

CULTURAL, ETHICAL AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF GLOBALIZATION

*Joanna Jankowska¹,
Urszula Strzałkowska*

Summary

The aim of the essay was to obtain evidence to the thesis about the impact of globalization on every aspect of the life of modern man in a way that is often invisible. In addition to economic and financial globalization and scientific and technical progress, there is a society with own cultural heritage and value system. The process of progressive globalization in the sphere of culture, ethics and society has been described. The conclusion discusses the positive and negative characteristics of the various types of globalization.

Keywords: globalization, culture, ethics, religion, fundamentalism, terrorism, society, human rights

Introduction

Roland Robertson – professor of culture sociology at the University of Pittsburgh applied term “globalization” to describe a set of processes that make the social world one². Since globalization is a multidimensional and multi-faceted phenomenon, it is difficult to define it unequivocally. When speaking about globalization, we normally refer to an advanced form of economic activities carried out at the international level, at the level of markets, industries and companies, leading to an increase in links between international businesses and to the development of the global economy. Most of the definitions of globalization refer only to its economic aspect and present

¹ Postgraduate students at the Faculty of Economics at Maria Skłodowska Curie University of Warsaw.

² P. Sztompka, *Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa*, Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków 2002, p. 585.

it as a process of deepening economic links between countries and regions of the world. However, globalization goes far beyond the realm of economics and finances, including the area of politics, demography, technology, information, ecology, health, internal and international safety, culture, ethics and religion. It makes analogous phenomenon spread regardless of the geographic location and economic advancement and hence unifying the picture of the world and building a common culture based largely on the model of consumption. In the philosophical dimension, globalization becomes a way of thinking about the Earth as a common place of all people who are aware of the sense of simultaneity and identity in the global aspect³.

In the modern world globalization claims the right to build a new, universal order, which is not limited by political boundaries of countries and which aims at obliterating cultural diversity. This order, which assumes to cover the whole humanity, not only dictates the organization of social life (often excessively using the concept of “modernity” and “civilization,” while ridiculing “parochialism” of the values of the cultural heritage of societies), but enters the spheres which have been recognized as inviolable, i.e. family life or individual set of values. This process, in a way that is not always conscious, has not left us with any sphere of life, which have not been affected by the globalist revolution. Modern man is forced to resolve increasingly complex ethical dilemmas, he often feels lost in the chaos of information, and despite multiple opportunities for communication, he is becoming more and more lonely.

Cultural dimension of globalization

When considering the cultural dimension of globalization one should realize that the universalisation of culture is not a new phenomenon. The spread of the art canons was common from ancient times until the nineteenth century. In the particular epochs the same patterns and designs were used, there is a noticeable stylistic similarity of many works⁴. However, the modern version of the cultural globalization is considered one of the most dangerous of its forms. On the one hand, it carries the risk in the form of imposing the culture and traditions of foreign rituals on whole societies, on the other hand, it creates an unprecedented opportunity to widely popularize achievements of civilization.

³ J. Kochan, *Globalizacja a społecznienie*, „Nowa Krytyka. Czasopismo Filozoficzne”, 13.01.2008.

⁴ A.D. Smith, *Towards a global cultures?*, in: *Global culture. Nationalism, globalization and modernity*, M. Featherstone (ed.), Sage, London 1990, p. 176–180.

The unification of culture in the sphere of values and the trend towards global cultural canon become the phenomenon which arouses much controversy. The supporters of the process claims that it gives a unique opportunity to allow international cultural dialogue, which will integrate societies without posing a threat to their identity. The opponents search for arguments in the cultural canon itself, which are created as a result of the acceptance or rejection of specific values by the group, formulating the boundaries embodying the “symbolic violence”, which, according to Pierre Bourdieu is “enslavement in the sphere of values”⁵. Concerns about the preservation of cultural identity are fully justified. An important part of the culture is tradition, understood as a set of values and behaviours passed to future generations. This specific for particular society value system creates a frame of reference for individuals and allows the existence in the surrounding world. Creating a supranational, global culture, which cannot have homogeneous system of values since being a compilation of many components, is an imposed phenomenon which arouses fear. “In contrast to ethnic and national cultures, which are separate, time-limited and expressive, and refer to the common feelings, values, memories, a sense of historical identity and a common destiny of the entire group – global and cosmopolitan culture is not able to relate to any historical identity (...) it is devoid of memories (...) and it does not respond to any necessities of life, does not create any identity”⁶.

Technological development, the development of cable and satellite television and advanced computerization promotes standardization and unification of culture. Recipients around the world were given the opportunity to use virtually unlimited cultural offers, which, unfortunately, are similar to each other regardless of latitude. Unprecedented concentration of media means that television and internet have become the primary medium of culture. The owners of television stations do not compete on the level of the proposed offer, but above all for ratings which have influence on the amount of the advertising revenue. In order to reach the largest number of potential viewers media create, for their own use, the image of the target audience. Individual tastes and preferences, cultural sensitivity and intellectual level of the audience do not have any significance. The guarantee of media success, measurable in the economic and political sphere, is the “mass man”. He does not belong to any nation and society, does not have memory, is not guided by logic, does not see the obvious causes and effects and he does not consider the adequacy of measures in relation to the objectives.

