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Article

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Suggested Citation: Spiridon, Cristian (2013) : Between Nationalism and the Flat World of Thomas Friedman, CES Working Papers, ISSN 2067-7693, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Centre for European Studies, Iasi, Vol. 5, Iss. 4, pp. 600-614

This Version is available at:

<https://hdl.handle.net/10419/198278>

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BETWEEN NATIONALISM AND THE FLAT WORLD OF THOMAS FRIEDMAN

Cristian Spiridon*

Abstract: *The present paper aims to disseminate the impact of globalization on the nation-state throughout the history. The research objective consists in the reviewing of the assertion of the globalization phenomenon and the conflicts it stirred at the national level by reasons related to cultural, economic, social or political issues. The analysis will be conducted by two antagonistic positions: an optimistic view according to which globalization has a positive effect overall and a pessimistic one under which globalization causes the decline of the nation-state. The main findings will show that nationalism is not doomed to disappear, but instead it will adapt over time and will steal from the benefits globalization brings everything that culturally, politically, socially, or economically suits to a certain nation.*

Keywords: globalization; nationalism; nation-state; liberal democracy; Western World

JEL Classification: A1; B11; B20; F10; F60

INTRODUCTION

The debate of the essay is generally taken from two antagonistic positions: an optimistic position that considers the effects of globalization on economic, social, moral and cultural aspects of society today have been predominantly positive. On the other side lies ones who see and foresee the decline of the nation-state as caused by globalization which brings with it conflicts rather than the prosperity largely conjured up.

Visions of a future that is not focused anymore on state as a central element of ensuring the welfare and social peace have features ranging from the utopian to a threatening character. One of the first "optimists" has been Francis Fukuyama who has imagined the end of history together with the global triumph of liberal democracy (Fukuyama, 1992). Peter Drucker wrote then about a "post-capitalist society" in which the nation-state dominance of the past 400 years has been challenged at every level, from the transnational to the tribal level. Moreover, banker Walter Wriston, appreciating the transition from a "material economy" to an "informational" one, concluded that the ability to instantly transfer huge amounts of capital undermines national borders and sovereignty (Wriston, 1992). Another author with a positive outlook on the effects of globalization is Rosecrance, professor of political sciences at the University of California in Los Angeles. Using methods of quantitative analysis, he sustains his plea which states that,

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nowadays, money and power are not derived from a fixed asset (land) but from capital, labor and information (assets which are movable) (Rosecrance, 1999). Given that the key factors of production are movable, the importance of borders has diminished considerably. The theory Rosecrance's book brings into focus is fundamentally optimistic. It outlines a future with an area of international peace ever higher. The fourth part of his book draws most attention through the accent it puts on the new international system from a political and economic combined perspective. The conclusions reached stress that international economies are no longer captive of the nation-states parochial governance.

Opponents to these optimistic theorists of the positive effects of globalization are those who predict the decline of the nation-state and the conflicts that may erupt as a consequence of this fact. Samuel Huntington provides a much darker forecast than that visioned by Francis Fukuyama. The first approach of the subject has been conducted within an article entitled "The Clash of Civilizations?" written in the summer of 1993 in the Foreign Affairs editorial. In agreement with what the title suggests, the article argued that the lines separating civilizations today will be the battle lines of the future. Detached from the traditional paradigm, Huntington said that is more relevant for states to be grouped in terms of culture and civilization than by reasons regarding economic and political systems or level of development (Huntington, 1993). The author expects that the central axis of the world politics in the future will be one of conflict between the West and the Rest, the latter category consisting in a concurrence between Islamism and Confucianism in order to challenge the values, interests, and Western power. A different portrait, but just as disturbing as that of Huntington, has been sketched by Robert Kaplan in "*The ends of the Earth: A Journey to the Frontiers of Anarchy*" (Kaplan, 1996) published in 1996. The timeliness of Kaplan's writing may be questionable due to his neo-Malthusian pessimism shared by Thomas Fraser Home-Dixon, who predicted the spread of diseases, malnutrition and increased competition for resources in the third millennium.

