

Geoculture world system, access to Balkan and Albania

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Abstract

If culture as a term covers a broad range of relations and social behavior, mutually implicated in influential and economic cycles of the global system, then it becomes wordy geoculture. Geoculture system is used as a term by Wallerstein (2004) who had treated it as a concept largely unused and under a theory of geoculture which plays an important role in the present world system. The theses that is presented in this article is that the global trajectory in the Balkan region is increasing from culture and that, it is imperative to establish a strategic culture direction and management, which, in turn, should be formed not only as a principal need, but also as an obligation of social state institutions to find the viable solutions of the global market policy, economy and culture. And in response to the challenging question the culture of integration becomes imperative now facing nationalism. Albania will have to manage perceptions, fears and realities arising from the above mentioned phenomenon, to establish a balance between the “inside” and “outside” views. In this sense main challenge of Albania is the management of cultural globalization to get the most of opportunities despite the risk of losing ground globally.

Keywords: *Geoculture system, globalization, economy, Balkan.*

Introduction

Culture consists of values. The definition of “culture” is thought as a value of “high elements of the human mind, art, science, literature, music”. So, culture means developing a high degree of intelligence in certain areas such as art, science (Worsley, *The Third World*, 1967) etc. Braudel in his book “*The grammar of Civilizations*”, analyses: “The Dictionary of humanities doesn’t allow cut definitions. Not that everything in this dictionary is uncertain or has become such, but most of the terms, not only is not defined once for all, but move from one author to another and do not stop changing before our eyes”. Williams who wrote “*The Sociology of Culture*” (Dervishi, 2000, 25-31) wrote that: “Cultural values are general concepts that define if a culture is desirable or undesirable, good or bad, beautiful or ugly. Culture is related to society but the links between them are very narrow and also differ from each other”. Every culture contains unique patterns of behavior that seem foreign to people with different cultural backgrounds. Values and norms of conduct vary widely from culture to culture. Every culture contains unique patterns of behavior that may seem foreign to people who have different cultural backgrounds.” (Giddens, 2007, 49). Culture is a way of life inherited, shared and cultivated, owned by individuals for the purpose of being members in a social group. In this sense, culture expresses more than “having” something. It expresses that we “are” something. It is an internal condition of the mind and soul, not an amount of circumstances. It’s a completely different distinction: a spiritual issue. Without this “subject”, there would not be the spirit, and “we were not even

be called people”(Giddens, 2007, 43). Spirit, in turn, is nothing but the totality of norms, values, ideals and unique models of the behavior of the people or community, a common way of expression, of living, of interpreting the objects, phenomena or duties. Universal culture is the attribute of all mankind, which expresses the strength adaptation attitude towards human nature. On the other hand, local culture refers to those complex systems encoded meanings through symbols, schemes and other representations created, shared, transmitted, reproduced and socially inherited by individuals in specific social groups and at special times. However, all cultures are more than language, more than clothing, more than feeding habits. Cultures are underground rivers that walk through our lives and relationships, giving us messages that form perceptions, attributes, trials and our ideas about ourselves and others. (Le Baron, 1996, 25). The anthropological concept (or civilization), presents different community cultures as moral values, teachings, attitudes, values, ideals and customs of different peoples and societies in the world. In this sense, this concept is definitely in decline of the amount, assuming the existence of different cultures and normally assuming the existence of a culture for any ethnic group or social grouping (Tylor, 1871, 25). Affiliation to such social groups is closely related to a common cultural identity. Taken in its broader etymological significance, culture is a complex community that includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, moral value and any other jurisdiction and habit acquired by man as a member of society. At the moment we relate to culture as national carriers or other entities, because global culture is not identity. We do not have a global state or nation that could be accepted or at least entered into the discussion of what is global culture. So, in view of the phenomenon, we cannot have global culture. But let's study the culture in relation to globalization, not only as a phenomenon, but also as a process. Then, in this case, we would have to talk about “globalization” culture. Here is exactly where we can step into the global field of integration or disintegration of the cultures with each other. Which cultures will integrate? This is not the case that a nation learns the songs of another nation, nor necessarily exercises habits or traditions of another nation, or lives with the memory of another nation. Culture is the one who associates the global process exchange of people, goods, ideas, knowledge and images. For example, the case of pleasant bilateral relation (e.g., commercial culture, military culture, economic culture, work culture, etc.) not so much because of the inferiority feeling rather than because of the effectiveness in the process of exchange where we are committed to that party. Another example is the case of favorite standards or norm of global relations. Cultural globalization will make clear through this paper, whether people in the world have become more similar or more different due to the exchange.

