

GLOBALIZATION DRAMA

UDC 316. 32

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Abstract. *The chief argument of this article is to be found in the extremely dramatic complications of globalization. The miraculous technological, economic and cultural highs that man has attained provide an unimagined power for creating a more humane, peace-loving and democratic "World Society". However, at the same time their dark side becomes overpowering, turning the global arena into a World Society of risk. The democratic image of globalization or the Orwellian repressive world regime and an unbridled upsurge of risk are at stake. The new era brings about a new, epochal perspective: integration into a single and united European Union, the process of which will, however, have different rhythms for different European states.*

Key words: *the light and dark side of globalization, new global empire, European Union.*

1. An examination of the globalization labyrinth faces an almost unsolvable complication at the very first step. Globalization has turned into an unstoppable force which is shaping the new image of the world, pulling so many strings of our daily lives. However, in spite of this, its nature remains mysterious – it presents "the Sphinx of the new millennium". "While some people recognize in it the earthly garden of Eden, the others can only find in it an apocalyptic pestilence of the world" (The Theses). "The Theses" justly see the source of this deep discordance in the outstandingly ambivalent, polyvalent character of globalization, in its various phenomenal forms.

True though this finding may be, it is nevertheless utterly insufficient, self-deceptive. It offers a picture of a soothing balance that exists: the light and the dark side have gone hand in hand throughout the modern history of the world; their peaceful coexistence will continue in the era of globalization, too.

The research results that I have obtained put a question mark on this soothing, non-dramatized picture. The old game has been disturbed, a gradual preponderance of the dark side is at work. The point of this article is to be found in these very dramatic complications of globalization. The miraculous technological, economic and cultural highs that

man has achieved provide an unimagined power for creating a more humane, peace-loving and democratic "World Society", a dream which has been dreamt for quite a long time. However, at the same time, the dark side becomes overpowering, it is turning the global arena into a World Society of risk. Let us consider the two sides of the historic record, the change of balance between the two forces.

2. A global economy, new economic geography, world with no borders is being created at an ever-increasing pace. The gigantic mass of the transnational financial capital and the economic dinosaurs, transnational corporations, are able to reach the farthest nooks of the planet, making economic wealth which our ancestors could not have even imagined – for the last five decades, the global wealth has been increased six times. The information revolution leads to a limitless broadening of local spiritual horizons, to the creation of a cosmopolitan culture. The network of powerful international institutions: the G-8, the EU, the UN Security Council, as well as the spreading of democracy and human rights far and wide – are sketching the outlines of the new global political order.

Akin to a plant that has been blooming for quite a long time, globalization yields a doublefold fruit: the worldwide wave of modernization and the birth of "World Society". Modern technology, market economy, political democracy are making their expansion to those areas where they have not flowered before. Warding off of such a mighty trend becomes unthinkable, and the price to pay too high. However, this modernization aspect of globalization is even bettered by new forms of domination. The long-lasting ideal of a unified and peaceful "World Society", the Kantian World Federation of States, seems to be at hand. But, this ideal is becoming distant when we direct the spot light to the other, the dark side of globalization.

3. The quintessence of the dark side of globalization is manifested through two dangerous symptoms: globalization assumes a very repressive shape, and the World order obtains the form of a "World Society of risk". Understandably enough, the "World Society of risk" is not of very recent origin, but the repressive form of globalization forcefully intensifies the risks. The outlines of several circles of ominous risks appear on the images that are products of a deep-going scanning process.

a) The first circle reveals a galloping ecological crisis. The ever fiercer conflicts over increasingly scantier natural resources – oil of the day, and drinking water of tomorrow – have ever so perilous military resolutions.

b) The second circle portrays a sketch of social risks. A malignant pair is marching over the planet: the more and more rapid obtaining of wealth by a small élite group and the globalization of poverty in gargantuan proportions. The abyss between the societies is ever so deeper. Half of humanity lives in poverty, whereas only 254 super-rich billionaires have a larger income in aggregate than half of the population in the world. As the proportions of social inequality turn the contemporary world scene into an eruptive ground, the cultural conflicts verge on a war of civilizations.