At the time the foreign correspondent of the New York Times published "The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Understanding Globalization" he benefited from previous writings on the decline of the nation-state equally from those who saw with pessimism this instance and those who considered it to be a new beneficial era to the mankind. Thomas Friedman approach has consisted in the synthesis of the contrasting views and the balancing of the positive and negative things that global flattening can induce (Friedman, 1999). Thus, the word "Lexus" in the title symbolizes the revolutionary changes that globalization brings in national security, politics, culture, finance, technology and environment while "Olives" denote the resistance of

traditionalists to these changes who are struggling to preserve cultural roots, often suffering from the effects of the displacement of globalization without enjoying its benefits. In the introduction to his book, Thomas Friedman makes a comparison between his feelings of globalization and the ones which spring in the dawn of each day, saying that they do more good than harm and that both phenomena are inevitable. However, in the book written at the end of the last millennium the author asserts that globalization will not end geopolitics. The only question we still have to answer to states if the flat world visioned by Thomas Friedman really mind the policy of each region and the locally specific social phenomena. Micklethwait and Wooldridge's (Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 2000) argued that globalization has helped to awaken nationalist or fundamentalist impulses instead of bringing nations closer. Peter Drucker completed saying that each time in the last 200 years when political passions and nation-state politics have been hit by economic rationality, political passions and nation-state have won (Drucker, 1993)

Substantial criticism regarding the benefits of globalization are made by researchers and prominent persons specialized in economy and international politics from outside the Western world. Sanjib Baruah, professor of political studies at Bard College, author of the article "India Against Itself: Assam and the Politics of Nationality" (Baruah, 2000) notes that most contemporary commentaries on globalization are not anchored in history, as capitalism has may never ran free across well established cultural and political boundaries by now. Quoting Karl Marx, Baruah points out the historic character of globalization describing three waves of migration and its impact on nations (Baruah, 2000). Robertson (Robertson, 2004) undertakes a trip back in time in an article entitled "The Historical Background and Significance of Globalization" trying to fit into a historical context the development of globalization in its different forms. On the other hand, Roshwald (Roshwald, 2011) in a search of the golden age of the nation-state notes that despite the dangers and abuses that history associates with the existence of the nation-state, alternative communities with no political borders entail more important potential risks. Segesvary (Segesvary, 2001) completes the list of those who have carried out an analysis of the globalization phenomenon in a historical context and concludes with the idea that today's flat world is characterized by universality in exchange to the past manifestation when clothes of globalization were more locally specific.

Paul Krugman, the Nobel laureate for economics in 2008, in an introduction to the revised edition of "The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money" by John Maynard Keynes (Keynes, 2009), reported that in the summer of 2005 a group of conservative scholars and

political leaders was asked to identify the most dangerous books of the nineteenth and twentieth century. There was little surprise when the Charles Darwin or Betty Friedan books were top ranked. But the economist's John Maynard Keynes famous work was not lower, surpassing even the works of Frantz Fanon or Lenin. Thus, given the impact that "The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money" has had on the contemporary political economy we considered quite relevant the presentation of Lenin's ideas with regard to the globalization phenomenon. Cited by McVeigh (McVeigh, 2005), Lenin issued certain prophecies about the future of capitalism which has been viewed appearing on the horizon of globalization (in the context of a parasitic capitalism). Similar to Marx's vision, Lenin considered that the economic base determines the political superstructure, that economics determines politics and culture. Thus, we can extract the core of the Leninist prophecy: the economic globalization perceived as an American product could flatten the world, universalizing policy, culture, values and beliefs. On the line of faith, King (King, 2002) finds globalization as the most profound religious movement of our time. The researcher argues about the entering into a phase of evolution in which humans will gather to form a comprehensive body of human types. In a somewhat similar trend, Dorrien (Dorrien, 2011) observed the predator spirit of capitalism and evoked the need for its transformation and its replacement by a cooperative ethos of economic democracy. Capitalism has overdeveloped selfish instincts of devotion and left the ability of the individual dry and atrophied. The social plague cannot be treated with more globalization while the elements with which the phenomenon operates are harmful to the communities.

