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***Challenging Globalization – The Contemporary  
Sociological Debate About Globalization***

***/A Theoretical Approach/***

*M.A. Dissertation in Advanced European and International Studies*

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## Introduction

*“All the world is a stage,  
And all men and women are merely players”*

*/William Shakespeare/*

Shakespeare’s famous words have been uttered centuries ago. Nevertheless, I find them appropriate for depicting present times. Today, more than ever, the world is shrinking and turning into a global scene on which we all have our roles to play. Which is the force that sets up the rules of the game and distributes the roles? Going on further in my reflections, many other questions come to my mind.

What is the reality we face today? Or, maybe, “reality” is not the right word to use, because in today’s world of informatization and mass communication technology time and space boundaries become permeable, even imaginary, so we better talk about “virtual-ity”? But, yet: What is driving today’s world and is throwing us into a vortex of events and changes? What causes transgression of all kinds of boundaries and enables us to travel all around the world even when we are completely motionless? What makes us almost daily reconsider our identity because of the multiple roles we have to play, thus becoming, put in a figurative way, “chameleons”? What causes time pass so quickly and space shrink? Why do we witness so many hybrid cultural products and practices today? ...

I could infinitely continue this list of questions. What it illustrates is that some significant transformations are taking place in present times, that they are omnipresent, that they affect all spheres of life, that they make us participate in a global game. In my opinion, there is one word that can be given as an answer to all these questions – GLOBALIZATION. One single word for describing such a multiplicity of phenomena! From this omnipresence, ubiquity and multidimensionality stems the obscurity of its meaning. Usually when something is present everywhere it multiplies in numerous images, so that it can be grasped with difficulty in its true meaning. The best way to make globalization reveal its many “faces” is to challenge it, that is, to start to examine its features very closely.

This work is an attempt to challenge globalization – to make it show us its images. Thus some light on the obscurity of its meaning will be thrown.

The most common interpretations of globalization are saying that the world is becoming more uniform and standardized through a technological, commercial and cultural synchronization coming from the West. These perspectives equate globalization with Westernization. However, there are other assessments that argue for viewing globalization as a process of hybridization, which gives rise to a global *mélange*. How globalization should be interpreted is hard to say because its meaning varies wildly according to the context in which it is used. Thus, in economics, globalization refers to economic internationalization and the spread of capitalist market relations. In politics and international relations, the focus is on the increasing density of interstate relations and the development of global politics. In sociology, the

concern is with the social changes and the emergence of “world society”. In cultural studies, the emphasis is on the global communications and their influence on culture and identity. As it becomes evident, globalization is a subject of study in various domains. This fact makes the attempt to define it more complicated. The lack of precise definition and theory of globalization provokes a debate among scholars coming from different fields of study. **It is exactly the obscurity of the meaning of globalization and the contemporary debate on it that will be at the core of my work.**

**My goals are:**

- 1) to sort out some of the dominant uses of the term “globalization” and**
- 2) to propose the need for a critical theory of globalization that overcomes the one-sidedness and ideological biases involved in most conceptions.**

For these purposes, two chapters organize the structure of my work. The first aims to explore the concept and the idea of globalization. In this respect my analysis passes through three levels of conceptualizing and theorizing globalization – etymological level, phenomenological level /globalization as a process/ and hermeneutic level /globalization as a discourse/.

The second chapter is centred on the contemporary debate about globalization in the field of cultural sociology and cultural anthropology. What this debate is particular with, is that it drives the attention at the cultural aspects of globalization – an issue, which is usually overlooked in favour of

the economic and political changes. My goal here is to represent and analyse the theories of four main participants – Anthony Giddens, Roland Robertson, Malcolm Waters and Arjun Appadurai. The grid of my analysis is a cluster of questions, which I apply to each of the authors, thus comparing their ideas.

The overall logic of my study is based on the attempt to tackle the topic of globalization as one that provokes a lot of polemics and debates. Yet, I am aware of the fact that because of the enormous scope of visions of globalization my work cannot be thoroughly complete. Therefore the following presentation will try to give a humble contribution for better understanding of the vast topic of globalization.

## Chapter One

### Conceptualizing and Theorizing Globalization

*“Globalization is not the only thing influencing events in the world today, but to the extent that there is a North Star and a worldwide shaping force, it is this system”*

/ Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, 1991 /<sup>1</sup>

Friedman’s comment comes to illustrate the utmost significance assigned to the phenomenon of globalization, perceived as the chief force shaping and moulding the world today. The statement also implies the omnipresence and multidimensionality of this phenomenon encompassing and influencing all spheres of life through its system, namely, through a network of processes.

Nowadays globalization is probably the most widely used word. It is “*the big current buzzword*”<sup>2</sup> in speeches of politicians, a catchword of the last decade of the century in newspaper articles, in the daily talks of journalists and managers, and in the debates of academics, used to signify that something profound is happening, that the world is changing, that a new economic, political and cultural order is taking place and shape. Hardly is there a sphere, or even an aspect, of our life that is not influenced or affected by globalization. But, yet, when we are asked to depict or define this phenomenon, we find difficult to do it.

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in: Kluver, Randy. *Globalization, Informatization and Intercultural Communication*. Internet source, p. 1

<sup>2</sup> Kalb, Don. “Localizing Flows: Power, Paths, Institutions and Networks”, a document included in the reader “*Balkan Societies – Europeanization and Globalization*“, Plovdiv Summer University 2000, p. 1.



The reason, according to Douglas Kellner, is that “ *the term is used in so many different contexts, by so many different people, for so many different purposes, that it is difficult to ascertain what is at stake in the globalization problematic, what function the term serves, and what effects it has for contemporary theory and politics.*”<sup>3</sup>

So, the cause for confusion to define the concept of globalization is, on the one hand, the ambiguity and multifacetedness of the term, varying in meaning according to the context in which it is used. On the other hand, it is the fact that despite the voluminous body of literature written on globalization in the field of sociology, political studies, cultural studies, economics, international relations, communication theories, business studies, the term “globalization” lacks a precise definition and a cogent theory. Thus, and this could be seen in a slightly paradoxical light, although that “globalization” has become a fashionable concept /a concept in vogue/ uttered almost everywhere by everybody, there is still a lot of perplexion, misunderstanding and ideological speculation behind its usage.

**A way to shed light on this conceptual obscurity, in my opinion, is to approach the topic of globalization through a threefold perspective including three stages or levels of analysis – *globalization as a concept, globalization as a social phenomenon and globalization as a narrative.*** Such an approach proves to be relevant to the study of globalization when we have a glimpse at some very generalizing definitions of globalization. Globalization is defined as “*a distinguishing trend of the present moment*”<sup>4</sup>, as “*the salient*

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<sup>3</sup> Kellner, Douglas. *Globalization and the Postmodern Turn*. Internet source, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

*feature of our times*"<sup>5</sup>. "Globalization is an idea whose time has come. From obscure origins in French and American writings in the 1960s, the concept of globalization finds expression today in all the world's major languages."<sup>6</sup>

What should grab our attention in these definitions is the complexity and ubiquity of the word "globalization" which is used in three different significations – "globalization" as a concept, "globalization" as a process, and "globalization" as a metaphor or an idea. Further reflections and clarifications on this are necessary.

In my view, "globalization" as a concept refers to the etymology and semantics of the word, that is, to its literal meaning.

"Globalization" as "a distinguishing trend of the present moment" and "a salient feature of our time" refers to the perception of globalization as an increasingly conspicuous and influential social phenomenon, seen as something imminently and strikingly present in reality, which itself shapes and transforms this reality. What is also implied here is the meaning of globalization as a historical process with its own dynamics and logic. In this mode of thinking, globalization appears something observable and examinable.

"Globalization" as an idea stresses on the theoretical and ideological baggage of the word. In this light, globalization could be seen as a paradigm and as a narrative telling and explaining how the world has been constructed and reconstructed by today's various changes. This is a higher level of conceiving of globalization, which comes after those of the etymological definition and

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 1;

<sup>6</sup> Held, David, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton. /eds./ 1999. *Global Transformations. Politics, Economics and Culture*. Polity Press: Cambridge, p. 1.

depiction. After describing the phenomenon we study, we start to reflect on it and thus we arrive at the hermeneutic mode of thinking, entailing reflection, interpretation and evaluation.

So, in what follows, I will first examine the etymology of the word “globalization” as it is used in the Anglo-Saxon and American literature, and that of the word “mondialisation” encountered primarily in the Francophone literature. Secondly, I shall try to highlight the nature and the driving forces of globalization as a process, that is, its historical context. Thirdly, I shall address globalization as a narrative, namely, the way it is perceived and interpreted in both the public and the academic discourse.

## **1. First Level of Analysis: The Semantics of “globalization”.**

In the middle of the 1970s the term “globalization” had yet to be coined and the term did not make its way into the English and German dictionaries until well into the 1990s.<sup>7</sup>

If we have a look at the *Petit Robert*, we shall find out the following etymological explanation of the word “globalization” and its process words:

**“Globalisation** /de globe; global/: processus aboutissant à créer de la *globalité*.

**Globalité:** état dans lequel un ensemble, pris en bloc, est identifiable en tant que tel.

**Global:** qui s’applique à un ensemble, pris en bloc.

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<sup>7</sup> Linné, Tore. *Globalization: Winners and Losers*. Internet source, p. 5.

**Globe:** *sphere /figure géométrique/; la terre.* <sup>8</sup>

And there again we come across the definition of the French term “mondialisation”:

**“Mondialisation:** *processus aboutissant à créer la mondialité.*

**Mondialité:** *état dans lequel le monde, pris en bloc est identifiable en tant que tel.*

**Mondial:** *relatif au monde entier.*

**Monde:** *1. ensemble de tout ce qui existe /création, cosmos, univers, macrocosme/; 2. ensemble de tout ce qui existe dans les limites données /microcosme; le monde des insectes; civilisations; le monde chinois; le monde romain/. 3. la Terre et l’Humanité que l’habite / et que la pense/.”*<sup>9</sup>

If we draw upon the second etymological description, we shall arrive at the following definition of “mondialisation”: *“La mondialisation est un processus aboutissant à l’état actuel de planétarisation unifiée des interdépendances de toute l’humanité”*<sup>10</sup>

Comparing the above cited definitions, one can easily conclude that the word “mondialisation” has richer connotations and a broader scope of meaning /”mondialisation” here is a synonym of “planétarisation”/, implying an infinite process encompassing the whole world consisting of microcosmos, macrocosmos, the Earth and the humanity. By contrast, the word “globalization” has more confined meaning signifying again a process but one that takes place in a smaller-scaled canvas – that of the Earth.

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<sup>8</sup> Cited in: Piel, Jean. “De quelques considerations lexicales et historiques à propos de la mondialisation” in: Beaud, Michel, Olivier Dolfus, Christian Grataloup /eds./, 1999. *Mondialisation. Les mots et les choses*. Editions Karthala, p. 142.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 143.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

What becomes undoubtedly clear, after scrutinizing the lexical meaning of the two words “globalization” and “mondialisation”, is that they both do not indicate a static condition but something in motion and development, in brief, a process. According to Jean Piel, “*stricto sensu le suffixe du mot (-asation) désigne non un état, mais un processus.*”<sup>11</sup> What can be contentious, however, is whether globalisation is a linear and evolutionary process, or one that has its own particular logic and telos.

“*Globalisation is often seen as a linear integrative process. Critics, especially from francophone countries, stress the disintegration and discontinuity in the notion of mondialisation.*”<sup>12</sup> As it has already been mentioned, the word mondialisation has a broader meaning and is critically more insightful, and what will later be elaborated, globalisation as a historical process cannot be characterized by an evolutionary logic, for it is a controversial process and “*historical patterns of globalization have been punctuated by great shifts and reversals, while the temporal rhythms of globalization differ between domains.*”<sup>13</sup>

Going back to the etymology of the word “globalization”, we should point out that “*the term was coined as early as 1959, although its popularity gained momentum only since about 1985.*”<sup>14</sup> What is also worthy of attention is Malcolm Waters’s observation that “*in 1961 Webster became the first major dictionary to offer definitions of globalism and globalization.*”<sup>15</sup> It is evident that the term “globalization” grew out of the adjective “global” in the sense of “world

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<sup>11</sup> Piel, Jean. “De quelques considérations lexicales et historiques à propos de la mondialisation”, in: Beaud, Michel, Olivier Dolfus, Christian Grataloup /eds./ 1999. *Mondialisation. Les mots et les choses*. Editions Karthala, p. 144.

<sup>12</sup> Box, Louk. *Globalization versus Mondialisation: Private Gain, Public Good and Common Understanding*. Internet source, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Held, David, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton. 1999. *Global Transformations. Politics, Economy and Culture*. Polity Press: Cambridge, p. 414.

<sup>14</sup> Kloos, Peter. *Global Order. Transformational Regimes and Identity Movements*. Internet source, p. 1.

wide”. Waters argues that *“although the word “global” is over 400 years old, usage of words such as “globalization”, “globalize” and “globalizing” did not begin until about 1960.”*<sup>16</sup>

Peter Kloos dates it back even more precisely by stating that *“the adjective “global” goes back to 16<sup>th</sup> c. England, and came into being in the wake of European expansion. This was no accident: due to the great sea voyages the narrow horizons of the so-called Middle Ages Europe had widened until they indeed encompassed the whole world.”*<sup>17</sup>

Waters puts the emphasis on the year of 1960 because it was at this moment that the adjective “global” acquired a more potent meaning, when McLuhan referred to the world as a “global village”. He uses the village as a metaphor for the world community, which has become more united and mobile thanks to the electronic means of communication. So, it was not until 1960 – the boom of the mass communications technology, that people became aware of the fact that a significant process of transformations was taking place, which came to be named “globalization”.

What comes into light through this historical and etymological survey of the word “globalization” is the fact that there lacks coincidence between the process and the concept of globalization, for the process is much older than the concept. How old it exactly is, that is a debatable issue, which will be later addressed.

Staying still on the first level of our analysis – the semantics of globalization and after having examined the history and etymology of the word,

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<sup>15</sup> Waters, Malcolm. *Globalization*. 1995. London and New York: Routledge, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

what follows is to try to grasp its present meanings. We already insisted on the extreme common usage of the word, a fact that makes some authors conclude that “*globalization is in danger of becoming, if it has not already become, the cliché of our times: the big idea which encompasses everything from global financial markets to Internet but which delivers little substantive insight into the contemporary human condition.*”<sup>18</sup> Other theorists claim that “globalization” is “*a big idea on slim foundations because it can refer to anything from the Internet to a hamburger.*”<sup>19</sup>

Both accounts reveal the ubiquity and multifacetedness of the term – in short, globalization means everything and nothing. Everything because it is present everywhere, and nothing because amongst the myriad definitions and interpretations it is hard to discern a simple meaning or referent for the term. If put it in a figurative way, it seems as if the meanings and connotations of globalization are so overwhelmingly abundant that they reach their “vanishing point” beyond which they lose their meaningfulness. In other words, the problem when conceptualizing globalization is, in my view, that globalization is taken for granted instead of being submitted to a critical conceptual analysis.

It is obvious that if we rest only at the etymological level of analysis of globalization, we cannot touch its essence and we are still in shortage of understanding it. What the examination of the etymology of the word, however, is helpful for, is to trace back its semantic origin which results in adding the suffix “ization” to the adjective “global”. Thus, it was revealed that “global-ization” is

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<sup>17</sup> Kloos, Peter. *Global Order: Transnational Regimes and Identity Movements*. Internet source, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> Held, David, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton. 1999. *Global Transformations. Politics, Economics and Culture*. Polity Press: Cambridge, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Clark, Ian. 1999. *Globalization and International Relations Theory*. Oxford: University Press, p. 35.

something referring to the globe /or “le monde”, in its larger sense/, more precisely, a process, or better, a host of various transformations reshaping reality.

Now let us make a step to the second mode /layer/ of analysis, where globalization is viewed as an empirical phenomenon and a historical trend, that is, as a process.

## **2. Second Level of Analysis: Globalization as a Process.**

Each process has to be pinned down and addressed from its historical context. Consequently, the questions that have to be raised here are:

- When did the process start?
- Does it represent a novel condition?
- What are its dynamics, causation and driving forces?
- Who are the actors in this process?
- How does it relate to other historical processes that take place in the course of its development?

