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GLOBALIZATION AND PRIVATIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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I. INTRODUCTION — II. FROM INTERDEPENDENCE TO (POST-DE) GLOBALIZATION — III. INEQUALITY AND ANTI-GLOBALIZATION — IV. SOVEREIGNTY AND POST-GLOBALIZATION — V. FINAL REFLECTIONS

ABSTRACT: This paper analyzes three periods in which the process of globalization has been strongly contested by civil society, sometimes translated into social movements that have acquired a transnational dimension and, in a more recent period, by substantial and radical changes in the governments and foreign policies of a significant number of States. The first of these responses to be examined is the birth of a movement, beginning in the late 1990s, which denounced the terrible socio-economic conditions endured by countries on the periphery as those marginalized by the globalization process (anti-globalization). The second response was born in the wake of the economic-financial crisis of 2008, which also hit the citizens of Western countries, promoters of the liberal economic ideology on which the foundations of globalization are based, producing an individual and collective awareness of the inability of States to correct the failures of the globalizing model and solve global problems (post-globalization). Finally, we will examine the reaction of certain governments, both in central and peripheral states, which advocate controlling the expansion of liberal internationalism by means of extremist and nationalist ideological formulas in favor of recovering national sovereignty, control of economies and free foreign policies through disconnectivity (deglobalization).

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KEYWORDS: Globalization, sovereignty, anti-globalization, post-globalization, deglobalization.

GLOBALIZACIÓN Y PRIVATIZACIÓN DE LAS RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES

RESUMEN: En este trabajo se analizan tres períodos en los que el proceso de globalización ha recibido una fuerte contestación por parte de la sociedad civil a veces traducida en movimientos sociales que han adquirido una dimensión transnacional y, en un período más reciente, por cambios sustanciales y radicales en los gobiernos y en la política exterior de un número significativo de Estados. La primera de esas contestaciones que se examinan es el nacimiento de un movimiento, a partir de finales de los noventa, que denunciaba las terribles condiciones socio-económicas que soportaban países de la periferia como los marginados del proceso de globalización (antiglobalización). La segunda contestación es la que nace a raíz de la crisis económico-financiera de 2008, que también golpeó a la ciudadanía de los países occidentales, promotores de la ideología económica liberal sobre la que se asientan las bases de la globalización, produciendo una toma de conciencia a nivel individual y colectiva sobre la incapacidad de los Estados para corregir los fallos del modelo globalizador y resolver los problemas globales (posglobalización). Por último, se examinará la reacción de determinados gobiernos, tanto en los estados del centro como de la periferia, que abogan por controlar la expansión del internacionalismo liberal mediante fórmulas ideológicas extremistas y nacionalistas a favor de recuperar la soberanía nacional, el control de las economías y las políticas exteriores libres mediante la desconectividad (desglobalización).

PALABRAS CLAVE: Globalización, soberanía, antiglobalización, posglobalización, desglobalización.

MONDIALISATION ET PRIVATISATION DES RELATIONS INTERNATIONALES

RÉSUMÉ: Cet article analyse trois périodes au cours desquelles le processus de mondialisation a été fortement contesté par la société civile, parfois sous la forme de mouvements sociaux qui ont pris une dimension transnationale et, dans une période plus récente, par des changements substantiels et radicaux dans les gouvernements et les politiques étrangères d'un nombre significatif d'États. La première de ces réponses que nous examinerons est la naissance, à partir de la fin des années 1990, d'un mouvement dénonçant les terribles conditions socio-économiques endurées par les pays de la périphérie, marginalisés par le processus de mondialisation (antimondialisation). La seconde réponse est née de la crise économique-financière de 2008, qui a également touché les citoyens des pays occidentaux, promoteurs de l'idéologie économique libérale sur laquelle reposent les fondements de la mondialisation, produisant une prise de conscience individuelle et collective de l'incapacité des États à corriger les échecs du modèle mondialiste et à résoudre les problèmes globaux (post-mondialisation). Enfin, il examinera la réaction de certains gouvernements, tant dans les États centraux que périphériques, qui préconisent de contrôler l'expansion de l'internationalisme libéral par des formules idéologiques extrémistes et nationalistes en faveur de la récupération de la souveraineté nationale, du contrôle des économies et de la liberté des politiques étrangères par la déconnexion (démondialisation).

MOT CLES: Mondialisation, souveraineté, antimondialisation, post-mondialisation, démondialisation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary international society involves an increasingly complex relational network derived, firstly, from an increase in the number of areas that are the object of international relations and, secondly, from the increasingly broad and varied participation of agents that engage in international processes. As sectors of the social, political, cultural and economic-financial life of states acquire an international dimension, global processes are expanding and diversifying, including issues and aspects traditionally under the domain of national policies, shielded by the exercise of sovereign powers (rights and freedoms of all citizens, the fight against crime, environmental protection and immigration management, among others). Moreover, new types of international actors, with a different operational scope, are beginning to interact in areas traditionally monopolized by states and international organizations, and which are already a concern of a large part of international civil society.

These changes in the volume, intensity and participants of international relations have been interpreted as a result of a process of greater dimensions referred to as globalization, which has become more acute over the last two decades, and is leading to the redefinition and restructuring of the exercise of state competences, as well as generating an individual and collective awareness of its consequences and a question on its benefits on a planetary scale².

