

Globalization essay sample

[Economics](#), [Globalization](#)



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Introduction

Globalization is “ the word most often used and abused, most rarely defined and probably the most misunderstood, nebulous and spectacular, from a

political point of view of the last and the future years to come “ (Beck et al, 2003). The subject of globalization gives in to disputes, to passionate reactions, to fears and suspicion, and is invoked as the cause for many of the events and transformations of the contemporary world. It is the “ disease” that this century is said to be suffering of.

The worst sin globalization is accused of is that of the levelling of the specific of the countries, be it economic, cultural or religious. The general perception upon this phenomenon is that it favors uniformization, homogenization, Westernization or Americanization of the cultures, being there also in this domain, just like in all subjects related to this proces, conflicting views, each of them held by arguments that are more or less viable.

Dependencies, and most recently, economic interdependencies are not new concepts, but their spectacular way of evolution recorded in the recent years has transformed the word globalization into a leitmotif for the specialists concerned with the subject, as well as for the public opinion.

The paper begins with a review of the theoretical concepts, comprising a conceptual delimitation of the “ globalization” term, its main features, dimensions of the process and vectors stimulating and promoting its expansion. Next, the phenomenon of globalization of the economic activity is approached, in relation to the terms economic globalization and system structure in a globalized world. Is there, besides an economic globalization, a cultural one? Have nations lost their identities to globalization? This thesis questions problems of maintatining the community and national identity, from a postmodern perspective, identity analysed in relaiton to cultural, political and social globalization.

Overview on the Concept of Globalization

Globalization is seen by many experts as a purely economic phenomenon, involving a growing economic interaction of the states or an integration of the national economic systems, through enhancement of the international trade activities, capital flows and investments.

The globalization of the economy has started since the pre-industrial period, through the extension of the venue of the economic activities, the process being marked, along the time by the increase in the role of the trade reports, of the foreign direct investments (FDI) and of the transnational corporations. In accordance to the OECD, globalization has been realised in three stages. The first stage is that of the internationalization and took place in the first three post-war decades, being characterized by an increase in commercial trade between the countries of the world, keeping their national character. The second phase is represented by transnationalization, stage that is specific of the 1970-1990 time period, being characterized by an extraordinary dynamism of the flows of foreign direct investment and implantations abroad.

The third phase of globalization began in the '90's and marked the appearance of the borderless economy, namely the global economy. It is characterized by the emergence of global production networks (flows), information and financial exchange.

The Economic Dimension of Globalization

Examples in relation to this dimension of globalization can be found at ease in the everyday mass-media, the economic dimension being most often the most visible and consequently the most discussed one.

The main characteristics of this current include the increasing global interdependencies between all the actors, the internationalization of trade and production, a new international division of labor, new migration moves from South to North, a new competitive environment, the liberalization of the financial markets, information, free movement of capital, goods and people, the third industrial revolution and transnationalization of technology, multinational companies dominance, global hyper-competition, the compression of time and space (real-time transactions), the birth of a global civil society, impairing of the national sovereignty, the cultural and spiritual identity as well as the state's internationalization, making it an agent of the globalized world. (Liederkerke, 2000)

In the plan of concrete results, globalization should appear as a process of diffusion of economic growth and general welfare, contributing through the technological transfer to sustainable development, that does not affect core resources of the planet. Unfortunately, until now, from this point of view globalization is still very unfavorable, causing the introduction of new economic gaps at continental or subcontinental scale by developing large growth poles.(Liederkerke, 2000)

The reality we are currently living in has confirmed us already that the promoters of the globalization process can only be those states which have the necessary means, reflected mostly in the level of economic development. Therefore, there is the simplistic attempt, yet not without foundation, to consider that globalization promotes and protects the interests of those states, especially of the United States, which were categorized a priori, after the Cold War, as the only global super-power.

