

GLOBALISATION AND THE HUMAN MIND – PART II

UDC 172

Ivan Ribarić

University of Belgrade, Serbia
E-mail: ivanrib@hotmail.com

Abstract. *In the first part of this presentation (I. Ribarić: Globalisation and Human Mind, Facta Universitatis, Series: Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology and History, Vol.9.No 1. 2010, pp 15-21. – <http://facta.junis.ni.ac.rs/pas/pas2010/pas2010-02.html>) we presented the starting point of this contemplation. The human mind participates in the development of human society and humankind by means of the feedback effect: a world created by the human mind.*

Based on scientific facts, we can infer that the nature of the human mind is determined by a mixture of two qualities of equal importance: individual independence (autonomy as the psychological underpinning of "individualism") and social dependence (socialization as psychological underpinning of "collectivism").

The nature of the human mind matches ethical utilitarianism, which holds that a moral agent should treat one's self (the subject) with no higher regard than one has for others, but that one should also not sacrifice one's own interests to help other's interests, so long as one's own interests are substantially equivalent to others' interests and well-being.

In the society of the information age the classical external incentive system for human activity, material reward (compensation) or moral reward (social prestige) is joined by the intrinsic incentive system derived from the nature and needs of the human mind (interest or enjoyment of the task itself, because it is interesting and satisfying in itself, the motivation to participate and contribute).

*The drawback of ideology of neoliberal economy is **fragmented ethics**: individual ethics; laissez-faire market ethics; ethics of firms, corporations, banks - each of them are expected to increase their own wealth and finance for the benefit of their own shareholders; ethics of financial systems (greed justification); poorly regulated and legal "lobbying" (the vote can be freely "sold"); at the international level local interests are often masked by false ethical behavior (some international aids);*

The fragmented ethics of a neoliberal economy and society has resulted in frequent economic meltdowns that cannot be explained by theories of business cycles alone.

Frequent, destructive violence in the streets of many towns and regions in the world are manifestations of the general dissatisfaction and apathy of the masses due to poverty, lack of prospects, expectancy and hope (as opposed to the initiative and unity of the elites).

*In the globalized society of the age of technology, ethics can only be **worldwide and unique**. The core of this ethics is scientific humanism (elaborated in: *Ibid*, part I). The global unique ethics means common ethical principles are accepted by all members of the world's population, including the upper classes and power elite. All individuals have to realize that this ethics is a necessity, morally and economically beneficial, and a common interest and need.*

Key words: *globalization; human mind; property and human mind; society and human mind; assisted social evolution; fragmented ethics - unique ethics.*

In the first part of this presentation (I. Ribarić: Globalization and Human Mind, *Facta Universitatis, Series: Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology and History*, Vol. 9. No 1. 2010, pp 15-21. – <http://facta.junis.ni.ac.rs/pas/pas2010/pas2010-02.html>) we presented the starting point of this contemplation: the evolutionary appearance of the phenomenon of the human mind in the universe was the beginning of creation of the contemporary created world (including everything that had not existed on earth before the emergence of the human mind: art, science, social relationships, ethical and aesthetical values, tradition, historical memory, technology, political, economic and military systems etc). The human mind gives sense to the existence of human beings and participate in the development of human society and humankind through the feedback effect: human mind-created world.

We also showed that the contemporary globalized world is a battlefield of many, more or less spontaneous undesirable processes which got out of the control of the human mind: the destruction of the environment, deficiency of the social and economic system, unnatural and deteriorating inequality in the distribution of the wealth (which stems from nature, human work and creativity or money management).

The inevitable conclusion is that the human mind must regain influence over those undesirable processes. The general criteria of this activity are the long term benefit to human beings, which are encompassed by the principles of scientific humanism. The benefits of human beings are determined and dictated by the nature and needs of the human being. On the other hand, all of the solutions which are not in accordance with human nature and human needs steer the flow of civilization towards an abyss.

A HUMAN BEING - A MIXTURE OF INDIVIDUAL INDEPENDENCE ("INDIVIDUALISM") AND SOCIAL DEPENDENCE ("COLLECTIVISM")

The communication between human consciousness and other human beings and with nature is possible only by means of the human senses. Consciousness (the personality) remains private and represents free will. The privacy of the human mind is secured but not isolated from the influence of the environment and human society.

