

DILEMMA: AMERICANIZATION OR GLOBALIZATION

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Abstract

Today we live in a world which Americans conceived and created as "their future", which we call globalization." Fatos Tarifa

For many authors globalization is one of the forms of U.S. hegemony and the process of globalizing today is nothing more than a Americanization of the globe. But can we put the sign of equality between these two phenomena? Could the globalization be considered an American creation? In fact, The United States of America have historically struggled to spread their values throughout the world, self-proclaimed as universal nation whose values should be applied to all mankind. Products and American cultural norms in the age of globalization, have become global in a much greater extent than those of other countries. But such an attitude can not pass without challenge and becoming subject to the criticism of those nations that have historically "compete for the title" having the same aspirations. Indeed, the idea that America is different from other countries and that it belongs the mission of preaching its values around the world, found on all sides of American politics, showing us clearly the elements of their national identity. The feeling of being a model for the rest of the world, lies deep in the American national consciousness. The problem lies in the fact that this national mission runs counter the interests of anti-American nations in Europe, which criticize and denounce contradictory most of the latter ones see as value. Therefore the aim of this paper is to make clear why globalization is fueled by the so-called "imperialism" of American values and culture, why some European countries are feeling the need to protect their values and culture and why for France, in contrast to Albania, has been so difficult to accept the spread of American values around the world?

Researching the literature and documentation we realize that globalization and Americanization appear as two sides of the same coin, as very related phenomena to the development of the world. Globalizing model of "American type" has an impact on reducing the many traditions and cultures in the nations and regions of the world which occasionally manifest anti-American sentiments. The latter are not only a consequence of the foreign policy, hegemony or military force of the United States, they were born as a combination of these causes with which Joseph S. Nye has defined as sources of "soft power" in America, and include among others political values and cultural norms.

Key words: Americanization, globalization, anti-American sentiments, political values, cultural norms.

1. Introduction

We all have the feeling that the world has become smaller, more interconnected, more homogeneous, is transformed into a horizon of society experiences. Worldwide media inform that transport links are global, International Corporation are represented in many countries of the world, has diminished the role of state borders in order to create a large market in the world, a unique global market. All these are indicative of what we call Globalization. Globalization as a term has been unheard until 25 years ago, but currently has invaded the economy, culture, media, politics etc. In our days, very often we hear expressions such as "global poverty solution", "global warming" or "global war against terrorism." This term has entered and in the social sciences jargon, where as many other widely used terms, there is no universally accepted definition. The simplest definition is that with globalization we understand "social, political and economic connection, that cross borders between countries and decisively stipulate the fate of those who live in every country".¹ This process has brought a new world reality, making clear the idea that the world has become like a global village where the interaction and interdependence between people and different countries is growing every day more.

As we mentioned above, the aim of this paper is not to analyze the phenomenon of globalization and its elements, but to make clear if globalization is fueled by the so-called "imperialism" of American values and culture, making the latter become global in a much greater extent than those of other countries. The basic idea of this study lies in the fact

of movement towards a globalization model according to the model of "American type" or in other words towards Americanization, which has had not a little impact on reducing the many traditions and cultures in the nations and regions of the world which occasionally manifest anti-American sentiments.

This way how is conceived globalization has fostered among different social groups in different countries contestation of the process which is significantly related to the rejection American hegemony, and here I am talking about her role as the economic, political and cultural hegemonic, bringing in this way a rejection of capitalism as an economic system, liberalism as the dominant ideology and the fear for the loss of cultural identity. So before we examine the influence of the U.S. on the values and culture of the rest of the world, it is necessary to examine in detail where the U.S. stand in relation to other powers of the globe. Are United States still the only global superpower? As we will see below, America has and continues to maintain all the features of a hegemon state, able to project its economic, military, political, diplomatic and technological power on the four sides of the globe.