Before starting to explore these questions, I would like to specify that since globalization represents controversial, multisided and multifaceted transformations, it would be more appropriate to approach it not as a single process but rather as a bunch of processes. Some authors even insist on the usage of the very word “globalization” in plural: “*There is not a single globalization, only globalizations*”<sup>20</sup>. “*Perhaps we should better speak of globalizations, in plural, depending on whether we are referring to technology, economy, culture*

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 35.



or environment.”<sup>21</sup> One might object that if we stick to this conception, we risk not to perceive the phenomenon in its wholeness, but to see it as a “patchwork”, if I may be allowed to use this metaphor, that is, as a sum of distinct processes. This is not really the case because what is intended by emphasizing on the plurality of the word, is to reveal its complex nature. Hence, globalization must be reflected on through the so-called “unity-in-diversity” perspective, signifying that globalization consists of closely interrelated processes, which, only when taken together, shape its wholeness. Thus globalization will be treated not as a one-sided process but as the focusing point of numerous changes.

Also worthy of attention is that other authors prefer not to speak of “globalization” or “globalizations” but, using more generalizing terms, of “global system” conceived as “*a system of relations between global scripts, actors and processes*”<sup>22</sup>, or of a “*global age*”<sup>23</sup>.

Going back to the above stated questions, the first that comes to be posed is about the starting point of globalization.

## **2.1. Periodizing Globalization.**

This intricate inquiry is at the core of a debate about the outset of globalization. What is important is the way the participants in this debate refer to globalization. Some, proceeding from the above analysed perspective of the plurality of globalizations, look not only for one but for more starting points addressing them respectively as economic, political and cultural globalization. It is claimed that “*the cultural globalization began in the period 300-800 AD when*

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<sup>21</sup> Linné, Tore. *Globalization: Winners and Losers*. Internet source, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Axford, Barrie. 1995. *Global System. Economics, Politics and Culture*. Polity Press: Cambridge, p. 6.

*the major religions were established and spread on a larger scale. Today's economic and ecological world order can be traced back at least five hundred years, when Christopher Columbus and Vasco da Gama were the pioneers of globalization, and the European expansion laid the foundation for growth in the North and for pillage and devastation in the South.”*<sup>24</sup>

The association of globalization with the Ancient Times looks to me a little exaggerated. It is true that a sort of cultural unification started with the emergence and development of the major world religions but it is arguable whether this process could be named cultural globalization. As for the economic globalization, the age of Great Discoveries is acceptable as a starting point, for this was the time when the opening of the world began. Yet, going back to so early times in history somehow drives our attention apart from the contemporary features of globalization. For this reason, I consider, it is more relevant to think about globalization as a process that has gone on for a long time, but accentuating that it has been dramatically speeded up in the last decades.

Here we come again to the issue of periodization where several waves of globalization can be singled out. The very fact that one speaks of waves, and not simply of periods of globalization, implies the existence of ruptures and fluctuations in this process. That supports my thesis that globalization is not a linear process but one that passes through ups and downs, driven by its own logic and dynamics.

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<sup>23</sup> Albrow, Martin. 1996. *The Global Age. State and Society Beyond Modernity*. Polity Press.

<sup>24</sup> Linné, Tore. *Globalization: Winners and Losers*. Internet source, p. 6.

The thesis of the origins of globalization in the aftermath of the Great Discoveries is also maintained in: Spybey, Tony. 1996. *Globalization and World Society*. Polity Press, p. 1.

Authors who date globalization back to the age of Great Geographical Discoveries distinguish four phases. Serge Latouche even names them “quatre mondialisations” – “la première mondialisation” took place in the age of the Discoveries of new worlds and their colonization. It is associated with the geographical expansion of the world. Therefore the first globalization is also defined as “planétarisation” /”la première mondialisation proprement planétaire”/. The second globalization in the 1880-1960 period coincided with the development of capitalism, industrialism and modernization. The third started with the process of decolonization and with the emergence of new states. The fourth, called the new globalization /la nouvelle mondialisation/ or contemporary globalization is characterized by four phenomena: “*la transnationalisation des firmes, l’affaiblissement des régulations étatiques à l’Ouest, l’effondrement de la planification à l’Est, la mainmise de la finance sur l’économie.*”<sup>25</sup>

The major flaw of Latouche’s phase model, in my opinion, is that it fails to catch the fluctuations of the global changes. The division of globalization into four distinct globalizations leads to the loss of interconnection. Hence, the four globalizations seem isolated and each of them appears as a singular process without being really bound up with the others and taking place only in its own historical context.

A far more acceptable periodization of globalization is the one that manages to catch the ups and downs of the global changes. It can be represented by the following curve of upheavals and crises: 1850-1929 /up/, 1929-1950

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<sup>25</sup> Latouche, Serge. “La mondialisation démistifiée” in: Goldsmith, Edward et Jerry Mander /eds./ 2001. *Le procès de la mondialisation*. Fayard, p. 12.

/down/, 1950-1960 /up/, 1970 /down/, 1980-present time /up/.<sup>26</sup> Let us have a glimpse at each of the waves.

The period from 1850 to 1929 is called the “Etalon-or” era because all national currencies were attached to the gold. Its characteristic traits are: the completion of the colonization; British military and economic hegemony; industrialization marked by numerous inventions, such as the steamship, railroads, telegraphs; intensification of the trade relations and investment flows; the introduction of Fordism - techniques for serial production based on combining standardized parts by using serial-purpose machinery – the moving assembly line; the promotion of Taylorism – a scientific method for organizing the labour leading to its fragmentation and specialization; the start of capitalist competitiveness through the concurrence and monopoly of big enterprises. The overall result of these cultural, political and economic changes was the increased opening of the world.

The wave that took place in the interwar years was a period of recession. It witnessed the Great Depression caused by the Wall Street crash in 1929 and the policy of protectionism exercised by the states striving to restore their shattered economies and to preserve their sovereignty. This period is a rupture in the globalization curve.

The next wave in the 1950s and the 1960s indicated again a rise in the political and economic affairs. This was the time of the decolonization and proliferation of states. In 1944 the Bretton Woods agreement was signed

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<sup>26</sup> A similar, yet not the same, wave model of globalization can be found in: Linné, Tore. *Globalization: Winners and Losers*. Internet source, pp. 2-3.

For a three-wave model see also: Kébabdjian. “Analyse économique et mondialisation: 6 débats” in: Beaud, Michel, Olivier Dolfus, Christian Grataloup /eds./ .1999. *Mondialisation: Les mot et les choses*. Edition Karthala, p. 53. See annex 1.

establishing the attachment of all European currency to the US dollar. The idea of the “welfare state” was inaugurated. Further integration was achieved through the creation of the European Economic Community. The involved period also marked the boom in the development of mass communication technologies that brought about a compression of the time and space horizons.

But this political and economic rise was overshadowed by the coming years of the 1970s. In a political plan, the break-up of the Bretton Woods system provoked a state crisis. Since the states were no longer the only actors on the international scene, they had to predefine their role and functions. In an economic plan, another severe recession appeared and resulted in a “stagflation” /a neologism signifying “stagnation” and “inflation”/.

The final wave, that of the contemporary globalization, started in 1980 onwards. It is characterized by acceleration and intensification of the economic, political and cultural integration. In an economic plan, the creation of the European Common Market was achieved after the adoption of the Single European Act in 1986. The increased growth of trade and foreign investments gave birth to the concept of “casino capitalism” implying any lack of guarantees for a gain. In a political plan, the state lost part of its influence because some of its functions started being executed by international and nongovernmental organisations. The process is reflected on in the term “desetatization”. In a cultural plan, the industrial society driven by the quest for professional realization and profit is today replaced by the “*post-industrial society*”<sup>27</sup>, also named “knowledge society”, “information society”, “programmed society”, in

short, a cognitive society that in order to obtain its goals does not use physical work but mental skills.

A crucial event that took place during the current phase of globalization and that has a profound significance on a political, economic and cultural level is the end of the Cold War. It brings about a new concept for reflecting on the reality – the concept of “new world order”. Provoked by the drive for legitimizing the new reality, the intellectual debate is aimed at giving answer to the following question: which are the new geopolitical imperatives that determinate the relations among the states after the crash of the bipolar model? The theories that are worthy to be singled out within the framework of this debate are: Francis Fukuyama’s theory of the end of the history, claiming that the liberal democracy will triumph as a global reality, thus putting an end to the so-called history of ideas; Zbigniew Brzezinski’s realistic theory which is intended to explain the international relations by the etatistic paradigm according to which all states are acting on the world scene, where Europe is imagined as a chessboard, consisting of key geopolitical zones and active geostrategical players, on which the struggle for a global supremacy is going on; Huntington’s civilization theory saying that the differences between nations in the new world order will not be of political or economic, but rather of cultural nature. Thus the rivalry amid the world greatest forces will be replaced by a clash of civilizations where those that have common in culture will collaborate with one another, while those that differ in culture will be in conflict. In present times it seems that the concept of globalization is more and more replacing the concept of new world order.

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<sup>27</sup> For a more comprehensive analysis of the idea of the “post-industrial” society see: Bell, Daniel. “The Coming of the Post-Industrial Society” in: Waters, Malcolm /ed./, *Modernity. Critical Concepts*. V. 4, “After Modernity”. London/ Routledge, pp.

After having examined the models of periodization of globalization, we can conclude that the above-presented curve like model fits best the diachronic nature of phenomenon and exemplifies its fluctuations. It also entails its multidimensionality, seen as a network of political, economic and cultural transformations. Another issue that became clear is that historical changes that happened in early times should not necessarily be labelled “globalization”. It does not mean that globalization is a new phenomenon. On the contrary, it is undoubtedly a process with a long history, whose pace, since the technological revolution in the 1950s and the 1960s, was highly enhanced. The acceleration of its pace has a direct reference to the reconsideration and redefinition of our perception of time and space.

## **2.2. Reconsidering the notions of “time” and “space”.**

The change in our spatio-temporal perception can best be caught if we address the problem from a philosophical perspective grounded on the comparison between pre-modern, modern and post-modern time and space. As this is a complicated philosophical question staying apart from the present study, I shall not go into depths. So, I shall only sketch out very briefly the salient features of the above mentioned notions which will allow us to spot the differences between them.

Pre-modern time is cyclic and flies according to the natural forces and God’s will. Pre-modern space is arranged in accordance with the centre-periphery model in which every object has its predestined place. The first significant change in the perception of time and space came in the age of

Renaissance advocating the idea that man is the creator of his own world. Thus pre-modern time and space became secularized and new perception came into being.

Modern time is linear and flies within the causal framework past-present-future. Modern space became open waiting to be explored and conquered by man. Under the impact of industrialization and new mass communication technologies, the notions of time and space were once again changed.

Post-modern space is virtual, electronic, decentred, placeless and borderless, while post-modern time is ceaseless and instant allowing one to be simultaneously at far distant places. What the global transformations result in is *“the compression of time and space horizons and the creation of a world of instantaneity and depthlessness. Global space is a space of flows, an electronic space, a decentred space, a space in which frontiers and boundaries have become permeable.”*<sup>28</sup>

Global space and time are often called cyber space and time – notions going beyond our perception of reality. It looks as if the rapid changes going on all around us cast us into another dimension, perhaps that of “virtuality”. In this beyond the reality dimension we have no time and space orientations because everything is utterly speedy and is in a perpetual transformation. We cannot but move together with the currents and flows. Even when we are in a motionless condition, we are still travelling<sup>29</sup>, something that is really unprecedented.

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<sup>28</sup> Morley, David and Kevin Robins. 1995. *Spaces of Identity*. London and New York, p. 115.

<sup>29</sup> For a more elaborated study of the issue of post-modern time and space see: Bauman, Zigmunt. *Globalization and Human Consequences*. 1999.



As we saw, globalization is not a novel phenomenon but nevertheless it has some unprecedented consequences, like those referring to the change in our spatio-temporal perception.

Still standing on the level of analysis representing globalization as a process, the questions, which rest to be answered, are about the actors and the driving forces of the process.

### **2.3. The Actors of Globalization.**

The complexity of the process explains the multiplicity of actors who take part in it. By “actor”, it is meant someone who has a special function, goals and strategy for attaining these goals. The participants in globalization are: the nation states, individuals, multinational enterprises, international organizations, institutional investors, nongovernmental companies, criminal organizations, mass media sources. All they influence the process of globalization in different ways depending on the extent they want to benefit from the advantages given by globalization.

### **2.4. The Axial Principles of Globalization.**

Some of the motor forces of globalization were already revealed in the course of the discussion of its periodization. Therefore, now I shall concentrate my attention not only on its axial principles, but also on other processes to which it is related.

Each process has its own dynamic, so does globalization. As it was underlined, its trajectory is not linear because it is not headed to a final point and

it has particular time and space projections. On the one hand, global changes cause expansion of time and space horizons. That is proved by today's high mobility of people, commodities, capital and information. Everything is travelling and surpassing all kinds of boundaries. As a consequence, the significance of what is territorial and local has been reduced. This spatio-temporal expansion comes to represent globalization as a centrifugal process. On the other hand, thanks to the new information technologies, people, goods and capitals can be virtually transferred all over the world in a blink of time /"one click is enough", if you let me this figurative expression/. Distances no longer matter. Rather than separating people, they bring them closer together. This compression and squeezing of time and space indicates that globalization is also a centripetal process. What comes to the fore after these reflections on the inner dynamics of globalization, consisting of both centrifugal and centripetal tendencies, is its controversial and dialectical nature.

The most salient aspect of this dialectics is the conjunction /or disjunction?/ between globalization and localization. The question is whether globalization and localization are controversial or complementary processes.

## **2.5. Globalization-Localization Nexus – Controversy or Complementation?**

*"We are part of more than one world. We live local versions of the world and in so doing we have to locate ourselves within the wider global context."*<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Voisey, Heather and Tim O'Riordan. "Globalization and Localization" in: O'Riordan, Tim. 2001. *Globalism, Localism and Identity*. London: Earthscan Publications, p. 37.

My point of departure here is the assumption that there is a complex and necessary relationship between globalization and localization. We already examined the etymology of the word “globalization” and saw that being created by putting “global” and “ization” together it signifies a continuing process comprising various changes and transformations that affect all relations in the world. Let us now have a look at the etymology of the word “localization”.

“Localization” is constructed in the same way as “globalization” – by adding the suffix “ization” to the adjective “local”. It comes to show that localization is also a process and not a static condition. *“Definitions of the terms local, locality, localism and localization, all refer to place and distinctiveness of that place.”*<sup>31</sup> Localization is thus focused on the sociocultural specificity in a limited space. Unlike globalization, localization insists on the embedding of social practices and the reaffirming of boundaries. It hints geographical confinement and stresses the uniqueness of the place, while globalization is geographically undefined. Localization is a search for time and space orientations, while globalization obliterates time-space differences. Thus, at first sight, both processes appear to be opposite. But, as we clarified it, globalization is a centrifugal and centripetal process which means that it causes both embedding and disembedding of social relations. An argument that sustains my thesis of the complementarity of globalization and localization is the catchphrase “think globally, act locally” which gained popularity in the field of economy. It requires a global awareness of the interconnectedness of processes, places and people, as well as their relationship to each other. We have to expand the scope of our worldview so as to be conscious of all changes that takes place today. At

the same time, we should keep an eye on the local specificities because each global transformation has a local context and is triggered by local needs. A good example can be drawn from the sphere of the production of goods. When something new has to be produced, one must first examine the local demands and taste. Stemming from its local canvas the product has to be introduced to the global market in such a way so as to show that there is not only a local, but also a common /universal/ need for its consumption. Thus its local traits contribute to the creation of its global image.

