

FROM GLOBALIZATION TO GLOBALITY - MERGING NON - WESTERN (POST) COLONIAL AND WESTERN SOCIETIES INTO A GLOBAL MODERNITY

Angela Barakoska, MA, Aarhus University, Denmark
E-mail: barakoska.andzela@gmail.com

Received: September, 05. 2014.

Accepted: October, 31.2014.

Review Articles

UDK 316.323.83

325.81(100:1-15)

316.722:316.75(100-15)

Abstract. Modernity stands as a widely used term for social change as it involves modification in many forms in the society and the way people develop with different ideologies and movements. Standing on the other side of the traditional and historical, modernity brings new forms of development, communication and connectedness. In this paper, it would be discussed whether the globalization processes are leading to merge by the societies and raising a global modernity. Hence the influence of the West and the pilgrimages drawn from the other societies would be examined. Change is just an unavoidable part of the society seen as a reform, reaction or revolution. However, the historical processes of integration, innovation and development bring different questions and theories. In this paper, it would be referred on the integrative inclinations for merging societies, the understanding of modernity and globalization processes that emerge from the historical development and social change.

Keywords: *Modernity, Globalization, Post colonialism, Social change, Westernization.*

1. INTRODUCTION

I would like to begin this essay explaining and defining the key concepts globalization, modernity, and globality while having the basic idea of preserving the scientific principle, going from general to more specific and concrete. Even though the term globalization is one of the most utilized and discussed topics in this modern world, I still find it challenging to explain it, because of its complex nature. We can see evidence of globalization at every turn, at home, in the workplace, in large stores, newspapers and business journals, the monthly government statistics, or in the academic literature. Globalization according to Albrow

refers to “all these processes by which people of the world are integrated into a single world society, global society” (Albrow, 1990:9). We are all aware that globalization processes are changing the picture of the contemporary relations amongst states, regions and the world overall. With the expansion and opening of the new horizons of freedom, democracy and world evolution, the processes of domination, hierarchy and authority have without any doubt increased as well. There is no unique definition of what globalization is but we can say for sure that it represents multifaceted interaction of forces that can result with producing sometimes contradictory, fluctuating effects of integration and disintegration, cooperation and conflict, order and disorder, peace and conflicts as we may notice (Wiebelhaus-Brahm:1). There are also perspectives saying that globalization is an antihumanism, and it is against the fundamental postulates of human life and society. The approaches will be always divided, but then, how and which position and attitude should we take towards globalization? In continuation, there is the subsequent form of globalization, globality. This term could be understood as something that follows after the globalization processes. Some may also argue that is a historic phenomenon (Weaver, 2003:1). In addition, modernity is the major concept or idea that reflects in the globalization in the societies. In this essay I will start out by explaining the meaning and concept of globalization, globality and modernity, afterwards I will try to explain some historical processes through the prism of modernity that are leading towards globalization, globality and merging of many countries, cultures, the influence of the West the positive and negative sides of the interconnectedness.

Corresponding Author
Angela Barakoska, MA, Aarhus University, Norway

E-mail: barakoska.andzela@gmail.com

2. WHAT IS MODERNITY?

In several important observations to globalization was understood as the outcome of modernity. Nowadays, many perspectives and conceptualizations are interrelated, becoming more and more synchronized and standardized, that is why globalization can be understood as the flexible combination of several disciplinary approaches (Giddens, 1990:46). Globalization, if we take it in a comprehensive way of perception, forms a world-wide historical field where global ideas and experiences are shared (Giddens, 1990:52). It was written in one article on a very simplified way that modernization, as well as globalization, is a process that happens straightaway, in this moment indeed. It is assumed that “modernity can be understood as an immanent condition that structures social action in manners that is significantly different from previous epochs” (Macamo, 2005:3). It is noted by Witrock that: ... “Modernity may be understood as culturally constituted and institutionally entrenched. However, these references points not only become arguments in ideational confrontations; but also provide shaping principles behind the formation of new institutions” (Witrock, 2000:38). The Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution are the main events in history as some may say, that created the standpoints of modernity. As can be viewed, a spatial-temporal structure is following. In addition, other cultural processes are usually added to this sequence as well, from the Italian Renaissance and the German Reformation to the Enlightenment (Tuma et al, 2000:469).