² According to Anthony Giddens, globalization can be defined as: “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa”. GIDDENS, A., *Un mundo desbocado*, Taurus, Madrid, 2000, p. 16 (own translation). See also ARYEETAY, E. and DINELLO, N., *Testing Global Interdependence*, Edgard Elgar Publishing, 2007. As Berta Lerner states, “(...) globalization marks the beginning of a stage in which a single economic system prevails in the world following the disappearance of the communist bloc, even regimes such as Cuba or, especially, China maintain their authoritarianism, but accept, to a large extent, the capitalist rules of openness. It is therefore a fascinating process, of a complex nature, which unfolds under neoliberal presuppositions. If, as Max Weber argued, capitalism was born out of Calvinist doctrine, neoliberalism is the doctrine of globalization. Neoliberalism advocates the integration of national economies based on the laws of supply and demand, individual efficiency and the reduction of state intervention, and the extension of private forces in the economic and social sphere. However, “recently, neoliberalism has been advocating greater statism once the difficulties and inconveniences have become evident in terms of private forces covering complex social areas (education, healthcare, housing) and to act both as guides and promoters of the economy; in short, to be both judge and advocate of the economic

Over the course of these pages, as well as examining the characteristics of the globalization process, we shall address three fundamental aspects of its evolution and their consequences. The first of these shall be the inequality with which the States of international society participate in a phenomenon that is manifesting itself on a planetary scale, and the initial reactions of civil society as a result. Secondly, we shall examine the limits of state control on the negative effects of globalization and individual rights and wellbeing, and the questioning of the benefits of globalization by international civil society (post-globalization). Finally, there will be an analysis of how, in recent times, some governments with considerable influence on the international stage have witnessed a series of detriments to their national interests due to the drift of globalization and, especially, the liberal political-economic ideology on which it is based, and have decided to take a sovereigntist turn, sometimes supported by a nationalist ideology, which questions multilateralism and international institutions (deglobalization).

II. FROM INTERDEPENDENCE TO (POST-DE) GLOBALIZATION

In the opinion of some authors, from the birth of the modern State, international society began to globalize, whereas others believe it is a qualitative change of international interdependence, which accelerated from the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, and blurs the differences between national and international societies. The continuing growth of the interdependence of international society does not enjoy a universally accepted interpretation of either its characteristics or beginnings. From the initial breakdown of the homogeneity of international society in the 15th century due to expansion, conquest and colonization, the process of interdependence appeared due to the increase of interactions and exchanges, and the effects of these on all of the states that existed at the time. Five centuries later there was a reverberation of the term mundialization understood as a “single world” at planetary scale, thanks to the unification of space, the sovereign equality of

process”. LERNER SIGAL, B., “Un panorama general de la globalización: génesis, evolución y perspectivas”, *RIPS. Revista de Investigaciones Políticas y Sociológicas*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1999, pp. 11-13 (own translation).

states and the end of the colonial empires. However, as pointed out by James and Steger, from the 1930s to the 1970s there was already evidence of transcendental changes in international society that involved a qualitative leap in regard to previous eras³. According to Randle, internationalization, trans-nationalization and globalization are three moments of a single process, which are distinguished by “the degree of interpenetration of economic activities and national economies in the world sphere”⁴. This is such the case that globalization constitutes the final degree of a constantly expanded process of interdependence.

Just as there is no consensus on a specific moment that can be attributed to the birth of globalization, this is also the case for its causes and consequences. While Jacques Adda upholds a predominantly economic interpretation of the globalization process and considers it the planetary extension of the capitalist economic system, as do Krugman and Venables, who also approach it from an economic perspective, focusing on the situations of inequality generated

³ In JAMES, P. and STEGER, M. B., “A genealogy of ‘globalization’: The career of a concept”, *Globalizations*, Vol. 11, No. 4, 2014, pp. 417-434. According to Rafael Calduch: “There are two opposing perspectives considering the historical importance of globalization. On the one hand, some consider globalization as the stage of evolutionary development of the process of worldwide expansion of international society over the last two centuries. Others believe it involves a new historical process, arising in the 1970s and 80s, as a result of the combination of a structural change in the capitalist system and the emergence of the new communication technologies. The debate between these two points of view is still ongoing. However, at this stage of the development of globalization, it is now possible to state two things as evident: a) Globalization is different from internationalization, although it extends to the entire world society. The difference between internationalization and globalization is extremely clear. Internationalization (enlargement of the world) was carried out via a process of colonial expansion and successive transfers of political, economic and cultural progress from some societies to others. In contrast, globalization appears to be linked to the emergence of originally universal challenges and problems that thus require collective responses or solutions that are also universal in scope. This new dimension in the universal exercise of power from the beginning is that which corresponds to global governance. b) Regardless of when the first phases of globalization were initiated, its scientific treatment and incorporation into the political agenda did not occur until the 1990s, following the end of the bipolarity between the United States and the Soviet Union”. CALDUCH CERVERA, R., “A Multi-level Architecture for Global Governance”, IV Congreso internacional do observare, Universidad Autónoma de Lisboa, 26 November 2021, p. 4.

⁴ RANDLE, P. H., *Soberania Global. ¿A dónde lleva el mundialismo?*, Acta Geographica-Paris, 2001, p. 185.

by the expansion of the market economy on a planetary scale, other authors, such as Held and McGrew, maintain a more complete vision of globalization and understand it as a process whereby events, decisions and activities that take place in one part of the world have very relevant consequences for individuals or communities in other far away parts of the world⁵. Following the reflections of Professor García Picazo, the most visible consequence of globalization is an economic acceleration and technological transformation that affects individuals' way of life, penetrating states and conditioning national power structures and modes of action⁶. And, in the same vein, Ulrich Beck puts the emphasis on how social groups interact and create transnational links and spaces, revaluing local cultures⁷.

Globalization today is understood as a process that extends to all spheres of the globe, although there are still territories that are marginalized or little affected by this phenomenon, and not all territories participate with the same reach. It is a phenomenon that appears to have a hegemonic, integrating and all-encompassing impact, which determines the behavior of not only States, but also their individuals, through the information and communication society⁸. Thus,

a generic way of understanding globalization is to consider it as a process of creation of a system of worldwide dimensions in which no significant event, process or action is circumscribed to the geographical area in which it originated. Events, processes and actions at a global level of the system have deliberate or involuntary effects on all local systems⁹,

⁵ ADDA, J., *La mundialización de la economía*, La Découverte, 2020; KRUGMAN, P. and VENABLES, A. J., "Globalization and the Inequality of Nations", *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 110, No. 4, 1995, pp. 857-880; HELD, D. and MCGREW, A., *Globalization/Anti-globalization: Beyond the Great Divide*, Polity, 2007.

⁶ GARCÍA PICAZO, P., ¿Qué es esa cosa llamada Relaciones internacionales? Tres lecciones de autodeterminación y algunas consideraciones indeterministas, Marcel Pons, Madrid, 2000, p. 78.