Some theorists go even further in their reflections on the interlocking relationship between globalization and localization. To express the inherent connection between them, Rosenau coins the term “fragmegration”, a conjunction of fragmentation and integration.<sup>32</sup> Robertson uses the term “glocalization” which is formed by telescoping globalization and localization into one word. *“According to the Oxford Dictionary of new words the term “glocal” and the process noun “glocalization” are formed by telescoping global and local to make a blend”*. Also according to the dictionary that idea has been modelled on Japanese “dochakuka” / deriving from “dochaku” – “living on one’s own land”/, originally the agricultural principle of adapting one’s farming techniques to local conditions, but also adopted in Japanese business for global localization, a global outlook adapted to local conditions.”<sup>33</sup>

Robertson’s idea of glocalization will be more thoroughly examined in the next chapter. Both neologisms “fragmegration” and “glocalization” come

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>32</sup> Cited in: Kloos, Peter. *The Dialectics of Globalization and Localization*. Internet source, p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> Robertson, Roland. “Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity” in: Featherstone, Mike, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson. /ed./ 1995. *Global Modernities*. London: SAGE Publications, p. 28.

to prove my assumption of the dialectics of globalization and localization. In conclusion to this issue, we might say that both phenomena are complex processes whose trends are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they are constantly mingling and permeating each other.

Before moving forward, a problem that looks to me relevant to be addressed here is the inquiry on whether globalization is truly globalized.

## 2.6. Is Globalization Really Global?

In so far as the word “globalization” itself implies the idea of encompassing everything within the reach of the globe, this question seems tautological. Yet, it is well known that not all parts of the world are touched and influenced by the globalization. There are places, which are totally excluded and isolated from today’s global changes. The only really globalized zones form the so-called Global Triad – *“the major three components of the triad are Asia – with particular reference to East Asia, not necessarily forever, but at least for the last quarter of a century, Japan, in particular. Secondly, there is, of course, Europe, particularly the countries that constitute the European Union. And thirdly, there is the Western hemisphere, particularly North America, and even more particularly, the United States of America.”*<sup>34</sup> Tore Linné points out that *“approximately 80 % of the world trade is still between the United States, the EU and Japan”*<sup>35</sup>, which means that the global transformations take place within the framework of this triad. So, how can globalization be a global phenomenon when its reach is encapsulated? The question helps us to see again the controversial

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<sup>34</sup> Robertson, Roland. *Comments on the Global Triad and Glocalization*; Internet source, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> Linné, Tore. *Globalization: Winners and Losers*. Internet source, p; 4.

nature of globalization – it has not only unifying, but also diversifying tendencies. In a geographical plan, it also brings about regionalization and thus divides the world into active players /those of the Global Triad/ and passive observers /all the rest/. On an economic level, apart from stimulating economic growth and wealth, it engenders polarization, marginalization, even, ghettoization. According to the United Nations Report, “*the 225-dollar billionaires in the world have assets corresponding to the incomes of 2.5 billion people in the poorest parts of the world*”.<sup>36</sup> On a cultural level, the hot debate is whether globalization will lead to a cultural homogenization or to a cultural heterogenization. As this debate will be at the heart of my next chapter, suffice it to say here that those who see globalization as a unifying force describe it as Americanization, while those who view it as a tendency strengthening the local identities, portray it rather as Indigenization.

## **2.7. Globalization-Americanization versus Globalization - Indigenization.**

What is meant by Americanization is the imposition of the values of the American consumer society – its way of life, tastes, inclinations, dressing style, shaped by the popular mass culture. Some authors go deeper in this phenomenon discerning other specific processes, such as Coca-Colanization and McDonaldization. These are processes through which the principles of fast-food restaurant and the mass consumption of the Coca Cola drink are coming to dominate more and more sectors of the American society, as well as the rest of the world.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>37</sup> See Spybey, Tony. 1996. *Globalization and World Society*. Polity Press, p. 45.

Serge Latouche even equates globalization with Westernization, where the West is defined as a geographical reality and as an ideological concept. In its latter sense, the axial principles of Westernization are: Christianity, secularization, capitalism, industrialization, modern democracy and the rights of man. According to the author, the project of Westernization to impose the Western economic, political and cultural model on the rest of the world has failed. Instead of resulting in homogenization, it gave rise to the process of indigenization, i.e. the resurgence of native cultures and local social practices.<sup>38</sup>

The short comment on the globalization-Americanization and globalization-Indigenization relationship proves once again the dialectical logic of globalization.

After having examined the different aspects of this dialectics, we shall focus our attention on the subsequent question:

## **2.8. What Are the Driving Forces of Globalization?**

The opening of the world would not be possible without the logic of capitalism and the development of technologies. Capitalism refers to industrialization, meaning a process of fabrication by using energy and machine technology. Industrialization implies technological change, whereby work is done by machines in order to achieve higher efficiency of production and higher final profit. According to Daniel Bell, today we live in a “post-industrial” society which differs from the industrial society in the age of capitalism – *“today there is*

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<sup>38</sup> See: Latouche, Serge. 1992. *L'Occidentalisation du monde*. Paris: Editions La Découverte.

*a transition from “economy of goods” to “economy of information”*”<sup>39</sup> The post-industrial sector is one of processing in which telecommunications and computers are the basic means for the exchange of information and knowledge. In short, the dimensions of the post-industrial society are: the centrality of theoretical knowledge, the creation of a new intellectual technology, the spread of a knowledge class, the change from goods to services. Consequently, in the post-industrial or info-based society, knowledge or the production of info values is its driving force, rather than the industrial technologies. Moreover, and here the contemporary wave of globalization comes to the scene, the innovation and convergence of technologies precipitate further changes that are fundamentally altering and will keep on changing the human landscape. We already addressed the most crucial change – the reconsideration of spatio-temporal perception.

So, as it became evident, the two primary impetuses of globalization – industrialization and informatization are closely linked. The proliferation of new technologies was prompted by the needs for further industrial development. As a process of change, informatization *“features: (a) use of information technologies, such as the world wide net and other communication technologies, to such an extent that they become the dominant forces in commanding economic, political, social and cultural development; (b) unprecedented growth in the speed, quantity and popularity of information production and distribution.”*<sup>40</sup>

Due to the informatization the space and time barriers are minimized.

With the electronic communication media, within an instant, the most novel ideas

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<sup>39</sup> Bell, Daniel. “The Coming of Post-Industrial Society” in: Waters, Malcolm. /ed./ 1999. *Modernity. Critical Concepts*. V. 4. After Modernity. London: Routledge, p. 216.



can reach around the globe and influence events that happen in far away parts of the world. It causes also proliferation of information about lifestyles and religions and other cultural practices. Surfing in Internet actually means travelling around the world and paying “virtual visits” to far away places. Mobility, flexibility and adaptability are in fact the social consequences of globalization. In order to recapitulate, as much as globalization refers to integration and bringing distant realities closer to each other, much of this integration occurs through the channels of technology.

What has to be stressed, and this again comes from the dialectical and controversial nature of globalization, is that not all people can take profit from the opportunities and higher chances it offers. The key word “access” is what divides people into those who have access to information and who benefit from the advantages given by the information technology, and those who have no access to information and who remain excluded, unable to take part in the global changes. In other words, globalization has both winners and losers. An undeniable fact that once again signals for taking into account the ambiguity and mansidedness of globalization.

It was exactly the multidimensionality and complexity of globalization that this chapter wanted to illuminate. But yet, one might object that there lacks a clear definition of globalization. That is so because my analysis has not yet come to end. Just to remind it, the logic of my reflections was grounded on a three-stage analysis of globalization – the etymology of the word /level one/, globalization as a process / level two/, and globalization as an idea, or a narrative

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<sup>40</sup> Kluver, Randy. *Globalization, Informatization and Intercultural Communication*. Internet source, p. 4.

/level three/. By now, I examined the first two levels. Here are the concluding remarks that can be drawn:

- \* Globalization is a controversial phenomenon. The word “globalization” and the process are not historically coincidental: the word was coined much later after the process, which it signifies, has started.

- \* Globalization is not a static state. It is a historical process, or better, a set of processes, which follows its own logic and dynamics. This set of processes consists of divergent waves forming a curve-like trajectory.

- \* Globalization has its periodization, driving forces and actors. In the mode of periodization, it is not a wholly novel stage and various theories about its beginning and periods can be found. What is novel, however, is the contemporary patterns of globalization which are a product of a unique conjunction of social, political, economic and cultural changes. The main consequence of these multiple transformations is the paradoxically simultaneous compression and expansion of time and space horizons, which makes us redefine the notions of time and space.

- \* The major impetuses of globalization, being in an intricate relationship, are the market capitalism /industrialization/ and informatization.

- \* Globalization is a process in which a myriad of actors take part, each of them having a special function and being guided by its proper interests and a strategy for achieving them.

- \* Globalization has both centripetal and centrifugal tendencies. Its dialectical nature can be seen in the following oppositions: Globalization-Localization, Unification-Polarization, Integration-Marginalization, Cultural

Homogenization-Cultural Heterogenization, Americanization /or Westernization, and in its more concrete variants McDonaldization and Cocacolonization/-Indigenization.

After having conceptualized globalization, we have some analytical sketches about its definition. A further step in reflecting on globalization is by theorizing it, which is the third level of my analysis.

### **3. Third Level of Analysis: Theorizing Globalization.**

In this mode of thinking, globalization is perceived as a narrative, that is, as a “story” about the various changes that happen today. This story, in my view, has two dimensions. On one side, it can be seen as a “normal talk” /even a chat/ - a simple description of today’s ongoing transformations. Globalization is what everyone talks about. This is the popular rhetoric of globalization, named also “*global talk*” or “*global babble*”.<sup>41</sup> On the other side, it is the metahistory or metanarrative of globalization, which not only depicts the phenomenon itself, but also provides reflections on its nature. This is the highest level of analysis called hermeneutic, comprising description and interpretation. Thus the metanarrative of globalization can be considered as a descriptive and analytical scheme aiming at explaining and analysing the essence of the on-going events. It is, in brief, the discourse of globalization.

#### **3.1. The Popular Rhetoric of Globalization – Euphoria or Melancholy?**

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<sup>41</sup> See the article: *Ethics and Globalization*. Internet source, p. 1.

*“Globalization through popular interpretations /journalistic and media representations/ is a process of primarily economic, but also social and political, change that encompasses the planet, resulting in greater homogeneity, hybridization and interdependence – “a global enmeshment” of money, people, images, values and ideas that has entailed smoother and swifter flows across national boundaries. These processes are driven by technological advance, the growth of the information sector, international cooperation, and processes of structural adjustment to a new global capitalist economic and political order headed by multinational corporations and international governmental institutions.”<sup>42</sup>*

What strikes the attention in this definition is its holistic scope – globalization is portrayed as an omnipresent process affecting all life spheres and causing free, even chaotic, movement of everything and everybody. It stresses that the phenomenon we are talking about is a process that has its driving forces in the face of the technological advance and the capitalistic market economy, and its actors among whom the main roles are played by multinational corporations and international governmental institutions.

According to another definition, *“globalization reflects a widespread perception that the world is rapidly being moulded into a shared social space by economic, technological forces and that developments in one region of the world can have profound consequences for the life changes of individuals or communities on the other side of the globe. For many globalization is also associated with a sense of political fatalism and chronic insecurity in that the*

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<sup>42</sup> Voisey, Heather and Tim O’Riordan. “Globalization and Localization” in: O’Riordan, Tim. 2001. *Globalism. Localism and Identity*. London: Earthscan Publications, p. 26.

*sheer scale of contemporary social and economic change appears to outstrip the capacity of national governments or citizens to control, contest, or resist that change.*<sup>43</sup>

Unlike the first definition, which is merely descriptive and objective, the second is more subjective. It does not emphasize the reality of the phenomenon, but the way it is perceived. The perspectives of the two definitions are different. That of the first is external /holistic/, while that of the second is internal /reducible/. The latter implies the change in the traditional perception of time and space. The loss of time and space demarcations and the lack of boundaries are seen as bringing about uncertainty and fear. This fear escalates to a fatalism especially when one becomes aware of the fact that not only are all boundaries obliterated, but also the role of the state decreases and it is no longer able to control and resist the changes.

What is also observable in the popular rhetoric of globalization is the tendency to evaluate the phenomenon, to judge it either as something positive, or something negative. A touch either of euphoria, or melancholy, is tangible in the everyday talk on globalization.

The advocates of globalization perceive it as a liberating power, which gives everybody more choices and opportunities of realization. It provokes higher mobility, flexibility, adaptability, changeability and interconnectedness. *“In its more euphoric versions, it evokes the mobilization of capital, the internationalization of trade and tariffs, a salutary “competitiveness” on the part of the labour, and the transformation of the world into a seemingly wired global*

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<sup>43</sup> Held, David, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton. /eds./ 1999. *Global Transformations*. Politics, Economics and Culture, p. 1.

*village*.”<sup>44</sup> What the optimists also celebrate is the ideology of neo-liberalism, which views the whole world as a market for global products, where the economic decisions slip beyond the state control. In short, in the optimistic viewpoint, globalization is equated with liberalization in politics, economy and culture.

The sceptical /pessimistic/ view, in contrast, “*evokes the homogenization of culture and annihilation of political autonomy for the relatively disempowered and, ultimately, ecological catastrophe, as an untenable consumerist model is spread around the globe that can ill afford it.*”<sup>45</sup> From this perspective, the information flow coming from the West /mainly the United States/ serves to transmit western values, such as individualism, materialism, consumerism and secularism around the world. Therefore, it is claimed that the global culture is actually “western culture” or American culture, developed under the influence of cultural imperialism. Drawn upon this, the argument of the pessimists is that globalization will result in destroying indigenous cultures, shattering identity, reducing the power of the state, bringing about even deeper polarization between the rich and the poor, and endangering the eco-system. In brief, globalization will lead to higher risks and uncertainty.

The conclusion that can be drawn after having addressed the pros and cons in the popular rhetoric of globalization, is that globalization is an extremely influential and contentious process that has advantageous and disadvantageous features.

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<sup>44</sup> Shohat, Ella and Robert Stam. “From Imperial Family to the Transnational Imaginary: Media Spectatorship in the Age of Globalization” in: Wilson, Roband and Wimal Dissanayake /ed./. 1996. *Global/Local. Cultural Production and the Transnational Imaginary*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, p. 146.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

Let us have a look now at the academic debate about globalization. Here we come to the theoretical level of analysis, that is, to the various theories of globalization, trying to understand and explain this social phenomenon and to represent a distinctive account on it. These theories and approaches are so numerous and variable that it is beyond the capacity of the paper to address them all. Therefore I shall stick to the generally accepted classification according to which three broad schools of thought might be distinguished – hyperglobalizers, sceptics and transformalists.

### **3.2. Globalization as a Discourse.**

Each of the above mentioned schools grounds its thesis on a framework of fundamental issues that are at stake when one theorizes globalization. The constituent elements of this framework are:

- Conceptualization – how can globalization be defined?
- Causal dynamics – which are the driving forces of globalization?
- Historical trajectory.
- Socio-economic consequences.
- Implications for the state and governance.<sup>46</sup>

#### **3.2.1. The Hyperglobalist Thesis.**

For the hyperglobalizers, globalization is a new epoch in human history defined as an irreversible, inevitable and necessarily privileged process.

*“Globalization defines a new age in which peoples everywhere are increasingly*

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<sup>46</sup> The five elements of the grid of analysis are taken from: Held, David, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton./eds./ 1999. *Global Transformations. Politics, Economics and Culture*. Polity Press: Cambridge, p. 3.

*subject to the disciplines of the global marketplace.*”<sup>47</sup> In this neoliberal variant, globalization is seen as the emergence of a single global market, driven by its logic of competitiveness and profit. For the French economist Alain Minc, “mondialisation” and “marché” /”Le marché-roi”, the “king-market”, in his words/ are interchangeable concepts, both being distinguishing and characterizing features of today’s reality: “*Mondialisation, globalisation, internationalisation, ne sont que des mots de code pour cette nouvelle loi de la gravitation économique, le marché-roi.*”<sup>48</sup>

For the advocates of globalization, the process has monocausal dynamics. Its motor force is the market economy. As for its socio-economic consequences, they envisage a fully integrated global market with price and interest rate equalization. In reference to its implications for the state, many hyperglobalizers share a conviction that economic globalization is constructing new forms of social organization that are supplanting traditional nation states as the primary economic and political units of society. Today, since a lot of the competencies of the state are executed by international and non-governmental organizations, the state has either to redefine its role or to wither away. What is clear is that the state is no more the protagonist on the global scene. There appeared many other actors with whom it should coordinate its actions.

