

MODERNIZARE, GLOBALIZARE ȘI CRIZĂ

MODERNITY, GLOBALISATION AND CRISIS

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Abstract

The conceptual arena of the twentieth-century consists of a mixture of ideas coming from the interpenetration of science, social theory, aesthetics and philosophy. Modernity is an elastic notion and most importantly, it relates metaphysical speculations as to whether nature favors form and fixity on the one hand and flux on the other.

Globalisation understood in an expansive fashion, is in many ways a rhetorical effect, as was international rationalization before it. We should take into consideration whether proposals for a new world order premised on a belief in universal rationality and harmony have lost their aura of scientific glamour and moral force.

The contemporary crises are the result of escalating arms race, crime, drugs, terrorism, environmental deterioration, social and economic decline, the depletion of the earth's resources, population explosion, urban violence, intolerance.

Key words: *modernity, globalisation, metaphor, reality, positivism*

Cuvinte cheie: *modernitate, globalizare, metaforă, realitate și pozitivism*

The conceptual arena of the twentieth-century consists of a mixture of ideas coming from the interpenetration of science, social theory, aesthetics and philosophy. Modernity is an elastic notion and most importantly, it relates metaphysical speculations as to whether nature favors form and fixity on the one hand and flux on the other. In this paper, modernity is viewed as having a dual significance it is associated with a crisp scientific rather than poetic sensibility.

The dual significance suggested in the early twentieth century both rational organization and a conception of experience as an interdeterminate rush, which are reflected in the positivist-empiricist spectrum of thought. It was Pearson who tried to isolate scientific notions which might assist in the rearrangement of social and intellectual priorities. These ideas associated with positivism and empiricism could be interpreted in very different ways and were pushed in strange and explosive directions. "This was not mere opportunism as positivist notions such as pure experience and the theory of conventionalism" but also "some justification for seeing positivism and the philosophies spun around the ideas of immediacy and flux as convergent" []. The naturalistic ideas of stripping the thought of unnecessary intellectual ornamentation and led to the more or less subjectivist directions of building out of pure experience a pluralistic universe "which were not conceived as a kind of mirror in which reality is reflected, but as the active life of a man as natural, spontaneous organizer of all data" []. These scholars were seen as denying the existence of a hidden metaphysical order and valorizing human will where the movements of pragmatism, intuitionism and positivism are tied together, dismissing as symptomatic the modernism's confusion and irrationality.

It was Bergson who emphasized that the spatial categories of the scientist failed to capture an overflowing reality. He also recognized that the scientific freeze-frames were born out of necessity because they were a sophisticated expression of the biological process of adaptation. It is the external environment that partly determines the human behavior, where creative energies come up against resistant elements and it is thought such encounters that the faculties are developed. Bergson's views intersect with Pearson's ideas that our perception of repetition and sequence in

nature is prompted by physical events and the requirements of survival and as a result progress resulted from our behavior being in accord with the dictates of science.

The more we emphasize the plasticity of experience the more politics may be seen as an artistic enterprise, or as a matter of calculated adjustment. If we examine the political translations of all the tendencies of thought, focusing on Mary Parker Follet and Harold Laski We can address the question as to what extent the philosophies of Bergson or Pearson can be seen as favoring the idea of one world or many.

Follet and Laski showed how easily pluralism expanded into monism in the form of a universal legal order. The presentation of empirical evidence pointing to transnational association and the threat scenarios were all intended to aid to the establishment of this goal.

“It was in defense to the principle of multiplicity, that pluralists, rather than speaking of world government, preferred to speak in terms of world federalism.”[] However, as fashioned by Follet and Laski, a federal republican model of governance makes clear the contours of a pluralistic universe, beginning to resemble to a universal empire or kingdom.

Later on the idea of global figured to the extent of the political, economical or military interests implied: for example the geopolitical imagery associated to the Cold War – whose scope were the bipolar military orders being built by the super-powers as well as those weapons of mass destruction designed to secure these orders. There is a great difference between the world where peoples entwine and the Cold War depictions of a world divided into “geostrategic regions”, conflicting spheres of influences. In the introduction to Kenneth Boulding’s “Meaning of the Twentieth Century: The Great Transition” (1964) Ruth Nanda Anshen showed that there was at work in the world a new consciousness among spiritual and intellectual leaders, one which sought to break the bonds of Cold War prejudices and antagonisms and “recapture the authority of truth and human totality” ; people changed:

“ There is in mankind today a counterforce to the sterility and danger of a quantitative, anonymous mass culture, a new if sometimes imperceptible, spiritual sense of convergence toward the world unity on the basis of the sacredness of each human person and respect for the plurality of cultures”.[4]

Anthony Dolman considered the global governance much the same thing as world government and to sustain his idea he cited the Marxist Silviu Brucan “vested with the authority to plan, to make decisions and to enforce them”. A. Dolman’s approaches demanding radical transformation of the system, promoting worldism would bring little help to the people, to the public and the “policy-making mainstream, both of which are inherently conservative, overwhelmingly gradualist and intolerant and fearful of things which smack of ‘extremism’”.[5]

As during the twentieth century we have witnessed a “growing awareness of the fragility and precariousness of civilization ,“ words like ‘catastrophe’, ‘collapse’, ‘chaos’, ‘disaster’, and ‘despair’ were very common[6].

References to the globe, as well as to the planet, as our common home also appeared in arguments for world order prior to and after the World War II, but the term globalization appeared in the 1960s referring to a process of worldwide integration. The term “process of globalization” was included in George Modelski’s “Principles of World Politics”, (1972), signifying the global interaction, awareness and “some degree of world wide value commonality”. Modelski’s work shows that globalization was in a sense very old but it was also the bearer of the new. In his opinion globalization gave birth to modernity and for a long time modernity had been confined to European States where globalization served to prop up the state in that region. He also stated that it was necessary wisely to direct globalization towards the goal of establishing a “governmental structure that would give equal, not to speak of higher priority to a rounded concern for all aspects of welfare of the human race”[7] In his works Modelski called for measures to control world growth, wealth and welfare and to facilitate a “general loosening up of world society”[8]not only in the sense of a loosening of borders but also in the sense of unleashing new independencies and differences. He

spoke about a plurality that would be centered not on states alone but both on state and non-state actors. In his view the state, once a container of modernity, is from a world society perspective a backward-looking formation because of its “continued institutionalization of war” and “the obstacle it posed to the “long-overdue modernization of world politics”[9] which is from his point of view the globalization of policy and government.

The twentieth century may be considered the century of modernity, globalization and the December 1987 issue of *Encounter* considered it the century of a “crisis of confidence in civilization”. The term crisis had lost much of its meaning. When it is tamed by social analysis and reduced in impact by constant reiteration in the media it is also a weapon of repression because nowadays crises are constructed and manipulated by authorities in order to shift the focus away from the real dangers. The contemporary crises are the result of escalating arms race, crime, drugs, terrorism, environmental deterioration, social and economic decline, the depletion of the earth’s resources, population explosion, urban violence, intolerance.

Conclusion

In this modern age the term globalization denotes a set of inducing arguments and seductive images rather than a stark and incontestable fact of life. In this quest we meet assertions, tactics and imagery so very similar to those which were invoked against state monism and particularism that were mounted during the interwar period. Globalization understood in an expansive fashion, is in many ways a rhetorical effect, as was international rationalization before it. We should want to consider whether proposals for a new world order premised on a belief in universal rationality and harmony have lost their aura of scientific glamour and moral force.

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