c) A race between transnational democracy and the creation of an Authoritarian World State, a new global empire has been opened on the political scene. On one pole, the EU presents a living prototype of a democratic transnational political organization. Instead of ending national sovereignty, it promotes a "common" sovereignty, the participation of all member states in decision-making on the regional level. Prominent on

the other pole are the symptoms of origination of an Authoritarian World State. The militant wing of the global power élite, primarily its American echelon, is becoming the sole centre of decision-making, with a tendency of transforming national states into mere transmission relays, local executives. This announces a drastic turn from a multipolar to a unipolar world. The idea of a world order without hegemony is an unreal, Utopian vision. However, it is due to this that the type of hegemony becomes a decisive issue. The "liberal" kind of hegemony, which is expressive of not only the interests of one superpower, but also the interests of the world nations and which accepts a considerable amount of multipolarity is being abandoned. The crucial transition to a repressive form of hegemony which relies on military dominance over the world is being enacted. "The new mission of the US is aggressive, global policing, a total and incessant war. The world is unipolar: you are either with us or against us" (Stratfor Strategic Forecast).

d) The fourth circle of risk reveals another lethal dichotomy: global terrorism – total war. Terrorism, which destroys the very essence of society by spreading a general sense of fear, can be misused by the "Global Hawks" for their vague geostrategic aims, for the infringement of civil rights and freedom.

4. The preponderance of the dark side is not a matter of strict historical indispensability, as perhaps the eclipse of the sun is. The repressive form of globalization is a result of the interests and the Weltanschauung of the dominant, extreme wing of the global power élite and its irrepressible ascent. The downfall of the Keynesian social democratic coalition, the advocate of Social capitalism and welfare state, and the rise of the neoliberal wing (Reaganism) of the 1980's, has been directing the world to an ever so greater abyss among societies. The invigoration of global hawks at the turn of the two millenia is increasingly symptomatic of an Authoritarian World State.

5. The troublesome consequences of repressive globalization and the Damocles' sword of risk inexorably cause resistance, set thousands of organizations in motion, as well as the critical intellectual élite in a struggle for the democratization of the global order. The scale of different projects ranges from environment protection and support of peace, to writing off debts of poor countries, minimal starting income for all citizens of the world, a more representative participation of countries in the transnational political institutions.

This leads us to a theoretically important conclusion: the decisive social struggle in the wake of the new millenium **is not fought in favour or against globalization, but over the form** it is to assume – repressive and inhumane or democratic and humane.

6. However, with this we have not reached the end but the peak of the complication. Eventhough the democratic alternatives may be **indispensable** just as air and water are, **in this sequence of history they are incapable of mitigating the effects of the dark side of globalization and the risks therefrom.** The authoritarian wing of the global power élite omnipotently rules the world scene without any effective counter balance. However, its design carries within itself an inherent seed of self-destruction, diagnosed not only by the critics, but also by the far-sighted exponents of globalization. "The greatest threat to globalization today is globalization itself; it contains a seed of its own destruction. It can become so oppressive that the great majority of the population of large

countries feel as though they were losers, and therefore endanger the maintainance of the whole system" (T. Friedman, a triple winner of the Pulitzer prize). "The system which has reached near perfection is vulnerable to the slightest of sparks" (Baudrillard). "I believe that the Western world is demonstrating selfishness bordering on irresponsibility, with a simultaneous inability to humanize globalization". (J. Chirac)

7. The weakness of democratic alternatives in terms of extorting even the slightest of changes, however, gives leeway for destructive, perverted kinds of resistance, different forms of reaction to the repressive globalization, starting from global terrorism to the local Argentine tango, urban violence. **The democratic image of globalization or the Orwellian regime and an unbridled upsurge of risk – that is what is at stake.** Nevertheless, the repressive course, albeit set in motion, has not completely triumphed still, history seems to be still hesitating on the issue of which direction it should take. Thus, the dissemination of this observation, which encompasses the far-seeing circles of global power élite, gives its strong contribution to achieving a better outcome.

8. Another major topic, or the other side of the same coin presents the drama of adaptation. The repressive form of globalization makes the challenge of the adaptation of local societies to the new order of things endlessly dramatic, even more cruel. But, in spite of this, a fruitful answer to this problem can not be found in isolation from the global trends. It would be an unfeasible Robinsonade in an ever so connected, mutually dependent world, a road to ghetto. The creative adjustment to the imperatives of the new era – openness to contemporary technologies, modern economy, expansion of human rights – it is a necessity which every society must recognize.