In “Consequences of Modernity”, the author Anthony Giddens, argues that: “Modernity refers to ways of social life or organization that emerged in Europe from about the seventeenth century onwards and subsequently became more or less worldwide in its influence. This links modernity with a time period and an initial geographical location, but for the moment leaves its major characteristics safely stowed away in a black box” (Giddens, 1990:1).

2.1. How can modernity be understood?

It is also perceived that modernity has two sides. Undoubtedly, modernity has created benefits for everyone, but on the other

side it has its negative features too (Giddens, 1990:2). We can take the African continent as an example, and give an explanation how countries were colonized and linked. The basic argument of modernization in this context, as some authors would say, is that Africa is a modern construct. “This is based on the principle that the awareness of an African cultural identity that can lay claims to a single political and economic destiny was the result of a discursive and practical confrontation with existential conditions brought to the continent by its forced integration into European historicity” (Cooper, 2005:92-103). In other words, it was in the process of coming to terms with slavery and colonialism that a specific kind of African identity was created. Africans produce their own social reality in dialogue with modernity as they move from colonialism into a world defined by themselves and by what they make in their everyday life (Cooper, 2005:92-103). We can say that modernity and globalization start with the movement of people and exchange of goods, as we mentioned previously.

2.2. One or multiple modernities? How it is perceived?

“Modernities are everywhere, at precisely the time modernity as the epochal discourse of the West appears to be on its last legs. This is one of the more paradoxical features of the globe.” The sense that modernity is at a turning point, comes from its inclusive, trans-cultural, and mixed character. Globalization can be described by the diversity of its modernities. The post-colonial theory provides a way to understand why this is so (Ashcroft, 2009:1).

Looking back in historic processes and happenings, we can realize that the world has always been somehow interconnected, no matter if the purpose was war, colonization, exploitation or conquering new territories. There are connections on different levels, in culture, economy, tradition and so on. Africa can be seen as a key player in the studies of capitalism, because of the options that Africa offered. For example, the slave trade was understood in different ways, it meant external relations and interconnections, exchange of resources and it had different consequences. However, the interconnectedness of different parts all around the world was crucial to the histories of those places, starting from slave

trade in the eighteenth century and ending with emancipation in the nineteenth.

3. MERGING SOCIETIES

If we start elaborating on how globalization connected (post) colonial countries with the ones that are more developed or, the “Western” part of the world, we can surely start by explaining the states, briefly mentioning their sovereignty and the ideologies that reigned. Wallerstein explains that every state has its sovereignty or state power, supremacy (Wallerstein, 2004:53-59). It is also a fact that all states are sovereign but only the stronger ones can get involved in the inside affairs and relations of weaker states. It is a fact that these stronger states have always been involved in the policies in the less powerful ones, putting a pressure and to a certain degree forcing them to take steps that meet the requirements of the strong states policy. Here I can mention some of their requirements like cultural, linguistic or educational policies or follow their way on the international ground. Strong and weak states were always interconnected, they have mutual benefit, the strong ones buy of the individual leaders in the weak ones, and the others grasp the protection they offer. Wallerstein mentions that the weakest states are the ones that are colonized and the decisions making bodies in any field are personnel from the colonizing country. The colonized state is the weakest kind of state in the international field, and it has the lowest level of autonomy. That is the reason why it can be easily exploited and manipulated from others (Wallerstein, 2004:53-59). Since I took Africa as an example, it can be noted that those who colonized, claimed that they are “opening” the African continent (Cooper, 2005:92-103). It could be sometimes perceived as European-dominated globality. It has been argued that colonialism in Africa was the formula that actually helped the African continent to absorb the modernity as a social reality (Macamo, 2005:5). The slavery in African countries or anywhere was not something new, but the interrelations between these countries. This gave a boost and uncompromising expansion of the system in the nineteenth century. When the French Revolution and Declaration of the Rights of Men was drafted, the exploited people and slaves became aware of their rights and possibilities and fought for liberty and democracy (Cooper, 2005:101).

“Post-colonialism can be provisionally

defined as the perspective or worldview of those who believe that it is possible to understand today’s world only by foregrounding the history of colonialism—defined in a very preliminary way as the domination of certain societies and peoples by others—over the past five centuries” (Krishna, 2009:3). Also, modernity has its role as a concept. Its realization is somehow blocked by the colonialism and socialism. Some may say that globalization and post colonialism became interesting and present in our surroundings these past two decades, but I oppose by saying that these processes or terms exist much longer. Undoubtedly, the decisive moment was the French Revolution. Globalization also refers to the integration of the societies into capitalist modernity and that includes economic, social, cultural and political patterns (Dirlik, 2003:1).