⁷ BECK, U., *What is globalization?*, John Wiley & Sons, 2018, pp. 13-16; BECK, U. and REY, J. A., *La sociedad del riesgo global*, Siglo XXI, 2002, pp. 13-17.

⁸ ENGEL, U. and OLSEN, G. R., *Africa and the North*, Routledge, 2004, pp. 131-138; BROLL, U., KEMNITZ, A. and MUKHERJEE, V., "Globalization, inequality and economic policy", *Economics and Business Review*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2019, pp. 3-11.

⁹ ATTINÁ, F., *El sistema político global: introducción a las relaciones internacionales*, Paidós, 2002, p.

although not in the same manner. And, as del Arenal argues:

If internationalization entailed the unification and domination of time and space on a planetary scale by the West, in a process that culminated at the beginning of the 20th century in the formation for the first time of a worldwide international society, globalization, as a process also dominated by the West, and in particular by the USA, directly linked to the scientific and technological revolution in the field of information and communication and to the decisive transformations of the capitalist system from the 1970s onwards, mutually influencing each other, would suppose not only domination and unification, but the overcoming of time and space as conditioning factors of human activity with systemic effects, reinforcing, in general, Western domination over the current global society in political and economic as well as social and cultural terms¹⁰.

Analyzing globalization is a complicated task not just because of the inherent complexity of the phenomenon, but also due to the fact it is a process that is still developing while at the same time it is examined. The analysis of globalization often focuses on identifying its different manifestations or consequences, such as the presence of a network of connections between territories, people, capital, goods and services; the intensification of political, economic and cultural relations: the existence of a complex system of mutual dependency or the creation of the integrated global economy deriving from the development of technology and communication¹¹. The subject of analysis, however, is the global connectivity of citizens, along with how this has led to the creation of both a large mass of marketing recipients and consumers of goods produced by the large international corporations, and the emergence of shared, highly disseminated opinions, many of which go against the asserted positive aspects of globalization and derive in a continuous questioning of the consequences of its effects.

160.

¹⁰ ARENAL MOYUA, C. DEL., *Etnocentrismo y Teoría de las Relaciones Internacionales: una visión crítica*, Tecnos, 2014, pp. 27-28.

¹¹ AXTMANN, R., “Cosmopolitanism and globality: Kant, Arendt, and Beck on the global condition”, *German Politics and Society*, Vol. 29, No. 3, 2011, pp. 20-37.

III. INEQUALITY AND ANTIGLOBALIZATION

From the stage of internationalization to the consolidation of the international globalized system, the classic concept of sovereignty has been eroded, deriving from the collision between the traditional state-centric structure and the appearance of new agents taking part in increasingly complex international processes. In fact, studies on independence carried out by transnationalists in the 1970s revealed the existence of a growing process that provoked reciprocal effects between states and also between distinct typologies of international relations actors, which forces the widening of the field of analysis, including new agents such as non-governmental organizations, transnational companies and social, ideological and religious movements, among others, which bring the condition of exclusive actor of the State to an end and substantially modify the international agenda, adding problems related to peace, ecology, human rights and scarcity of resources¹². But globalization has not had the same consequences for all territories and populations, as it has depended on the position occupied by States in the political and economic-financial power structure at the international level¹³. The reconsideration of the dependency theory from the logic of globalization and the move from the juxtaposition of capitalist economies to an international economic policy stimulated other theoretical reconsideration. Intellectual structuralist currents warned of the birth of regional subsystems that exaggerated the differences between the developed world and the developing world, due to the fact that the global effects of the expansion of capitalism were not the same for all societies, and these dependency relationships were perpetuated in former colonial territories by Western capital-financed big international corporations¹⁴. Two theoretical currents appeared within structuralism. The first, *Dependency Theory*, focused on topics related to underdevelopment, especially in the area

¹² ROSENAU, J. N., *Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity*, Princeton University Press, 2018.

¹³ GARCÍA PICAZO, P., *Teoría breve de relaciones internacionales: ¿una anatomía del mundo?*, Tecnos, 2017, p. 17.

¹⁴ RUGGIE, J. G., *Embedding Global Markets: An Enduring Challenge*, Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2018, pp. 231-254; JAHN, D., “Globalization as ‘Galton’s problem’: The missing link in the analysis of diffusion patterns in welfare state development”, *International Organization*, Vol. 60, No. 2, 2006, pp. 401-431.

of Latin America, developed by authors including Cardoso, Prebisch, Dos Santos and Furtado, who described how specific regions endured a situation of continuous dependency¹⁵. Secondly, global interpretations arose regarding what was occurring in the international system when the *World-System* and *Capitalist Market* approaches started to gain ground. In view of the fact that neither economic progress nor the consequences of globalization for state sovereignty appeared in the same way for all territories or individuals in international society, Emmanuel Wallerstein offered an explanation of how the globalized system does not exclude any territory because all participate in its logic but take on different roles¹⁶. The richest countries (the center) are those controlling the exploitation of the resources of third countries, goods production, financial markets, technology development and the relocating of the profits of an organized economy at a planetary scale. This is all to provide their citizens with the necessary goods and services to maintain levels of social wellbeing based on mass consumption and choice of products, the guarantee of which is only possible via a strategic scheme of production with costs that are increasingly reduced and worldwide sales¹⁷. Countries on the periphery, with lower per-capita incomes, sometimes with great economic and social instability, even suffering situations of structural violence, are those that fulfill the role of suppliers of raw materials and energy resources, offer highly profitable working conditions, with extremely permissive social and environmental legislation, substantially lowering production costs. At the semi-periphery are countries that are beginning to emerge technologically,

¹⁵ CARDOSO, F. H., *Los Estados Unidos y la Teoría de la Dependencia. América Latina, 50 años de industrialización*, Col. La Red de Jonás, Premiá, 1978; PREBISCH, R., *Capitalismo periférico: crisis y transformación*, Fondo de cultura económica, 1981; DOS SANTOS, B., “Más allá del pensamiento abismal: de las líneas globales a una ecología de saberes” in *Epistemologías del sur (perspectivas)*, 2014, pp. 21-66; FURTADO, C., *La economía latinoamericana: formación histórica y problemas contemporáneos*, Siglo XXI, 2001.