Of particular importance has been the consultation of the paper of Emile Boutroux "The Contingency of the Laws of Nature" (Boutroux, 1920) and "La Pensee et les Nouvelles anti-intellectualistes Ecoles" by Alfred Fouille (Fouille, 1911) in which the authors have carried out a classification of the nationalist phenomenon in a historical context and have captured a series of features and manifestations of nationalism over time.

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Ernest Renan (1823-1892), a french philosopher, theorist and author of the essay "What is a nation" approaches the definition from a spiritualist point of view and sees the nation as a spiritual principle, the product of the complications of the human history, representing a spiritual family, not a particular group determined by a geographical configuration. Thus, the

spiritual principle represents the soul of the nation. Spiritual definitions have been enunciated by Jules Michelet - the unity of spirit constitutes the nation, Emile Boutroux (Boutroux, 1920) and Alfred Fouille (Fouille, 1911) – who see the nature as a feature of union between the past and the present of a spiritual community. Rabindranath Tagore granted a materialistic representation of the nation, as a political and economic union of a people as an organized force. Nation is based on the geographical area and on the physical environment, territory and borders, on conditions and economic factors. Mussolini launched the idea of a voluntary nationalism as a combination of Renan spiritualism and voluntarism. He has focused on the assertion of the national power.

Isolated reactions associated with what can be described as nationalism have occurred since the time of Pericles when Athens was a dynamic commercial center in the heart of the Eastern Mediterranean. Even if the demographic composition of the city-state had suffered from massive changes due to the influx of traders, craftsmen and slaves from within and from outside the Hellenic world, the *polis* tightened the laws regarding the citizenship and the political membership of men descended from city native parents (Roshwald, 2011). Centuries later, elements of nationalism had been reflected in Nicefor Phokas speeches, ruler of Lombardy, or Jacob Szadek, Polish scientist, who formulated pioneering elements of the nationalist doctrine on July 3th, 1464, in the presence of the Pope at the peace conference held in Thorn. Also, Niccolo Machiavelli, the precursor of the idea of unity in Italy argues about the citizens of a homeland that he should join in. During the sixteenth century attention had been captured by the disintegration of the Western European Church produced by the Protestant Reformation which divided the Christian community in several battlefields. The religious conflicts triggered were masking the secular political conflicts. Until the early 1700s the competitive spirit determinant of the conflicts between nations in all spheres of individual endeavors had managed to erode the religious conscience of Catholic origin which have promoted the universality and the idea of community and that have maintained united the Western Christianity for significant periods of time (Greenfeld, 2011). The context thus created was conducive for the assertion of the nationalist doctrine and ideology in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when it had gained force and collective expression. Liberal and national ideas issued by the French Revolution that spread across Europe and resulted into an intensification of the struggle against foreign domination of the oppressed nations are considered a basis for the propulsion of nationalism to public attention, but the events that shaped nationalism and gave it power had consisted in the unification of Italy and Germany

that started in the second half of the nineteenth-century and spread to some extent until the late twentieth century. Between 1917 and 1923, the Romanov, Habsburg and Ottoman multinational empires have collapsed and the doctrine of national self-determination has taken the forefront as a legitimate basis and a tool for propaganda for the two ideologies competing for global rescue (Leninism and Wilsonism). This period can be considered a boundary point for the imposition of nationalism as a social, political, cultural or religious phenomenon (Manela, 2007). From an economic perspective, the principle of nationality was revealed through protectionist tariffs on imports from abroad, which had a counterproductive character very often.