On the question whether the Western and non-Western countries merge, I would definitely state my attitude as positive. Obviously it is the result of the globalization processes. The trans-boundary movement of goods, people, knowledge, languages and cultures proves the state’s society possibilities for collaboration, and external connection. If we take a look at the world today, we can see many inequalities, connected but different. Many people would say that the globalization is some kind of global governance that goes beyond the nation state, that the authority is relocated to the international field, here we could include international organizations and other actors. This also confirms the statement that the world is interconnected, but not completely. We can still witness parts of the world that tasted the new technology, rise in economy or possibility to travel cheap and fast. We can say that current trends and economic integration are processed, but only in a limited manner. We cannot be definite if the pathways to development are still available in the developing countries, taken into consideration the constraints of the global economy (Wiebelhaus-Brahm:5).

The western and non-western world is viewed as an identification and process of classification for how modernity can be described. When we mention the Western world we refer to the countries who had the biggest economic, political, and social developments in the 19th century as well as self-identification and often they are the synonym for change. We need to add that African slavery as we gave it as an example above in this text, and the colonial empires, was the main culprits for the creation of Modern Western Europe and

America. Moreover, the word modernization is sometimes seen as economic development or acceptance of Western principles which means increasing development processes.

Consequently, modernity is perceived as something that is permanently changing the traditional settings and moving on to conquer the Non Western world. Contact with the western developed countries is seen as inability and confusion in the local culture and identity, while the imported elements are new, different but welcomed and accepted. This term represents the relations between the countries their societies, cultures and overall the civilizations, where always some group are more central than others. Dealing with details, but we can say for sure that the historical events that begun around 1500 and 1800 and took place in Europe definitely made changes and alterations. According to this, we can add that globalization can be seen as a long process that raises the interconnection between states and civilizations.

4. MODERNITY OR GLOBALIZATION?

Additionally, Western modernity is understood as one of the many levels of globalization and its processes flourishing all around the world (Roudometof, 1994:18-21). Nonetheless we cannot deny the positive facts from the globalization, as globalization is not deleting the local culture, and the local culture is not surrendering itself to the powers coming from outside, but it engages with all the benefits that could be adapted. In this modern twenty first century, we cannot say for certain what is global and what is local, and for sure those boundaries are blurred. Yet, what is very important, how the globalization process affects and portrait in different societies and states, it depends to a large extent of the local culture (Turner and Khondker, 2009:33). "If globalization was to become an ever inescapable phenomenon, it was through colonialism, nationalism and socialism which were at once products of globalization and efforts to shape it in some ways, or even to restrain it, as in the case of nationalism and socialism" (Dirlik, 2003:21). Globalization is in many respects about a surfeit of history, both as its constituent and its product. Some scholars would say that through all the actions that happened in history, people were those who were actively participating in the creation of persistent

process of interconnectedness.

People developed themselves as they were crossing boundaries and spaces countering something that is different, spatially distinct (Cooper, 2005:108). Globalization provides as some may say, opportunities for prosperity, global communication, peace and democracy, while others are radically opposing by saying that there is a great threat of conflicts and uncontrolled power. With the increased mobility and flows of capital from the western and non-western countries unity on the international field while forming some model of "global governance". The nature of capitalism has changed as well when entering the post-industrial economy. We must mention that the economic processes became so dispersed and hard to keep control on them (Wiebelhaus-Brahm:1-5). What is more in this new era, it is not only the interactions that happen every day but the level where global culture industries are circulating, namely through transnational actors and agreements. We can continue discussing the globalization, the way it developed, all its historical processes and different aspects but they will always be indefinite. There will never be sufficient definitions and explanations. Yet there will always be scholars who oppose.

5. CONCLUSION

In summary it can be stated that for many people the globalization means Westernization and is considered as a cultural degradation of their local society. Others think that it produces ethnic inequalities, discrimination and conflict and that the engagement in the international economy means danger by itself. The more optimistic version is that these processes represent a challenge and a positive change and opportunities (Wiebelhaus-Brahm:7). As we mentioned before, on the question whether globalization leads to globality, the answer would be affirmative. Globality means that nothing that happens on this planet can have local meaning only. All the events have global effects on the world as a consequence of the globalization processes. In addition, modernity is seen as the European phenomenon. It is believed that "modernity at large" or different modernities can be hybridized, uneven ... "nevertheless, in the last instance these modernities end up being a reflection of an Euro-centered social order, even if under the assumption that modernity is now everywhere, an ubiquitous