⁵ P. Bourdieu, J-C. Passeron, *Reprodukcja. Elementy teorii systemu nauczania*, PWN, Warszawa 1990, p. 74.

⁶ W. J.Burszta, *Antropologia kultury*, Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 1998, p. 183.

He remains a manipulated creation of the media with the programmed mass psyche, with its mentality and shallow emotions and a desire to be like the others. As this process progresses slowly, it is overlooked by most people and regarded as something quite natural. Meanwhile, the market provides a “mass man” with what he wants, and in fact it only meets those needs which have been previously effectively created in him. We tend to forget that the advertising market is billions of dollars spent annually to promote specific music, clothing or cosmetics. Each TV station is virtually 24-hour advertising aimed at making buyers realize that their lives will not be fully valuable without making new purchases and permanent enlargement of ownership. In order to become modern humans, they have to use cosmetics of a particular producer, drive a car of a certain brand and spend their holidays in a strictly defined manner. As interestingly noted Israeli writer Amos Oz “the greatest threat associated with the processes occurring nowadays is a global infantilization, changing people into children stupefied by a strong desire for toys, who were born to buy”.

Since the beginning of civilization, economically dominant countries, with an advanced level of development, have become centres from which peripherals took ideological and cultural models. This transfer usually proceeded unilaterally and adapted models were recognizable even after many centuries and even when the former peripherals themselves became cultural centres (Egypt → Greece → Rome; Olmec Toltec → Maya); although their geographical reach remained limited to the particular regions. In modern times, global centres have appeared next to the still existing regional centres and they affect the peripherals located in the farthest corners of the world. And so, the United States of America remains the undisputed leader in the export of content and culture in the field of technology, science, music, film and television, Japan passes on to the world its corporate culture and management organization, France dictates the latest trends in fashion, Italy shares its culinary arts and the Scandinavian countries share advanced mobile telephony. Regardless of latitude, due to the shrinking time and space compression, people watch the same movies and TV series, listen to the same music, buy the same clothes, restaurants serve the same dishes and are presented in the same mobile phones are presented in the shops. Global cultural ecumene seems accomplished⁷. However, the reality is not so clear. In Latin-Atlantic cultural circle (North America, Europe) homogenization or rather the Americanization of culture has become a fact. Societies of different countries have similar, consumer lifestyle, refer to the

⁷ U. Hannerz, *Powiązania transnarodowe. Kultura, ludzie, miejsca*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2006.

same system of values and ethical standards, and adhere to the same ideology. In many European countries, including Poland, the processes of depreciation of national symbols, ridiculing patriotism and tradition, contempt for the “inferior”, “parochial” native culture, progressive commercialization of Christian holidays, which have lost their religious character, becoming a festival of commercialism are observed⁸. To the European calendar were added new holidays – Halloween and Valentine’s Day, to workplace – corporate culture, to private life – new fashion, without which it is impossible to remain a civilized man. Polish culture surrendered to westernization after 1989, but due to “cultural saturation”⁹ of content flowing from the dominant centre (USA), this process is continuously progressing in spite of the warnings, from circles aware of negative effects of globalization in the sphere of symbolic culture, of disavowal of elite culture, based on the original act of creation. Particularly alarming phenomenon of “cultural deformation”¹⁰ which means adapting only superficial, the simplest content of Western culture, now occurs widely and it is closely related both to the earlier mentioned phenomenon of “mass man” as well as his uneasiness to receive the ambitious culture that requires intellectual effort and forces us to think. For decades, the Polish Television Theatre has been acquainting future generations with the greatest works of world literature every Monday. After 1989 it disappeared completely from television or its broadcasting was moved to late evening hours. Prime time has remained reserved for shallow mass entertainment, which does not require anything from the audience and does not teach anything, but it allows to achieve high viewing figures and proportional to them profits from advertising. From the same source also comes an unusual popularity of reality shows, talk – shows, series from “real life” and soap operas or all kinds of productions of non-existent intellectual level and embarrassingly low artistic level, ubiquitous in commercial television stations. Culture, which is one of the most important factors in shaping societies, has become a commodity managed according to the rules of marketing. The value of culture come down to the market price and the expected profit. Artists who want to be noticed, give up the freedom of artistic expression in favour of the laws of the market and the expectations of the mass buyer. Relationship of culture and economics have always existed (patronage, artistic guilds, etc.), but never on such a large scale. The downfall of craft and small craft artists is an evidence of that. The product

⁸ J. Czaja, *Kulturowe czynniki bezpieczeństwa*, Krakowskie Towarzystwo Edukacyjne Sp. z o.o, Kraków 2008.