2. American "Hyperpower"²

When we talk about the America primacy in relation to other powers of the globe, it is necessary to focus the analysis on the economic, political and military factors because the status of a hegemonic power or of any state in the system of international relations, is defined by these essential components. Goldstein, identified as the main

¹ Giddens, A. 1997. Sociologjia. Tirane: Çabej pg. 495

² Vedrine, Hubert. Moïsi, Dominique. 2001. France in an Age of Globalization.

feature of a hegemonic power, the ability to dictate, or at least to dominate rules and arrangements through which, realized the political and economic international relations. ✓ According to this author, economic hegemony, includes the ability to focus the world economy around itself, while, political hegemony implies the ability to dominate the world militarily.³

As we see, most of this definition reflects the real impact that the United States have in the world today. This fact is further reinforced if we refer to Zbigniew Brzezinski's, according to which the United States, are and will remain the first global superpower, the only and last. By this author: "For the times to come - for more than a generation - America's status as a world leader will not be contested by any single candidate. No nation-state can be measured ✓ with America in four key dimensions of power - political, economic, military and technological, which together produce global political power".⁴ What is strange, relates to the fact that the definition given by Brzezinski almost fifteen years ago remains valid until today. Even according to Krauthammer, the dominance of the United States, has still more increased. He asserts that if America today is not unipolar, then no one can ever be.⁵

Indeed, America has now the monopoly of military power, across the globe, has economic and technological innovations unmatched by any other country, which necessarily gives a global political authority that no other ✓ country could have. This political, economic military and cultural authority of the United States, former French foreign minister Hubert Védriner, has expressed by labeling as a "HYPERPOWER". As Fatos Tarifa said after considering many factors in his book: "*Fati i një Shekulli: Hegjemonia Amerikane, dilemat e Europës dhe sfidat e Azisë Lindore*", will take several decades that any other great power can achieve the United States in one of the components that determine its status as the only hegemonic power of the world.⁶ This author quoting Rajan Menon, points out that "Today, America is like Britain of the 19-century. It causes envy, anger, and time after time alarm. But it does not create fear as a constant, real or immediate threat".⁷

In fact, after the Cold War and creation of the new global order, America was the only hegemonic power of the world. Its principles in defense of free markets, human rights and the democracy, combined with the greatest military power until today, have made it possible for the state to intervene in situations and places where none can interfere. If we will refer to the following facts, would conclude that America runs the full superiority compared to any other country which we consider powerful today.

✓ Calculated its economy in GDP, is more powerful than the economies of Japan, China and Germany taken

together, or stronger than the 16 eurozone countries taken together.⁸

U.S. presence in international politics has served to strengthen the security in different regions and countries of the world, has helped to keep under control a number of conflictual and complex relationships as those between Greece and Turkey, Israel and Egypt etc. After the intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, failed to establish security and stability in the Western Balkans. This would not be able to realized by any other state or coalition of states. As Josef Joffe says, has many things in the world that must be done and only America can do them. US pays extraordinary bills expenses for the operation of NATO, World Bank, International Monetary Fund etc.⁹

America's military expenditures are now almost equal to those of all countries of the world taken together. In 2008, for example, military expenditures of the United States was 60 billion USD, while the same year military expenditures of China, India, Japan and Russia taken together were only 219 billion USD,¹⁰ so 2.7 times less.

The marine and air military forces, the capacities to control the airspace that disposes the U.S. can not be competed by any other state or group of states. In other words, America has supremacy on land, air and seas. This supremacy isn't known even by the United Kingdom of the 19-century.¹¹

Nowadays, American technology is inaccessible. The United States use the advanced technologies of information and communication.

All those mentioned above can be summarized in one sentence: The United States stand on the world like a colossus. They dominate the business, trade, communications; its economy is the most successful in the world, its military power that no one comes close.¹² However, there are many authors who think that American supremacy is coming to an end. Fareed Zakaria is one of them who ponders that while the rest of the world is rising, America is falling.¹³ Personally I am inclined to challenge this thesis. That the world is not transformed yet, this we could say with conviction. It still remains unipolar and the United States are still the only global superpower. However, in our days we find an international competition among great powers like U.S., Europe, Russia, China, Japan and India which are competing for regional dominance, if not global. These countries are being

8 For more information see: Joffe, Josef. 2009. "The Default Power: The False Prophecy of America's Decline, Foreign Affairs, September/October: pg. 21-35.

