

WORLD ECONOMIC GLOBALIZATION

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1. INTRODUCTION

As of 1989 transformations take place in the part of the world that corresponded to what has been called real socialism. The existing paradigm of communism, characterized by a theoretical public ownership of the means of production, collapsed and is replaced by a new model: that of the end of history. According to him, the West has won the ideological war and liberalism will prevail forever.

The best symbol of this process will be the fall of the Berlin Wall. In the countries of the former Iron Curtain, a rapid transition to a market economy is beginning. At the same time, a series of changes appear in the sociological structures of many societies: the national blocs that have confronted each other in recent decades are dissolving; there is no longer a compact workers' bloc; neither does the bourgeois class correspond to the traditional clichés. A versatile class advances, with other economic interests and whose ideology is more contradictory. There is a social twist.

The disappearance of most of the socialist countries, the takeoff of many emerging countries, the volatility of economic borders multiply the markets. In the early 1980s, only half the world's population participated in international trade; Currently, 90% of the towns are part of it. Globalization is born.

2. BEHIND THE WALL

As a result of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the economy above all, but also culture and politics tended to become global. In the closest history there are three movements of economic opening. In the 1960s, there is an internationalization of trade organized within the richest countries. At the beginning of the 1980s, a new impetus was given for the disappearance of economic borders, in which national currencies lost their status. A decade later, the unification of the world economic space is accelerating, based on the volatility of capital movements and the information revolution.

After Central and Eastern Europe, the nations of the former Soviet Union, the emerging countries of Southeast Asia or Latin America, India and China enter this wave of globalization. The small areas that still practice real socialism (Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam) and almost the entire African continent remain excluded.

There are three causes for globalization: 1) the acceleration of economic opening and the exchange of goods and services; 2) liberalization of capital markets; and 3) the communications and computing revolution.

Economic globalization is that process by which national economies are integrated into the framework of the international economy, so that their evolution will depend more and more on international markets and less on government economic policies.

Globalization has taken advantage of the explosive development of two sectors: the financial markets and the media.

3. THE FINANCIAL MARKETS

The world of finance brings together the four qualities that make it a model perfectly adapted to the new technological order: it is immaterial, immediate, permanent and planetary.

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National economies feel powerless before the movements of a gigantic mass of virtual capital, capable of moving instantly and causing the most solid currencies to fall; the financial economy has freed itself from any social or political control.

But financial globalization does not mean the disappearance of economic tensions due to the domination of the world and its distribution in areas of influence. The United States, Europe and Japan continue to confront their models of capitalism and try to attract new markets (Latin America).

In this sense, the path taken by the European Union to become a unit with a single currency is of interest. The European Union Treaty is the last stage of an integration process that began with the CECA Treaty, which was followed by the EEC and EURATOM Treaties, signed by Italy, France, Germany and Benelux.

The nature of the European Union goes through economic and monetary union. The political aspect does not figure in the first line of the debate. In the meetings of the Council of Europe there is no talk of the formation of a federal State, but of the organization of an economic pole capable of competing with the United States and Japan.

In this global financial market, the main countries that receive and receive funds are the rich countries (those that make up the OECD). At the head is the United States followed by Germany and Japan, and by the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Canada and Australia.

4. THE SOCIETY OF THE INFORMATION.

The second axis that has influenced globalization is that of the media. The communication industry is determined by the technological fusion of media, telecommunications and electronic data processing. In this sector, the market is no longer national and is, at best, global and in most cases, global.

This means the withdrawal of nation states from media politics and a trend towards deregulation, privatization and concentration.

The media revolution influences the ways of governing in nation-states. As a real example, we show one linked to the Internet. After the dissemination of the book *The Great Secret*, by Mitterrand's doctor, which was withdrawn from bookstores, for not respecting medical secrecy and violating the right to privacy. Its dissemination through the computer network revealed a new legal vacuum. Since then, voices have been raised calling for the existence of a cyberspace police. There is hardly any jurisprudence on the Internet; furthermore, given its global nature, nothing prevents network offenders from settling in a country that has not signed international agreements on intellectual property.

Huge mega-mergers have formed between the giants of cable, satellite, information, video, media and film. This is the world of multimedia involving mergers and acquisitions that mobilize tens of billions of dollars. The new utopia is that of a fully integrated information and communications market, thanks to electronic and satellite networks, operating in real time and permanently.

5. CONTRADICTIONARY EFFECTS

The globalization of markets has had positive effects for large areas of the planet; consumption has reached places where it never would have. Without this internationalization of the economy, capital would not have flowed to some emerging countries, which has facilitated the growth of their economies.