⁹ U. Hannerz, *Powiązania transnarodowe...*, op.cit.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

formed in the artist's studio – a craftsman, having unique characteristics, individualized at the level of the creator's imagination, cannot be a cheap and mass product. Due to the high financial risk of differentiation strategy and despite an increase in interest in unique offers by potential buyers, very few companies in the market can afford long-term brand building in the face of continuous variation in demand. The mass production is economically more profitable in the short term, and the possibility of a further cut of costs by moving production lines to Asia is an extremely tempting prospect for most entrepreneurs. In the era of globalization it comes as no surprise that the Russian “matryoshka” is produced in China ...

Another type of risk associated with the “cultural deformity” is an attempt to reach a compromise between the content transmitted from the cultural centre and the local tradition, the point at which the society enters into the sphere of influence of global culture and its level of economic and technological development¹¹. In societies with a traditional autocracy model imported democracy turns into a facade democracy, in which the puppet parliament approves all decisions of the leader, transforming them into law, which are then enforced by the system of orders and penalties. In societies which are devoid of tradition of political or social dialogue, freedom of expression can turn into destructive chaos leading to divisions, resulting in tired people becoming vulnerable to economically unrealistic, but very catchy, populist theories. Freedom of associations can lead to such a fragmentation of the political scene, which can practically paralyze decision-making of the legislature.

The most optimistic scenario of the culture globalization assumes “developing cultural amalgamation”¹² based on dialogue and exchange, which will lead to the enrichment of civilization achievements. The clash of cultures could be a positive phenomenon, stimulating artistic creativity, allowing artists to seek inspiration in the content flowing from the outside, a kind of “filtration” of them through the styles and forms of local culture, with the consequent creation of new, unique works. Cultural synergy would be the beginning of “creolization”¹³ or “hybridization”¹⁴ of global culture composed of many diverse, complex cultures, which are derivatives of earlier influences and contacts, having continuous dialogue on the meaning, values and ideas.

¹¹ S. N. Eisenstadt, *Utopia i nowoczesność. Porównawcza analiza cywilizacji*, Oficyna Naukowa 2011

¹² U. Hannerz, *Powiązania transnarodowe...*, op.cit.

¹³ *Ibidem*

¹⁴ *Ibidem*

A specific feature of contemporary culture is its dynamic variation and the direction of these changes cannot be clearly determined. On the one hand, losing the cultural differences of ethnic groups, on the other hand, progressive integration of humanity through cooperation and cultural exchanges. Universalization of culture, with its negative consequences, in its shallowest and easiest dimension with unprecedented and impossible earlier, universal access to the heritage of the whole of civilization. It seems that the modern world is now at the stage of increased “cultural deformation”. As a result of unification and standardization of the expectations of consumers, the social identity and integration function of culture is beginning to disappear. The globalization of this sphere deprives of the opportunity to build individual identity and respect for the individuals. Multiplied by the globalization cultural offer does not mean multiplied availability of culture. Promotion of cultural phenomena is not related to the sense of mission of spreading values, but to spreading the specific political and economic interests. Increased cultural diffusion makes us more and more similar and leaves no room for individualism of each person and their desire to distinguish themselves by building their own identity.

Ethics, religion and society in the era of globalization

Ethics is defined as the science of morality detailing the importance of the concepts of good and evil, responsibility, conscience, duty, and as a set of moral standards and values characteristic for the given community¹⁵. The concept of social collectivism was completely unambiguous not so long ago, constrained by cultural, geographic or political frames. Globalization disturbed this clarity, bringing in multiculturalism, universalization, liberalization and relativism. The overriding role of freedom in its social and individual dimensions, carries a real risk of relativization of existing standards imposed by religions and traditions rooted in culture of the closed society. Are the moral standards really relative and cannot be evaluated? Is it possible to create a universal ethics, based on the timeless aspects of it?

The golden rule proposed by Peter Singer – treat others as you would like to be treated¹⁶ – is in conflict with established necessity, of individuals and whole societies, to satisfy the needs of their own. In terms of morality the indifference of one man towards a starving child in the neighbourhood

¹⁵ *Słownik Encyklopedyczny Edukacja Obywatelska*, Authors: Roman Smolski, Marek Smolski, Elżbieta Helena Stadtmüller, Wydawnictwo Europa, 1999 .