9 Walt, Stephen M. 2005. Taming American Power: The Global Response to U.S Primacy, pg. 94.

10 Calleo, David. 2009. "How to Govern a Multipolar World" Current History, pg. 361

11 Statement Of Robert O. Work Senior Defense Analyst Center For Strategic And Budgetary Assessments Before The House Armed Services Committee Projection Forces Subcommittee Hearing on DD(X), July 19, 2005. (online source: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/congress/2005_hr/050720-work.pdf)

12 "America's World", The Economist, 23 October 1999. (online source: <http://www.highbeam.com/publications/the-economist-us-p6055/october-1999>)

13 Zakaria, Fareed. 2008. Bota pas-amerikane, pg. 46

3 Goldstein, Joshua S. 1988. Long Cycles: Prosperity and War in the Modern Age, pg. 281

4 Brzezinski, Zbigniew. 1997. The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives, pg. 195

5 Krauthammer, Charles. 2002-03. The Unipolar Moment Revisited, pg. 6

6 Tarifa, Fatos. 2010. Fati i një Shekulli: Hegjemonia Amerikane, dilemat e Europës dhe sfidat e Azisë Lindore, pg. 345

7 Tarifa, Fatos. 2010. Fati i një Shekulli: Hegjemonia Amerikane, dilemat e Europës dhe sfidat e Azisë Lindore, pg. 345

transformed rapidly in the major economic power and have become rivals for geopolitical advantage in Asia. However, neither one of these powers are able nowadays to project a considerably political and diplomatic influence beyond the region of Asia and the Pacific. Among the great powers of our time, only America has and continues to maintain all the features of a hegemon state, able to project its economic, military, political, diplomatic and technological power on the four sides of the globe. As Fukuyama has pointed out the United States may exercise their influence in many countries, while neither of them is able to influence the same extent on the United States.¹⁴

But what about the impact of American culture into the rest of the world? Have the U.S become synonymous of the so-called cultural modernity? Are American products and cultural norms global, to a much greater extent than those of other countries? Let 's handle this issues below.

3. Globalization or "Imperialism" of American values and culture?

The United States of America have historically struggled to spread their values throughout the world, self-proclaimed as universal nation whose values should be applied to all mankind.¹⁵ But such an attitude can not pass without challenge and becoming subject to the criticism of those nations that have historically "compete for the title" having the same aspira: exporting their values on the rest of the world. From this perspective, it is understandable why the European national creed is colliding with the U.S. national creed, it is understandable why for France has been so difficult to accept the spread of American values throughout the world, it is understandable why European countries feel the need to protect their values and culture and is therefore clear why anti-Americanism is fueled by the so-called "imperialism" of cultural and American values.

Indeed, the idea that America is different from other countries and that it belongs the mission of preaching its values around the world, found on all sides of American politics and has been a source of influence on foreign policy of this state. The words of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, according to which "the American nation is necessary", clearly point to elements of American national identity. Also, through these words we can understand why many Americans are surprised when confronted with anti-American sentiments. The feeling of being a model for the rest of the world, lies deep in the American national consciousness even claimed that they necessarily require that other nations adopt the same values and virtues of the great nation of the future. All this can be best illustrated by the words of James Skillen, who writes: "Americans have believed from the beginning that their nation has a divine mission to fulfill, to bring light to the world, a light that was subsequently defined as the light of freedom, democracy, and prosperity rather than the light of biblical righteousness. But America has been and remains in the minds of its people, a just nation that has

the right to lead all nations towards their true destiny, towards the goal of truly terrestrial history."¹⁶

The problem lies in the fact that this national mission runs counter the interests of anti-American nations in Europe, that not only don't like to be guided by the United States by this "dominant, obnoxious allied, that always act as triumphant, selfish and hegemonic superpower" but they criticize and denounce contradictory most of the latter ones see as value and which is spreading more and more in the era of globalization. On this point of view, would be entitled Markovic who emphasizes that the European anti-Americanism relates more to America's identity, thus what America is than its behavior, thus what America does.¹⁷ In this context, the typical American values, and so more the ones they are trying to export through their foreign policy, have served as a repeated source of European anti-Americanism.

Regarding the issue of cultural norms, we can say that the United States of America have become a synonymous with the so-called cultural modernity: American cultural products and norms, have become global in a much greater extent than those of the other countries. As Lieber said, while priority and influence of the United States are easier to assess in the economic and military sphere, in the cultural arena, it becomes more difficult, however, even here, American superiority is really noticeable.¹⁸ U.S.A, which has the world's biggest economy and strongest known army, has taken gigantic steps in persuading the rest of the world to think and act like them.