The peak of the nationalist phenomenon has been reached not in the interwar period or the period that followed the Second World War (1945-1989). Small nation-states who managed to escape from the tutelage of great empires, although only a relative amount of them had gained political independence, were still informally subordinated to the political power of the epicenters of the former military and diplomatic world. Moreover, the false independence of these countries (countries of the Central and Eastern Europe area) had been accompanied by internal problems of identity: each of these alleged nation-states was characterized by ethnic minorities whose official policy positions could be described as dissident. The intense efforts that had been made in order to strengthen the national identity among the countries of Central and Eastern Europe between 1920 and 1930 had been directly proportional to the ethno-cultural heterogeneity and the degree of insecurity of their borders (Pani, 2007). The situation had not been positive or color shaded in East Asia also, where the Japanese propaganda with regard to the establishment of a political system which could cultivate a special form of civic nationalism in Manchuria clearly masked imperialist claims.

Nationalism has got its highest freedom of expression after 1989. The experience has served to highlight the political fragility of the nation, which at least within the reconfigured Europe is now safer, more stable, and more durable than ever. This is possible chiefly due to the power and effectiveness of the international organizations that contributed to mitigate threats to national independence. But nationalism today is not similar the one from a century or two ago. It is legitimated out of history, morality and universal values such as freedom or equality (Ben-Israel, 2011). Nationalism is no longer considered to be an ideology in the pure sense of the word, but merely a principle of political organization that promotes the congruence of the political unity with a cultural group because such a combination is effective from a practical point of view and fits the modern world based on collective cultures (Graham, 2008).

Even if the nationalism of the nineteenth century seemed to be one of the many ideologies that tried to impose at that time like socialism, communism, liberalism or conservatism, it now appears in a different, flexible, changeable manner, establishing "alliances" with other ideologies such as racism, imperialism and anti-imperialism to ensure its own survival (Munck, 2006).

In the XXIst century a new phenomenon threatens to shake the many pillars that nationalism is based on in different parts of the world. Considered by some an autonomous force and by many others a product developed on the American soil, globalization has come to flatten the world of the 3rd millennium. As an autonomous force, globalization is a powerful process of global integration in terms of politics, economics, communications and culture able to undermine the traditional state sovereignty (Tyoyila, 2007). As a product localized geographically, globalization describes a flattening process "sold" by the United States to the rest of the world that has Mickey Mouse ears, eats Big Mac, drinks Coca-Cola or Pepsi and does its calculations on an IBM personal computer or Apple laptop, using Windows 98, with an Intel Pentium II chip and a network connection from Cisco Systems (Friedman, 1999).

According to the first view, the phenomenon may be attributed to a richer history. Although not as they currently exist, globalization developed its forces in the eighteenth century, when the Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years War in the bosom of the Holy Roman Empire and the Eighty Years War (1568-1648) between Spain and the Dutch Republic. During this period, the European states have legitimated their boundaries and the Westphalia norms were not regulating the colonial conquests by the power states of the old continent. European states could easily attach territories outside the continent as long as each strong nation from the first category respected the sovereignty of the others. In this early stage of globalization, the territorial boundaries of the non-Western political systems were not considered unbreakable. From this point of view this period of expansion of the Western Europe is likely to be considered the starting point in the building of the foundation of the global political economy as it is perceived today. Only at the end of the century efforts have glimpsed the universalization of a system that until then applied just to Europe, and the Westphalia principles of sovereignty and inviolability of national borders were expanding outside the non-Western world. It is no wonder that now when states are required to give up some sovereignty on behalf of the free market and human rights they show a high reluctance which stems from the fear of a likely return to an era of selective sovereignty.