¹⁶ WALLERSTEIN, I. M., *Análisis de sistemas-mundo: una introducción*, Siglo XXI, 2005.

¹⁷ As Manuel Castells argues: “The production of goods and services is also globalized around production networks of 53,000 multinational companies and their 415,000 ancillary companies. These networks employ only some 200 million workers (out of almost 3 billion people who work for a living around the world), but these networks generate 30% of global gross domestic product and 2/3 of world trade”. CASTELLS, M., “Globalización y antiglobalización” in. STIGLITZ, J. E. and BARLOW, M., *Pánico en la globalización*, Bogotá, 2002 (own translation).

which are even becoming headquarters of the major industrial centers but continue to offer advantages in terms of production costs and aspire to form part of the group of countries that form the “center” of the system. The erosion of the national sovereignty of the central countries, the promoters of the liberal economic ideology on which globalization is based, is much less pronounced than the erosion supported by the periphery countries, which feel more at a disadvantage after having assumed the liberalization of the factors of production and finding themselves destined to continue being providers of raw materials, cheap labor and marginal consumers¹⁸.

The reality of the world-systems did not leave international society indifferent and provoked an unprecedented transnational outcry against the situations of inequality in the distribution of functions and wealth at the international level, and which is by and large known by the name of the “anti-globalization” movement. In contrast to other movements throughout history, and which on occasions ended in revolutions, this protest did not demand rights and changes for the collective itself or participating organizations¹⁹. The so-called anti-globalization movement originated at the heart of progressive, ecological and humanitarian associations, whose protests took place in symbolic places in world power centers, seeking the recognition of economic, social and political rights for peoples on the “periphery” who were marginalized and negatively affected by globalization²⁰. Since the Seattle pro-

¹⁸ In this regard, Wallerstein refers to the social system we live in as a capitalist economy-world, divided into a central area and a peripheral or semi-peripheral area, where the stability of the central system is based on the control of the peripheral area. WALLERSTEIN, I. M., *Capitalismo histórico y movimientos antisistémicos: un análisis de sistemas-mundo*, Ediciones Akal, 2004 and WALLERSTEIN, I. M., *Análisis de sistemas-mundo: una introducción*, *op. cit.*

¹⁹ CALLE, A., “Nuevos movimientos globales. Tiempos de reflujo y sedimentación”, *La política en la red: Anuario de Movimientos Sociales*, 2005; PASTOR, J., *Qué son los movimientos antiglobalización: Seattle, Génova, Porto Alegre-los diferentes grupos y sus propuestas: el debate después del 11/09*, Rba Publicaciones Editores Revistas, 2005; RAMONET, I., “Globalización, desigualdades y resistencias”, *Economía y Desarrollo*, Vol. 126, No. 1, 2004.

²⁰ AYRES, J. M., “Framing collective action against neoliberalism: The case of the anti-globalization movement”, *Journal of World-Systems Research*, 2004, pp.11-34; VAN AELST, P. and WALLGRAVE, S., “New media, new movements? The role of the internet in shaping the ‘anti-globalization’ movement”, *Information, Communication & Society*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 2002, pp. 465-493; CASTELLS, M., “Globalización y antiglobalización”, *op. cit.*; ECHART, E., LÓPEZ, S., OROZCO, K. and TAIBO, C., *Origen, protestas y propuestas del movimiento antiglobalización*, Los Libros de la Catarata, 2005. “When the movement presented its credentials on the international stage it was

tests against the World Trade Organization summit in 1999, and the 2001 Genova protest against the G8 summit, the anti-globalization movement has consolidated itself as a “movement of movements”, giving rise to global and regional forums of citizen organizations and networks, such as the Porto Alegre World Social Forum and the European Social Forum, among others, the result of a “multi-centric, horizontal and reticular structure” which, as Ricardo Usategui points out, comprises a melting-pot of movements that share their criticisms of a neoliberal globalization, but which diverge in terms of possible alternatives and the viability thereof²¹.

Regardless of its name, shape, internal diversity and evolution, this good or evil called the anti-globalization movement constitutes the first significant response to the foundations and consequences of the globalization process throughout international society and, in this regard, it is pertinent to analyze in what way its evolution also continued to create other responses on the part of international civil society, and in which way they manifested themselves.

IV. SOVEREIGNTY AND POST-GLOBALIZATION

The continuous need to improve the living conditions of citizens in the dubbed anti-globalization. This denomination has been considered by certain sectors of the movement itself as pejorative since globalization is an inevitable process that any level-headed person will find impossible to oppose. The subject of the criticism is the current form of neoliberal globalization. The term was initially used by powerful groups to delegitimise its demands, attempting to present it as a group that goes against the logical and natural course of history. And this is where we find one of the greatest paradoxes, as there are few things as globalized as this movement that, taking advantage of the new forms of communication and the reticular form of organisation achieves a global power of action encompassing topics and spaces. This is the reason why different names have been considered in order to refer to a single phenomenon: anti-globalization, anti-capitalist globalization, anti-neoliberal globalization, anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, alter-globalization, toward an other globalization, for a globalization from below, for a globalization of rights, for global justice, global resistance, movement of movements, non-global, globalphobic [...]”. URIARTE USATEGUI, R., “Análisis del nacimiento y desarrollo del movimiento antiglobalización”, *op. cit.*, p. 155 (own translation).

²¹ URIARTE USATEGUI, R., *Ibidem*, p. 157; FERNÁNDEZ BUEY, F., “Sobre el movimiento de movimiento”, *Revista de Estudios de Juventud*, No. 76, 2007, pp. 21-36; NEGRI, A. and HARDT, M., *Multitud: guerra y democracia en la era del Imperio*, Debate, 2004.

political, economic, social, cultural and environmental sphere in a globalized world has led States to increase economic and financial connectivity to guarantee investment opportunities and a generous supply of products and primary materials and energy²². But, at the same time, in many of these connected spaces the presence and weight of other private agents is increasingly important, and their interests also determine the design of the international cooperation agenda²³. This transfer from the public to the private occurs when the State itself stops auditing spheres of economic, social, cultural and political life that should supposedly be under its guard, but which it can no longer manage via traditional control and regulation mechanisms²⁴.