(Kouzmin, 1999)

It should also be noted that the advanced capitalist states are being under the impact of the contemporary globalization. They are forced to compete each other in the desire to attract foreign direct investment (FDI). Those states are also facing caused tensions in the economic field, discontent provoked by the distruction of the classical system of value hierarchy (Shangquan, 2000). On the other hand, it is true that for the developing countries, the global economy is a given as they have to adapt to the rules established by the more powerful states, finding themselves in a subordinating position. This situation has lead some to ask themselves whether globalization is a powerful ideological instrument that supports the export of certain values and systems. (Kouzmin, 1999)

The Phenomenon of Globalization of the Economic Activity

Globalization of the economy could be defined as the highly dynamic process of increasing interdependencies between national states, as a result of the expansion and deepening of the transnational linkages in larger and more varied spheres of the economic, political, social and cultural life. The problems then become rather global than national, demanding more and more frequently a global settlement. (Kly, 1999)

Globalization is the stage that has been reached today by the secular process of internationalization of economies and of the economic activities as a result of mutation that have occured in the domestic and international economic structures. It is a strategic means to which large companies and banks have turned to in order to secure their profitability and in order to overcome superficial, or in depth fluctuations in the different economies

where they have their capitals clustered. (Kouzmin, 1999)

The fundamental feature of the current economy lies in the dominance of the financial markets on trade with goods and values, and also because of the role that it has come to have the knowledge as a production factor. Science and the human brain capacity to innovate, play an increasingly important role in productivity and economic growth. (Shangquan, 2000)

Indicators of Economic Globalization

The degree of globalization of a country is primarily measured by the level of economic opening towards the exterior and by the share of exterior trade in GDP and the investment climate. At the basis of assessing the level of globalization of the global economy is the degree of its internationalization.

Emphasizing the economic integration between nations has led to the erosion of the differences between national economies, as well as to a reduction of the autonomy of the national governments, trend that shows no sign that it will stop. (Altman, 2007)

Regardless of whether one is or isn't a globalization supporter, examples on the dimensions and its effects can be seen every day. The volume of the operations performed is growing, the amount and location of the direct investments, business relocation, financial market fluctuations, economic competition between states and regions are just a few of the effect factors. Trade, finance, transportation, production, services, capital, are today part of a whole, which no longer holds on the physical borders of the states or of the continents. (Brooks et al, 2011)

The increase of the international trade, superior to national production growth, internationalization of the financial markets, the increasing influence

of the large companies on the government, homogenizing lifestyles are some of the characteristics of the economic globalization. (Steger, 2003)

Malcolm Waters (2001) considers as dimensions of an economic globalization the production, trade, investment, organizational ideology imposing of a particular style of doing production), financial market and the labor market. Of these, the financial market and the trade represent those elements in which globalization is almost entirely realized. (Waters, 2001)

The financial dimension is also relevant in the globalization process.

Extending the financial services portfolio and clients to a global scale, indicated the tendency of creating a financial planetary market. The markets are interconnected and the events affect all actors in the scene. Opening or closing of the national exchange control systems has been a main driver of the financial globalization. On the global stage, the financial transactions are headline in the profit economy. They exceed the value of the international trade of goods and services, this fact being able to easily volatilize economies that are considered to be stable. The systemic risk has increased on the financial market, national economies being put today in the position where their levers of action have lost their efficiency. Another aspect of globalization is represented by the fundamental economic exchanges, with the meaning of capital flows on various national markets that have become increasingly more difficult to control. (Moses, 2006)

The planetary state in which we live is economically dominated by the large transnational corporations which, as their name suggests, transcend nationality borders, they overcome and go beyond the national authority. There is no economic sector in which large corporations are not present.

System Structure in the Globalized World Economy

The national framework in which the economic processes were conducted throughout the many centuries has ceased to be the ultimate reference of economic policy. For a long time, citizens of America, France, England, and Germany could believe, justifiably, that their welfare depends on the welfare of their own nation. Today, things are different as the welfare of a nation is essential for the wellbeing of everyone, but now it depends on such complex mechanisms and connections that have been extended so much that it is not exaggerated to say that all of us have started depending, perceptibly on the global economy. (Carayannis et al, 2012)

The most relevant indicator for the high degree of autonomy that the actors in the postindustrial international systems enjoy is the proliferation of the transnational corporations. If until the nineteenth century the international trade has taken place between companies, under the apartaining country's banner, today it is increasingly open, more liberalized and it extends beyond the political authority of the national governments. The market economy system has not only become widespread, but also has replaced global trade by binding international transactions between them. (Moses, 2006)

Global Culture and National Identity

Considered to be contemporary with modernity, the globalization process involves, first of all, economic systematization, and then, internationalization relations between states politically and, not least, the emergence of a global culture or consciousness. Can we speak therefore, in an era of diversity and axiological pluralism, about a culture belonging to a world seen as a unique space? About a global culture that would imply at least the diminishing of the

importance of the particular cultures, implicitly of the community identity of the different nations.