¹⁶ P. Singer, *Jeden świat – etyka globalizacji*, Wydawnictwo Książka i Wiedza, 2006.

is as reprehensible as the indifference of developed societies to thousands of people dying of the fully curable disease, due to the lack of a few dollars for buying the medicines. However, the idea of creating a supranational code of ethics, close to many supporters of globalization, is not feasible. The world striving towards universal liberalization, diverse in terms of economy, technology, culture and traditions, having different value systems, is not ready to accept homogeneous ethics imposed by the abstract world government. Global ethical imperative with standards of identity applicable to everyone would also be in clear contradiction to the essence of liberalism – freedom of individuals and tolerance for diversity. Establishing an universal code in conservative societies, attached to the native, traditional value systems, would require the use of dictatorial methods, and it would turn apologists of globalization into uncritical ethical fundamentalists. People of Western civilization are accustomed to seeing the world through the lenses of their own culture, dominated by the idea of continuous development and intellectual pursuits. They considered it the most valuable and for this reason only culture, which should be adopted by the whole of humanity. The westerner, in his cultural narcissism, refuses to acknowledge the existence of other values and different aspirations of other, multimillion populations. Aggressive enforcement of one “only right” ethical or cultural model combined with expansive western economy, which cares only for the economic indicators and ruthlessly explores the economies of less developed countries, causes only resentment and opposition to the influence. Continuously widening economic gap between the “rich North” and the “poor South” is further compounded by the globalized media culture. In people living below any defined subsistence the view of rich and decadent lifestyle of Western society causes frustration, hostility and opposition to the world order. As a part of this increasingly widespread rebellion, in the sometimes unconscious way, and sometimes skilfully inspired way, the respect for one’s own culture and values transmitted through the generations, which have their origin in religion or tradition, revives. This clearly noticeable trend is a form of opposition of marginalized societies to the contemporary forms of global neo-colonialism. Thus Western civilization, which gave birth to the idea of globalization, which asked questions about the meaning of existence and which was shaped by ideas of the French Revolution, brought the essence of its existence to maximizing economic profit. By the lack of moral sensitivity and the ability of sharing prosperity, it has contributed to the resurgence of all kinds of fundamentalisms. The main beneficiary and product of globalization is a narrow elite, that uses all available profits without limitation. The costs of globalization in the economic, political, cultural, social and psychological spheres are incurred by the masses, which are becoming

more aware of the unreality of their influence on decisions taken not only over their heads, but also over national governments. This raises the obvious hatred not only to the elite, but also to the institutions they represent. Countries and institutions manage the global economy in a way that is often cynical and marked by relativism. Over the past decades, the essence of country institutions disappears in favour of supranational organizations whose structure limits the declining impact of society on the quality of the management process. People do not have the opportunity to conduct a real dialogue with global authorities, they do not believe that “they” care about anything except the size of their income, that “they” still care about democracy, which changes slowly in yet another empty slogan, that one can affect “their” decisions in other way than through strikes, demonstrations or spontaneously formed social movements (“dissatisfied”, Anonymous). On the other hand, the elite shows increasing contempt in relation to the masses, which when well-fed and intoxicated with mind-numbing entertainment, should thoughtlessly submit to the dictates of the global society and forget about any attempts to execute responsibility for decisions from the rulers, even if their consequences no longer concerned only one country but the entire regional or the world economy.

Globalization allows the creation of fortunes, the size of which is unimaginable for the common man. Currently in the world there are about 78 thousands transnational corporations, 780 thousands subsidiaries, which have a total of about 780 thousands subsidiaries. The sale of these subsidiaries reaches \$ 19 billion, which is more than a double of the value of global trade¹⁷. In 2005, 52.8% of global GDP was controlled by 500 transcontinental corporations¹⁸. At the same time the continuous decrease in the level of wages and rising unemployment are observed¹⁹. Increasing disproportions in living standards generate social tensions and pose a threat to world peace. Western societies live in the cult of money, and they seem to be obsessed with lust for accumulating wealth in the greatest quantity. Work ceased to be considered in terms of the need to meet the basic needs of life and has become a fetish, a way to acquire further assets, outdo others, achieve economic dominance, build prestige. “Rat Race” is a passive creative destruction, at the end of which there is only the burnout and a sense of loss of meaning in life. This revalued hierarchy of human values results in reifica-

¹⁷ Data based on the paper of Departament Analiz i Prognoz Ministerstwa Gospodarki, Warszawa, November 2007.

¹⁸ J. Ziegler, *Imperium hańby*, Wydawnictwo: Książka i Prasa, 2012.

¹⁹ H-P Martin, H. Schumann, *Pułapka globalizacji. Atak na demokracje i dobrobyt*, Wrocław 1999.

tion of man, bringing him to the role of the tool, one more mean to achieve the benefits and goods satisfying whims. Wealth brings isolation born of fear. What are the fortresses built in urban enclaves like not a manifestation of one's own fears of loss of accumulated wealth perceived as a measure of human values? However, the separation provides apparent safety, as it shows the evident economic gap between society and contributes to the loss of human solidarity. People outside the fences feel marginalized, devoid of their living space, worse because poorer, crowded into ghettos filled with blocks of flats and full of aggression towards "outsiders". It is not a comfortable situation for either party. The hostility intensifies and deepens the fear of isolation from the "internal enemy", which leads to an escalation of animosity or even hatred and provokes criminal behaviour. It is not an accident that dehumanized and technocratic modern Western civilization cannot cope with their own mental health.