By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries trade has highlighted a democratic imperative and has reduced the viability of the old forms of exclusion in some communities (a reason which later formed the view that capitalism is the engine for change). For the first time some groups of countries were operating globally. Initially they have transformed, at a relatively small scale, the crossroad of the regional markets into global networks and have accelerated the global distribution of plants and animals, sustaining the growth of population and the environmental change. French Revolution of 1789 showed the dramatic social and political consequences of globalization as manifested at that time. The rapid entry into the war and the assertion of France imperialist claims made possible a sudden reform of the political, economic and social dynamics. This transformation had been accompanied by another consequence of the democratic imperative of globalization - the technological revolution that has defined, as a central element, what can be considered the second wave of globalization (XIXth century). Industrialization is further illustrated as an example of British or European exceptionality, a product of the Enlightenment, rather than as an achievement of the global production and trade with cotton or a result of democracy, democracy which in turn seems to be a consequence of the expansion of consumer markets (Robertson, 2004). But we cannot overlook the impact of industrialization over the entire globe. Industrialization has allowed nature and environment to support a more large population which led to new social and political dynamics. More than ever, technology had the ability to generate huge profits. Also it increased interconnectivity between different countries and between individuals of the same nation, allowing a more rapid diffusion of the technical capital. Industrialization brought with it a series of disadvantages as well. Companies that have benefited from the technological revolution first were those whose elites were transformed and charged with political and economic power during the first wave of globalization. The Industrial Revolution seemed to be a reward for these elites and it materialized through the creation and integration of various profitable economic activities. Large groups of people from other social groups were able to benefit from this event as well, event that have induced a process of democratization over the course of the nineteenth century and have marked a new era of the masses (Mann, 1997).

Thus, the third wave of globalization (the current one) should be placed in a historical and political context. We should not minimize the profound transformation that has brought with it. The information revolution as a central element of the nowadays globalization can be considered as the third industrial revolution: the first gave us the railroads, the second reached its peak by putting on the plane and car and the current revolution built the "electronic highway"

which allows the achievement of virtual travels at an unprecedented speed and relatively low costs. As an autonomous force, today's globalization takes the form of a flattening world economy. The liberalization of trade and financial flows as well as the support of the world's most powerful states to reduce tariffs and nontariff barriers at an international level led to the creation of close links within the group of world developed countries but also between developed and developing areas. The contribution to growth in both categories of nation-states through increased specialization and the assertion of the comparative advantage principle is unchallengeable. However, although globalization has resulted in an economic growth among developing countries it has also induced a wide heterogeneity at the industrial and regional levels. While the newly industrialized Asian states have prospered, the performance of African countries has been very low. At the same time, the globalization increased the labor movement across national borders and has created instability within the labor markets of the host countries. This instability entailed the liberal-democratic capitalism promoted by the United States to face resistance even from some developed countries. The United States position with regard to labor is into a fundamental contrast with the historical experience of other countries. Therefore, France, Germany and other European countries have resisted the exhortations to cut social granted benefits and reduce the labor force because they have feared of the instability that can be set up at home (Temin, 1999). The governments of these nations have considered that a lower standard of life accompanied by tariff barriers are preferred to a domestic instability that the implications of globalization could feed. Something similar occurred in Asia. The alleged inability of Malaysia to face international economic invoked by Thomas Friedman had been in fact a national strategy of the government to impose capital controls in order to stop the movement of active flows that threatened to leave the country. This measure had the effect of avoiding catastrophic financial losses. Then we can argue about Japan which resisted to a total transformation towards a free market economy in order to protect the population from unemployment. Although the country suffered economically and it has taken a while to recover from the recession that it had entered at the end of the nineteenth century, Japan has achieved very good results in terms of keeping the welfare of the population. One can see that Japan has made calculations and concluded that it is more profitable to give up benefits that globalization can bring at the economic level instead of bearing the social tensions that would occur in case of a wider openness of the economy to the global market.

