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Globalization and Russia

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No social phenomenon can be considered outside the globalization context any more in modern social science. **The essence of globalization, to my mind, is, in the shortest definition, that it is an objective, natural process of integration of the mankind.** Globalization appears in the fact that social processes in one part of the world determine what is going on in all other parts of the world in a more influential way and are themselves affected by the latter. Space compression takes place, time is being pressed down, geographical and international borders become more transparent and easy to overcome. Flows of goods, services, information, people, and capital circulate around the planet with growing intensity.

Various forms of union of peoples have been known since the ancient times, but the processes of integration of the mankind only **embrace the whole planet for the first time in history** in the end of the 20th century due to wild changes in communication means, economic, political, spiritual spheres. One can only speak about globalization in a strict sense of this word since that time.

Globalization appears as a multilevel and many-sided system of various integration phenomena. The main ones are the emergence of global communication, global economics, global politics, global culture, a global language, and a global way of life. But it would be insufficient to restrict oneself with stating these changes.

Globalization is seen as an extremely contradictory and complex process, if analyzed more thoroughly. On the one hand, globalization is a regular and necessary process of integration of the mankind, accompanied by the growth of the quality of life and well-being level of the mankind, accelerating of the economic and political development of countries, activation of interchange with technological, scientific, and cultural achievements among various countries and peoples. On the other hand, globalization **under the conditions of the economic, military, and political supremacy of the USA and their allies consequently has taken a pro-Western, liberal form and means establishing supremacy of western trans-national corporations and western governments over the whole world.** The USA and their allies have made use of globalization, subdued it to their interest. Considering that, globalization in the present, liberal form turns into deepening the abyss between the rich and developed West and the poor and backward non-western world, rigid dictatorship of the USA all around the planet, unification of national and cultural self-determination of peoples of the planet, destruction of their spiritual identity, destroying national statehood, demoralization, cynicism, consumption cult, standardization and spiritual devastation. Meaning this form of modern integration processes, we speak about **liberal** globalization.

Let us note **the most important negative consequences** of liberal globalization. **Firstly**, liberal globalization not only leads to erosion of the national statehood, to undermining of sovereignty of independent national states, but also to their decay and collapse. **Secondly**, liberal globalization, creating a unified culture without religion, being precise, a global surrogate of culture, tries to destroy religious traditions and national cultures as well. **Thirdly**, liberal globalization dooms the mankind to complete absence of spirituality; it destroys the traditional values of the people's life. It creates a zombie-person, deprived of belief and historical memory, torn off the national roots, religious traditions, not remembering his or her ancestors, indifferent to his or her Motherland, only capable of consuming, i.e. oriented exclusively to satisfaction of his or her physical needs. Liberal globalization strives to turn a person into an animal, into a creature which is easily manipulated. **In the fourth place**, liberal globalization, depriving countries of the world of their national, state and cultural identity, turns the whole planet into some faceless, homogeneous, mono-polar space, dominated by the only super-power. **In the fifth place**, liberal globalization, having as a purpose creation of the world order, world government, world police, world armed forces as some over-national, over-state structures, logically leads the mankind to establishing the

global economic, political and spiritual totalitarianism, when only the USA would rule all the peoples according to its interests. Liberal globalization strives to unite all the independent states under the aegis of the USA into some united “world society”, “union of states” with gradual and full depriving former countries of their rights and opportunities to assert their own national interests, to conduct their own national policy.

Russia itself felt all the consequences of involving into the processes of liberal globalization in 1990-s, when liberals were in power, headed by president B.N. Yeltsin, which conducted liberal reforms according to instructions of advisers in Washington and subordinated our country to the project of liberal globalization. Let us examine the most visible consequences of Russian liberal reforms of the 1990-s.

The collapse of the USSR, local conflicts, and terrorism. One of the most catastrophic results of liberal reforms of 1990-s was the collapse of the USSR. It led to a plenty of local conflicts with hundreds of thousands of the dead and millions of refugees in the republics of the former Soviet Union and in Russia itself. The collapse of the USSR, liberal reforms in Russia have created the problem of terrorism in Chechnya. Bloody terror attacks of recent years in Russia, including the villainous crime of terrorists in Beslan in September 2004, eventually should bother the conscience of the liberal reformers.