The perceptions by two human minds of the same thing in the external world are not identical. Perception is an active process consisting of organization, integration and interpretation of sensual information. Interpretation of sensual information means that human mind gives the meaning of the sensual input based on previous knowledge, memory, expectations, motivation, stands, emotional and other experiences, education, individual personality. The individual authenticity and independence of the human mind is also

based on the other functions and capabilities of the human brain: free will, curiosity, imagination, creativity.

On the other hand, the human mind is profusely dependant and immersed in human society and makes a human being a part of society.

In contemporary neuroscience there is a consensus that the human brain has inherited capabilities for various functions (language, music, recognition of faces, space perception, empathy, etc). The development of these functions depends on environmental influences and the impact of the human society and "created world". The human mind cannot be developed and cannot appropriately function without contact with other human beings.

Based on these scientific facts we can infer that the nature of the human mind is determined by the mixture of two qualities of equal importance: individual independence (autonomy as the psychological underpinning of "individualism") and social dependence (socialization as psychological underpinning of "collectivism").

It is obvious that economical science and social philosophy, ethics and human dignity, which are extremely and exclusively individualistic (the pursuit of self interest, neglecting dysfunctional economic relationships) or exclusively collectivistic (giving priority of group goals over individual goals) do not match the nature and needs of the human mind.

The individualistic side of the human mind is the base of psychological egoism, which urges people to act only in their self-interest. In the social realm it corresponds to ethical egoism which means the ethical position that moral agents ought to do what is in their own self-interest. Ethical egoism is usually combined with rational egoism, which holds merely that it is rational to act in one's self-interest.

The idea of individualism is the basis of an economic doctrine which holds that each individual should be allowed autonomy in making his or her own economic decisions as opposed to those decisions being made by the state or the community. This economic doctrine corresponds to the political ideology of classical liberalism which emphasizes free markets and the primacy of economic freedom and minimal interference of the government.

The collectivistic side of the human mind is the grassroots of (psychological and) ethical altruism, which holds that moral agents have an obligation to help and serve others, which means to subjugate the individual to a group. Many psychological needs are a manifestation of the collectivistic profile of the human mind: sharing, justice, empathy, compassionate communication, the need for participating in society's activities and collective decision-making, the need for meeting the needs of others.

The extreme example of political philosophy based on the idea of collectivism is "anarcho-communism" which advocates not only collectivization of the means of production but of the products of labor as well. Political movements such as fascism, all other forms of totalitarianism, and certain forms of nationalism and patriotism can be considered collectivist, as they emphasize the role of the nation or state over individuals.

The nature of the human mind (which is a mixture of individual independence and collective dependence) matches ethical utilitarianism, which holds that a moral agent should treat one's self (the subject) with no higher regard than one has for others, but that one should also not sacrifice one's own interests to help other's interests, so long as one's own interests are substantially equivalent to the others' interests and well-being.

For example, business leaders would comply with the principle of ethical utilitarianism if they make as much money as possible while conforming to the basic rules embodied in the law and in ethical customs.

PROPERTY AND THE NATURE OF HUMAN MIND

Property is any physical or intangible entity that is owned by an individual or jointly by a group of people.

Personal property is possession belonging to a person. Personal property matches the individual side of the human mind. It existed before men made laws referring to property rights. Personal property rights stem from the natural needs of the human mind. The other types of property rights - of real property (land), private property (owned by legal persons or business entities), public property (owned by the state or public), intellectual property (creations, inventions, etc.) - arise from social conventions and morality.

The beginning of social protection of private property came with the rule "do not steal". Protecting private property, this social rule also protects common interest. The formula "protect at the same time the individual interest and collective interest" is the starting point of all human efforts (conventions, law, ethics, social philosophy, political systems) to reconcile the mind's dichotomy, the individualistic and collectivistic profile (the struggle for political power and economic dominance were always an accompanying part of the game).

The final solution of this formula has not been found yet.

Let us look at the simple contradiction in contemporary social 'philosophy': traditional property rights do not support property rights that unreasonably interfere with property rights of another private party and that unreasonably interferes with public property rights, public health, safety, peace or convenience.

On the other hand, the central point of capitalism is the assumption (which matches the individualistic side of the mind) that property rights encourage their holders to develop the property, generate wealth and efficiently allocate resources based on the operation of the markets. This assumption proved to be a good momentum wheel for economic productivity but if this stance is applied without limitations the result is a world full of conflicts. The idea that owners have no legal and ethical obligations to others wrongly presupposes that property rights hardly ever conflict with other protected interests.