The basic problem of the third wave of globalization consists apparently in its American specificity. Nowadays globalization becomes rather a process of universalization instead of

taking the specific and beneficial form for each region. Nation-state is not dead, though it put on new modern clothes. Contrary to Francis Fukuyama's prophecy that made him famous in his essay written in 1989 according to which the end of history had come accompanied by the global triumph of liberal democracy and no further development is necessary or desirable in the development of human relations, the end of history has not come or has not brought the proclaimed victory of the democratic capitalism. "Olives" can grow and want to grow in a world where "66 human beings and 310 robots make 300 Lexus sedans per day" (King, 2002). It is a wrong belief to consider that the "Lexus" has overwhelmed the olive tree. Specifically, it is wrong and premature to form the idea that globalization has uprooted traditional cultures. The tensions and clashes occurred between the new global culture and the traditional ones from all around the world have come to validate this claim (William, 2007). In the "Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention" paper of Thomas Friedman the author claims that two countries that had on their territory a McDonald's fast food have never lead a war against each other from the moment when in both countries have been settled at least one subsidiary of the famous fast food chain. The war that took place in Serbia and which coincided with the year when the above mentioned book was published invalidated instantly the famous journalist theory. The culture flattening and the peace that the presence of a symbol of globalism is supposed to be bringing with are devoid of gaps or are missing completely in some parts of the world. This finding is reinforced by the rhetorical question that raises more often in the minds of the inhabitants of the regions outside the Western world: why should McDonald's in India or Thailand be seen as a sign of globalization and not as an ethno-specific food, as Indian and Thai are seen in the United States?

Therefore, attempts which aim implanting Western democracy where Western democracy does not fit are likely to cause potentially disruptive effects comparable to those that Christianity had in the Roman Empire of the fourth century. Democracy does not always make societies more civil (Navarro, 2004). Claims that globalization emerges from below the heart and deepest aspirations of the people are somewhat overstated. The predator spirit of capitalism should be transformed or replaced by a cooperative ethos of economic democracy. Economic democracy without political democracy is an empty promise, like a pot roast or a form without substance. The political democracy can be gained and sustained on the long-term only if it has the consensus of the subordinated community. Globalization in the sense of a planetary flattening ignores tradition, and values rooted in the cultural specificity of a nation but forces any country that wants an economic growth to wear the clothes it promotes

universally through aggressive marketing (Kleinkneicht, 1998). Once the universal clothes are put on, the private sector unleashes, inflation is maintained low, governments are minimized, tariffs are eliminated, the budget is balanced, the capital market is deregulated and foreign ownership and foreign direct investment are allowed (Dorrien, 2011). When these events are an usually fact, the policy choices of a nation is reduced to "Pepsi or Coke", to confused nuances of taste or policy measures, small changes that take into account local traditions, a little relaxation here or there but never a real deviation from the basic golden rules. During these moments nationalism occurs, moments when globalization takes the guise of a flattening process or universalization. The nationalism arises when globalization becomes an American specific clothes, and not because this is a trendy clothes, one qualitative and one that can keep you warm in some seasons, but because it does not fit all countries.

The continuous focus in recent decades on the economic factor has stuck globalization with a very serious condition: the global financial and economic crisis that burst out in the late 2007. The neoliberal meds promoters of globalization have been very credulous on the last twenty years to consider that the market is able to correct itself and has no need to regulate the banking system and the investment firms. Above all, they mistakenly assumed that the ever-expanding gap between productivity and wages in the United States could be offset by building a bridge made up of more and more loans. Contrary to the neoliberal extoller faith, the United States have not provided universal prosperity by putting on the universal clothes and abandoning the manufacturing production. From the late 1940s to 1975 the productivity and wages have increased simultaneously creating a society based on a strong middle class. Meanwhile no banking crisis had occurred because the New Deal had kept commercial banking activities separate from the investment banking institutions. But wages have flattened in the mid-1970s and have remained still until now while productivity continued to rise and banks have penetrated deep into the investment sector. The rich got richer in the 1980-2000 period and the rest stayed behind calling in loans to avoid collapse. At the time almost all countries with their economy based on the manufacturing sector performed better than the United States in terms of revenue growth and had realized a fairer distribution of them. As a result, the global integration of two different growth patterns – economies based on debt financed consumption and economies based on production and exports with a high propensity to savings - has created a very unstable world economy characterized by speculative bubbles and huge trade imbalances. The United States debt credit cards induced a seven times increase in sales between

1975 and 2008 and an explosion of domestic loans from a rate of 47% of GDP in 1975 to about 100% in 2005.