Finally, as for the historical trajectory of globalization, hyperglobalizers consider it as a linear and end-state process whose final aim is a fully integrated global market.

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>48</sup> Minc, Alain. 1997. *La mondialisation heureuse*. France Loisirs. Paris, p. 12.



### 3.2.2. The Sceptical Thesis.

For the sceptics, unlike the hyperglobalizers, globalization is not a historically unprecedented process, but one with a long history. Proceeding from the economic conception of globalization, which rhymes it with a perfectly integrated market, the sceptics argue that globalization is “a myth”.

Comparing the present economic integration of the world flows of trade, investments and labour with that in the 19<sup>th</sup> c., Hirst and Thompson conclude that today’s integration is much less significant than that in the 19<sup>th</sup> c. Therefore they state that the extent of contemporary globalization is wholly exaggerated.<sup>49</sup>

Sceptics also insist on the fact that what is called globalization is not totally a global phenomenon for the world economy evolves in the direction of three major financial and trading blocs shaping the Global Triad Europe-Japan and North America. If again compared with the classical Gold Standard */Etalon-or/* era, today’s world economy is significantly less integrated than at that time.

In a social plan, the sceptics are convinced that the logic of market will strengthen and deepen the differentiations between people, concerning their wealth, labour, social position and education. The market will create “a social puzzle” consisting of privileged and disfavoured positions. This will increase social inequality and hierarchy. As for the consequences of globalization on the role of the state, the sceptics think that governments are not passive victims of internationalization. On the contrary, states still have an

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<sup>49</sup> Cited in: Held, David, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton. /eds./1995. *Global Transformations. Politics, Economics and Culture*. Polity Press: Cambridge, p. 5.

important role to play in the regulation and active promotion of cross-border economic activity.

The notions of cultural homogenization and global culture are considered myths by the sceptics because of the resurgence of nationalistic and fundamentalist movements in many parts of the world that we witness today. In this respect, they sustain Huntington's thesis of the clash of civilizations based on the assumption that those civilizations that have similar cultural features will cooperate with each other, while those who differ will be in conflict and tension.

One aspect of the sceptical thesis, from my viewpoint, which can be regarded as a flaw, is the conflation of globalization with the expansionary imperatives of the market capitalism. This comes from the privilege given to the economic globalization, while a more comprehensive explanation should highlight the complex interactions between its motor forces, embracing economic, technological, cultural and political changes.

### **3.2.3. The Transformalist Thesis.**

In the transformalist account, globalization is conceived as a *“powerful transformative force, which is responsible for “a massive shake-out” of societies, economies, institutions of governance and world order.”*<sup>50</sup> Globalization is seen as the central driving force behind the rapid political, economic and cultural changes that are reshaping the world today. Along with being presented as a strongly influential process, it is also viewed as a highly

controversial process. Unlike the hyperglobalizers and the sceptics, the transformalists make no claim about the trajectory of globalization, nor do they seek to evaluate it. Although that they conceive it as an open-ended historical process, they focus on its contemporary patterns.

At the core of the transformalist thesis is the belief that contemporary globalization is reconstructing the power, functions and the authority of national governments. Rather than globalization will bring about the end of the nation state, it has encouraged adjustment strategies, and in some aspects, even a more active state.

In sum, for the transformalists, globalization is a contradictory process punctuated by upheavals and discontinuities. One that at the same time fragments and integrates, universalizes and particularizes.

As we saw, each of the three approaches to globalization has its flaws and neither of them can be taken as an ideal model for describing and analyzing the phenomenon.

After having sketched out the three opposing parts in the academic discourse on globalization, here it is how the characteristic ideas of the three theses can be summarized:<sup>51</sup> /see annex 2/

**\*Hyperglobalists:** Globalization is a global age. Its dominant features are: global capitalism, global governance and global society. It is driven by the market capitalism and technology. Under the impact of globalization, the role of the state will imminently diminish. In normative plan,

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>51</sup> The summary given above draws upon the logic of my study. For a more complete assessment of the competing claims of the three schools see: Held, David, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton. /eds./ 1999. *Global Transformations. Politics, Economics and Culture*. Polity Press: Cambridge, p. 10. See annex 2.

globalization is estimated positively because it causes the opening of new horizons and worldviews, thus providing more opportunities for personal and social development.

**\*Sceptics:** Globalization is above all an economic globalization, meaning a creation of global market economy. Contemporary globalization has to be put into question and set free from its mystification presenting it as something unprecedented and extraordinary. The argument for this is that the current international economy is less open, independent and integrated than the regime that prevailed from 1870 to 1914. The motor forces of today's wave of globalization are the states and the markets. This goes hand in hand with the assumption that the role of the state will be reinforced because most of the companies are still nationally based. In social plan, globalization will bring about polarization, as there are many parts of the world that do not participate in this process. Here lays their main source of concern.

**\*Transformalists:** globalization is a transformative force in the domains of politics, economy and culture. It is a very controversial and dialectical process with multicausal dynamics. From the transformalist perspective globalization is perceived primarily as a social phenomenon tightly connected with modernity.<sup>52</sup> Insofar as the state is the main institution that organizes the social relations in the age of modernity and as globalization is seen as a consequence of modernity, the role of the state will not be reduced.

The conclusion to be drawn from the three visions is that **globalization is a complex process that leads to the following**

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<sup>52</sup> What is meant here is the philosophical debate about Modernity-Globalization-Postmodernity relationship, which will be addressed in the second chapter.

**transformations: instantaneity** /time-space compression and distancing/, **interconnectedness** /transgression of political, economic and cultural boundaries, which generates free flows of people, goods, capitals and information/, **interchangeability** /simultaneous presence at several places in the virtual reality/, **interdependence** /access to the global network/. The four key terms of my working definition of globalization are also discernible in the following statement: “*Globalization can be thought as a process /or a set of processes/, which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transformations – assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact – generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power.*”<sup>53</sup>

According to this definition, **globalization can be theorized within a framework comprising four constitutive elements: extensity** /expansion/, **intensity** /acceleration/, **velocity** /speed, interconnectedness/ and **impact propensity** /the influence of globalization on the spheres it affects/. These are, in fact, the spatio-temporal dimensions of globalization. And here is the moment where we arrive at the highest level of analysis, considering globalization as a metanarrative, i.e. as a theoretical model grounded on the four foundations. The purpose of this complicated model is to show and explain how the global flows, networks and relations can be mapped in reference to their spatio-temporal dimensions: extensity, intensity, velocity and impact propensity. In order to simplify it a little bit, I would say that this theoretical model is a type of construction, a general explanatory scheme of globalization.

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<sup>53</sup> Held, David, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan Perraton. /eds./ 1999. *Global Transformations. Politics, Economics and Culture*. Polity Press: Cambridge, p. 16.

It goes beyond the level of phenomenology /mere description of the ongoing phenomena/ to that of hermeneutics, meaning an interpretation of the observed phenomena. Put in a different way, at the phenomenological level we observe and describe the object of our study, while at the hermeneutic level we reflect and interpret it.

Proceeding from these reflections and using the above sketched theoretical model of globalization, some theorists think that a typology of globalization can be constructed. According to the different configurations of the four dimensions, different types of globalized worlds can be distinguished: “*thick globalization*”, “*diffused globalization*”, “*expansive globalization*” and “*thin globalization*”.<sup>54</sup>

Type one /*thick globalization*/ represents a world in which the extensive reach of global networks is matched by their high intensity, high velocity and high impact propensity across all the domains of social life.

Type two /*diffused globalization*/ refers to global networks, which combine high extensity with high intensity and high velocity, but the impact of propensity is low.

Type three /*expansive globalization*/ is characterized by high extensity and impact combined with low intensity and low velocity.

Type four /*thin globalization*/ represents high extensity combined with low intensity, low velocity and low impact propensity.

For the sake of clarification, we can see how each of these abstract models is applied to reality, that is, how they refer to the phenomena. We can speak of a thick globalization only in the sphere of economics, where the drive

for a global market is pushed by the information technologies providing instantaneity, interconnectedness, interchangeability and interdependence. Diffused globalization, in my opinion, is the cultural one, where controversial changes, such as cultural uniformization and cultural differentiation are in motion. Expansive globalization looks to me the one that takes place in the sphere of politics, where the political integration fluctuates between widening, deepening and completion. As for the thin globalization, it can be seen as the one that happens in those places of the world that are out of the Global Triad.

Another question that has to be raised here is how this theoretical typological model helps us go deeper in the meaning of globalization. If we have to formulate a common definition based on the four theoretical grounds, it could be the following: **Globalization means widening, deepening and speeding up of the global interconnectedness, instantaneity, interdependence and interchangeability.** This definition entails very succinctly all the connotations of the word “globalization” stemming from my three layered analytical framework /semantics of globalization, the process of globalization and globalization as a narrative/, and I find it relatively satisfactory for a working definition.

The principal aim of this chapter was to challenge the topic of globalization, that is, to try to find a leading path for conceptualizing and theorizing it among the volumes of literature written on it. For this purpose, the logic of my presentation was built on a three staged analysis of globalization. Of extreme interest for me is the third analytical level, where globalization was

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., pp. 21-22. See also annex 3 and 4.

examined through two dimensions – the popular rhetoric and the academic discourse.

Here are the concluding remarks that can be drawn:

\* In the everyday talk, globalization is thought as something so insistently and conspicuously obvious, that it is taken for self-understandable and self-explanatory.

\* The popular rhetoric of globalization is normative – it estimates the phenomenon either positively /optimists/, or negatively /sceptics/. This is a reductionalist perspective, which fails to see globalization in its full complexity and multivalency.

\* The multisidedness of globalization provokes an academic debate in which three main theses may be underlined – hyperglobalist /celebrating the coming of the global age/, sceptical /denouncing the social inequality, cultural uniformization, economic and political disintegration generated by globalization/, transformalist /conceiving globalization as a transformative force, given birth by modernity/.

\* The theoretical model of globalization might be built on four spatio-temporal grounds, named extensity, intensity, velocity and impact propensity.

\* According to the various configurations between the four elements, a typology of globalization can be constructed, distinguishing four types – thick, diffused, expansive and thin globalization.

The three-levelled analysis, which I applied to the topic of globalization, let us capture its various features, exploring them step by step.



Most often, however, the aspects of globalization that are given primacy refer to economics and politics. Thus the changes that take place in the field of culture remain somewhat overshadowed. In addition, the contentious issue whether a global culture exists is less treated than those of global economy and global politics. For these reasons, the second chapter of my study will be dedicated to the debate about globalization that takes place in the field of cultural sociology and cultural anthropology, and that addresses mainly the cultural aspects of globalization.

The fact that in the focus of analysis will be a debate, makes us rest on the third analytical level at which we arrived so far in our attempt to conceptualize and theorize globalization. Thus a logical transition to the second chapter is provided.

## **Chapter Two**

### **The Contemporary Sociological Debate about Globalization - Some Contesting Positions**

Staying at the stage of hermeneutics, where globalization is treated as a discourse or a narrative, I shall try to make a historical reconstruction of the contemporary debate about globalization by analyzing the theories of its main proponents. It is beyond the capacity of this work, however, to address the particular positions of all theorists. Therefore, the presentation will be limited to four major participants – Anthony Giddens, Roland Robertson, Malcolm Waters and Arjun Appadurai. These authors are not randomly chosen. The logical thread that ties their theories is grounded on the fact that three of them – Robertson Waters and Appadurai address the cultural aspects of globalization and argue with one another. As for Giddens, although that he does not explicitly touch the topic of cultural globalization in his theory, he is the one who sets the stage for the debate by claiming that globalization is a consequence of modernity. He also treats the problem of identity formation in the age of modernity.

My aim here will be to examine the theories of the above-mentioned authors in the light of the critical dialogue that has been set up among them. The focus will be on the “meeting” and “clashing” points in their theories.

After having identified the actors in the involved debate, what follows is to portray the field of study in which it takes place.

The previous chapter made the claim that one of the crucial consequences of globalization is the reconsideration of the notions of time and space. Rethinking our spatio-temporal perception is an important social change,

which attracts especially the attention of social sciences thinkers. “*Globalization has become an increasingly influential paradigm in the human sciences since the beginning of the 90s. It has, in fact, been the successor to the debates on modernity and postmodernity in the understanding of sociocultural change and as the central thematic for social theory. Globalization leads to spatialization of social theory.*”<sup>55</sup> What becomes clear from this statement is that the debate takes place in the field of social sciences, more precisely, in that of cultural and anthropological sociology. Each of the above mentioned authors has his background in this domain. A short-sketched portrait of each of them will give us some more clues for the scope of their research interests.

Anthony Giddens is known for his writings in the areas of sociology, politics and social theory. An interesting fact of his biography is that he has served as an advisor to both British Prime Minister Tony Blair and President Bill Clinton. He is also the promoter of the idea of the “Third Way”, which in the realm of politics is “*an attempt to argue how you can make left-of-centre values in a world of fundamental transformation where traditional leftist politics have lost their purchase.*”<sup>56</sup>

Roland Robertson is considered one of the world’s pioneers in the study of globalization. According to Malcolm Waters, “*the development of the concept of globalization as a specifically sociological concept owes the greatest debt to him.*”<sup>57</sup> In addition to globalization, he has published extensively on the sociology of religion and culture, as well as social theory. He is the first who focuses the attention on the cultural aspects of globalization.

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<sup>55</sup> Featherstone, Mike, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson /eds./, 1995. *Global Modernities*. London: SAGE Publications, p. 1

<sup>56</sup> Cited in: *The Globalization Debate*. Lecture Series, June 15 2000. Internet source, p. 4.

Malcolm Waters comes from the field of sociology, while Arjun Appadurai from that of cultural anthropology.

After having thrown some light on the background of the four authors, what follows is to address the debate itself.

My analysis will be based on a cluster of questions, which will be applied to each author's theory, thus allowing me to single out the similarities and particularities between them. **Here is the grid of my analysis:**

- **Definition of globalization** – does it include the four dimensions of the phenomenon /which were analysed in the previous chapter/, i.e. extensity, intensity, velocity and impact propensity?
- **Key features or model of globalization.**
- **Origin/periodization – waves of globalization.**
- **Modernity–Globalization–Postmodernity relationship.**

### **1. Giddens's Theory of Globalization.**

The first who challenges the existing up to now theories of globalization and provokes a new debate in the field of sociology is Anthony Giddens. Making an overview of the academic discourse of globalization, he states that *“the early debate on globalization in the mid 1980s sought to determine if this concept was an accurate description of changes that were occurring. On the other side, sceptics of the notion argued that there was nothing fundamentally new about globalism that did exist. On the other side, hyperglobalists trumpeted a world of dramatic transformation and new global*

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<sup>57</sup> Waters, Malcolm. 1995. *Globalization*. London and New York: Routledge, p. 38.

*dynamics – a world dominated by corporations and technologies, where government has no real power and people have no faith in traditional politics.*”<sup>58</sup>

The two opposing sides that Giddens addresses were already represented in the first chapter. What his statement is intriguing with is that he refers to the theories of hyperglobalizers and sceptics as belonging to an early phase of the debate on globalization. One during which the phenomenon was depicted and interpreted one-sidedly – either positively /hyperglobalist euphoria/, or negatively /sceptic melancholy/, conceptualizing it mainly in economic terms. This was a wrong approach because “*globalization is fundamentally social, cultural (and) political, not just economic. Globalization is about macro-systemic changes in the global marketplace and the nature of sovereignty, but it is also about the here and now about transformations that affect our daily and emotional lives.*”<sup>59</sup> Giddens argues that this “pros and cons” debate is a thing of the past and “*the debate now is about the consequences of globalization, not about the reality of globalization.*”<sup>60</sup>

Giddens sets the floor for the new phase of the debate in his book “*The Consequences of Modernity*”, published in 1990, where he claims that globalization is one of the consequences of modernity. Since the two concepts are intricately related, an analysis of Giddens’s theory of modernity is needful.