Absolute insistence on the security of property in reality may constitute the defense of the rich against the poor, or of those who have property against those who have none at all.

Communism tried to offer the opposite solution (which matches the collectivistic side of mind): private property should be abolished and only collective ownership of means of production will assure the minimization of unequal or unjust outcomes and the maximization of benefits. History showed this concept gives rise to a society with lack of productivity.

The optimal solutions for the social property formula should be sought for in ethical utilitarianism (the mixture of individual independence and collective dependence of the human mind). Unfortunately, in the contemporary world, property and other economical issues (profit, rent, interest, wage-labor) are not philosophical questions but a political issues of substantial concern.

The economical system that can satisfy the formula of ethical utilitarianism can be looked for in the "hands on" economic system: it involves a greater role of the society and/or the state to pick goods and services, with the stated aim of ensuring social justice and a more equitable distribution of wealth or of ameliorating market failures.

SOCIETY AND THE HUMAN MIND

Human societies are characterized by patterns of relationships between individuals sharing a distinctive culture and institutions. Society allows individuals to achieve needs or wishes they could not fulfill alone but in a collective, collaborative manner. Social scientists have identified historical types of societies: hunter-gatherer societies; nomadic societies; farming societies; intensive agricultural societies; industrial and post-industrial societies; the invention of two of the most significant achievements in the twentieth century, the computer and the World Wide Web which initiated the development of a virtual society based on an online identity which is evolving in the information age.

Virtually all societies, including the society of the information age, have developed some degree of inequality among their people through the process of social stratification - the division of members of a society into levels with unequal wealth, prestige or power. In a contemporary globalized world these inequalities have become unbearable, dangerous and harmful for peace in the world, for balanced economic development and for the development of civilization.

Globalization and the emergence of the "post-traditional" society give individuals the opportunity to consciously change social structure (economy, norms, customs, traditions, ideologies) and their place in it.

In the industrial and postindustrial society (with the capitalist mode of production as a global economic system) the principal incentive of social behavior of individuals was expected to be the struggle for achievement and enlargement of personal wealth and maximization of financial growth. That is considered the main driving force of economic development. The nature of this personal motivation is extrinsic: it comes from outside the individual. Social psychological research has indicated that extrinsic rewards can lead to overjustification and a subsequent reduction in intrinsic motivation. This extrinsic motivation is accompanied by inevitable competition (to win and beat others).

Competition encourages efficiency and causes commercial firms to develop new products, services and technologies. But competition in industrial and postindustrial societies (with capitalist economic systems) is predominantly "destructive competition", which seeks to benefit an individual (or group) by damaging and/or eliminating competing individuals and/or group.

Fortunately, competitiveness in human beings is not innate but a learned behavior (the same could be said for co-operative competition, which is based upon promoting mutual survival, "everyone wins"). That means that human beings can learn to adapt to environmental pressures.

THE SOCIETY OF INFORMATION AGE AND THE HUMAN MIND

The universe contains a large number of known and unknown natural forces that are intertwined and act in a chaotic game of chance and determinism. Future events cannot be predicted. The feedback effect of the human mind-created world (created by the human mind) interrelationship also has an unpredictable future. The current effect of this historical process is manifested in the beginning of the development of the society of information age.

The society of the information age features: the capacity to manipulate, store and transmit large quantities of information which has increased at a staggering rate over re-

cent years; the application of knowledge and inventions to economic activity, to the extent that it has become the predominant factor in the creation of wealth.

Information is not a concrete thing an individual can control. It is universal, existing in other people's minds. Therefore, the originator has no legitimate sovereignty. Inventions are mostly a social creation of collective, cumulative, path-dependent and interrelated work. They are a part of the common property and created world. Knowledge and inventions give rise to an economy of abundance because knowledge and ideas have infinite potential (unlike the conventional economy of scarcity based on limited resources like land, machinery, etc).

The society of the information age stimulates individual development of intrinsic motivation which means interest or enjoyment in the task itself (because it is interesting and satisfying in itself), motivation to participate and contribute. In that way, in addition to the well known ordinary needs of human beings (physiology – hunger, thirst, sleep, etc; safety – security, shelter, health; a sense of belonging – love, friendship; self esteem – recognition, achievements; self actualization) the society of the information age stimulates the need for psychological pleasure achieved by principal activities of the human mind, curiosity, imagination and creativity, and an intrinsic desire for personal development. The classical external incentive system, material reward (compensation) or moral reward (social prestige) is joined by the intrinsic incentive system derived by the nature and needs of the human mind.