Although the issue of human spirituality has been pushed out of the collective consciousness, there comes a moment in which no material goods are able to compensate for the feeling of total emptiness, the lack of specific identity, absence of meaning and purpose of life, fear of exclusion and uncertainty of tomorrow.

The analogy of the above-described scheme to the problem in the world is striking. Globalization, which was intended to give benefits to all people, brings enormous benefits only to the richest. We live in a world where 1% of the richest have income of 57% of the poorest and the 1, 8 billion people live in extreme poverty, on less than 1 dollar a day, where more than 10 million children under five die from malnutrition, epidemics and lack of drinking water, 850 million people are illiterate and 325 million children of school age do not have any means for education.²⁰ Technological and scientific progress is not followed by the ethical and moral progress, but social and economic disproportions increase. Areas of unimaginable luxury adjoin the areas of unimaginable poverty, food waste on an unprecedented scale is intertwined with real hunger, hedonistic negation of all values and moral standards coexists with religious fundamentalism. "...*We live in the era of everything and anything, in the era of culture-performance-dressing, in an era where everything is for sale.*"²¹ The reality is not conducive to building a unified global society in which every individual is working for the good of all, basing their actions on universal code of ethics. On the contrary, there are indications that we walk the path to the destruction of

²⁰ J. Ziegler *Imperium*, op. cit.

²¹ M. Bradbury, *Doctor Criminale*, trans. E. Kraskowska, Wydawnictwo Zysk. i S-ka, Poznań 1996, p. 189.

humanity with the help of tools created by its own technological progress. In a situation where 358 billionaires have an income equal to the income of 45% of all humanity²² and two thirds of the population is constantly marginalized, in which hundreds of transnational corporations control more than 30% of the global resource of raw materials and 20% of global wealth belongs to developing countries inhabited by 80 % of humanity²³, a man is forced to economic immigration, looking for a job away from the place of his residence, torn from family, cultural background and religious community, getting a sense of loss in return. In the twenties of the 20th J. M. Keynes century saw irreligious and asocial aspects of contemporary capitalism, in which natural human relationships are replaced by a common desire to acquire as many possessions as possible. Poverty existing in reality cannot be reconciled with the facade humanism, greedy activities of criminal groups trading humans and their organs without resistance, drugs and arms with the apparent legislative initiatives of the United Nations, which also do not have any mechanisms for enforcement. The criminalization of poverty is a fact which cannot be denied even by the most loyal apologists of globalization.

The escalation of hostilities is an obvious breeding ground for international terrorism so often treated as religious fundamentalism. The dispute over the existence of God, conducted for many years in the Christian circle at the source of Western civilization, is completely rejected in societies with different cultures, but fundamentalism does not remain a stranger to the contemporary Christianity. Muslim societies build their vision of the world based on the canons of religion and they relate faith directly to the politics. Islam has become the religion of the excluded, the poor, without the dignity associated with human, which has had constantly growing number of followers, not only in the Arabic world, but also in Africa and Asia. After a traumatic September 11, the world recognized Islamic orthodoxy as the greatest threat to the world, which made religion a tool of political fight. It should not be forgotten that Catholic fundamentalism (ETA, IRA), Protestant (Ku Klux Klan) and Jewish (Gush Emunim), also contributed to the destruction of many lives.

A very important issue is the introduction of a clear distinction between terrorism and faith. The terrorists act in the name of religious slogans, their actions are being explained by poverty and cultural differences while the true and only goal is domination, fame and a sense of power. Usama ibn Ladin was a millionaire, the perpetrators of the attack on the World Trade

²² In: UNDP Human Development Report, Nowy York, July 1996.

²³ H-P Martin, H. Schumann, *Pułapka globalizacji..*, op. cit., p. 9.

Centre assimilated into the culture of the western world, leading the existence of people who are not poor and quite well educated. The members of ETA, the IRA are often the people from wealthy families. The assassins do not lead life in accordance with religious precepts and use the religious ideology only in order to rationalize their own actions and justify crimes. They are sociopaths in the purest form, shaped by the environment of like-minded sociopaths. International disputes, disproportions in the allocation of wealth, the collapse of moral values create the perfect atmosphere for terrorist activities. Poverty, social and civilizational exclusion of the whole communities are pretexts and camouflage for the real motives of the activities, behind which usually stand particular countries pursuing their own goals. Without Pakistani intelligence aided by China the Taliban would not exist. Hamas and Al Fatah would remain meaningless small groups of fanatics if not for the generous financial and military support from the Soviet Union. Terrorism will not end with the covering all gaps of civilization, because there will always be some ideology that justifies it and the leaders of the countries who will have no ethical qualms about taking care, in this extremely undignified manner, of political or economic interests.