In fact, the cultural dimension of the United States "soft power" is very important because the United States, are increasingly seen as the epitome of mass culture. American popular culture, where we can talk about fast food industry popularly known as the American fast-food, pop music, television, Internet pages indicated as computer-based media, constitute the most widespread and prominent exports American, which first became attractive to European people, later to the entire world. Exactly this process has frightened European political and cultural elites, according to which American mass culture poses a serious threat to the "top" culture of the old continent, massive imports of American cultural products are degenerating their own culture. Seen in this light, cultural anti-Americanism is growing day by day, American culture is becoming more and more global enabling that Americanism and globalization appear as two sides of the same coin, as very related phenomena to the development of the world. Talking about its impact in cultural and economic sphere, Americanism becomes more than ever synonymous with globalization.

4. Globalization as anti-Americanism

Globalizing process has played a role in fostering European anti-Americanism. As Professor Tarifa notes,

14 Fukuyama, Francis. 2006. "The Paradox of International Action", *The American Interest* 1, 3 (Spring), pg. 7

15 Lieven, Anatol. 2005. *America Right or Wrong. An Anatomy of American Nationalism*, fq. 34

16 Skillen, James W. 2005. *With or Against the World? America's Role among the Nations*.

17 Markovits, Andrei S. 2007. *Uncouth Nation. Why Europe Dislikes America*, fq. 81-82

18 Lieber, Robert J. 2005. *The American Era. Power and Strategy for the 21st Century*, fq.101

today we live in a world which Americans conceived and created as "their future", which we call globalization.¹⁹ In this context, considering an American creation and as the source of all the things they dislike, many European countries have accumulated a great rage against the United States, their economic system, ideals and attitudes that are spread quite rapidly under the impact of globalization.

Globalization, this vague and terrible concept as Richard Pells says, is perceived by critics as insidious threat to the nation-state and its cultural identity.²⁰ Most debates about globalization, focus on its effects on the economies of individual countries by creating an opposition to a market economy, its cultural effects which necessarily lead to erosion of national identities. America being considered the perfect capitalist country in the world that cares only to accumulate assets without worrying about social consequences, becomes again the focus of the Europeans attention.

In this way, criticizing globalization and its impact on the social aspect of national sovereignty and national identity is constantly fed social and sovereign-nationalist anti-Americanism. Therefore, anti-globalization and anti-Americanism appear as the same thing, even if we talk about the impact of its cultural and economic sphere, anti-globalization can not be translated otherwise except as anti-Americanism. To understand better this phenomenon, let's stop during the post-Cold War, where the majority of European countries, suffered a deep crisis of identity that were significantly associated with severe reactions to the power and hegemony of the United States of America. France is undoubtedly the first answer that comes to mind seeking to know which of the countries in Europe is more anti-American. The reason that makes the French anti-Americanism distinctly, compared with the European relates to the inherited values of the Revolution and the Enlightenment which are continuously embedded in France national identity. As the author Todorov says, the central principles of the French national identity have been consistently French aspirations, moreover these values necessarily had to be exported to the rest of the world.²¹ This probably explains the fact that France is one of those Western European countries that adamantly refused to imitate the political, socio-economic and cultural model of the United States.²² As Revel says, France is the cultivation home of anti-Americanism in Europe, is the driving force of every anti-American thing.²³ In fact, the political and cultural elites in France, have always been the primary agents of anti-Americanism, they have criticized, denounced as inconsistent most of those which Americans call values and today are being imposed globally. In this way, we are dealing with a refutation of "Americanization",

understood as wide spread of American ideas and customs, fueled by globalization.