### **1.1. Giddens’s Idea of “Reflexive Modernity”.**

Giddens elaborates an institutional analysis of modernity. The response he gives to the initial inquiry: “What is modernity?” is the following:

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<sup>58</sup> Cited in: “*The Great Globalization Debate*”, Lecture Series, June 15, 2000. Internet Source, p. 2.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

*“Modernity refers to modes of social life or organization which emerged in Europe from about the 17<sup>th</sup> c. onwards and which subsequently became more or less worldwide in their influence.”*<sup>61</sup> Thus modernity is associated with a time period and with an initial geographical location, which implies its tendency to organize and arrange social life across time and space, that is, to set up and order social institutions. In Giddens’s view, modernity has four main institutional aspects or dimensions: 1) capitalism – seen as the system of production of commodities for markets, in which wage labour is also a commodity, or, in Giddens’s words, *“capital accumulation in the context of competitive labour and product markets.”*<sup>62</sup>; 2) coordinated administrative power focused through surveillance, that is, the control of information and social supervision on the part of the state; 3) industrialism – the application of inanimate sources of power through productive technologies for the transformation of nature; 4) military power – the concentration of the means of violence in the hands of the state.

The four dimensions of modernity can, in my judgement, be seen as an explanatory scheme showing how social order and relations are constructed in reality. The idea of the modern explanatory scheme is associated with the philosophical vision of the so-called “project” of modernity, which will be briefly highlighted.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>61</sup> Giddens, Anthony. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Polity Press: Stanford University Press, p. 1.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

### 1.1.1. Sketches on the Historical and Philosophical Context of Modernity –

#### Modernity as a Historical Age and the “Project” of Modernity.

Modernity is generally held to come into being with the Renaissance and is defined in relation to Antiquity. In this mode of thinking, modernity is seen as a historical transformation brought about by the evolutionary human development. It implies the progressive economic and administrative rationalization and differentiation of the social world, processes that brought into being the modern capitalist-industrial state. In sum, modernity refers to stages of social development, which are based upon industrialization, the growth of science and technology, the modern nation state, the capitalist world market, urbanization.

There is a considerable debate about when exactly the modern era began. I shall not enter this debate because it stays aside the logic of my presentation. Suffice it to say that historians date the early modern period in the 16<sup>th</sup> c. with the rise in capitalist development and the puritan reformation. Sociologists, on the other side, take for a starting point the Industrial revolution that occurred in Britain between about 1750 and 1820, and the political revolutions that took place in the American colonies in 1776 and in France in 1789.<sup>63</sup>

As a historical age modernity has its project, i.e. its general vision about the changes in social life. The first, who cast a light on the essence of this project, by associating it with the ideas of Enlightenment, is Immanuel Kant. In

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<sup>63</sup> See: Waters, Malcolm /ed./. 1999.

an article, entitled “*Was ist Aufklärung?*” from 1784<sup>64</sup>, he defines the age of Enlightenment in an abstract way /drawing upon the etymology of the word “Enlightenment” – literally “coming out into light”/ as man’s coming out of the immaturity for which he himself is responsible. This immaturity is self-caused because until that moment man had no control on his own life. His life was given meaning by outer forces, such as religion, tradition and prejudices, and his identity was predestined and imposed on him. Man’s process of growing up and becoming mature started with the acquisition of knowledge. The age of Enlightenment showed the path to be followed for obtaining this knowledge – the principles of rationality and objectivity. Reality is no more subject to mystical forces, which arrange and explain everything that happens. It becomes disencharmed and demystified, open for exploration through knowledge.

Kant’s theory reveals the project of modernity as one aiming to give a reasonable explanation of phenomena through the logic of common sense. This project can be interpreted as a metanarrative, which means that it not only describes what is going on in reality, but also seeks to explain the changes by applying a general model-like scheme to them. This scheme is metaphysical by its nature because it looks for indisputable foundations in the face of rationality and objectivity, on the base of which the acquisition of knowledge and the explanation of the creation of the world can start. To put it a little more clearly, the metanarrative of modernity /that has its grounds in the ideas of Enlightenment/ is an interpretative universalizing model looking for explaining the processes that take place in reality.

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“General Commentary: The Meaning of Modernity” in: Waters, Malcolm /ed./, 1999. *Modernity. Critical Concepts*. V. 1. Modernization. London and New York: Routledge, p. 3.



All these reflections on the modernity as a historical age and on its project are necessary so as to represent the historical and philosophical context of the debate on modernity, where Giddens's sociological conception of modernity is involved too. As we saw, from the sociological perspective, the project of modernity refers to the arrangement and order of the social patterns of life, based on a fourfold institutional framework – capitalism, industrialism, military power and states.

An issue, which Giddens further analyses, is how the above presented project of modernity is put into question under the impact of mass communications technologies, mass production and mass consumption in the late 20<sup>th</sup> c. Here we arrive at the subsequent debate – that about postmodernity.

### **1.1.2. Sketches on the Historical and Philosophical Context of Postmodernity.**

Some authors state that we no longer live in the age of modernity, but in this of postmodernity. According to Marshall Berman, postmodern claims have come in two waves. The first was in the early 1960s, coming from all over America from the people who invented happenings, assemblages, environments and the art that would come to be called “Pop”, i.e. “for mass entertainment”, with no art value. The second wave was in the 1970s and the 1980s, coming at first from France, where the main representatives are the French philosophers – Derrida, Foucault, Lyotard, Baudrillard and others.<sup>65</sup> Berman argues that postmodernists repudiate any sort of universal quest and proclaim their will to

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<sup>64</sup> See: Kant, Immanuel. “Was ist Aufklärung?” in: Foucault, Michel. 1996. *Critics and Enlightenment*. Paris, p. 2.

<sup>65</sup> See: Berman, Marshall. “Why Modernity Still Matters?” in: Lash, Scott and Jonathan Friedman /eds./, 1992. *Modernity and Identity*. Oxford and Cambridge: University Press, pp. 43-44.

live according to less ambitious ideas rooted in particular experiences, local interests and the heterogeneity of language games.

The author who has been primarily responsible for popularizing the terms “postmodernism” and “postmodernity” is Jean François Lyotard. In his view, the so-called “postmodern condition” is distrust and denial of the grand modern narratives /the general universal explanatory schemes as that of Giddens’s, that was represented above/ that can no longer function because of a shift in the status of knowledge.<sup>66</sup> In Giddens’s words, *“the condition of postmodernity is distinguished by an evaporating of the “grand narrative” – the overarching “story-line” by means of which we are placed in history as being having a definite past and a predictable future.”*<sup>67</sup>

The two definitions of postmodernity come to show that, put in a figurative way, postmodernism prosecutes a “war on totality”. It denies the possibility of universal reasoning and accounts of the social life, which claim universal validity. Also a postmodern objection is that the theoretical models portraying how social relations are constructed and organized should not be holistic and generalizing. An attention on the social particularities must be paid, too. Another issue the definitions reveal is the reason for social transformations. Due to the new information technologies the acquisition of knowledge is no more connected with training /in the sense of “Bildung”, i.e. “shaping one’s mind”/ of mental skills, but is turned into an informational commodity – into something that can be produced and sold. Hence, postmodernity refers to the reconstruction

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<sup>66</sup> Lyotard, Jean-François. 1979. *La condition postmodern*. Paris. The citation here is taken from the Bulgarian translation, published in 1996, ed. by Bogomilova, I. Sofia: Naouka i Izkustvo, p. 39.

<sup>67</sup> Giddens, Anthony. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Polity Press: Stanford University Press, p. 2.

of socio-spatial relations by new patterns of investment and production in industry, services, markets and telecommunications.

Both Baudrillard and Lyotard assume a movement towards a post-industrial age. Baudrillard stresses that the new forms of technology and information became central to the shift from productive to a reproductive social order in which simulations and models increasingly constitute the world, so that the distinction between the real and imaginary is erased. Images are deprived of their true meaning and are turned into simulacrum, that is, into artificial images produced by media sources.<sup>68</sup>

Giddens disagrees with the postmodern thesis because if we accept it, it would mean that we have entered a new historical period and that the previous stage has been surpassed. This is so because the very prefix “post” signifies something that comes after a break or a rupture with the modern. This is a negation of the modern, a shift away from its features and an establishment of new social patterns. Therefore Giddens claims that “*rather than entering a period of Postmodernity, we are moving into one in which the consequences of modernity are becoming more radicalized and universalized than before*”.<sup>69</sup> The order beyond modernity, but still stemming from it, he names “reflexive” or “radicalized” modernity.

### 1.1.3. “Reflexive Modernity”.

The term “reflexive modernity” is also used by Ulrich Beck:

*“Reflexive modernization is supposed to mean that a change in the wake of*

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<sup>68</sup> See: Featherstone, Mike. 1991. *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism*. London: SAGE Publications, p. 3.

<sup>69</sup> Giddens, Anthony. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Polity Press: Stanford University Press, p. 2.

*normal, autonomized modernity and with an unchanged, intact political and economic order implies the following: a radicalization of modernity which breaks up the premises and contours of industrial society and opens paths to another modernity.*"<sup>70</sup> What is pointed out here is the continuation between the two phases of modernity. For this reason what comes after modernity is not postmodernity, for it still has its grounds in modernity itself. In Beck's theory the most remarkable feature of reflexive modernity is the emergence of "risk society" – *"this concept designates a developmental phase of modern society in which the social, political, economic and individual risks increasingly tend to escape the institutions for monitoring and protection in individual society."*<sup>71</sup> In other words, Beck's "risk society" is what some authors /Daniel Bell, for instance/ call "postmodern" or "post-industrial" society" – one that has to meet the confrontations of insecurity and uncertainty in reality produced by the global changes. Beck places risk at the core of his analysis of contemporary social changes, and defines it as a systematic way of dealing with hazards and insecurities induced and introduced by modernization itself. For him, modernization is the primary globalizing force and global risks are product of global industrialization. Because today risks spread very quickly, they are inherently globalizing. Hence the coming of risk society accelerates the globalizing process. It is, consequently, in the term of "risk society" that Beck conceptualizes globalization and, similarly to Giddens, conceives it as a consequence of modernity.

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<sup>70</sup> Beck, Ulrich. "The Reinvention of Politics: Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization" in: Beck, Ulrich, Anthony Giddens and Scott Lash. 1994. *Reflexive Modernization*. Polity Press, p. 3.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Going back to Giddens's thesis of reflexive modernity, it should be underscored that for him "*the reflexivity of modern social life consists in the fact that social practices are constantly examined and reformed in the light of incoming information about those practices.*"<sup>72</sup> Here the idea of reflexivity implies the idea of "self-monitoring", even "self-observation", "self-examination". For Giddens it is the extent and intensity of reflexive practices that distinguish traditional from modern cultures. Reflexivity is a particular characteristic of modern identity. For better understanding of Giddens's vision of reflexivity, the problem of identity has to be involved, and a brief comparison between pre-modern, modern and postmodern identity is needful.<sup>73</sup>

## **1.2. Reflections on Premodern, Modern and Postmodern identity.**

My argument is that the transition from one type of identity to another is engendered by the change in the spatio-time perception. The key question with regard to identity is "Who am I?". By "identity", following Guibernau's definition is meant "*an interpretation of the Self that establishes what and where the person is in both social and psychological terms. When one has identity, one is situated, that is, cast in the shape of a social object by the acknowledgement of one's participation or membership in social relations. Identities exist only in societies, which define and organize them.*"<sup>74</sup>

The major function of identity is the legitimacy of the Self, including a twofold process – self-legitimacy, or self-determination and recognition by the

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<sup>72</sup> Giddens, Anthony. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Polity Press: Stanford University Press, p. 38.

<sup>73</sup> The problem of premodern, modern and postmodern identity I have already developed in my paper "The Debate about Cultural Identity and the Impact of Globalization on Postmodern Identity – the Bulgarian Case", written in March 2001 for participating in a Symposium based on problems of identity.

others. Individuals have multiple identities among which we can distinguish two major types: personal /grounded on one's race, gender, region, religion, ethnicity/ and collective /formed by the shared values with the others/. Proceeding from my claim that the transformations in identity formation process are brought about by the changes in premodern, modern and postmodern time and space, we can respectively speak about premodern, modern and postmodern identity.

Premodern identity /also named traditional/ is fixed, solid and stable because it is determined and prescribed by the so-called local-cosmic narrative, according to which every individual's life is driven by a divine force and by the inscriptions of the past. This identity is not subject to reflection because it is a function of predestined social roles and a system of myths. Its constitutive element is the kinship – one's belonging to a particular community. Hence it is a collective identity.

The secularization of everyday life in the age of modernity makes individual face the idea of reflection, in the sense in which Giddens uses it – as self-monitoring and self-examination. Identity is still conceived as something substantial and fundamentally unchanging. However, with the demise of God in the modern era, social space opens up the way for autonomous definition of identity. The Enlightenment proclaimed the idea that man is free to arrange his life by himself. Thus modern identity is ambiguous – it is at the same time innate and achieved, solid and flexible, stable and mobile.

The intensity and rapidity of the global cultural flow in the age of modernity overlap boundaries, thus connecting and mingling different cultures.

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<sup>74</sup> Guibernau, Montserrat. 1996. *Nationalisms. The Nation-State and Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 72.

That brings about cultural hybridization and identity becomes unstable because of its multiplicity. Some argue that this is a new type of identity – postmodern identity. It consists of a variety of roles, images and activities, which the self is free to choose. Because of the virtual postmodern time and space in which man can simultaneously be at far-distant places, the process of identity formation becomes troublesome and identity itself – multiple and flexible .

These reflections on premodern, modern and postmodern identity are useful, firstly, because they refer to the problem of reconsidering the notions of time and space under the influence of various social changes. Secondly, because the topic of identity is an integrative part of Giddens's idea of reflexivity and reflexive modernity.

Going back to this idea, as it was already mentioned, reflexivity is a characteristic feature of modern identity. Giddens argues that the traditional /premodern/ cultures display a sort of reflexivity, in the sense that their members “keep in touch” with or monitor what they do, but in relation to an order that is external for them – God or nature-given. Thus in traditional societies social interactions are face-to-face without being mediated by formal institutions and abstract systems. By contrast, in modern societies the world is not given but made through the choices of actors engaged in a reflexive monitoring of all areas of life.

Taking into consideration what was said so far, we can conclude that reflexive modernity suggests not simply reflection – observing and interpreting the phenomena in reality, but also self-confrontation – facing and dealing with changes. Thus the transition from the industrial to the knowledge-based society

/post-industrial or risk society/ takes place, where the latter has to meet the insecurity and risks accompanying the process of turning everything into goods production.

Giddens's vision of reflexive modernity was necessary to be explained because it refers to the modernity-globalization-postmodernity relationship in his theory. The question to be posed is whether globalization can be considered as one of the grand metanarratives of modernity, or it should rather be linked with postmodernity. In Giddens's theory modernity is the period whose development engenders global changes.

Except the reflexive appropriation of knowledge, which was already analysed, the other two dynamic forces of modernity are the separation of time and space and the development of disembedding mechanisms. The last two entail the sociological question of order, that is, the interpretation of the arrangement of social relations. Giddens rejects the dominant sociological theorization of "order" as "*the boundedness and integration of social systems*"<sup>75</sup> because this conception fails to see the dynamics of social structural processes and their expansion and extension throughout the world in the context of globalization. He proposes that instead of looking at the integration of bounded systems, we need to think of the problem of order as one of "*time-space distancing – the conditions under which time and space are organized so as to connect presence and absence.*"<sup>76</sup> The problem of time and space is at the heart of Giddens's theory of modernity for it is the changes in the spatio-time perception that engenders the transition

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<sup>75</sup> Giddens, Anthony. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Polity Press: Stanford University Press, p. 64.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 14.



from premodernity to modernity and subsequently from modernity to postmodernity.