and ineluctable social fact” (Escobar, 2004:5). Modernity means emancipation too, and this emancipation in Europe started around the eighteenth century. It was manifested through the Reformation, the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Many scholars are asking questions and exploring the processes of globalization, but there are still some questions that remain unanswered. In addition what are the features of modernity, is globalization something that could be called post modernity or not? While some of the scholars who observe the globalization and its historical processes would state their opinion as positive, there are also some who provide opposite statements. Globalization is a very inconsistent process, happens between the states, the Western and the non-western, the more and less developed, but then again also happens within them (Wiebelhaus-Brahm:2). From a historical perspective we could argue that the globalization can find its roots in the first migrations of people, long distance trade connection thus connecting the colonialism and everything that followed (Pieterse, 1993:48). It is also true, and I can agree upon that the relations that happen between regional systems in trading, religious networks, geographical differences and considerations as well as the spread of power present very complex historical pattern (Cooper, 2005:101). Additionally, some would say that modernizing equals with westernizing, that non- Western countries should leave their cultures and accept the Western ones. All of the developing countries or Third World countries would like to merge and modernize, but that does not mean essentially adopting or copying completely the culture and Western values. Moreover, there are leaders from these non -Western countries that have accepted modernization but not westernization. We can give the example that China is modernizing but not westernizing. I will end up this essay by saying that we can always agree upon some decisions and facts if or if not the world is one homogenous place interconnected with its modernities and fragments, but we will always have lack of words to describe this rigid globalized world while being surrounded constant by its images.

Conflict of interests

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

- Albrow, M., & King, E. (1990).** *Globalization, knowledge and society: Readings from international sociology.* Sage.
- Ashcroft, B. (2009).** Alternative modernities: globalization and the post-colonial. *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*, 40(1).
- Beck, Ulrich (2000).** *What Is Globalization?* The Global Transformations Reader. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Cooper, F. (2005).** *Globalization in Question.* Berkley and Los Angeles California: University of California Press.
- Dirlik, A. (2000).** Globalization as the end and the beginning of history: The contradictory implications of a new paradigm. *Rethinking Marxism*, 12(4), 4-22.
- Dirlik, A. (2003).** Global modernity? Modernity in an age of global capitalism. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 6(3), 275-292.
- Escobar, A. (2004).** Beyond the Third World: imperial globality, global coloniality and anti-globalisation social movements. *Third World Quarterly*, 25(1), 207-230.
- Giddens, A. (1990).** The consequences of modernity. *Cambridge: Polity*, 64.
- Krishna, S. (2009).** *Globalization and post-colonialism: Hegemony and resistance in the twenty-first century.* Rowman & Littlefield.
- Macamo, E. (2005).** Negotiating Modernity: From Colonialism to Globalization. *Negotiating modernity. Africa's ambivalent experience.* Dakar, CODESRIA/Zed Books, 1-18.
- Pieterse, N., & J, (1993).** Globalization as hybridization. *ISS Working Paper Series/General Series*, 152, 1-18.
- Roudmetof, V. (1994).** Globalization or modernity. *Comparative Civilizations Review*, 31, 18-45.
- Tuma, V. C., Dussel, E. D., & Krauel, J. (2000).** Europe, modernity, and euro-centrism. *Nepantla: views from South*, 1(3), 465-478.
- Turner & Khondker, (2009).** *Conceptualizing Globalization*, http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/32598_02_Turner_&_Khondker_CH_02.pdf pg. 33, page retrieved 23.02.2014.
- Wallerstein, I. M. (2004).** *World-systems analysis: An introduction.* Duke University Press.
- Weaver, C., J., (2003).** *History, Modernization and Globality: Preliminary*

Thoughts, Institute on Globalization and the Human Condition, http://www.sociology.mcmaster.ca/institute-on-globalization-and-the-human-condition/documents/IGHC-WPS_03-5_Weaver.pdf, pg.1, page retrieved, 22.02.2014.

Wiebelhaus-Brahm, E. (2002). *Globalization, Modernity, and Their Discontents*, Available at SSRN 1666871. <http://faculty.unlv.edu/ericbrahm/globalization-review.pdf>, retrieved 23.02.2014

Wittrock, B. (2000). Modernity: One, none, or many? European origins and modernity as a global condition. *Daedalus*, 31-60.