According to Rosencrance, this situation is the result of the fact that many States prefer to resize and conquer markets rather than territories, giving rise to the merchant state, which, despite cloaking itself in democratic ideals, seeks territorial expansion via mercantile exchange. This phenomenon, which some have coined deterritorialization, is one of the main consequences of globalization²⁵, and, despite having been promoted at the national level, it

²² In this sense, as professor Truyol warned a long time ago, “[...] international society has lost in homogeneity what it has gained in expansion and in terms of the number of components. Nevertheless, in terms of diversity factors, the most characteristic of our world is without doubt the degree of economic and social development, which depends on the level of industrialisation and ultimately the level of scientific and technological progress”. TRUYOL Y SERRA, A., *La sociedad internacional: epílogo: el fin de la era de Yalta y la revolución del Este europeo*, Alianza editorial, 2008, p. 95 (own translation).

²³ STARR, P., “The Meaning of Privatization”, in KAMERMAN, S.B. and KAHN, S.B., *Privatisation and Welfare*, 1989, pp. 42-44; COLAS, A., *International Civil Society: Social Movements in World Politics*, John Wiley & Sons, 2013.

²⁴ Many media outlets have classified globalization as an involuntary phenomenon, given that “the integration of national economies has changed the way the world works”. However, The Economist has laid bare that States will not bear the pressures it creates and sooner or later will stop the process using the means at their disposal. “The pressure to compete will erode the capacity of governments to design their own economic policies [...]. It will be said there is no such thing as absolute freedom –nor total sovereignty– but it is one thing to accept cuts explicitly through agreements and another to be pressured by global lobbies that are impossible to resist”. THE ECONOMIST, “On the World”, 18 October 1997, p. 79.

²⁵ In this sense, Rosencrance argued that territory went out of favor and States with little territorial extension and scarce natural resources have placed themselves among the seven richest nations in the world. ROSECRANCE, R., “International security and the virtual state: states and firms in world politics”, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 28, 2002.

has to a large extent fallen under the control of the corporations, which have their headquarters in the territories of States with developed market economies and use the national structures to increase their international presence and maximize profits²⁶. And, in this regard, Randle reaches the conclusion that “globalization —new or old— in its advanced essence weakens nation states, erodes sovereignty and leads to the growth of rootless corporations, and thus national cultures become little more than consumer preferences”²⁷. Therefore, the phenomenon of globalization does not just entail a material threat to the exercise of the national sovereignty of states with better power attributes; what it actually does is altering the organizing principle of the inter-state system in operation since the appearance of the modern state²⁸.

Another of the ways in which the state has been affected in the exercise of sovereign competencies at the internal level has undoubtedly, as pointed out by David Held, been the fact that leaders make decisions in the framework

²⁶ Professor García Segura has sought to identify six basic dimensions in which globalization has made itself felt in the international sphere: (a) a political institutional dimension, reflecting the proliferation of agents and institutions distinct from states; b) a political regulatory dimension expressed in the dissemination of principles and values of a universalist disposition; c) a psychological dimension, manifested in the perception of the world as a single space; d) an ecological dimension, reflecting global hazards and threats; e) an ideological dimension, which presents globalization as an irreversible fact; f) a global dimension that appears in a tendency towards the homogenization of uses and customs. The truth is that this dimension normally manifests itself in more regional than global terms. GARCÍA SEGURA, C., “La globalización en la sociedad internacional contemporánea: dimensiones y problemas desde la perspectiva de las Relaciones Internacionales” in *Cursos de derecho internacional de Vitoria-Gasteiz/ Vitoria-Gasteizko nazioarteko zuzenbide ikastaroak*, 1999, p. 315-350.

²⁷ RANDLE, P. H., “Soberanía Global. ¿A dónde lleva el mundialismo?”, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

²⁸ As Hinojosa posits, it is necessary to abandon the classical concept of state sovereignty, given that the sovereign state is increasingly identified with the exercise of a series of functional competencies. This conception appears as a result of the fact that the capacities of the nation state to lead a social and political model are questioned in the face of the globalization phenomenon, which has eroded the traditional attributes of state sovereignty. HINOJOSA MARTÍNEZ, L. M., “Globalización y soberanía de los Estados”, *Revista Electrónica de Estudios Internacionales*, Vol. 10, No. 5, 2005. According to Attinà, the analysis of globalization must be performed from a dual perspective: 1) understanding and explaining the nature of the changes referred to by the term globalization 2) identifying and explaining the changes globalization causes in politics (in the economy, security, rules of the game, etc. ATTINÀ, F., *El sistema político global: introducción a las relaciones internacionales*, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

of international organizations not subject to democratic control²⁹. The management of such a complex interdependency such as the one that creates the globalization process requires international institutions and forums of international cooperation in which to develop governing mechanisms. As a result of this, citizens begin to observe that the creation of diverse international regimes means transferring spheres of political, economic and social life found in a democratic system of decision and control to international agencies in which decisions are not taken via these parameters, and escape any direct or indirect public participation. Although nations attempt to find internal legislative and administrative solutions, the world economy annuls the possibilities of autonomous economic policies and conditions other facets of state life. In view of this situation, many have ventured to affirm the viability of a broader political system in which decisions are democratically legitimized; in short, a worldwide democracy that develops a system of rights and values³⁰. Nevertheless, the design, characteristics and possibilities of this type of project are still in their infancy, both at a theoretical and political level. The differences between nations and regions, the diversities between state regimes and systems and, in addition, between the values of citizens, constitute the counterpoint to proposals in favor of a global political system³¹.