Manufacture is a material thing rooted in the community, while non-manufacturing activities of the new economy depends on special skills, limit the power of trade unions and is vulnerable to outsourcing, fact that exacerbates inequality. A significant part of the world trade is still represented by tangible assets, especially manufactured goods. Bush administration policy fueled deficits by promoting financial and real estate industries at the expense of neglecting the manufacturing sector. The need to finance the United States deficits created dependence on China loans. The nations that have created the deficits came with sovereign funds to buy American companies and factories. Subsequently, a crater has been created in the economy after the outbreak of the credit crunch in the housing market, the mortgage bubble burst out and the global credit markets have frozen.

All these events were impossible to predict or imagine by Thomas Friedman's vision of an electronic herd of global investors that could transfer the capital from a corner to another of the world not caring about the government or nation, not taking into account the economic order, and guided only by economic attractions likened to the laws of nature.

The financial crisis will cause countries of the world to react and rethink their economic policies in order to avoid new catastrophes. The United States itself began to take precautions to protect the national economy. In September 2010 the United States House of Representatives authorized the imposition of protective tariffs for almost all Chinese imports given that Beijing decided not to abandon the exchange rate game play. The government also proposed some laws to be enforced in order to limit the freedom of action of the American multinationals so that they carry out a high volume of activity on national territory. After three decades of steady progress in the liberalization of trade and financial flows, during which governments of the world's most powerful states have supported non-tariff barriers, protectionism is suddenly on the political agenda with the global economic crisis (Bussiere *et. al*, 2011). The foregone that can be create through the implementation of these measures will cause a loss of confidence in the power of liberal democracy and capitalism to stand as political and economic systems globally.

CONCLUSIONS

As a conclusion, although the information is transmitted quickly from one corner of the planet to the other, goods circulate freely through the channels of the world trade and passenger transport is carried out with ease from one continent to another, rapid communication and dissemination of information does not alter the economic and technical operations because their essence is strictly intrinsic to each activity. A money transfer remains a money transfer no matter that it is done in two seconds or two days. The definitions of the activities of import / export or type of goods sold remain the same even if it takes two months to transport a quantity of goods on the ocean or just 24 hours. The essential connotation of globalization nowadays is that of an interpenetration between the universalization of the individual and the customization of the universal. Thus, the globalization process incorporates universal trends (such as the global spread of the Western consumerism) but also private affirmation and ways of life (the revival and the enhancement of the overall national consciousness or the spread of other collective identities). In contrast to globalization, the universalism gathers the world together as a whole by asserting alleged beliefs, values and social practices and some institutional structures supposed to have an universal applicability. In contrast to universalism, globalization recognizes the importance of context and embraces the opposite: the localism. Localism, under the intrinsic logic prioritizes customization as much as the context. Context, as an aspect of globality, eliminates abstract approaches, formal and preconceived principles for the sake of the contingency and particularity of things and events. Global trends absorb certain aspects of localism and frequently reflect contextual realities, while specific situations incorporate global features or at least investigate such traits for its own. Fundamental visions of the world such as the Islamic or the American Evangelical imagine globalization to be present in the "science" of speeches and in the use of private arguments and technology.

It is possible then to say that in modern times two movements simultaneously coexist, each with its own dialectic: on the one hand, the growing trend of globalization characterized by the space and time distancing and on the other hand the growing importance of location and the focus on local configuration, from an economical, political, social, or cultural point of view. Nationalism will not disappear, it will adapt over time and will steal from the benefits of globalization everything that fits.

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