Deindustrialization. Liberal reforms lead to the collapse of the national economy in Russia. From 1991 till 2000 all the basic indices of its economic development reduced sharply. The country, which was the first one to start the mastery of the space, was thrown to the outskirts of the global world. The portion of Russia in the world GDP reduced from 5.57 to 2.1% from 1990 till 2000, and the portion of Russia in world industry reduced from 10.3 to 4.5% during those years, gross domestic product per capita of population reduced from 13,400 to 6,900 dollars¹. The GDP, size of industry and agriculture of Russia reduced more than twice during 1990-2000 decade. The country industrialization, conducted in 30-50-s with huge labor and efforts was largely reversed. **A large-scale deindustrialization of the country occurred.** Russia found itself at a threshold of a technological collapse due to the deterioration of the main funds, the evidences of which are numerous technological catastrophes of the recent time, e.g. the large-scale switch-off of the electricity in Moscow and neighboring regions in May 2005. The most important branches of production, which determine the “face” of modern scientific and technological progress and provide for the development and prosperity of any country, proved to be in stagnation or decline. A lot of plants and factories stopped. The most up-to-date enterprises of air-space industry are reorganized for manufacturing primitive household production, up to saucepans and garden inventory.

Industrial branches of the economy not only lack capital investment, but also suffer from the leaving of the qualified personnel. The quantity of people working in scientific and technological spheres reduced from 2.5 million to 800 thousand people from 1990 till 2001². The large quantity of highly-qualified professionals – candidates and doctors of science, graduates of the best universities of Russia – left the country to work and live abroad permanently or temporarily. Their departure is caused by both impossibility of getting a deserving compensation for their work and by a sharp decline in large-scale and fundamental research in Russia, which does not allow putting into practice the high creative potential of Russian scientists. The total number of working abroad Russian scientists, according to some estimates, reached about 30 thousand in 1998³. Considering all that, Russia gradually ceases to be a great economic and scientific power of the world.

¹ World Economy. Global Tendencies for 100 Years. M., 2003, pp. 510, 512, 540, 550, 595, 601.

² Reformation in Russia: Reality and Perspectives. M., 2002, p. 5.

³ Zayonchkovskaya Zh. Work Emigration of Russian Scientists. The State Statistics Committee Informs about the Journeys of Russian Scientists Abroad. // Demoskop weekly.



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Russia becomes a raw materials appendage of the global economy. Considerable structural errors of our economy are the evidence of turning Russia into the raw materials appendage of the West. The portion of manufacturing industry in the structure of Russian industry decreased from 73.8 to 66.7% during the period of 1990-2000, and the portion of mining industry increased from 18 to 24.4% (including oil and gas industry – from 11.3 to 17.4%)⁴. Russia exports oil, gas, metals, wood, and many other raw goods. Oil accounts for 40% of total export of Russia now⁵. Dependency of Russian economy on the situation with world oil prices is growing. It is very dangerous for the development of our economy and our society, because the supply of oil in Russia is only sufficient for 21 years under present rates of its extraction⁶.

Social catastrophe. One of the most dramatic results of liberal reforms was the catastrophic deteriorating of the social situation. The Soviet system of social guarantees was broken; no system, adequate to contemporary situation, was practically created, and due to all that Russian citizens faced the market tempest one on one. Both working and not working people proved to be completely defenseless before exploitation, poverty, absence of order.

The crying evidence of the deformation of the social sphere was an unprecedented sharp polarization of income of Russian citizens. According to the research, the decile coefficient in 1989 (the correlation of income of 10% of the richest and 10% of the poorest) was equal to 4.7, while this index reached the level of 20.3 in 2000⁷! Russia had left behind not only all developed countries according to this index by 2002 – the USA (15.9), Great Britain (13.8), Germany (9.0), France (9.1), Japan (4.5) – but also the whole number of developing and post-socialist countries – Turkey (13.3), Pakistan (7.6), Indonesia (7.8), Thailand (13.4), and Poland (9.3).

Liberal reforms split Russia into a small group of billionaires and multimillionaires, on the one hand, and the majority living in poverty, on the other hand. As a result two Russias emerged – a rich one and a poor one, which live in different dimensions, do not understand each other, have different values orientations, which would never find consent and reconciliation between each other. In such situation no consolidation of Russian society can be spoken about. The polarization does breed social disintegration, tension, and the whole spectrum of negative social phenomena.