Without a doubt, we are witnessing a clash of civilizations, which manifests itself in a kind of religious renaissance in relation to Christianity, Judaism or Islam. The followers strive to the purification of faith from any borrowings and accretions, they want religion to be pure, unspoiled, like an original faith of ancestors²⁴. Religion organizes chaos, gives the individual a sense of security and restores dignity. It is, on the one hand, described earlier rebellion against pervasive consumerism and the imposition on local societies of artificial global culture lacking a clear identity, on the other hand, in times of general relativity the expression of the longing for the clear definition of good and evil, truth and falsity, the longing for justice which is unattainable in the modern world.

The crisis of moral values and the relativizing of ethical standards causes a sense of helplessness, lack of purpose of existence, resulting in the escape of a man from himself. The reflection coming from the understanding of reality is lost in information served by the media in the number and rate that unable thinking. People who are gradually deprived of spiritual life, try to deal with solitude by fighting for money or stimulants and fun. They search for the meaning of life by applying a further dose of adrenaline in the form of risky performances and they look for answers to the questions in sects or fortune-telling. They often escape from the real world into a virtual one, in which each failure can be repaired in a "second life" and the harm

²⁴ B.Tibi, *Fundamentalizm religijny*, trans. J. Danecki, PIW, Warszawa 1997, p. 5.

caused to another person is not redeemed by the spiritual desolation. The science, identified with the progress of civilization, which was supposed to offer a human being easier life and fortune, has paradoxically become a tool of personal and social enslavement.

Globalization and the human rights

The idea of human rights is as old as our civilization. The concepts of human rights can be found in the “Code of Hammurabi”, the Old and New Testament, “Laws” of Plato, “Rhetoric” of Aristotle, in the writings of Cicero, “Summa Theologica” of Saint Thomas Aquinas, the Great Charter, the American Declaration of Independence, the French Declaration of the Rights of the Human and of the Citizen and the Polish Constitution of May 3, in William Ockham and Samuel Puffendorf, in “Two treatises of government” and “A Letter concerning toleration” by John Locke and “Spirit of Laws” by Montesquieu. It should be determined what is commonly understood as the concept of human rights. Their clear definition does not exist and a current classification of science puts them on the borderline of ethics, law and political science. The easiest way you can define them is as a set of rights belonging to the individual because of the inherent dignity of the human, these rights are universal, inalienable, inviolable, natural and indivisible.

Negative rights, also called first generation rights, grant civil rights to man that cannot be restricted by the state. These include: the right to live, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of the proclamation of the views, the prohibition of torture and degrading treatment, the right to a fair court, civil and election rights, the right to decide about your life and the right to happiness. The second generation rights consist of positive rights in the field of social, economic, solidarity and cultural rights (to science and health, work, property and inheritance, the right of peoples to self-determination, to artistic creation, scientific research and publishing its results, to the free usage of culture). This is the group of rights that are not only the most difficult for execution, but also for the effective enforcement. In the era of globalization the group of third-generation rights was created, including the right to live in peace, social development, safe environment and equitable use of the achievements of civilization. Codification of human rights was carried out gradually between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. So we have:

- Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen,
- Bill of Rights – the amendments to the United States Constitutions,

- The Slavery Convention,
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women,
- Convention on the Rights of the Child and its two Additional Protocols: The Participation of Children in Armed Conflict and on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

Human rights protection is also guaranteed in the constitutions of particular states and is of interest to various regional institutions (e.g. Council of Europe) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and churches.

Globalization as a transnational trend causes that “... *our daily, common activities are increasingly influenced by events happening on the other side of the globe. Conversely, local habits tend to have global consequences*”²⁵. In the economic sphere happens “...*a merge of puddles, ponds, lakes and seas of rural, provincial, regional and national economies into one global economic ocean. It will issue small units to the impact of the huge rollers of economic competition instead of, as it was the case earlier, to moving small waves and regular tides*”²⁶. Derivatives of the process of globalization – social exclusion, poverty, unemployment, human objectification, taking away his dignity and sense of security – stand in sharp contrast with nobly sounding records of the Convention cards. This leads to a paradox, in which the same supranational institutions that allow the introduction of huge capital by transnational corporations to tax havens and destruction of local economies, fight for human rights trampled by a policy of these companies.

According to Amnesty International the rights of 214 million of emigrants in the world are notoriously violated by their home country or host countries. These people, who are very often left to themselves, live on the margins of society blamed by the populist rhetoric for the economic difficulties of the country to which they came. They are locked up in detention centres and exist in extreme conditions or work under the rate at which a man of the West would agree to employ. They work in the conditions of forced labour

²⁵ A. Giddens, *Poza lewicą i prawicą. Przyszłość polityki radykalnej*, trans. J. Serwański, Wydawnictwo Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 2001, p. 13.