The promotion of the positive aspects of this globalization, including economic modernization, technological and scientific progress, the expansion of a universal ideology of human rights and the increase in cooperation,

²⁹ HELD, D., *La democracia y el orden global: del Estado moderno al gobierno cosmopolita*, Paidós, 2002, pp. 42-44. Professor Roldán Barbero pointed out the following in this regard: “The lack of democratic credentials is not only a deficiency of the rule of law, but also of the international institutions, including the Security Council, the International Monetary Fund, the G7 and the G20. The most developed and sophisticated example of transnational democracy is undoubtedly embodied in the integration of the European Union, despite its ongoing effort to combine municipal and supranational democracy, and the constant threat of the democratic deficit. Beyond the legal considerations as regards international relations, we are witnessing the generalised phenomenon of globalization. This movement surpasses internal democracy without an appropriate transfer of democratic principles to the international community”. ROLDÁN BARBERO, J., “Internal democracy and international law”, *Spanish Yearbook of International Law*, No. 22, 2018, pp. 181-202.

³⁰ KEANE, J., “Cosmocracy and global civil society” in BAKER, G. and CHANDLER, D., *Global Civil Society*, Routledge, London, 2004, pp. 149-170.

³¹ HIRST, P., THOMPSON, G. and BROMLEY, S., *Globalization in Question*, John Wiley & Sons, 2015.

as well as a greater international regulation, have been countered by consequences of such magnitude that many believe we are at a post-international or post-globalization stage. This all stems from the reactions provoked by the continuous economic-financial crises experienced at both the center and the periphery, and the negative consequences in matters of human rights and environmental protection created by the neoliberal ideology upon which the globalizing process is founded, in addition to the constant rise in inequalities it creates and perpetuates. All of the above has given rise to an individual and collective raising of awareness regarding this phenomenon, which, in principle, manifested itself in the so-called anti-globalization movement at the beginning of the 21st century, but appears to have been succeeded by other protest cycles redefined by some as “networks of movements” or “collective transnational action”, characterized by group action on the internet, which offers permanent communication and a constant exchange of information between individuals anywhere on the planet who, in many cases, lack previous militancy in political, social and union organizations, and who spontaneously join local protests that follow the logic of a more global movement. This occurred as a result of the last great economic crisis in 2007/2008 when the so-called “global justice movement” arose from national protests such as “Occupy Wall Street” and “15M (Los Indignados)”. The positive aspects of globalization were again questioned, failures in its governance were denounced and changes were demanded that supposed regaining control of the financial economy on the part of state institutions, and greater democratic guarantees³². And, in a similar regard, del Arenal summarized their demands in the following manner:

A globalization that will also favor the humanization of international society, particularly through, on the one hand, the empowerment of human beings and their affirmation as individual and collective agents, in the national and international sphere, and on the other hand, the change undergone in terms of the perception of a single, global and immediate space,

³² DELLA PORTA, D., ANDRETTA, M., CALLE, A., COMBES, H., EGGERT, N., GIUGNI, M. G. and MARCHETTI, R., *Global Justice Movement: Cross-National and Transnational Perspectives*, Routledge, 2015; JURIS, J. S., PEREIRA, I., and FEIXA, C., “La globalización alternativa y los ‘novísimos’ movimientos sociales”, *Revista de Centro de Investigación de la Universidad La Salle*, No. 37, 2012, pp. 23-39.

in which there is a weakening of the state as a benchmark for all things international and in which all humans start becoming increasingly relevant reference points³³.

When economic expansion starts to erode national sovereignty as well as the political, economic and social conditions of many territories, although at different paces, local spheres react in the face of this tendency towards the homogenization of social life and seek elements of identification, normally related to belonging to a space, as an alternative to the reality of the state that has not been able to protect itself from the erosive phenomenon of globalization³⁴. The supposed era of post-globalization and structural change in which international society finds itself is closely linked to the phenomenon of the privatization of international matters, not only via an increasing participation of large international corporations, but also civil society at the transnational level, representing the private altruistic initiative in defense of global public assets. Civil movements, such as the movement against climate change led by Greta Thunberg started in 2018, are an example of the trust international society places in private altruistic agents to contribute to national and international public life over nations themselves and international institutions, incapable of demonstrating control over the globalization process and its crises³⁵.

Current social movements, after the anti-globalization experience and the technological improvement in private communication, feed off a network of informally connected relationships, lacking procedural regulations, in which a multitude of agents participate such as individuals, platforms, communal groups, associations and organizations. This sometimes results in the confluence of a series of networks between associations that already existed in different territories, despite the diversity of their participants and the flexi-

³³ ARENAL MOYUA, C. DEL., *Etnocentrismo y Teoría de las Relaciones Internacionales: una visión crítica*, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

³⁴ John Cassidy holds that economic globalization is probably the only effective type, given that neither the intensity nor the results of political and cultural globalization are equal to it. CASSIDY, J., "The Decline of Economics", *New Yorker*, 1996, pp. 50-60. On the consequences of globalization for "refugee, immigrant and other pariah" humans, see BAUMAN, Z., & LLAZCANO, P. H., *Vidas desperdiciadas: la modernidad y sus parias*, Paidós, Buenos Aires, 2005.

³⁵ SCHOLTE, J. A., *Globalization and Governance: From Statism to Polycentrism*, University of Warwick Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation, 2004.

bility and decentralization of their structures. Unlike the social movements born in the last century (the peace movement, the movement against nuclear weapons, the feminist movement), the most recent examples have managed to maintain a “multi-issue” agenda — environment and development; human rights, gender and development; human rights, peace and the environment— and are carrying out major campaigns at the global level, leading to the progressive development of shared identities and ideas on certain issues of international importance, creating joint actions that can be activated at very short notice thanks to information and communication technologies and the flexibility of their participants³⁶. And as Margarita Zárata argues, the coordinated and sustained social mobilization of the participants of these networks is what generates the social movement as a result of an individual and collective raising of awareness of the nature of the globalizing process, its advantages and serious contradictions³⁷. Moreover, this new form of international collective action does not necessarily need to rely on the convening power of associations in Europe and the US, as was the case during the anti-globalization movement, since the new activism is capable of such remarkable achievements as, for example, the Amazon World Social Forum and the protests against the Climate Change Summit, both in 2009, sponsored by international activist networks such as Jubilee South, Climate Justice Action, Climate Collective, La Via Campesina and the World March of Women, among others³⁸.