Numerous *forms of social barbarism*, which are the evidence of the deep unwell-being of the society: drug addiction, alcoholism, mental illnesses, homelessness, child neglect, prostitution, etc. have sharply increased in Russia, compared to pre-reform times due to the above-mentioned collapse of the economy. The social fabric of Russian society is disintegrating.

Not only the social order of Russia was undermined during the years of liberal reforms, but also the biological base of the society – the health of the population sharply worsened. Inhabitants of our country get ill more often and seriously. They were attacked by illnesses, rooted in sharp social unwell-being: tuberculosis, syphilis, AIDS, alcoholism, and drug addiction.

Criminalization of the Russian society. The sphere of social order in Russia is characterized by an unprecedented rise of crime rate, criminal terror against the country's population, penetration of organized criminal groups into the highest levels of power, including law-enforcement organs.

The most dangerous thing is the activity of Russian organized criminal groups. It turned into a very serious factor of development of our society. Thousands of criminal groups,

⁴ World Economy. Global Tendencies for 100 Years. •, 2003, pp. 569-570.

⁵ Leeucht K. Russian Oil: Production and Export // Economy Questions 2003, •5, p. 139.

⁶ Emerging-market Indicators // Economist, June 25th 2005, p. 114.

⁷ Human Development Indicators, 2004, p. 189. Internet address: www.undkr.org.

the number of members of which totals up to hundreds of thousands, boss throughout Russian territory. The most wide-spread forms of “trade” of Russian organized criminal groups are selling counterfeit, i.e. fake production, prostitution, and pornography, forging financial documents, real estate operations, selling stolen cars, kidnapping, selling arms and drugs, and many others.

However, undoubtedly, the most dangerous evidence of criminalization of Russia is an unprecedented growth of murder rate. The number of murders registered by organs of Internal Affairs in Russia in 1990 was 14,300, in 1998 – 23,000, in 2001 – 29,800, in 2002 – already more than 32,000 people. But the number of killed people is actually much bigger. Many of the people, listed as missing, were actually murdered. The number of missing people in Russia exceeds the rate of 100 thousand people annually⁸. If the above-mentioned numbers are taken into consideration up to 120-130 thousand (!) Russian citizens die because of crimes. The criminals actually wage a war against our country.

The decay of the state. Russian liberals have reduced the state step by step for the last 12 years, have continuously cut its functions down, have sold the state property to oligarchs cheaply, which made the government invalid and helpless in solving all live social issues. The refusal from a strong and active government only proved to be profitable for “unclean” businessmen and the criminal world. Meanwhile, the necessity of a powerful government is also greatly determined by peculiarity of the Russian society. The huge territory, the longest in the world and often not calm boundaries, geographical conditions of the northern country with adverse climate predetermines the necessity of a powerful government, capable of actively influencing all social processes.

The demographic crisis. The most critical social, economic and spiritual crisis logically led the country to the demographic crisis. The demographic situation in modern Russia cannot be evaluated in any other way, except as a catastrophe. An unprecedented dying out of people has taken place since 1992 – the population decreases by 700-800 thousand people annually. Life expectancy was 69.2 years in 1990, and in 2001 it fell down to the level of 65.3 years; moreover, the difference between the life expectancies of men and women in 2001 was 13.3 years in women’s favor⁹. In case of retention of modern demographic tendencies a collapse decrease of the nation’s population and its getting older will logically occur in the first half of the 21st century. According to the UN data, the population of Russia would have reduced to 133.4 million people by 2015, if modern demographic tendencies retained¹⁰. According to the scientists, the population of the Russian Federation may decrease to 100 million people by 2050 under retention of the present demographic tendencies. *Dying out of the people of Russia is the most visible result of tragic consequences of liberal globalization in our country!*

10. Spiritual crisis. The spiritual foundations of the people’s being are completely destroyed in Russia, its moral condition catastrophically deteriorated. Ideas of good and evil are undermined, moral standards are destroyed, an enormous moral and psychological degradation of the population occurred. Western values, alien to our culture, orientation towards personal profit, gain are imposed by force on the public consciousness. Work ethics, connecting a positive person’s well-being with his professional success in creative, useful for the common good kinds of work activity, has been broken. As a result of negative social processes and agitation of values of “consumption society”, consumerist way of life among Russian teenagers and youth, the prestige of honest labor has sharply declined.