²⁶ H-P Martin, H. Schumann, *Pułapka globalizacji...*, *op. cit.* p. 29-30.

or actually in the slavery system. Amnesty International Annual Report for the year 2013 leaves no illusions as to the condition of human rights in the modern, globalized world. The right to freedom of speech is violated and the tortures are used. In Africa, in many countries the real power is exercised by armed gangs which recruit soldiers among children and the military junta that took over governments by either armed uprisings or coups, aided by a ruthless security services. The population escapes from areas of armed activities, but people often escape to even greater misery of the refugee camps. This leads to rapes and bestial crimes that are very often committed on all tribes. In South America, a relentless struggle for access to natural resources takes place, which is lost by indigenous peoples forced to leave the land that their ancestors settled. The conflicts between drug cartels, which possess greater financial resources than most of the smaller states, multiply. People exposing corruption, meanness and political assassinations disappear without a trace. In the Asia-Pacific region protests of population meet with brutal pacification and the participants get are taken to prison or to the place of execution. Women remain second-class citizens without the right to education, civil rights and, in extreme cases, even the right to life. In the Middle East and North Africa there have been continuously ongoing military conflicts for years, during which human rights are simply a farce (Syria, Egypt, Libya, Israel). In Europe no one is able to solve the problem of emigrants and expressions of aversion for the Roma population. The investigations and processes of crimes committed during the war in the Balkans are carried out without much enthusiasm. Russia limits civil liberties and annexes parts of independent territory of Ukraine. The decisions of the European Court of Human Rights are questioned and the implementation of its provisions is not enforced. Around the world, millions of people suffer from discrimination based on colour of skin, religion or nationality, they are being offended, subjected to physical and psychological violence. There are more and more cases of human trafficking, which, although illegal and banned by most countries in the world, remains one of the most profitable “businesses”. Human organs trafficking is not only thriving on the black market, but also on the internet. The significant increase in the level of aggression in children and adolescents (the phenomenon of the “wave” in schools) is a common concern and the impunity of juvenile offenders, generally undergoing mild rehabilitation with parental supervision or curator, seems to be the problem that is difficult to solve even by the most experienced teachers.

Many people are asking how it is possible to have a boundless contempt for other people in our modern, enlightened times, despite such beautiful laws that we all supposedly have? The reasons for this state of things can

be enumerated. The lust to get rich at any cost effectively eliminates moral resistance against enslavement of another human individuals, the abductions of young men to labour camps, women to brothels and children into slave labour, which, though morally repugnant, can significantly reduce the cost of production. The feeling of superiority (whether in the ideological or civilization dimension) raises discrimination of “worse” people because different. The reason for persecution does not matter. In the context of modern apartheid both nations and compatriots are annihilated. The totalitarian systems rule out any concern for the rights of the individual, and in others, undeveloped countries, calculation justifies trampling of human dignity economic.

Annual report on human rights in the world for 2013 prepared by the international organization Human Rights Watch, as the most common manifestations of violations of rights in the European countries enlists racism, deprivation of the rights of immigrants and refugees, discrimination against minorities, lack of transparency in investigations conducted against a secret CIA prisons and war criminals from the Balkans.

Postmodernism, as the syndrome of “exhaustion culture”, brought the disintegration of previous philosophical systems, rejection of social structures and ethical standards. Its only value is the lack of any values and the characteristic feature – relativism and morality without ethics. The idea of the concept of law imposes restrictions on freedom of the individual to the point where the freedom of others begins. Postmodern morality does not seem to notice this obvious truth. Civilized man consumes and gathers, regardless of the cost incurred by others and by their own humanity, he entertains and he does not know in what direction he goes. But certainly he is not trying to think and understand. This type of reliable knowledge would destroy the ideal image of the world that he has painstakingly built in his own sense of superiority.

Conclusions

The purpose of the above essay on the topic of globalization in its cultural, ethical and religious aspects, was not to present a pessimistic vision of the world and an individual who is completely disenchanted with modernity. Enough has been written about the benefits of the globalization in the way that is not always consistent with the objective truth. The modern world is dominated by the view that neoliberal globalization of the economy is the pinnacle of the economy, and there is no real alternative to it (TINA – “There is no alternative” Margaret Thatcher). This view is pre-