I have already analysed the particularities of premodern, modern and postmodern space and time in the previous chapter. Here I would like to remind that premodern time was always linked with space, while with the new technological inventions /the mechanical clock, for example/, prompting the advent of modernity, time became separated from space. In addition, *“in conditions of modernity, place becomes increasingly phantasmagoric – locales are penetrated by and shaped in terms of social influences quite distant from them.”*<sup>77</sup> *“It is the separation of time and space that drives modernity and their recombination in new forms permit the precise time-space “zoning” of social life, the disembedding of social systems and the reflexive ordering and reordering of social relations.”*<sup>78</sup> What these abstract and complicated statements mean is, in my view, that modernity comes into being through a change in the perception of time and space brought about by the new technological inventions. Thus time is no more the cyclic premodern time, and space is no more constructed and arranged by forces out of the human reach. Time becomes now linear and space open to be explored. The opening of spatio-time horizon leads to an expansion of people’s worldview and to a disembeddedness /replacement/ of institutions by “lifting out” social relations from local contexts of interaction and actively restructuring them across spans of space and time.

Giddens describes two types of disembedding mechanisms: symbolic tokens, such as circulating money and credit, and expert systems of technical

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

accomplishment or professional expertise that organize social environment. These are abstract systems, which arrange and order social life. In the course of modernity their scope becomes larger and larger - they become globalized.

It is exactly in relation with spatio-temporal change that Giddens views globalization. He defines it in the following way: a) *“The concept of globalization is best understood as expressing fundamental aspects of time-space distanciation. Globalization concerns the intersection of presence and absence, the interlacing of social events and social relations at a distance”*<sup>79</sup>; b) *“Globalization can be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.”*<sup>80</sup>

The key words in these definitions are “time-space distanciation” and “intensification”, which means that they include three dimensions of globalization – extensity, intensity and velocity. The first definition clearly explains Giddens’s claim that globalization is a consequence of modernity. Insofar as globalization means distanciation of time and space, it is exactly in the age of modernity that the notions of time and space are reconsidered. Except that globalization expands time and space horizons, it also binds them by linking distant places and creating higher interconnectedness. As it becomes obvious, globalization in Giddens’s theory is presented as a dynamic and controversial phenomenon, having both centripetal and centrifugal tendencies. It is viewed as an inherent impulse of modernity towards stronger interdependence by increasing the scope of social life and the

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<sup>79</sup> Giddens, Anthony. 1991. *Modernity and Self-Identity*. Polity Press, p. 21.

<sup>80</sup> Giddens, Anthony. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Polity Press: Stanford University Press, p. 64.

intensification of social changes. Thus globalization refers to the stretching and deepening of social transformations.

### **1.3. Giddens's Idea of Identity.**

Another issue in Giddens's theory of globalization that has to be addressed is the question of identity. He elaborates his idea reflecting on the transition from traditional /premodern/ to modern identity. This is explainable because, as it was clarified, he does not accept the thesis of postmodernity and refers to the contemporary age as radicalized or reflexive modernity. So, exploring the changes of identity construction during the reflexive modernity, he concludes that the transformation of intimacy involves the following: 1. *“An intrinsic relation between the globalizing tendencies of modernity and localized events in day-to-day-life – a complicated, dialectical connection between the “extensional” and the “intentional”*; 2. *The construction of the self as a reflexive project, an elemental part of the reflexivity of modernity; an individual must find her or his identity amid the strategies and options provided by abstract systems*; 3. *A drive towards self-actualisation, founded upon basic trust, which in personalized contexts can only be established by “an opening out” of the self to the other*; 4. *The formation of personal and erotic ties as “relationships” guided by the mutuality of self-disclosure*; 5. *A concern for self-fulfilment.*”<sup>81</sup> Giddens's assessment of the changes in modern identity is in accordance with my reflections on the differences among premodern, modern and postmodern identity. What he accentuates on is, firstly, the ambiguity of modern identity simultaneously shaped by globalizing tendencies and localized events. Secondly, the reflexivity to which the process of identity

formation is subject, meaning that the individual thinks over the social roles which he is given to play. Thirdly, the driving impetus of one's personal development is self-actualization, i.e. the quest for achieving one's goals by establishing contacts with the others. This becomes possible due to the time and space distancing that provokes the opening out of the world and the self to the others. Fourthly, along with the tendency for the individual to participate in more social relations, there is also a tendency for individualism or closing of the individual in his world. Fifthly, the expansion of time and space horizons provides more possibilities and chances for the individual, but at the same time creates new threads and dangers.

The above sketched features of modern identity are shaped under the impact of globalization. What can be concluded is that modern identity is controversial, multiple and reflexive.

After having examined Giddens's theory of globalization based on his idea of reflexive modernity, I shall try to summarize by applying the elements of the grid of analysis that were set up at the beginning of the chapter – definition of globalization, key features or model, origin/periodization and modernity-globalization-postmodernity relationship.

\* Giddens defines globalization as a multicausal and multistranded process, full of contingency and uncertainty. Explicitly his definition includes two of the dimensions of globalization, which were presented in the first chapter - extensity /time-space distancing/ and intensity /intensification of social relations/. Implicitly, he also addresses the impact propensity dimension, that is the influence of globalization on identity. What he does not talk about is the velocity, i.e. globalization seen as speeding up process.

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., pp. 123-124.

\* The key features of globalization, according to Giddens, are time-space distanciation and the disembedding modern mechanisms /symbolic tokens and expert systems/. They cause deterritorialization, that is, replacement and dislocation of the institutions in spatio-temporal horizon, which affect the process of identity formation.

\* As for the origin of globalization, which is tightly connected with the modernity-globalization-postmodernity relationship, Giddens does not provide a phase model. More precisely, he transfers his institutional model of modernity, consisting of capitalist economy, nation-state system, military order and industrialism to that of globalization. For him, these are the four spheres affected by globalization among which the global flows are exchanged. But since these are actually the dimensions of modernity itself, globalization appears not to be an independent, singular process, but a simple continuation of modernity, happening in the phase of reflexive modernity /which other authors prefer to name postmodernity/. Moreover, his thesis that globalization is a consequence of modernity is rooted in the assumption that modernity is inherently globalizing, proved by some of the characteristics of the modern institutions, such as disembeddedness and reflexivity.

If we place Giddens's thesis in the academic discourse of globalization, including the three debatable positions that were already analysed - hyperglobalist, sceptic and transformalist, his theory is definitely transformalist. From the analysis of his ideas it became obvious that globalization is seen as a long-term historical process, inscribed with contradictions that reshapes modern societies and the world order.

Going further in the contemporary debate about globalization, the social theorist who opposes Giddens's theory is Roland Robertson. Robertson's theoretical model of globalization is revealed in his book "*Globalization. Social Theory and Global Culture*", published in 1992.

## **2. Robertson's Theory of Globalization.**

Robertson elaborates his theory proceeding from the argument, and thus objecting Giddens, that "*globalization is not equated with or seen as a direct consequence of modernity. Rather it should be seen as a very long, uneven and complicated process.*"<sup>82</sup> Theorizing globalization, Robertson refers to it through a two-staged analysis comprising globalization as a concept, "*best understood as indicating the problem of the form in terms in which the world becomes "united", but by no means integrated in naive functionalist mode*"<sup>83</sup>, and globalization as a topic, in other words, "*a conceptual entry to the problem of world order*".<sup>84</sup> According to him, globalization is a particular phenomenon that requires an interdisciplinary treatment. He advocates for a theoretical approach, which goes beyond simple models of world polity or world economy to the independent dynamics of global culture. Hence his interpretation is focused on the cultural aspects of globalization. What yet has to be said in these introductory remarks is that Robertson's approach is different from that of Giddens. Unlike Giddens, he is less concerned with mapping the intersections between the four dimensions of globalization /extensity, intensity, velocity and impact propensity/ than in

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<sup>82</sup> Robertson, Roland. 1992. *Globalization. Social Theory and Global Culture*. London: SAGE Publications, p. 8.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

understanding how they foster particularism-universalism duality in the field of culture.

### **2.1. Robertson's Flexible Model of Globalization.**

According to Robertson, globalization refers both “*to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole.*”<sup>85</sup> He approaches globalization both from outside – an objective perspective, viewing it as a process causing interconnectedness and interdependence, and from inside – a subjective perspective, implying how we conceive it. Such a vision of globalization refers to both an increase in global interdependence and the consciousness of that interdependence. The essential character of globalization resides in the awareness of the global, that is, in our understanding of the global situation, specifically in the fact that the world is an arena on which we all participate. A vision that encompasses both the internal and external trajectories of globalization requires a flexible model – one that can reveal its complexity and multidimensionality, its continuity and wholeness.

Robertson's model of the global field is based on four major aspects, or reference points. These are “*national societies; individuals; or more basically, selves; relationships between national societies, or the world system of societies; and, in the generic sense, mankind, which, to avoid misunderstanding, I frequently call humankind.*”<sup>86</sup> By this framework he wants to see how the world is ordered. The question of order is central for Giddens, too. The difference, however, is that Giddens tries to map, i.e. to portray the dimensions of modernity, respectively of

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<sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 25. See annex 5.

globalization, without focusing on their interconnections. Therefore Giddens's model can be considered descriptive. By contrast, Robertson's flexible and holistic model is not only descriptive, but also analytical. It aims at interpreting how the four actors on the global scene /individuals, national societies, world system of societies and humankind/ interact and influence each other. It is intended to take into account the changes in each of the four major components in tandem with shifts in the relations between them. Trying to catch all dimensions of globalization, his model is multidimensional, synchronic and diachronic at the same time. What attracts the attention is that the four constitutive elements refer to the four possible perspectives of perceiving the world – personal /selves/, collective /national societies/, international /world system of societies/ and global /humankind/. This comes to show the holistic, even, totalistic scope of his model, trying to englobe all processes that take place in reality and trying to capture all their interrelations. By its nature, the model, except being descriptive and explanatory, is also structural. It portrays how the social relations in the world are formed and ordered. It is thus constructed so as to fit best the phenomenon of globalization, which it describes: "*globalization per se is most clearly applicable to a particular series of relatively recent developments concerning the concrete structuration of the world as a whole*"<sup>87</sup>. Thus the model represents globalization as a multidimensional and multifaceted process, or better, a set of processes, consisting of individualization, societalization, internationalization and humanization. These processes are in a hierarchical sequence and mark four stages through which we have to pass in order to perceive the world as a whole.

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 53.



In his presentation of the global field, Robertson points out that the model refers primarily to 20<sup>th</sup> century development and seeks to highlight three problems that arise from the global changes – the process of relativization, the causal mechanisms or driving forces of globalization and the problem of global complexity.

A key term in his model is that of “relativization”. The interactions among the four participants on the global field bring about relativization of various aspects in social life. The term, in Robertson’s words, “*is meant to indicate the ways in which, as globalization proceeds, challenges are increasingly presented to the stability of particular perspectives on, and collective and individual participation in, the overall globalization process.*”<sup>88</sup> Consequently, relativization means instability, and is closely connected with the notion of global complexity. The latter implies the meeting and mingling of various cultural features that create new hybrid, and therefore, relative, forms.

After having sketched out Robertson’s model of the global field, the conclusions that can be drawn are the following. Firstly, Robertson’s theory represents globalization as an intellectual or cognitive process, referring to the attribution of meaning to the social processes and to the interpretation of their interactions. Secondly, the model shows how our awareness of perceiving the world as a whole has to be structured and has to evolve by passing through four stages – personal, collective, international and global. Thirdly, this holistic model aims to portray globalization as a complex and multisided phenomenon. This approach differs from those that take globalization as an imposed and unicausal process and name it Westernization - the rise of the West and the imposition of its

institutions around the world. Robertson argues that the stress should not be put only on the social institutions /as in Giddens's case/ because they do not reproduce themselves but have to be reproduced by human beings. Hence, there should be voluntaristic processes involving the reproduction of the social institutions. Proceeding from this logic, Robertson states that *"the overall process of globalization can best be treated in terms of what may be called a "voluntaristic theory", meaning that the global system is not reducible to a scene consisting merely of societies and/or large-scale actors. Individuals, societies, the system of societies and the humankind are to be treated in terms of one coherent analytical framework and the global cultural pluralism is itself a constitutive feature of the contemporary global circumstance"*.<sup>89</sup> What becomes clear from this statement is that globalization is conceived as a set of processes, driven by their own logic, which affect all spheres of life, and operate in such a way so as to structure the world as a whole.

Fourthly, globalization in Robertson's view refers to processes that are usually designated as cultural, that is, concerned with the attribution of meaning in the global arena. He looks for addressing the varying links between culture and social structure and between culture and individual and collective action. Thus he goes beyond the traditional conception of culture as a system of beliefs, values, symbols, rituals, codes of behaviour, to that of metaculture and considers it as a dynamics of social practices dealing with exchange of meaning and information among the four actors of the global field. In this light, his flexible model can be considered as a model for identity formation, involving four types of

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

identity – personal, collective, national and global. The question that must be answered in relation with both the cultural complexity and the process of identity formation is about the local-global nexus, or the issue about the conjunction between cultural particularism and universalism.

## **2.2. Cultural Homogenization or/and Cultural Heterogenization? - Robertson's Thesis of "Glocalization".**

In his reflections on this inquiry, Robertson seeks to transcend the controversy between the two opposing tendencies in order to represent them as complementary. The question also involves the problem of identity formation.

Each culture and identity are located in a particular space and time. The extensity, intensity and rapidity of the global cultural flows overlap all boundaries, thus connecting and mingling different cultures. This persistent cultural interaction and exchange produce cultural homogeneity and disorder. The question that arises is whether globalization leads to a cultural homogenization or to a cultural heterogenization. According to Robertson, the numerous responses given to this inquiry so far can be summarized in two perspectives – relativism and worldism. *"Relativism, including postmodernism, involves refusal to make any general, universalizing sense of the problems posed by sharp discontinuities between different forms of collective and individual life (...) This perspective is anti-fundamental. Worldism is, in contrast, foundational. It is based upon the claim that it is possible to grasp the world as a whole analytically to such an extent that virtually everything of sociocultural and political interest which occurs around the*

*globe – including identity presentation – can be explained, or at least interpreted in reference to the dynamics of the entire “world-system”*”<sup>90</sup>.

In order to explicate this statement, we can say that the relativist perspective is reductionist and puts the emphasis on the particularities, while the worldist perspective is holistic and generalizing, and singles out the similarities and the common features between cultures. What Robertson disagrees with, is that both approaches to the impact of globalization on identity and culture fail to capture the dynamics of the process. Both perspectives are grounded on “either/or” logic, that is, they are one-sided. His alternative is the attempt to transcend and overlap the distinction between particularity and difference, universality and homogeneity. Such an approach rests on the thesis that “*we are, in the late 20<sup>th</sup> c., witnesses to – and participants in – a massive, twofold process involving the interpretation of the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism.*”<sup>91</sup>

For Robertson, globalization is undoubtedly a true dialectical process, consisting of two contrary sub-processes – particularism /where the stress is on the cultural uniqueness and diversity/ and universalism /where the emphasis is on the cultural unitary and homogeneity/. I shall try to interpret Robertson’s thesis by applying Hegel’s understanding of dialectics<sup>92</sup> to it, involving three main steps – thesis-antithesis-synthesis:

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p. 100.