In this society, competition is co-operative. This new quality in human motivation forces is a result of the natural process of the continuous mind-created world interaction.

The drawback of the ideology of neoliberal economy is **fragmented ethics**: individual ethics (the individual is expected to increase personal wealth without limitation); laissez faire market ethics, declaring the position of noninterference in the affairs of individual conduct or freedom of action, leads to the concentration of power and to an unjust distribution of wealth (the market in itself is not inherently unethical); ethics of firms, corporations, banks: each of them are expected to increase their own wealth and finance for the benefit of their own shareholders. Unfortunately, there is plenty of evidence today of unethical multinational corporate practices, which can drastically affect everyday lives of the masses. The world has witnessed serious economic and natural disasters because of unethical business practices; the financial system ensures growth through a competitive capital market system with the least regulation over the flow of capital. Such a system lets experts in the field of finance into the vice of greed justification; the stand that a group, as such, has no rights other than the individual rights of its members; poorly regulated and legal "lobbying" cannot be distinguished from corruption: law or decision makers can freely "sell" their vote, decision power or influence to those who offer the highest compensation; at the international level, local interests are often masked by false ethical behavior. For example, some international aids, which are supposed to support the economic, environmental, social and political development of developing countries, are tied with various conditions: the given aid must be spent in the donor country or predetermined countries; unbalanced appreciation of the recipient's currency; support for strategically important leaders; the obligation of the recipient to purchase goods and services from the donor, even if these are cheaper elsewhere; wiping out local production and increasing dependency, etc.

The fragmented ethics of a neoliberal economy and society has resulted in frequent economic meltdowns that cannot be explained by theories of business cycles alone.

Frequent, more or less spontaneous massive destructive violence in the streets of many towns and regions in the world, (with a tendency of becoming more massive, more wide-

spread, and more or less violent) independently of the immediate inducement, are manifestations of the general dissatisfaction and apathy of the masses due to poverty, lack of prospects, expectancy and hope (as opposed to the initiative and unity of the elites).

Due to concomitant changes of the human mind, the ethics of the information age is being developed on the assumption to protect interests of the majority in society and individual interests. In the globalized networked and intertwined society of informative age, ethics can only be worldwide and unique. The core of this ethics is scientific humanism (elaborated in: *ibid*, part I).

SOCIAL EVOLUTION ASSISTED BY THE HUMAN MIND

Culture and institutions of a society are a part of the created world (created by the human mind) and it is unnatural that many phenomena of society (money management; free market; profit; political and economic interests; all kinds of struggles for economic and political prestige, power and resources) are taking place without reference to human mind needs.

The human mind in the new information age has achieved a new level of development and needs new social, political, economic, cultural and ethical conditions which we call "mind ecology" (elaborated in: *ibid*, part I). The evolutionary changes of the postindustrial society and neoliberal ideology which accompanied culture have been initiated and we live in a transitional period. In a contemporary globalized world events are taking place which are contrary to the interests of the planet, humanity and individuals and which require the conscious engagement of the human mind. Global, unique ethics, based on the principles of scientific humanism, must hold a central place in the human conscious engagement.

A global unique ethics means that common ethics principles are accepted by all members of the world's population, including the upper class (successful entrepreneurs, CEOs, successful venture capitalists, politicians, investment bankers, some lawyers, heirs to fortunes, stockbrokers, celebrities) and the power elite (people dominating three major sectors: economy - major corporate owners and directors; politics - highest political leaders; military - high ranking military officers). All individuals have to realize that this type of ethics is a necessity, that it is morally and economically beneficial, and serves common interest and needs.

A very important role in this process belongs to the mass media which can significantly contribute to the common views and political attitudes by their vociferous everyday activities.

Ethical behavior is a conscientious, voluntary individual choice beyond the limits of law and other regulations, though their necessity remains unquestioned. The criterion in ethical behavior is not "correct" or "true" by some metaphysical criterion. It is based on empirical principles of scientific humanism. Some ethical norms are ingrained in the culture as "customs" (they are conscious), and changing the culture is naturally accompanied by their change. The changes in human psychology are accompanied by changes in the expectancy of individual behavior. It is well known that if expectations related to some actions in a society are positive, people are more likely to act in this manner, or if negatively received, people are less likely to act in this manner.