⁸ Reformation of Russia: Reality and Perspectives. M., 2002, p. 94.

⁹ The Ministry of Labor and Social Development of the Russian Federation: Report on the Situation and Tendencies of the Demographic Development of the Russian Federation. M., 2002, p. 12.

¹⁰ Human Development Indicators, 2004, p.139. Internet address: www.undkr.org.

11. Russia's loss of its authority at the international arena. The Russian Federation has impetuously lost authority and influence in the world during 1990-s. Russia lost the status of a superpower and was retreating in all directions. It lost former allies, left from lots of regions of the world. The USA and their allies pretended to consider Russia, while actually were ceasing to consider it in world issues. Some observers began to speak about "the end of Russia", i.e. about Russia leaving the number of the most important subjects of world politics, began to write it off completely.

However, countries, malevolent towards Russia, made a wrong conclusion. Our country grew much weaker as a result of liberal reforms, but it has turned to the path of slow and difficult, but inevitable recovery since 2000. New Russian leaders undertook huge efforts towards restoration of sovereignty, actually lost in 1990-s. Our country has left the fairway of the USA and turned to consistent defense of national interests. New leaders of the country proceed from the conception of the multi-polar world and hold on to the principle of saving the balance of interests of various countries of the world.

What should we do? So, many-sided and objective analysis of the position of Russia lets us with full certainty make a conclusion, that the main threat for it is the policy of liberal reforms, liberal globalization, conducted for the interests of the USA and supported by the liberal opposition inside Russia till now. To my mind, it is necessary to undertake the following steps for making the social life in Russia "healthier" and revival of our country.

1. We should declare war on terrorism, criminality, and corruption. Toughening the punishments for especially grave crimes against a person and the society up to the capital punishment for terrorism, murders with aggravating circumstances, selling drugs, together with decisive and rigid struggle with organized criminal groups, corruption in organs of power, the "shadow economy", acting as a "feeding" base for criminality and terrorism, are necessary. Saving our people from the criminal terror, the bacchanal of criminality is the most important ground for conducting the policy for the interests of the country and the people.

2. A refusal from pro-American and pro-Western policy is necessary. It is necessary to conduct the policy of getting more distant from the USA and their closest allies. Subordination to the interests of the West, headed by the USA, threatens Russia with not only turning into a raw materials appendage of the world economy, but also with the loss of its national and cultural identity. Russia should refuse from one-sided orientation to the West and admit that the USA and their allies are not only partners for it, but also geopolitical and economic competitors.

Russia should not strive to pay any price for joining the European Union, and our country should not sacrifice its national interests for the sake of fulfilling ultimatum requirements of the West. It is necessary to quit flirting with "the seven" – Russia does not have a voice there and will not gain any profit for itself. We should not count on the fact that we will take a deserving place in the community of western powers. As a whole, the USA and the West are only ready to speak with us as an equal partner under one historical condition – unconditional support of their policy.

Washington and its allies strive to subordinate countries of the CIS to their influence, the evidence of that is their aspiration to control the political life in the Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, their blockade of Byelorussia. The USA, declaratorily announcing partnership with Russia, also, as numerous facts show, consistently and persistently conduct the policy of extruding Russia from the whole post-Soviet space.

To my mind, the balanced policy of orienting towards various poles of the global world with elements of wholesome and reasonable isolationism, defending its industry and spiritual life, would prevent Russia from turning into a raw materials appendage of the West, allow to revive its economic and scientific potential, save its state sovereignty, its unique culture and its mentality. The policy of reasonable self-isolation, as history proves and as the experience of contemporary China shows, can be very effective.

However, we do not appeal to have absolute isolationism and a closed state. It is necessary for the interests of our country to be able to combine, on the one hand, isolationism towards our potential enemies, and, on the other hand, open-door policy for ties with our real, not imaginary, friends and allies. Considering all that, Russia should greatly reform its foreign policy and revise its foreign policy orientations, getting rid of pro-American and pro-Western “heel” of its foreign policy.