<sup>92</sup> The word “dialectics” here will be used in its initial sense. “For the ancient Greek thinkers “*dialektiké*” denotes a dialogue in which the discussants constantly adjust their views on the basis of what the other says. A dialectical relationship, therefore, is

## Globalization

Thesis	Relativism	Worldism	Antithesis
	Particularism	Universalism	

Sub-synthesis 1 – universalization of particularism

Sub-synthesis 2 – particularization of universalism

Final synthesis – Structuration of the World-as-a-whole

After applying Hegel's scheme of dialectics to Robertson's theory of globalization, we see that before the final synthesis there is a transitory stage where the two components of the opposition interact and intervene. As a result we have a twofold process involving the interpretation of universalization of particularism and particularization of universalism. What is meant here is that the two processes are not mutually exclusive but interpenetrating – each of them influences the other. Thus, on the one hand, globalization implies a tendency for uniformization by making the world become more a single unity. This, however, does not mean that we are becoming more identical because, on the other hand, there is also a tendency for particularization striving to place each culture and identity in their local context. Hence globalization cannot be directed only at cultural unification and homogeneity because although that it enables flows of goods, capitals, people and information to transgress many boundaries, there is a backlash coming from the natural cultures in their attempt to preserve their particularities. Yet, when local

cultures are integrated in the global mass culture, their specificities seem obliterated. In this sense, global mass culture resembles a split of different cultures, which are absorbed and given a common universalized form. But, in another sense, global culture is not as unitary as that, for it is a patch of various local traits and identities. The metaphors of the split and the patch, which I used here, come to show us the interpenetration between universality and particularity. Put in Robertson's words, "*we have to be conscious about the fact that indigenization is the other side of the coin of the homogenizing aspects of globalization. We should consider globalization to be simultaneously homogenizing - making things the same – and at the same time, making things different.*"<sup>93</sup>

Going back to the scheme, after the above described transitory stages, we arrive at the final stage of the dialectics, where "*the universalism-particularism issue has come to constitute something like a global cultural form, a major axis of the structuration of the world-as-a-whole. I suggest that universalism and particularism have become tied together as part of a globewide cultural nexus.*"<sup>94</sup>

So, in Robertson's interpretation, globalization brings about both cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization, and these two processes overlap and set up a global culture. Thus the debate about global homogenization versus heterogenization /worldism vs. relativism/ is surpassed and what Robertson spells out is the way in which these tendencies are mutually implicative. For a better understanding of his idea, he coins a new term "*glocalization*".<sup>95</sup> – the convergent point of local and global. The term stresses again the necessity to

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<sup>93</sup> Robertson, Roland. *Comments on the "Global Triad" and "Glocalization"*. Internet source, p. 3.

<sup>94</sup> Robertson, Roland. "Social Theory and the Problem of Globality" in: King, Anthony /ed./ 1991. *Culture, Globalization and the World System*. Macmillian, p. 76.

<sup>95</sup> The semantics and etymology of the word was already explained in the previous chapter. See p. 26.

transcend the widespread tendency to regard the local-global problematic as involving a polarity, where local is seen as a counterpoint of the global. By separating the local and the global, we have a distorted image of what is happening in the world today. To avoid this, the local must be considered as an aspect of globalization, as included within the global. *“For my own analytical standpoint the concept of globalization has involved the simultaneity and the interpenetration of what are conventionally called the global and the local, or it is even more precise to substitute the term “globalization” with the term “glocalization”.”*<sup>96</sup> The conclusion to be drawn is that globalization is a truly dialectical process and its complex nature can be grasped only if we take its major trends – homogenization and heterogenization for complementary and interpenetrating.

Now let us have a look at Robertson’s thesis of the origin and periodization of globalization. As it was already mentioned, Robertson rejects Giddens’s argument that globalization is a consequence of modernity, and sees it as a process with its own historical telos and logic. Aiming to show not only how the world is mapped, but also how it is structured and what shifts happen within the framework of its structure, he advocates necessarily for a minimal model of globalization.<sup>97</sup>

### **2.3. Robertson’s Minimal Model of Globalization.**

Phase one: the germinal phase. Lasting in Europe from the early 15<sup>th</sup> c. until the mid 18<sup>th</sup> c. Incipient growth of national communities and downplaying of the medieval “transnational” system. Expanding scope of the Catholic church.

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<sup>96</sup> Robertson, Roland. “Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity” in: Featherstone, Mike, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson. 1995. *Global Modernities*. London: SAGE Publications, p. 30.

Accentuation of concepts of the individual and the ideas about humanity. Heliocentric theory of the world and the beginning of modern geography. Spread of Gregorian calendar.

Phase two: the Incipient phase. Lasting from the mid 18<sup>th</sup> c. until the 1870s. Sharp shift towards the idea of the homogenous, unitary state. Crystallization of conceptions of formalized international relations, of standardized citizenry individuals and more concrete conception of humankind. Themmatization of nationalism.

Phase three: the Take-off phase. Lasting from the 1870s until the mid 1920s. "Take off" refers to a period during which the increasingly manifest globalizing tendencies of previous periods and places gave way to a single, inexorable form centred upon the four reference points. Early themmatizations of the problem of modernity.

Phase four: the Struggle-for-Hegemony phase. Lasting from the mid 1920s until the late 1960s. Disputes and wars about the fragile terms of the dominant globalization process established by the end of the take-off period. Establishment of the League of Nations and then the United Nations. Conflicting conceptions of Modernity, followed by the high point of the Cold war.

Phase five: the Uncertainty phase. Lasting in the 1960s and displaying crisis tendencies in the early 1990s. Heightening of global consciousness in the late 1960s. Number of global institutions and movements greatly increased. Sharp acceleration in means of global communication. Societies increasingly are facing the problem of multiculturalism and polyethnicity. Arising

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<sup>97</sup> Robertson, Roland. 1992. *Globalization. Social Theory and Global Culture*. London: SAGE Publications, pp. 58-59.



of interest in world civil society and world citizenship. Consolidation of global media system, including rivalries about such.<sup>98</sup>

Mapping the path of globalization as a series of five phases, Robertson shows that globalization is a long historical process with its own trajectory independent from that of modernity, highly accelerated during the last century. The reason is the higher dynamics of its driving forces at this time – market capitalism, industrialism and mass communications. In other words, his main point in this model is that globalization is a process with a general autonomy and logic, and it operates in relative independence from strictly societal or sociocultural processes, like those of modernity and postmodernity. It does not mean that globalization stays apart from modernity-postmodernity relationship. Rather it is a singular process, that is, one which is not a consequence of modernity, and which is not one of the grand modern narratives. At this point we reach Robertson's critics of Giddens's theory.

#### **2.4. Globalization, Modernity and the Issue of Postmodernity – Robertson *versus* Giddens.**

What Robertson first opposes in Giddens's theory of globalization is his approach to the topic by placing it in the contemporary debate about modernity and postmodernity and thus arguing that globalization is a consequence of modernity. Robertson's objection is that Giddens does not represent the phenomenon as a singular historical process, but as one originating from modernity. In this mode of reflections, Giddens does not really analyse globalization itself but modernity. Central to the task of grasping the nature of

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<sup>98</sup> For a more complete description of Robertson's the phase-model of globalization see: Robertson, Roland. 1992.

modernity is the idea of its discontinuity, meaning that compared with previous periods the changes of the last years are very dramatic and unique. Robertson agrees with the discontinuities on which Giddens emphasises: *“the great rapidity and pace of change in modern life; the global scope of change; and the uniqueness of modern institutions, such as the nation state, the commodification of products and labour, and the great reliance on inanimate sources of physical power.”*<sup>99</sup>

What he disagrees is that Giddens puts the stress on the institutions as the only actor on the global field that organizes and orders the social relations. Instead of one actor, Robertson constructs his flexible model of the global field on the roles of four participants – individuals, societies, system of societies and humankind, and argues that each of them contributes to the structuration of the world as a whole.

Another “clashing point” between the theories of the two authors refers to modernity-globalization-postmodernity relationship. The guiding thread of Giddens’s book is that postmodernity is not a break with, but a radicalized or reflexive modernity. Thus postmodernity is seen simply as an extension of modernity. Since globalization is a consequence of modernity and its contemporary phase takes place in the reflexive modernity, it could be considered as one of the grand modern narratives, i.e. as a universal explanatory scheme, thus accentuating on its universalistic tendency. By contrast, Robertson’s position is that one of the major consequences of globalization is the relativization of “grand modern narratives” which brings about mixture of universalistic and particularistic trends.

The models of globalization, which the two authors offer, are different, too. Giddens says that globalization has four dimensions: the nation state,

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*Globalization. Social Theory and Global Culture.* London: SAGE Publications, pp. 58-59.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 139.

the world capitalist economy, the world military order and the international division of labour. In fact, this four-dimensional image results in a rough transplantation of the four basic institutional features of modernity on the global scene. Thus, societal surveillance becomes the nation state system; societal capitalism becomes the world capitalist economy; societal military power becomes the world military order; and industrialism becomes the international division of labour. It becomes clear that for Giddens globalization is “*simply an enlargement of modernity, from society to the world. It is modernity on a global scale. Modernity is inherently globalizing.*”<sup>100</sup> The question that Robertson poses here is whether modernity is a Western project or not. Giddens’s answer is affirmative, but at the same time he claims that globalization is “*more than a diffusion of Western institutions across the world, in which other cultures are crushed.*”<sup>101</sup> Robertson objects to this conflation of modernity and globality, and states that although Giddens perceives globalization not only as a Western phenomenon, he does not exactly explain what “non-western” might mean in a thoroughly modernized world.

In relation with Giddens’s definition of globalization as “time-and-space distancing”, Robertson agrees that he is right in drawing attention to the ways in which time and space have become globally separated, recombined and standardized. What Robertson criticizes is that with his institutional analysis of globalization Giddens diminishes his cultural considerations and does not take into account the cultural differentiation. Therefore, Robertson concludes, Giddens “*fails*

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

*to meet the standards of a genuinely multidimensional approach.*"<sup>102</sup> Moreover, Robertson disagrees with Giddens's idea that globalization is a "*dialectical phenomenon in which events at one pole of a distanced relation often produce divergent or contrary occurrences at another.*"<sup>103</sup> Such a description implies an action-reaction relationship between the local and the global, which is not really the case. Both, for Robertson, are in an intricate connection and are not controversial but complementary tendencies. Their interpenetration can best be expressed by the substitution of the word "globalization" with the word "glocalization".

In order to recapitulate, I shall apply to Robertson's theory the same grid of elements /definition, key features, model of globalization, modernity-globalization-postmodernity relationship/, which was used for Giddens's.

\* Robertson defines globalization as a multidimensional and reflexive process referring to the compression of the world and the evolution of our consciousness of the world as a whole. Explicitly his assessment involves the following dimensions of globalization – intensity, velocity and impact propensity. The fourth dimension – extensity /expansion of the worldview and spatio-temporal horizon/ he addresses in his minimal phase model of globalization, where the accent is put on the take-off phase – the one that pushes forward and accelerates the global changes.

\* The key feature of globalization, as seen by Robertson is its truly dialectical nature grounded on the complementarity of universalism and

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>103</sup> Robertson, Roland. "Glocalization: Time-Space and Homegeneity-Heterogeneity" in: Featherstone, Mike, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson. 1995. *Global Modernities*. London: SAGE Publications, p. 27.

particularism. The mutuality in the local-global nexus is revealed by the term “glocalization”.

\* As for its origin, globalization is portrayed as a singular process whose historical path passes through five phases: germinal, incipient, take-off, struggle-for-hegemony, and uncertainty phase. Thus globalization has its own trajectory and is not equated with modernity or postmodernity. Robertson explains that globalization is not a new phenomenon, that it predates modernity and the rise of capitalism. However, modernization tends to accelerate it.

\* Robertson’s analysis of globalization is socio-cultural, for it seeks to explain how the world is structured, how it is becoming more united and how it influences the process of identity formation. In relation with the latter, the focus is on the participants on the global field and the way they become aware of living in the world as a single place. Hence his analysis is both objective /descriptive/ and subjective /interpretative, cognitive/.

\* His model of globalization is based on four participants, the interaction among whom leads to the process of relativization, i.e. the loosening of social ties and the reshaping of social relations. Clarifying it better, as a process that both connects and stimulates awareness of connection, globalization dissolves the autonomy of actors and practices in the contemporary world order. In this process of relativization, all units engaged in globalization are impelled to assume a position and define an identity appropriate to the global changes. In simple words, global changes provoke dislocation and disembedding of social practices and identities. Identity is no more stable because the individual is thrown into a vortex of events to which he has to act adequately by adopting the best role for the

case. Relativization thus evokes flexibility and adjustment. It brings into light the fact that the four elements of the global situation /selves, societies, world system of societies and mankind/ must interpret their very existence as parts of a larger whole.

Placed in the academic discourse of globalization, Robertson's theory, like Giddens's, is transformalist, representing phenomenon as a set of transformative processes that have profound impact on culture and identity.

In conclusion, it must be underlined that Robertson develops a multidimensional approach to the study of globalization, especially with reference to culture. He states that today's world is increasingly compressed and complex, which makes the search for identity of individuals more difficult. His view of the cultural processes insists on directing attention both at particularity and difference, at heterogeneity and homogeneity. Each of us has a role to play on the global field, and each of us has his or her contribution to the structuration of the world as a whole. Therefore this structuration involves not only transformative processes, but also changes in our social consciousness. The question, in my opinion, that Robertson makes us pose is: "Are we really aware of the global world in which we live today?".

The next author whose theory of globalization is closely linked with those of Giddens and Robertson is the cultural sociologist Malcolm Waters.

### **3. Waters's Theory of Globalization.**

In his introductory book on the sociology of globalization, entitled "Globalization", Waters makes a comprehensive overview of the topic of globalization, which starts with a brief examination of the history of the concept of

globalization, followed by a review of the works of authors, such as Giddens, Robertson, Harvey, McLuhan. Drawing upon Robertson's argument contra Giddens's that globalization precedes modernization and is a long-term historically independent process, Waters elaborates his own theory of globalization.

Waters's working definition of globalization resembles a lot that of Robertson: "*Globalization is a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding.*"<sup>104</sup> Like Robertson, Waters perceives globalization both as an objective and subjective process. The accent is again put on the fact and the feeling of receding /compression in Robertson's words/ of time-space horizons, of bringing events and people in reality closer to each other. This implies the idea of interconnection and interdependence.

### **3.1. Waters's Genealogy of Globalization.**

Addressing the genealogy of globalization, Waters points out that there are three possible points of departure. According to the first, globalization has been in process since the dawn of history, that is has increased in its effects since that time, and that there has been a sudden and recent acceleration. The second perspective sees globalization as contemporary with modernization and the development of capitalism. The third represents globalization as a recent phenomenon associated with other social processes, such as post-industrialism, post-modernization or the disorganization of capitalism.<sup>105</sup> Waters accepts the second starting point, which associates globalization with modernization and thus

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<sup>104</sup> Waters, Malcolm. *Globalization*. 1995. London and New York: Routledge, p. 3.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

portrays it as a relatively contemporary phenomenon. In fact, he specifies that there have been some globalizing tendencies before this period, but they were non-linear. The linear extension of globalization, in his view, began in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> c. with the early modern period. Such a conception of the origin of globalization is again very similar with that of Robertson, who also dates the process back to the 15<sup>th</sup> c., when the germinal phase started.

### **3.2. Waters's Model of Globalization.**

His model draws upon Weberian insistence to examine the domains of economics, politics and culture separately. These are the three domains of globalization defined in the following way: *“The economy includes social arrangements for the production, exchange, distribution and consumption of goods and tangible services; the polity-social arrangements for the concentration and application of power, especially insofar as it involves the organized exchange of coercion and surveillance as well as such institutionalized transformations of these practices as authority and diplomacy. Culture-social arrangements for the production, exchange and expression of symbols that represent facts, affects, meanings, beliefs, preferences, tastes and values.”*<sup>106</sup> Such a model can be called idiosyncratic, that is, lacking inner cohesion. Each of the three spheres is enclosed, encompassing processes particularly inherent to it. The points of departure in Waters's and Robertson's theories are similar insofar as they treat globalization from a twofold perspective – objective and subjective. The difference is that Robertson tries to analyse the phenomenon taken in its wholeness. For that cause his model is holistic. Waters, on the contrary, dissolves globalization and examines



its domains separately. In his case we can even say that he refers to three globalizations – economic, political and cultural. Each of them is thought as a set of social processes, taking place in various spheres. Hence his model seeks to capture the relationship between social organization and territoriality in order to see how the global flows structure and organize each of the domains. His vision is summarized in a phrase that he repeats several times throughout the book: “*Material exchanges localize; political exchanges internationalize; and symbolic exchanges globalize.*”<sup>107</sup> The emphasis here is put on the cultural economy, seen as the only really globalizing dividing force. The reason is that economy and culture have overlapped since economy has largely become geared to the production and dissemination of symbols and simulacra, and no longer to material objects. In this mode of reflection, Waters’s vision of cultural economy can be interpreted in a postmodern sense, meaning that everything is turned into commodities /we can even speak of cultural fetishism/ that are sold thanks to their trade images. For this new type of cultural-economic exchange, local or national boundaries are no longer relevant. “*These cultural currencies have become so overwhelming*”, Waters claims, “*that they breached the levees not only of national value systems but of industrial organizations and political territorial arrangements.*”<sup>108</sup> The flows of images travel and transgress boundaries, thus becoming accessible everywhere. Because of their quick spread and penetrability, Waters argues that the cultural flows globalize.