Access in Geoculture of Global Systems

Geoculture has a broad field of study closely related to geopolitics. Among many applicable topics within the field of study are: Globalization, which is theorized as an explanation for cultural convergence; Westernization, or other similar processes such as modernization; Americanization, Islamisation and other theories of cultural hegemony or cultural assimilation through cultural imperialism, regional cultural differentiation, etc. Wallerstein (2004) has emphasized four theses connected with periods, as follows:

a) there was no “geoculture” (Wallerstein, 1999, 15) during the first three centuries of the world system, which means before the French Revolution;
b) with the French Revolution, was discovered a part of what we understand today with “geoculture”, but as a tension created by three ideologies: conservatism (right), liberalism (middle) and socialism (left); c) liberalism was the ideology prevailing for two centuries (1789-1989); d) American hegemony has come to its end, and now we are open to a new period of chaos, a “dark period”, which will continue until a new system of civilization that can be created (between 2025-2050). Other researchers have discussed about these four theses connected with global systems in the light of considering other viewpoints. In this context, they mainly emphasized that: a) there was modern “geoculture” which results even before the French Revolution (Ernicidades, 1998, 24-89); b) historical circumstances where are configured the three ideologies (conservatism, liberalism and socialism) could not be limited only to the events of French Revolutions), the crisis of liberalism gave way first to a conservative neo-liberalism, and then a free market economy, linked to the hegemony of global power of international companies; c) American hegemony, far from declining, didn't stop increasing, especially after the Gulf War, and that of Iraq and Afghanistan, where USA exhibited a military superiority, as well as political and economic power over Europe and Japan. In contrast to Wallerstein, these researchers seem to believe, that perhaps in the coming years, there will be a growing ecological and economic polarization under US hegemony.

The central thesis of Wallerstein is based on the French Revolution as the starting point for the expansion of liberal ideology. From the standpoint of Latin America, the process of the French Revolution was lived as a starting point - along with American colonial emancipation, in the cases of Peru, India and Colombia. In fact, the war between the European countries and in the United States lead to a certain hegemonic nationalism among a growing industrial bourgeoisie (in Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, China, India still colonial, etc.), which saw in war an opportunity for economic-, political- and cultural independence. There is another ideological phenomenon, which is not included in the scheme analyzed by Wallerstein, but it continues to be very important in the periphery of the world (85% of actual humanity). The failure of populist movements and the emergence of neo-liberalism, “the liberalization of national markets” by the following financial speculative capital “privatization” (as an ideology of IMF) cannot only be explained by ideological crisis of liberalism, which lies in the “center” of the world system, as Wallerstein has tried to explain, but also of geoculture as a whole.

Neo-liberalism, American military and cultural hegemony

The dissolution of the Soviet Union led to the end of the Cold War, which continued since the Yalta Treaty. Neo-liberalism is a requirement for the freedom of competition in a market without monopolies. This economic ideology operates in favor of expanding the hegemony of the center of the world-system, especially the dominant hegemony of the United States in Latin America, which is immersed in an artificial external debt who grows day by day. The conservative ideology of neo-liberalism is giving way to a few more new economical theories, namely: the theory of liberalization of national markets related to privatization,

as a form of hegemonic global power presence of international companies, and financial capital in the hands of a private technocratic bureaucracy throughout the world.

USA has a special position in the international capital scene, compared to the European States, Japan or Canada. In terms of military power and cultural influence, USA is the most important power in the global system - in economic terms (the dollar is still the world currency), in the political level (the ability of the US to impose their will in all levels, including economic level, as can be seen during the Japanese crisis) are proof of a monopoly of international power.

According to Mousy, a distinguished analyst at the French Institute of International Relations, Europe faces several types of fears. Firstly, the fear of invasion of the poor, mainly from the South - a fear that is fueled by demographics and geography. Secondly, the danger of radical Islamists transforming Europe into "Eurabia". Thirdly, noting the risk, Europe will be transformed into a museum ... in a place for tourists and retirees and will not be a hub of creativity and influence ... (Mousy, 2007, 8-9). The latest terrorist act in Paris is a clear indication for which George Friedman conducted a survey. Americans have been and are more optimistic about their future than Europeans and, in general, believe that the privations of today are tomorrow's benefits (Friedman, 2015, 85). Europeans may have a more "historical sense" than Americans, but America has something else important, that is confidence in the future. If there is a way that can annihilate the current civilization and the way of living today, it would happen if the ruling elites in most developed countries would not have the political will to face the sacrifices that require planning for the future, compared to the present. The preference for the future is not simply an aphorism; it has been and remains a necessary "instinct" for the survival and development of society. Only in modern societies this "instinct" is transformed into a human and rational choice in a deliberately programmed activity, which aims the further development of modern civilization, through a series of economic and social policies studied successfully. America has been and is able to play the role of world leadership, defining the main directions of economic, political and cultural policies. For illustration we can bring to attention the American contribution to the Marshall Plan, the American strategy of the Cold War and after the war, etc. Despite the difficulties facing the US economy currently, America has always been able to rediscover herself facing new areas and challenges. Moreover, not only Europe, but the entire international community really depend on the "global public goods" ("Global public Goods") that are guaranteed from the United States, such as the preservation of global security and monetary stability, freedom of maritime trade and liberal trade system, leadership in the fight against global terrorism and in efforts to halt the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the payment of colossal bills for keeping upright NATO, United Nations, IMF, WB, etc. From this perspective, some conclusions have derived from the above analysis: USA has emerged as an international economic power (industrial and financial). In this situation, citizens have become consumers of a capital anonymous and cultural market without inter subjective structures, which can bind their subjectivity in global society. Post - modernity can be considered as a final expression, a geoculture of global system in the current stage of capitalism, which uses an aggressive strategy of globalization, especially through the use of communication, especially those electronic.