In other words, globally, economic relations are no longer registered under internationalism, but in the context of transnationalism.

Considering that between the economic globalization, political and cultural, there are mutual interconnections, the question becomes: is there yet, besides economic globalization, a cultural one? In other words, does it mean that the emergence of a global market, of the multi and transnational economic relations, the transcendence of the nation-state, the emergence of a global culture? These are questions that are going to be answered later on this paper.

The focus will be, therefore, on the global culture idea, subscribed to the cultural globalization process. I believe the latter suggests an interconnection with the process of economic globalization, given the consumerist global culture phrase. But is it possible, the emergence of such a global culture?

Cultural Globalization

Based on the existence of the global economic relations, a global culture may have as foundation, an interdependent communication system. Acting as a technical environment, over which other levels would be overlapped, it would achieve what Smith names the level of “ hybridization”. (Ervin and Smith, 2008)

Economic globalization, as we have shown before, does not necessarily impose a global culture, even though cultural globalization is in full advancement. Between this one and the political globalization there are no

interdependent relation but only interconnections.

An important role in setting up this level of global culture is represented by the ethnical aspect of the globalization process, which involves the transmutation of the different cultural national values from one side to another of the world.

The development of the global communication networks (as mentioned before, the technical environment of the cultural globalization), as well as the global production and exchange systems, specific to the economic globalization process, are diminishing the importance of the local circumstances of the community life.

The spatial-temporal compression has a more pronounced geographical connotation than the phrase used by Giddens, without losing, however, the socio-historical coloring. The globalization process imposes a temporal pressure on spatiality, and this is all done through the global communication systems, so that people from different countries come to share certain values and live together certain events.

Although it has universal vocation, the global culture is diffuse in space, as it is devoid of a history deeply rooted. In essence, what we might call global culture today, time- transmittable, is that culture offering technical solutions to problems generated by the globalization process. (Vesajoki, 2002)

Consequently, the characteristics of such a culture would be: eclecticism, universalism, timelessness (in the sense of lack of history) and technicism.

Unlike the global culture, national culture is characterized by: particularism, temporality and expressiveness. These values capture the sense of continuity of the human community, its shared memories and a common

destiny.

Note that both collective and national identity are marked by eclecticism, however, it should be pointed out the eclecticism of the national identity, which operates inside of strict cultural constraints, precisely because it refers to the specific conditions of the national culture. Of course, as a global culture, located in close interconnection with the political and economic globalization, it can be built, but in the parameters of artifice.

Globalization implies, however, interdependency and de-territorialisation. To these globalizing tendencies are possible at least two “ answers” from the national cultures. The first one is represented by translation, which represents the ethnic groups assuming more than one identity in an attempt to develop new forms of expression, entirely separated from their origins.

(Vesajoki, 2002)

The second one is tradition, which requires the resurgence of the nationalism, but also more violent forms of it, such as the ethnic fundamentalism. In essence, it is an attempt to rediscover the forgotten origins of their own history.

Our conjecture is that the first trend subtends to the process of cultural globalization, especially being present in countries where the globalization process is politically and economically active. The second tendency, on the other hand, is opposed to the cultural globalization, being specific to those states of group of states integrated in a process of passive globalization.

It seems indeed that the global culture may find resources for development only artificially, so that the central difficulty in any global identity building project, therefore, of a global culture, is that collective identity, such as

imagery or culture, is always specific in terms of history, because it relies on shared memories and a sense of continuity between generations.

Conclusions

In conclusion, trying to keep an objective character to addressing the subject, we can say that globalization is an extensive and complex process aimed at achieving in the end the total integration on different areas: economic, political social and cultural.

In the process of globalization, nation-states have given up some rights and freedoms, having expanded others more. It can be considered that, from this perspective, nation-states, nations and the nationalism allow, on the one hand, the connections between the global context and its various levels. On the other hand, they represent real and imaginary “ counterweights” to the process of globalization, itself.

Finally, what can be observed and deducted is that both unifying tendencies and the existing fragmentation of the contemporary world must be understood in direct relation to the global human condition that is specific to the post-modernity.

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