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>108</sup> Cited in: Kalb, Don. “Identity-Politics, Globalization and the Nation State”, article, April 1999, included in the reader of Plovdiv Summer University, 2000, “*Balkan Societies – Europeanization and Globalization*”, p. 3.

Specific to Waters's theory of globalization is not only his model built on the separate domains of economics, politics and culture, but also the genealogy of globalization he gives. Here again he treats the phenomenon as consisting of three different processes – economic, political and cultural globalization and defines separately their origin.

He dates the economic globalization back to 1870-1914 period because of the development of transportation and communication networks, the rapid growth of trade and the huge flow of capital at that time. He also singles out trade as the original driving force because it links together geographically distant places. Depicting the features of the world economy in the course of the phases, which I already presented in the first chapter while analysing the problem of the periodization of globalization, Waters arrives at the contemporary period. It is marked by dematerialization of commodity production, incited by two processes – *“post-industrialization in which a majority of the labour force is now engaged in the production of commodified services rather than material commodities, and hypercommodification and industrialization of culture - the exchange of signs for finance, the exchange of money for meanings”*.<sup>109</sup> Culture becomes industrialized and commodified in the sense that cultural products lose their value to be turned into commodities. Thus culture and economy are closely linked – culture gives the image of the product, while economy provides the market place where it is sold.

Apart from the economic globalization, the political globalization has also its historical path. The question that arises here is about the fate of the nation state – whether its sovereignty is in decline, or the “world government” is possible. According to Waters, today *“the state could no longer offer security, therefore*

*trade and financial markets were internationalized, and in motion is a process of “disétatization” or state-weakening”.*<sup>110</sup> Waters’s claim that globalization will lead to the withering away of the state is hardly credible, as current history abundantly underscores. There are still many places in the world, suffice it to mention the Balkans, the Middle-East, South Asia or parts of Africa, where state-conquering identity-politics is a problem of utmost importance.

Observing the cultural globalization, Waters concludes that culture shows greater tendencies towards globalization because the process proceeds more rapidly in contexts in which relationships are mediated through symbols. Culture is the field where the free flow of images and symbols can take place. Hence “*a globalized culture admits a continuous flow of ideas, information, commitment, values and tastes mediated through mobile individuals, symbolic tokens and electronic simulations.*”<sup>111</sup> A distinguished trait of contemporary culture is consumption – “*consumption becomes the main form of self-expression and the chief force of identity. It implies that both material and non-material items, including kinship, affection, art and intellect become commodified, that is their value is assessed by the context of their exchange, rather than the context of their production or use.*”<sup>112</sup> Consumer culture is most commonly interpreted as imposition of the Western and more particularly, the American cultural models of life. From this perspective, as we already underlined, some authors refer to globalization as Americanization, even as McDonaldization or Cocacolanization, whose common principles are efficiency, calculability, profitability, uniformity.

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<sup>109</sup> Waters, Malcolm. *Globalization*. 1995. London and New York: Routledge, p. 76.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126.

What follows, as a conclusion on Waters's theory of globalization is the application of my cluster of elements for comparison.

\* In accordance with Robertson's definition of globalization, Waters portrays it as a social process resulting in receding of the social arrangements in reality, and making us aware of this receding. Thus globalization is represented in the dimensions of intensity and impact propensity. The others – extensity and velocity are addressed when Waters comments on the origin of globalization – the opening out of the world and the speeding up of cultural flows.

\* Waters's model does not take globalization as a whole phenomenon, but as one comprising three separate processes – economic, political and cultural globalization. This model is reductionist and fails to grasp the phenomenon in its complexity and ubiquity.

\* The key features of globalization according to Waters are hypercommodification and relativization. The former tendency is typical for the postmodern thinkers /Frederic Jameson, for example/ who speak about hybrid and commodified cultural forms. The second brings him close to Robertson's idea of the relativization of social practices in the global field.

\* As for the origin of globalization, Waters's periodization follows that of Robertson, dating the phenomenon back to the beginning of modernization. But, unlike Giddens, Waters does not represent globalization as a consequence of modernity but as a singular historical process or better, a plurality of economic, political and cultural changes. In Waters's vision globalization is fragmented into cultural, economic and political globalizations, where each of them has its specific

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 140.

historical path. Thus not only are economics, politics and culture turned into separate domains, but also into separate periods.

A major flaw in Waters's theory of globalization, in my view, is the distortion of the process into three independently going on economic, political and cultural currents. Thus a complete picture of it, mapping the relations and interactions between the three flows is not possible.

The last theory of globalization that will be analysed here is that of the cultural anthropologist Arjun Appadurai. For the sake of introduction, I shall give some sketches on the structure of his book "*Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*". In it he brings together in revised form seven essays which were published in various journals and collections between 1990 and 1995. His collection connects his earlier work on global flows with some of his ethnographic researches on India, and with a more recent interest in the problems of locality and local identity in the globalizing age. The book offers a new framework for the cultural study of globalization and gives an anthropological view for the phenomenon.

#### **4. Appadurai's Theory of Globalization.**

Modernization theory, Appadurai argues, has always been flawed by its consequent neglect of the complexities of cultural process. For this reason, his aim is "*to thematize certain cultural facts and use them to open up the relationship between modernization as a fact and as a theory.*"<sup>113</sup> What he means by modernization as a fact is the process itself /most often associated with

industrialization/ that incites various changes in reality. Usually the focus is on the field of economics and politics, thus leaving the sphere of culture aside. On the other hand, modernization as a theory implies the idea of the modern metanarratives – the universal interpretative schemes, which are also concentrated on constructing economic and political explanatory models without really touching the realm of culture. This lack of theorization of the cultural transformations can no longer be sustained in the age of globalization, when all boundaries become permeable. The two driving forces of globalization, according to Appadurai, are the electronic mediation and mass migration because they have a “*dramatic joint effect on the work of imagination*”.<sup>114</sup>

#### **4.1. Imagination as a Social Practice.**

Imagination plays a vital role in Appadurai’s theory because in the electronic world “*it has broken out of the special expressive space of art, myth and ritual and has now become a part of quotidian mental work*”<sup>115</sup> and becomes very important for the process of identity formation. By means of new communication technologies imagination makes people travel all around the world and meet with different cultures. As a consequence, there has emerged a “*new order of instability in the production of modern subjectivities*”<sup>116</sup>. Appadurai speaks of the imagination as a property of collectives because together with mass media, it creates “community of sentiments” /or better “imagined communities”/ - a group of people that begins to imagine and feel together. The fact that imagination somehow

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<sup>113</sup> Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. 1996. Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, p. 2.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

arranges social relations comes to signal that it is seen as a social practice – “*the imagination has become an organized field of social practices, a form of work. It itself is a social fact, and is the key component of the new global order.*”<sup>117</sup>

The topic of imagination and the way it influences the formation of identity is closely linked with the idea of culture. Appadurai defines culture as “*difference, especially difference in the realm of group identity. Culture is a pervasive dimension of human discourse that exploits difference to generate diverse conceptions of group identity.*”<sup>118</sup> This is an anthropological vision of culture, viewed as a set of social practices including myths, rituals, traditions, and customs, as a whole, a system of symbols and codes of behaviour. In this mode of thinking, the notion of culture designates one’s belonging to a certain group, the formation of one’s collective /or group/ identity. Such a conception of culture seems to equate ethnicity and culture. But this is not entirely true because culture means not only the possession of certain attributes /material, linguistic or territorial/ but also the consciousness of having these attributes. The question is how one’s awareness of being part of a given culture changes in the era of mass communications and migration, in short, in the era of globalization.

#### **4.2. Appadurai’s General Theory of Global Cultural Process.**

Appadurai argues that “*the central feature of global culture today is the politics of mutual effort of sameness and difference to cannibalize one another and thereby proclaim their successful hijacking of the twin Enlightenment ideas of*

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

*the triumphantly universal and the resiliently particular.*”<sup>119</sup> In his view, similarly to Robertson, the central problem of today’s global interactions is the tension between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization. This process is intensified by the work of imagination, which is given new impetus in the age of globalization and which incites a global cultural economy. The latter is understood in the sense used by Waters – as flows of images, symbols and simulacra, that turn cultural values into goods and means of advertisement. Until now the cultural exchange has run in the centre - periphery frameworks, where there is a dominant culture trying to impose its specificities on the indigenous cultures and thus to assimilate or integrate them. Appadurai considers these centre – periphery models not any more valid because today imagination transgresses all limits – “*the new global cultural economy has to be seen as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order.*”<sup>120</sup> Since the organized field of social practices is convergent, politics, culture and economics can no longer be kept separated. Unlike Waters, who insists on the autonomy of each of the three spheres, Appadurai states that under the conditions of global changes producing free movement of people, goods, capital and information, these domains are interlinked and they influence each other. Hence the complexity of the current global economy has to do with certain fundamental disjunctures between economy, politics and culture. The above mentioned flows are real transactions of people, capital, commodities and information, but they have yet another dimension – imaginary, as far as we conceive them by our imagination. The very idea of flow, as something that crosses real and imaginary borders, has connotations of “chaotic”, “irregular” and

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., p. 34.



“divergent”. Therefore, Appadurai suggests that “*the theory of global cultural interactions...will have to move into something like a human version of the theory that some scientists are calling “chaos theory”*”.<sup>121</sup> His chaos-theoretic approach to global culture is developed in the five-dimensional model of global cultural flows moving in non-isomorphic paths, which he offers. The five dimensions are named “ethnoscapes”, “mediascapes”, “technoscapes”, “finanscapes” and “ideoscapes”. They represent, in fact, his model of globalization portrayed as a mental picture of global cultural interactions. The five scapes are “perspectival constructs inflected by the historical, linguistic and political situatedness of different sorts of actors: nation states, multinationals, sub-national grouping and movements.”<sup>122</sup> The landscapes are constructed by the imaginations of persons and groups around the world, so they can be also called “imagined worlds”.

By ethnoscapes, Appadurai means the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles and other moving groups and persons. Technoscape is the global configuration of technology. Finanscape is the dimension of global capital – of currency markets, national stock exchanges and commodities. Mediscape refers to the distribution and dissemination of information /done by newspapers; magazines, TV stations, film production studios, etc./ and to the images created by the media. Ideoscape is also a dimension of images but of those that are politically directed and frequently have to do with the ideologies of states or the counter-ideologies of movements.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>122</sup> Appadurai, Arjun. “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy” in: Featherstone, Mike /ed./. 1990. *Global Culture. Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*. London: SAGE Publications, p. 296.

<sup>123</sup> For a more complete description of the cultural flows see: Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. 1996. Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 33-36.

The five scapes constitute an abstract model trying to show the paths in which the current global flows occur and run. Thus the global field is represented as one where ethnoscaples, technoscaples, finanscaples, mediascaples and ideoscaples intensively interact in a diffused and chaotic way, producing meeting and clashing points among them. I would comment that this model of globalization fits very well the four basic dimensions of the phenomenon – extensity, intensity, velocity and impact propensity, for the five flows have their scale, speed and volume. What is specific is that these flows have various trajectories, sometimes convergent, other – divergent. Therefore their interactions bring into being hybrid forms. Consequently, unlike Robertson’s thesis about the global-local nexus, the cultural flows in Appadurai’s model cannot be referred to the relationship between universalized particularism and particularized universalism. Their connections are not only particular-universal like type, but mansided. Because of this *mélange* of various flows, the work of cultural reproduction becomes a daily hazard. Appadurai maintains that the streams of people, money, images, machinery and ideas are fundamentally fractal, in the sense that they possess no boundaries, structures or regulations and they overlap. What can be concluded is that this model of globalization is not a stable system because it aims to catch the dynamics of the process and the fluctuations of the global flows. Thus globalization is represented as a historically uneven and multidimensional process. From an anthropological point of view, it can be seen rather as a localizing, than as a globalizing, process because it depends on the way the actors in globalization will appropriate the global changes, i.e. whether they will adapt to the new global context, or they will adjust the transformations to their local canvases.

What follows in conclusion is the application of the four elements of analysis to Appadurai's theory.

\* Globalization is defined as an even social process, where the stress is put on the localizing tendencies. As it became obvious from the model of globalization, the phenomenon is viewed in four dimensions – extensity, intensity, velocity and impact propensity.

\* The driving forces of globalization, according to Appadurai, are the electronic mediation and mass migration. The most important consequence of it is that imagination becomes a social practice by creating personal and group identities.

\* The model of globalization consists of five non-isomorphic paths of flows, which are mental constructions of the way people, machinery, information, ideas and money travel and cross borders.

\* Appadurai does not address the question of the origin of globalization. He centres his attention on its contemporary phase. He also does not comment explicitly modernity-globalization-postmodernity relationship.

After having analysed the theories of globalization of the four authors, here are the concluding remarks that can be drawn.

\* All of the discussed authors take part in the contemporary debate about globalization putting the stress on the influence of globalization on culture. Placed in the field of contesting hyperglobal, sceptic and transformalist theories, they can be defined as transformalists because all of them conceptualize and theorize globalization as a phenomenon that transforms the existing reality.

\* Each of them builds his theory on the basis of several pivotal issues, including working definition of globalization, axial principles, model, genealogy and modernity-globalization-postmodernity relationship.

\* They maintain that globalization is a complex, multifaceted and controversial process with a profound impact on the sphere of culture, mainly in reference to the interactions between different cultures /I would say the problem of multiculturalism, but it is not very correct to use this term since none of the authors touch this topic/ and to the changes in the process of identity formation.

## Conclusion

The goal of this study was to challenge globalization, that is, to make the phenomenon reveal its specificities and images by examining it thoroughly. The first chapter sought to sort out some of the dominant uses of “globalization” by conceptualizing and theorizing it through a three-staged analysis – etymological, phenomenological and hermeneutic.

\* The result of the survey at the first two levels is that globalization appears as a historical process, which has its key features, periodization, driving forces and actors.

\* At the third level of analysis, a model of globalization was proposed based on four constitutive elements – extensity, intensity, velocity and impact propensity, encompassing its main dimensions – compression and distanciation of time and space, intensification, acceleration and its influence on a given sphere. According to the way the three elements are combined in a certain field, a typology of globalization can be made, including thick, diffused, expansive and thin globalization.

\* Globalization was also analysed in the light of its popular rhetoric and the academic debate. What should be singled out here is that the debate proved to be based on the leitmotifs of everyday talk about globalization, and on this ground it referred to it as a narrative – as an explanatory scheme about the ongoing processes.

\* On the level of the debate three contesting positions were analysed – hyperglobalist /seeing globalization as an irreversible and beneficial process/, sceptic /viewing it as a process that will increase social inequality and will incite a standardization of culture/ and transformalist /portraying it as a set of social processes that influence and transform social relations and their institutional arrangement/.

\* The transformalist perspective was more comprehensively explored by analysing the theories of four social sciences and anthropology scholars – Anthony Giddens, Roland Robertson, Malcolm Waters and Arjun Appadurai. The analysis brought into light that they approach globalization as a theoretical construct, or a narrative, for describing and interpreting today's changes in social practices. They all put stress on the sphere of culture, where new hybrid forms will be produced after the interpenetration of the local and the global, the universal and the particular.

\* Passing through different levels of analyses let me reveal various images and ideas of globalization. Now, if taken altogether, we can give a general definition of globalization. **Globalization is a multicausal and multidimensional process /or a set of processes/ that causes compression of time and space horizons, where all boundaries become permeable. It also structures a world of instantaneity, interconnectedness, interdependence and interchangeability, as well as our consciousness that the world is becoming a single place or a global arena on which we all play.**

This work aims to provoke everyone to face globalization because it is a fact of life. When confronting it, we must take into account that globalization

is a highly dynamic and controversial phenomenon. Therefore we should always refer to it critically so as not to take it either as something beneficial, or something disadvantageous. It is essential to keep in mind that globalization has its “gains and losses” and it is up to us to adapt to the process and take profit from it. The point is how we shall perform our roles on the global scene.

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