Balkan and Albania

Balkan is one of the peninsulas of Europe, with a whole mosaic of desperate people, religions, races and cultures like no other peninsula that deserves an analysis whenever the issue comes to talk about the case of Albanian culture and globalization. Balkan, or as it could be called the heart of Southeast Europe is connected geographically, with two other continents: Asia and Africa. Currently in the Balkan mosaic are included twelve countries: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, Greece, Turkey, Romania and Bulgaria. This area has a total surface of about 795,000 square kilometers and a population of about 75 million of people of different nationalities. Its story is dominated by a long history of coexistence, conflicts, insurgencies, occupations, separations, reunion borders, clashes between empires that accompanied the disintegration of Yugoslavia. The most important religions of Balkan region are Christian (Orthodox and Catholic) and Muslim (Huntington, 1996, 47). In the Balkan as a result of the existence of some nations and countries, different languages are spoken, such as: Romanian, Bulgarian, Albanian, Turkish, Serbo-Croatian, Greek, and Hungarian. Although the Balkan has been for a long time under Ottoman occupation, this region has preserved the identity, culture and language. Todorova, who is author of the book "Imaginary Balkans", states that "... One of the most beautiful things in the Balkan region is not the nations, which have an extremely rich history, but their mentality" (Teodorova, 1997, 11).

Challenged by nationalist culture

The Balkan region has been at the margins of great empires, and consequently, its history is dominated by wars, rebellions, invasions and clashes between empires since the Roman Empire to the recent wars in the former Yugoslavia. The creation of nation states in the Balkans is mainly carried out after the fall of great empires and is associated with the escalation of violence, armed conflict and war. The most dramatic example occurred in the late 20th century, when Serbs forcibly expelled and practiced genocide on the Albanian population of Kosovo, with the sole purpose of their departure and the homogenization of its territory. The exclusion of other ethnicities in the region has been as important as their involvement in the respective communities. After the fall of communism, the exemption was put on the agenda for the reason that throughout history, other ethnicities are seen as "those who do not belong to our community," as "foreign," who were forced to live together. (Woodward, 1995, 223). On the other hand, the inclusion was seen more like assimilation, than finding commonalities or as an opportunity to cohabit between different nationalities.

Albanian geoculture

Albania was part of the Ottoman Empire until its independence in 1912. After World War II, America paid particular attention to the Albanian issue. The American President Wilson, who defended the universal values of democracy, freedom and self-determination of peoples, protected directly the values of Albanian nation. The American interest for

Albania increased in the early 20s of the last century and developed dynamically during the period between the two world wars. The Cold War brought isolation in Albania and immediately after 1990, the American interests in Albania rose once again. The processes of democratization, consolidation of democracy, Kosovo liberation and Albania's accession to NATO, etc., were implemented only with the support of the US. On the other hand, Albania is closely connected to Italy, due to migration and economic development. A common destiny has divided the Albanian people with the neighboring Greek people, because of the last that made efforts to expand in Albania throughout the 20th century. Two decades after the Cold War, the major changes towards the globalization of politics, economy and culture, were fundamental for Albania. Globalization was followed with an unprecedented emigration (one in three residents) as well as full integration in the structures of financial, military and political European and Euro-Atlantic structures. We have two completely opposite dimensions. Along the spiritual social and economic deformation, there was self-preservation of Albanian culture. The goal of these strategies is the preservation and improvement of the best cultural values.

Conclusions

In the Era of Globalization the study of culture is complicated and simplified at the same time. Globalization is the process where the whole globe is becoming a "single socio - cultural" planet where every part of the world has its own geoculture. Global culture is a standard behavior of symbols, values and material objects that have become the common place throughout the world. In this sense, anthropology, in which the concept of culture falls, is a science in which research is always open; its beauty is that it is more hopeful than the ultimate reality interpretation (Strauss, 1963, 347-348). Small nations, like great nations have no choice to ignore globalization, but should have the choice to calculate it. The cultural dimension is the most sensitive dimension of globalization, because culture, as a soft power is in its nature, the most vulnerable. In this context, the main purpose of the existence of academic institutions as a cultural source are the discovery, preservation and communication of knowledge, not only in Albania, but in the whole world.

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