When social movements awoke the interest of international public opinion on certain issues, they have a greater chance of being heard by national and international institutions and even of persuading them to take action to satisfy some of their demands. Depending on the magnitude they acquire,

³⁶ DIANI, M., “Social Movements and Collective Behavior” in *Concise Encyclopedia of Comparative Sociology*, Brill, 2014, pp. 410-417.

³⁷ They tackle issues and work in the framework of transversal topics in the same way as the major international programmatic documents (Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals). The relationships between this multitude of agents in networks -WomenNet, Econet, PeaceNet, LaborNet and ConflictNet- are able to mobilize civil society at the international level. ZÁRATE VIDAL, M., “Resistencias y movimientos sociales transnacionales”, *Alteridades*, Vol. 25, No. 50, 2015, pp. 65-77.

³⁸ BRINGEL, B. and ECHART, E., “De Seattle a Copenhagen (con escala en la Amazonía): del movimiento antiglobalización al nuevo activismo transnacional”, *Jóvenes en la Red. Anuario de Movimientos Sociales*, Vol. 1, 2010, pp. 191-201.

the participants, the objective and reach of the actions shall have greater or lesser legitimacy and influencing capacity. These new forms of individual participation in present-day international relations are the result of a more cosmopolitan international society, based on democratic values, which many national governments have no choice but to support, thanks in large part to the impetus and demands they receive from their citizens, convinced of the need to limit the actions of lucrative state and non-state actors, which they see as an obstacle to achieving a more peaceful, just and equitable international society, with a functioning and governance that respects the rights and freedoms of individuals and is consistent with sustainable development. National and international institutions are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain control over the information that individuals receive and select in order to form their opinions when state borders are blurring as a result of an ever-expanding international virtual space or the participation of private initiative in the governance of areas recently incorporated into international relations, although in some cases still at an incipient stage of their organization and regulation³⁹.

Nevertheless, there are also many relevant states that show resistance to the internationalization of national spaces, which prefer strictly inter-State cooperation and respect for the content of the institution of sovereignty, as shall be seen in the following section⁴⁰.

V. POLARIZATION AND DEGLOBALIZATION

The analysis of a stage in progress is always complicated, taking into account that the observer is even more incapable of analyzing political and social phenomena in the time and distance necessary to do so. With due prudence and precaution, it seems that a trend is observed, at least in Europe

³⁹ OSIANDER, A., "Sovereignty, international relations, and the Westphalian myth", *International Organization*, Vol. 55, No. 2, 2001, pp. 251-287.

⁴⁰ PETRELLA, R., "Globalization and internationalization" in BOYER, R., BOYER, S. R. R., and DRACHE, D. (eds.), *States Against Markets: The Limits of Globalization*, Psychology Press, 1996, pp. 62-83; MOGHADAM, V. M., *Globalization and Social Movements: Islamism, Feminism, and the Global Justice Movement*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2012; KNIGHT, J., "Updated definition of internationalization. International higher education", No. 33, 2003.

and America, of exhaustion in terms of continuing to assimilate the economic, social, health and security consequences of globalization: continuous economic-financial crises, mass migration from the periphery to the center, wars due to greed, transnational organized crime and global terrorism. As Sanahuja notes in relation to this question:

In reality, the international system is going through an historical cyclical change, the crisis of globalization understood as a hegemonic model. It involves a period of structural change that ends the post-Cold War era, dominated by economic globalization and liberal democracy. If 9/11 and the war on terror put an end to the democratic optimism that followed the Cold War and the “end of history”, the economic crisis that began in 2008 would close the cycle of economic globalization in its current form based on productive transnationalization and financialization. (...) From this perspective, it should be noted that the international system is undergoing a period of structural change towards non-hegemonic forms, a period understood as a modern crisis of globalization adopted at the end of the 20th century. This crisis involves the crossing over of the power transition processes created by globalization itself; the exhaustion of the economic and technological cycle of productive transnationalization; the social and economic limits of the model, illustrated, in particular, by climate change, and its failures of governance, both in the national and international spheres⁴¹.

The decade of the 2020s is characterized by an increase in opposition to the rules that constitute the liberal, national and international order and that, in short, continue to drive the process of globalization⁴². Powers that question the democratic and socio-political dimension of globalization, however, do not dispute the economic component from which they benefit, although they do not share its founding philosophy: liberalism⁴³. Nevertheless, the

⁴¹ SANAHUJA, J. A., “¿Bipolaridad en ascenso? Análisis equívocos frente a la crisis de la globalización. Análisis equívocos frente a la crisis de la globalización”, *Foreign Affairs Latinoamérica*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 2020, p. 82.

⁴² *Ibidem.*, pp. 76-84.

⁴³ POWELL, C., “¿Tiene futuro el orden liberal internacional?”, *Real Instituto Elcano*, No. 29, 2017.

dissatisfaction of peoples, groups and individuals who consider themselves on the losing side of globalization are the breeding ground of new political projects that carry the banner for nationalist, populist and xenophobic movements, which call democracy and its national and international leaders into question, branding them as weak and inept⁴⁴.

These new political options offer the electorate nationalist, populist and radical proposals based on analyses that deliberately ignore the structure of international society and the consequences of this complex process of globalization. Over the last decade we have witnessed the rise in political extremism in Europe and America, the return of populist and nationalist political proposals presented as alternatives to the liberal and cosmopolitan ideologies that have dominated the landscape of a large proportion of national political contexts and inspired the advancement of the institutionalization of international relations. Political parties and options that were practically abandoned or marginalized have been revived, and there has been a resurgence of discourses that at other moments in recent history were the object of true disdain and rejection. These types of ideas, which offer radical and simple solutions to transnational and highly complex problems, are normally identified as an alternative to many of the achievements in rights and freedoms of Western democracies, identifying enemies and culprits of individual and collective misfortunes and create a climate of social polarization sometimes difficult to revert in short periods of time.