Russia should do its best for maximum getting closer with countries of the CIS, orienting to a voluntary mutually profitable union with them in various forms. Under the threats of liberal globalization the interests of Russia have much in common with the interests of China, India, Moslem world countries, and other “third world” countries, and also with the interests of sensible circles of united Europe, which realize the absence of perspectives in liberal and pro-American globalization.

3. Liberalism, as a leading ideological trend, should be put an end to in Russia.

Liberalism, as an ideological and political trend, failed in Russia, having shown its complete being unfounded. It is important to understand and realize for the Russian society that our Russian liberals are that “fifth column” inside Russia, basing themselves on which, the USA and their allies tried to put into practice their plans of subordinating Russia to themselves. It is important to realize that the activity of western-liberals is not only hostile to Russia, but also harmful for its further development. Considering all that, it is necessary to prevent liberals’ attempts to carry out revenge and come back to power.

Our country does not need liberal freedom “without boundaries”, which is identical to the right to rob, to kill, to corrupt people’s souls with impunity. Freedom without any restrictions leads to total anarchy, to the struggle of each individual against his or her fellow-creature and against all and, on the contrary, - of all against each one. Freedom, being interpreted by liberals, humiliates the law and rejects the moral, which inevitably leads the society to complete disorder, confusion, chaos, and, finally, to destruction. In reality freedom should only exist as being limited by frames of the law and by standards of moral.

4. Russia needs a strong government. In order to revive Russia, we need a strong government, which would be an active subject of economic life, regulate economic processes and social relations, struggle with terrorism, criminality, and corruption, and defend the internal and external safety of our country. Only strong government can protect its citizens from all social misfortunes and create the conditions for development and prosperity of the country.

Government should expropriate natural resources (oil, gas, metals, etc.) and dispose them for the interests of *the whole society*, for the well-being of *the whole* people. Natural resources should serve to the whole nation, and not to a small group of greedy oligarchs. All natural monopolies (energy industry, railways, oil and gas industry), having strategic importance for the interests of the whole society, should also be a part of the government property. However, the mixed economy should exist in Russia, combining government, social, and private property. The competition of different forms of property would provide for the dynamic development of the country’s economy.

5. Russia should strengthen its defensive capacity. We live under the conditions of the extremely unstable world. Aggressive circles in Washington are actually waging the Third World War with subordinating the whole world to the USA as an aim. The USA have performed aggression against Yugoslavia and Iraq, are ready to declare war with Iran, North Korea, Syria. That is why Russia needs strong armed forces, capable of repulsing any aggressor, for the defense of its interests and the interests of our allies. Strengthening the armed forces of Russia, development of its military industry complex are the examples of the first priority tasks of our society, solving which would allow to adequately respond to the calls thrown by global liberalization.

6. It is necessary to exert maximum efforts for spiritual and moral revival of Russia.

Russia will never become a strong and prosperous power without a detailed system of moral upbringing of the population in the way of humanism values (real, not liberal one), collectivism, and patriotism. A complex of measures on spiritual and moral recovery supposes the total change of policy of mass media (and, most of all, television), which should exclude demonstration of scenes of violence, sex, amorality, and absence of spirituality. It requires creation of public control councils and introduction of moral censorship in all mass media. It is also necessary to correct the education plans in secondary and higher school towards spiritualism and patriotism. Orthodox Christianity and other traditional religions of Russia should play an important role in reviving the moral.

Summing up all mentioned above, it is necessary to underline that we need to refuse from liberal globalization in the name of survival of the mankind. The world supremacy of the West, headed by the USA, global liberal imperialism come to their historical finale. Any empire is doomed to defeat, as history shows. And the liberal empire of the USA will not be an exception. It was once more confirmed, e.g. by the events in Iraq.

Globalization, in a sense of a natural process of integration of the mankind and peoples' getting closer, is a world public property, and it must serve to all peoples and countries of the world, not only to so called "golden billion", not to western trans-national corporations and governments. **The mankind needs other globalization in the name of its survival. We must transfer from mono-polar, liberal, pro-American globalization to multi-polar globalization, based on mutually profitable collaboration of peoples and governments of the whole world.**

The international sociological community should submit its valuable contribution to the research of perspectives of transfer to globalization for all, to a more humane world. To my mind, it is becoming one of the most vital and important tasks of the world sociology.

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