Although globalization does not exist in the strict sense; there is no absolute globalization of exchanges and financial flows: there are areas of the planet in which the big investors are not interested. Their paradigm is Africa; Absent from world economic interests, it only reappears when the conflict of its civil wars or famines breaks out.

The danger of the African continent is destruction or widespread chaos. The need to redraw the borders drawn by the powers that divided up the continent after discovering it has been suggested. Africa does not receive the proportional part of the dollars that would correspond to it by territory or by population; when at the summits of the G-7 or any international organization pending loans (external debt) are studied, everyone assumes that they will never be paid.

In 1996, the UN announced a plan to lift Africans out of poverty in the next 10 years; Under the direction of the World Bank, this plan had as priorities health, public administration, food security, water and sanitation, peace and information technology. This aid did not come from private initiative, but from a kind of "charity business" in the form of international cooperation.

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Economic globalization redistributes funds in some cases that, in another situation, would only circulate in the center of the system and never in the periphery; but in others, it concentrates them and discriminates against large regions of the world.

In addition, the destructuring effects have multiplied around it, in the form of new inequalities, increases in unemployment, a crisis in labor value and a decrease in social cohesion.

The global market is supplanting in some spheres the traditional power of the States, and what was advertised as synonymous with progress is beginning to be one of fear, insecurity, danger to the citizen or inequality. It is true that in recent years democracy has spread throughout the world, but unemployment, inequality and poverty have also increased. In recent decades, the differences between the richest and poorest countries have grown; OECD countries, Asia and part of Latin America live better today than ever, but in a hundred states they have suffered the opposite experience: they have experienced a reduction in their income and live worse than 15 years ago.

These data are usually related to each other, as material for sociological interpretation rather than as economic realities. However, there is nothing as economic as the distribution of income and wealth in the world, and its advance or retreat. There has been a concentration of extreme poverty and extreme wealth. In addition, there are increases in inequalities within nations and the concept of poor workers has emerged, those whose wages do not allow them to get out of the poverty threshold.

As a consequence of all this, migratory movements have multiplied. These migratory currents are increased by the demographic factor; the birth rate grows more the less developed the country under analysis. For example, in the deprived area of North Africa, the population will double in just 20 years and its natural outlet will be Europe. The emigrants flee from hunger and poverty, although integration does not take place outside their country.

Globalization has created other rules of the game. We are witnessing the dismantling of the welfare state, with the excuse of its impossible financing. But this dismantling, together with the other negative consequences of globalization, is increasing the number of discontented.

As a consequence, the distance between what the elites say and what the people on the street think, who disconnect from the public sphere and isolate themselves in their private lives, increases.

The excesses of globalization worry among those who are in charge of accelerating it. Several of them have been highly critical of the undesired effects of the global market:

- Confidence must be created among employees and cooperation between companies must be organized so that communities benefit from globalization. If not, we will see a resurgence of social movements the likes of which we have not seen since World War II.
- If companies do not respond to the challenges of poverty and unemployment, tensions will increase between the haves and have-nots and there will be an increase in violence.

Despite these complaints, the reality is that similar management standards are adopted in all countries. There is a conscious loss of autonomy of national authorities when deciding economic policies. This becomes more evident in the European Union, in which the convergence criteria assumed as the path for the single currency eliminate the economic and fiscal policy of the member states; monetary policy is no longer a national competence but of the European Central Bank.

The globalization of exchanges of goods and services is good for humanity because it has expanded the arrival of flows of wealth to places where they would never have arrived, but the idea that those who remain outside it would be protected by the beneficiaries, It has not been fulfilled. This can be demonstrated in any of the two most spectacular aspects of globalization: inequality or the unemployment crisis. Thus, the latter is already developing with total normality, in the sight of all, despite the fact that there is no greater imbalance than mass unemployment. Unemployment is now more serious than in the crisis of the 1930s. • The crisis has lasted for more than 15 years, while that of the 30s did not last more than 4 or 5 years.

- We have become accustomed to the idea that no remedy can be found. On the contrary, in the 1930s, many economists were convinced that action could and should be taken. Currently, the dominant mood is one of fatalism.
- The work that exists is precarious.

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- Unemployment is long-term.
- The crisis has appeared in a context of prosperity that is not that of the 1930s, while the social systems could have made unemployment less painful, the protection systems are leaking everywhere, given that their financing is very expensive.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In short, and this is a fundamental characteristic of globalization, for the first time in history, capitalism can show no more than restricted legitimacy; not everyone takes advantage of it; its effectiveness is limited. By its very nature, capitalism has always been like this, but that fact has never been accepted by the defenders of the system; The fact of the reality of exclusion has never been so strong: full employment and equality are very far from the scope of the functioning of capitalism and very far from its intentions.

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