9. Nevertheless, in view of the ways of adaptation, there occurs a great schism in our society. If one tends to show sensitivity for the national identity, the interests of one's own society, and a certain degree of autonomy in many issues – one is often easily stigmatized as a retrograde nationalist. In case one is open to contemporary world trends, one gets branded as a servile mondialist. As opposed to that, it must be understood that walking on two legs is a necessary fact of life. The care for the needs of one's own society and its identity (which can become pluralistic – one can be both a Serb and a European after all) **and** opening towards globalization trends, its modernizing side, are both equally necessary. Just as closeness and confinement stand on the road to isolation, blind incorporation into the global order, automatically, does not by itself present a formula for salvation. It can lead to the attainment of a modern society, by means of a Herculean endeavour that the countries of the Pacific belt, the European south and, to a certain degree, the lands of Central Europe have made, or to joining the world order but in the form of the New European Peripheries. The forces of this new peripherization possess powerful local and global generators.

10. One of the circles is made up of the character of the local power élites, the two lines that have run deeply in its profile. As first, they are the architects of "Wild Capitalism", an edifice that rests on crumbling foundations. a) The first element is a malignant symbiosis of power and money – power, political function is comparatively less a mainstay of social development than an efficient instrument of spectacular, "instant" enrich-

ment of the élite. In the stead of a "State of Development", there occurs a "State of Plunder". b) A highly corrupted privatization process opens up thousands of leaks, illegal forms of transferring the wealth of the state treasury to the hands of private individuals. Selling state-owned property cheaply puts the process of privatization much more at service to the accumulation of wealth of the élite, its remaining in power, than to the end of technological advancement of the society. c) The bond between mafia capital on one hand, and the power centres on the other, wraps around the society like a spider web. d) Political authoritarianism is an unavoidable protection mechanism in corruptive systems.

The other line, deeply cut into the profile of the local power élite, is its disconsensuality, a lack of the ability to make big compromise and a surplus of intolerance, war to extinction, inclination toward far-fetched projects which go from one extreme to the other: total nationalization of property or privatization at the lowest of prices, either demonizing the global order or establishing a satellite-type relationship.

11. Progress to a modern society or sliding down to the abyss of periphery are decisively dependent upon regional powers and the forms of globalization.

A trait that has been characterizing the social geography of Europe is its division: The Western center and the Eastern European semi-periphery. The new age brings about a new epochal perspective: the **integration** into a unified European Union, which, however, will occur at different paces for different countries. The deep political inequality among the states will be disappearing or it will be alleviated at a higher rate. But the hard-to-crack economic features of the periphery, the astronomic differences in terms of 2.000 – 30.000 dollars of income per capita, will present a harsh reality for a long time.

The uncertainties of the economically troubling and politically authoritarian globalization will also have effect in the same direction. The once opulent economic support for the countries of the European south has been drastically reduced. In this historical stage, the help offered to the underdeveloped countries is four times less than before, and the help by the US has been decreased thirty times. The aspirations toward an authoritarian world state, a global empire, are being deeply imprinted in the European social organism, causing a further division into the Old and the New Europe. Forced allegiance, coercive choosing – «whose side are you on?» – can have tragic consequences and do irreparable harm.

12. Be that as it may, the semi-peripheral societies are still on a historic intersection, their structure is not petrified, nor completely shaped. There lies a huge human potential within the society, a nucleus of knowledge, invention and enterprise, the capability of achieving a more modern society. Liberating these bound forces means freeing the agentum mobile which surpasses the authoritarian, disconsensual and self-centered élite by far.

DRAMA GLOBALIZACIJE**Miroslav Pečujlić**

Poentu izlaganja čine krajnje dramatični zapleti globalizacije. Čudesne tehnološke, ekonomske, i kulturne sile koje je čovek osvojio poseduju neslućenu moć stvaranja humanijeg, miroljubivog i demokratskog "Svetskog društva". No, istovremeno njihova tamna strana postaje nadmoćnija, pretvara svetsku arenu u Svetsko društvo rizika. Na kocki je demokratski lik globalizacije ili orvelovski svetski represivni poredak i nezadrživ uspon rizika. Novo doba donosi novu, epohalnu perspektivu: integraciju u jedinstvenu Evropsku Uniju, koja će, međutim, za različite evropske države teći različitim ritmovima.

Ključne reči: svetla i tamna strana globalizacije, nova globalna imperija, Evropska Unija.