sented mainly by major economic powers and representatives of transnational corporations. It is more and more often called into question by economists from countries with less economic expansion and emerging social movements – anti-globalization, pacifists, ecologists, dissatisfied, etc. The greatest achievements of globalization include the openness of economies, the elimination of trade barriers and the opportunity for the free movement of goods, facilitation of the exchange of information, dissemination of new technologies and facilitation of the access to the achievements of civilization in the field of science or art, economic activation of the countries, in which there are direct investments, the abolition of borders and the ease of movement (compression of time and space), a progressive democratization of societies and intercultural integration achieved in the way of economic cooperation. They are without a doubt the great achievements in the history of mankind. Economics is a ruthless science and it also links the concept of profit with the costs. The price paid by the modern world for the undeniable achievements of civilization, seemed to be worthy of deeper consideration. The costs incurred in the fields of so far rather not associated with economics: culture, ethics, social, family and spiritual life of man, rising unemployment, could lead to social exclusion, imposing cultural style of life on the entire populations, the disappearance of ethnic groups and cultural homogenization, the manipulation of information and media, migrations of people, human loneliness despite various opportunities for communication, insecurity, disorder of sense of security because of the loss of identity, family breakdown, fear of disease and old age, annihilation of human spiritual ambitions and replacing them with the rush toward wealth, widespread consumerism rather than intellectual reflection.

Globalization is building a new, universal order across borders resulting from geography, politics and culture. This order does not organize only sphere of the economy, but inexorably enters areas that were so far inviolable – privacy and family. Globalization as a process, is not neither good nor evil, but counteracting its negative consequences is a real challenge for the modern world intoxicated by postmodernism, conflicted, fighting in wars and appropriated by the dehumanized capitalism, for which human rights are just another nicely sounding, populist slogan.

References

1. Bourdieu P., Passeron J-C., *Reprodukcja. Elementy teorii systemu nauczania*, PWN, Warszawa 1990.
2. Bradbury M., *Doctor Criminale*, trans. E. Kraskowska, Wydawnictwo Zysk. i S-ka, Poznań

- 1996.
3. Burszta W.J., *Antropologia kultury*, Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 1998.
 4. Czaja J., *Kulturowe czynniki bezpieczeństwa*, Krakowskie Towarzystwo Edukacyjne Sp.z o.o, Kraków 2008.
 5. Dobrowolski K., *Studia nad życiem społecznym i kulturą*, PAN – branch in Kraków, Prace Komisji Socjologicznej nr 7, Wrocław 1966.
 6. Eisenstadt S.N., *Utopia i nowoczesność. Porównawcza analiza cywilizacji*, Oficyna Naukowa, 2011.
 7. Gabryś L., *Instytucja państwa w dobie globalizacji*, in: *Wyzwania procesu globalizacji wobec człowieka*, ed. Ewa Okoń-Horodyńska, Akademia Ekonomiczna im. Karola Adamieckiego, Katowice 1999.
 8. Giddens A., *Poza lewicą i prawicą. Przyszłość polityki radykalnej*, trans. J. Serwański, Wydawnictwo Zysk i S-ka, Poznań 2001.
 9. Hannerz U., *Powiązania transnarodowe. Kultura, ludzie, miejsca*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2006.
 10. Kochan J., *Globalizacja a uspołecznienie*, in: *Nowa Krytyka. Czasopismo Filozoficzne*, 13.01.2008.
 11. Królewicz C., *Globalizacja w aspekcie odpowiedzialności indywidualnej człowieka*, in: *Wyzwania procesu globalizacji wobec człowieka*, ed. Ewa Okoń-Horodyńska, Akademia Ekonomiczna im. Karola Adamieckiego, Katowice 1999.
 12. Martin H-P., Schumann H., *Pułapka globalizacji. Atak na demokrację i dobrobyt*, Wrocław 1999.
 13. Opracowanie Departamentu Analiz i Prognoz Ministerstwa Gospodarki, Warszawa November 2007.
 14. Singer P., *Jeden świat – etyka globalizacji*, Wydawnictwo Książka i Wiedza, 2006.
 15. *Słownik Encyklopedyczny Edukacja Obywatelska*, Authors: Roman Smolski, Marek Smolski, Elżbieta Helena Stadtmüller, Wydawnictwo Europa, 1999.
 16. Smith A.D., *Towards a global cultures?*, in: *Global culture. Nationalism, globalization and modernity*, ed. M. Featherstone, Sage, London 1990.
 17. Sztompka P., *Socjologia. Analiza społeczeństwa*, Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków 2002.
 18. Sztompka P., *Trauma wielkiej zmiany: społeczne koszty transformacji*, Instytut Studiów Politycznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Warszawa, 2000 and P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie, fundament społeczeństwa*, Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków 2007.
 19. Tibi B., *Fundamentalizm religijny*, trans. J. Danecki, PIW, Warszawa 1997.
 20. UNDP Human Development Report, Nowy York, July 1996.
 21. Zacher L., as cited: Lidia Gabryś, *Instytucja państwa w dobie globalizacji*, in: *Wyzwania procesu globalizacji wobec człowieka*, ed. Ewa Okoń-Horodyńska, Akademia Ekonomiczna im. Karola Adamieckiego, Katowice 1999.
 22. Ziegler J., *Imperium hańby*, Wydawnictwo: Książka i Prasa, 2012.