Many circumstances have prepared the world for establishing a worldwide unique ethics, based on the principles of scientific humanism: the process of globalization; informative society; staggering development of communication; collective psychological change; the universal knowledge network, network of thoughts, ideas; global innovation

network; a global network of independent scientists, academic researchers, customers, suppliers. All these processes contribute to the development of human intelligence, which improves the competence to make rational choices, better information processing, support of democratic values, human rights etc.

After being globally popularized and achieving the appropriate level of global consensus, unique ethical principles (based on principles of scientific humanism) can be implemented in particular situations, respecting generally accepted views, but also, the pluralism of interests, traditions and cultures. The process of implementation has to be conscious, willing, some kind of "assistance to evolution". It is not isolated "rational" social action (based on the principle "the end justifies the means") but a series of concrete social "instrumental" actions which are planned and undertaken after evaluating the goal in relation to other goals, and after thorough consideration of various means and consequences.

GLOBALIZACIJA I LJUDSKI UM – DEO II

Ivan Ribarić

U prvom delu ove prezentacije (I. Ribarić: Globalisation and Human Mind, Facta Universitatis, Series: Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology and History, Vol.9.No 1. 2010, pp 15-21 - <http://facta.junis.ni.ac.rs/pas/pas2010/pas2010-02.html>) izložili smo početno stanovište ovog razmišljanja. Ljudski um učestvuje u razvoju ljudskog društva i čovečanstva povratnim mehanizmom: ljudski um – kreirani svet (kreiran ljudskim umom).

Na osnovu naučnih činjenica možemo zaključiti da je priroda ljudskog uma određena mešavinom dva kvaliteta podjednako značaja: individualne nezavisnosti (autonomije kao psihološke osnove individualizma) i socijalne zavisnosti (socijalizacije kao psihološke osnove kolektivizma).

Priroda ljudskog uma odgovara utilitarizmu, koji podrazumeva da moralni subjekt ne treba da ima prema sebi više obzira nego prema drugima, ali, takođe, da ne treba da žrtvuje svoje interese radi interesa drugih sve dok je njegov interes jednak interesima i dobrobiti drugih.

U društvu informativnog doba, klasičnim spoljnim poticajnim sistemima ljudske aktivnosti, materijalnoj nagradi (kompenzacija) ili moralnoj nagradi (socijalni prestiž), pridružuje se unutrašnji podsticajni sistem koji potiče iz prirode i potreba ljudskog uma (interes i zadovoljstvo koje pruža sam zadatak, potreba učestvovanja i doprinošenja).

*Slaba strana u ideologiji neoliberalne ekonomije je **fragmentirani moral**: individualni moral; moral slobodnog, neregulisanog, tržišta; moral firme, korporacija, banaka – od svih njih se očekuje da povećavaju sopstveno bogatstvo i finansije u korist svojih deoničara; moral finansijskog sistema (opravdanje granzivosti); slabo regulisano i legalizovano lobiranje (glasanje se može prodati); na međunarodnom nivou lokalni interesi su često maskirani lažno etičkim ponašanjem (neke međunarodne "pomoći").*

Fragmentirani moral neoliberalne ekonomije i društva ima za posledicu česte ekonomske krize koje se ne mogu objasniti teorijama poslovnih ciklusa. Često destruktivno nasilje na ulicama mnogih gradova i oblasti, manifestacije su opšteg nezadovoljstva i apatije masa zbog siromaštva, nedostatka perspektive i nade (nasuprot inicijativi i jedinstvu društvenih elita).

*U globalizovanom društvu informativnog doba moral može da bude samo **svetski i jedinstven**. Osnovu ovog morala čini naučni humanizam (elaborirano u: *ibid*, part I). Globalni jedinstveni moral podrazumeva zajedničke principe prihvaćene od svih članova svetske populacije, uključujući višu klasu i elitu moći. Svi pojedinci moraju shvatiti da je ovakav moral potreban, moralno i ekonomski delotvoran i od zajedničkog interesa.*

Ključne reči: *globalizacija; ljudski um; vlasništvo i ljudski um; društvo i ljudski um; asistirana društvena evolucija; fragmentirani moral – jedinstven moral*