Anti-Americanism has helped France to establish a national identity but at the same time has created a European identity. Therefore anti-American sentiments have helped Europe to create its identity versus America, they are feeling the need to protect their values and culture. This form of anti-Americanism, is fed constantly being manifested in the form of rejection of American cultural products on the one hand and repeatedly criticized their attractiveness to the peoples of the world. But, are all Europeans aggressive and hostile to foreign policy, socio-economic system and above all to American culture being widely spread in the era of globalization? Of course not. Albania, for example, appears to be the most pro-American nation

in the world, followed by Kosovo Albanians.²⁴

However, while the causes of European anti-Americanism related to American hegemony, dimensions of its power, to the combination of the sources of "soft power" in America, every society has the "trademark" of its anti-Americanism that is based on their historical relationships with the United States, in their values and attitudes as well as in aspirations and perceptions they have against the single global hegemony today's unipolar system, which, according to Leslie Gelb, will remain the largest global power for many decades in the future.²⁵

Conclusions

Finally it can be said that globalization and Americanism appear as very related and intertwined phenomena to the development of the world, phenomena arising from a common origin. United States which has the world's biggest economy and strongest known army, has taken gigantic steps in persuading the rest of the world to think and act like them. So, Americanism becomes more than ever synonymous with globalization: products and American cultural norms in the age of globalization, have become global in a much greater extent than those of other countries.

Realistically America has and continues to maintain all the features of a hegemon state, able to project its economic, military, political, diplomatic and technological power on the four sides of the globe. The idea that America is different from the other countries and belongs the mission of preaching its values in the rest of the world, can be found in all sides of American politics and has been a source of influence on foreign policy of this state. The experience of becoming a model for the rest of the world, lies deep in their national consciousness, even claimed that they necessarily require that other nations adopt the same values and virtues of the great nation of the future.

By this point of view many people do not believe they can benefit by U.S, but instead of this they feel exploited by most powerful state that is using globalization in function of its global domination. The fact of movement towards a

19 Tarifa, Fatos. 2007. Saga e dy kontinenteve: A po ndahen Europa dhe Amerika nga njera-tjetra?, fq 86

20 Pells, Richard. 1997. Not Like Us. How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture Since World War II, fq. 325-326

21 Todorov, Tzvetan. 1989. Nous et les autres. La réflexion française sur la diversité humaine, fq. 44-49

22 Tinard, Yves. 2001. L'exception française.

23 Revel, Jean-Francois. 2002. L'obsession anti-américaine. Son fonctionnement, ses causes, ses inconvénients, fq. 164

24 Tarifa, Fatos. 2008. Amerikanofobia dhe Anti-Amerikanizmi European, fq. 117

25 Gelb, Leslie H. 2009. Power Rules: How Common Sense Can Rescue American Foreign Policy, fq 73-90

globalization model according to the model of "American type" or in other words towards Americanization, has had not a little impact on reducing the many traditions and cultures in the nations and regions of the world which occasionally manifest anti-American sentiments. This way how is conceived globalization has fostered among different social groups in different countries contestation of the process which is significantly related to the rejection of American hegemony, and here I am talking about her role as the economic, political and cultural hegemonic, bringing in this way a rejection of capitalism as an economic system, liberalism as the dominant ideology and the fear for the loss of cultural identity.

United States, are increasingly seen as the epitome of mass culture. American popular culture, where we talk about the American fast food industry widely known as fastfood, pop music, television, web pages or implied as computer-based media, constitute most widespread and most notable American export who has become attractive for the whole world. At a closer look, globalization is slowly shifting towards Americanization that is a contemporary term used for the influence that United States of America has on the culture of other countries, substituting their culture with American culture. This process often involved learning English and adjusting to American culture, customs, and dress. So globalization is nothing more than the imposition of American culture on the entire world. By

this perspective, cultural Americanism is growing day by day, American culture is becoming more global enabling that Americanism and globalization appear as two sides of the same coin, as very related phenomena to the development of the world.

Globalizing process has played a great role in fostering European anti-Americanism. In this context, seen as American creation and as the source of all the things they dislike, many countries in the world have accumulated a great anger against the United States economic system, ideals and attitudes which still pervade quite rapidly under the impact of globalization. In this way, criticizing globalization and its impact on the social aspect of national sovereignty and national identity is constantly fed social and sovereign-nationalist anti-Americanism. Therefore, anti-globalization and anti-Americanism appear as the same thing, even if we talk about the impact of its cultural and economic sphere, anti-globalization can not be translated otherwise except as anti-Americanism.

Finally I would like to conclude with the words of Thomas Friedman: "...globalization is in so many ways Americanization: globalization wears Mickey Mouse ears, it drinks Pepsi and Coke, eats Big Macs, does its computing on an IBM laptop with Windows 98. Many societies around the world can't get enough of it, but others see it as a fundamental threat."

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