As a result, liberal internationalist ideas are identified as responsible for the erosion of national sovereignty, the waves of migrants and refugees — treated as a threat to economic, social and cultural security —, global terrorism is beginning to be considered a result of the weakness, permissibility and decadence of Western liberalism, and the economic and financial crises are blamed on excessive interconnectivity, the concatenation of foreign policies that are unrealistic, “do-gooding” and, above all, contrary to national interests. Such trends, materialized in the so-called illiberal governments of the European Union, in the arrival of the far-right in countries such as Italy, Brexit in the United Kingdom and the participation of extremist parties in Western government coalitions, however, cannot easily operate on the fring-

⁴⁴ SAJÓ, A., UTTZ, R. and HOLMES, ST. (eds.), *Routledge handbook of illiberalism*, Routledge, 2021; AYMERICH, R., *El desencanto global: de la euforia neoliberal al cuestionamiento de la globalización, la guerra y la crisis climática*, Libros de Vanguardia, 2022.

es of the processes of integration or cooperation in which these states were already participating, although they can attempt to decelerate internationalization, hinder liberal foreign policies, and appeal to the reduction of connectivity as solutions for those citizens most dissatisfied and affected by the process of globalization.

These ideological currents, which advocate deglobalization and have become stronger in recent times, curiously, represent a change with respect to previous stages, in which criticism of the globalization process only came from transnational social action, regardless of the form it took (movements, networks, network of networks, transnational campaigns, etc.), while now the opposition comes from the very governments or political forces that present themselves as options for leadership. In summary, criticism of the globalization process now also comes from national centers of power, the same that in previous decades felt conquered by the benefits of unstoppable interdependence and an increasingly flexible and porous conception of sovereignty. Now, though, those States that seek to renationalize, regain control of the exercise of sovereign powers and put national interests first, are raising their voices. In short, it involves a protest against globalization from national politics and the public sphere⁴⁵.

Lastly, connectivity between nations of international society, independently of their location and conditions, has shown to be of little advantage in situations such as the war of Ukraine caused by Russian aggression. The consequences of the conflict have extended to the economies and energy supply conditions in practically all international society. The devastating effects of the short-circuits in the connected economies are giving rise on the part of many states to a rethinking of their international political-economic relations, which they afford greater autonomy to avoid their foreign policy decisions or those of other states ending up affecting the upholding of the well-being and progress of their societies. As Mearsheimer points out, it should not be forgotten that many states in the international society are not convinced or have stopped being convinced by the ideological dimension of the markedly liberal globalization, states whose aspirations of autonomy or power cannot easily be satisfied in the face of the international hegemony that the promoters of the globalization process wish to maintain, who sometimes even allow

⁴⁵ On the questioning of the liberal order and globalisation in AYMERICH, R., *El desencanto global: de la euforia neoliberal al cuestionamiento de la globalización, la guerra y la crisis climática, ibidem*.

them to distort the foundations of the liberal order in its own name in their international relations to uphold their position of power in the international system⁴⁶.

The criticisms of globalizing liberalism originating from extremist currents have been echoed by the leaders of many territories and cultures that have perceived the homogenizing result generated by the global economy to maximize the potential number of potential customers/buyers. Although globalization has always coexisted with a certain tendency towards fragmentation, which consists in the local defending itself from the global by closing itself off and marking its own differences, this phenomenon has become more acute in recent times, as the global threatens to put an end to local identity and its cultural, political, economic and social elements⁴⁷. This can create a withdrawal towards cultural-ethnic identities that do not wish to be involved in a process of homogenization of uses and customs at a global level, supported by the exchange of information and disinformation, and the mass communication of the digital age⁴⁸.

V. FINAL REFLECTIONS

While the globalization process, initiated decades ago, has become more intense and its negative and well as positive consequences have intensified and spread, there has also been an increase in its critics, the nature of which has also diversified. Terms such as anti-globalization, post-globalization and

⁴⁶ MEARSHEIMER, J., *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities*, Yale University Press, 2018; LARUELLE, M., “Illiberalism: A Conceptual Introduction”, *East European Politics*, Vol. 38, No. 2, 2022, pp. 303-327.

⁴⁷ HOLSTI, K. J., “Change in the International System: Interdependence, Integration, and Fragmentation”, In *Change in The International System*, Routledge, 2019, pp. 23-53. The opinion that globalization may lead to a process of homogenization is not shared by Gray & Salomon, given that if capital and production moves freely through borders, it occurs in order to take advantage of the differences between regions, localities and states. In summary, homogenization appears to be naturally incompatible with globalization. GRAY, J. and SALOMON, M., *Falso amanecer: los engaños del capitalismo global*, Grupo Planeta (GBS), 2000, pp. 57 et seq.

⁴⁸ PONCE-TALANCÓN, H. and GAONA-MONTIEL, F., “Hacia la posglobalización con desafíos sociales”, *Eseconomía*, No. 27, 2010, pp. 89-121.

deglobalization have served to illustrate different reactions originating from civil society at the transnational level that have acquired highly varied characteristics at the same time as information and communication technologies advanced and more and more individuals, associations and organizations participated, from increasingly far-reaching geographical spheres of international society. Inequalities in the participation and redistribution of the profits of globalization inspired the first anti-globalization movements, setting a precedent: the struggle, primarily by the privileged citizens of the globalization process, for the dignity and progress of territories and citizens marginalized by globalization. The push, fundamentally from Western civil society, was joined by individuals and organizations from around the world, provoking a continuous transnational action from the local to the global, primarily focused on the conservation of public global assets. These ongoing protests, in diverse and interconnected spheres and on the part of individuals across the planet, have been called post-globalization, an individual and collective realization of the consequences of this totalizing process on the lives of people, communities and international society as a whole.

However, this awareness led by transnational social movements has not been the only response to globalization. The public sector, governments and international institutions have been aware of how they lost control of this process and the limitations sovereign states were obliged to assimilate when providing their citizens with the needs and welfare they had committed to. This has led to a response in the form of extremist proposals in favor of recovering national sovereignty, control of economies, foreign policies free of the moral shackles of liberalism and disconnectedness.

The globalization process, however, continues to develop, advance and expand in all its dimensions and, for the time being, absorbs the reactions and criticisms of social movements and governments and states. It seems unstoppable and inevitable, above all because no alternative model exists that is able to compete with it, although many sectors of international society are aware it requires corrections in order to stop many of its more negative consequences.

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