place on a map, it is not reduced to its physical dimension, administrative sanctions, guards in uniforms, or pledges to use force. “The worst aspect of the wall is to turn so many people into its defenders and produce a mental attitude that sees a wall running through everything, imagines the world as being divided into an evil and inferior part, on the outside, and a good and superior part, on the inside. A keeper of the wall need not be in physical proximity to it; he can be far away and it is enough that he carry within himself its image and pledge allegiance to the logical principles that the wall dictates.”⁵⁶ Hopes were pinned on virtual proximity, but it does not mean real closeness, or unity, much in the same way as telephone contacts, which have been present for a long time, do not reduce physical distance, whether for good or for bad.⁵⁷

⁵³ J. Baszkiewicz, *Nowy człowiek, nowy naród, nowy świat: Mitologia i rzeczywistość rewolucji francuskiej*, Warsaw 1993, p. 127.

⁵⁴ M. Kula, *Trzeba owoić własne miejsce: Wykłady z socjologii historycznej*, Warsaw 2018, p. 219.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 219–220.

⁵⁶ R. Kapuściński, *Travels with Herodotus*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2009, p. 59. Cf. also Z. Bauman, *Globalization: The Human Consequences*, Columbia University Press, 1998.

⁵⁷ Cf. for example A. Munk’s movie *Eroica* based on J. Stawiński’s screenplay, 1957, especially the scenes with Edward Dziewoński as the leading actor (portraying Dzdzius).

The ideology of globalization and the unsatisfactory attempts to put it into effect as one of various political projects have been replaced by responsive reactions. They are shaping the world of the near future, which is now emerging. At the same time, they do not challenge the expansion of great corporations, the dominance of the financial sphere, or world trade. This picture must include the experiences of the pandemic crisis in 2020, which have been merely sketched out here, and particularly profound climate change, which is an ongoing process. Reactions to these critical transformations of the world's natural environment should be likewise global, but they would require axiological foundations shared by all humanity. In reality, they only trigger partial reactions, which are significantly less effective.

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