

At the dawn of the 21st century, a true world government, as envisioned by the advocates of globalism, does not exist, even though a lot of time, talk, action and thought in all spheres of existence, whether political, economical, or social, gets devoted to the ongoing process of globalization. Certainly, the world is becoming one. Certainly as well, it is doing so without become one. This contradiction deserves explanation.

Political globalization: Even though full world governance above the level of calculative, internationalist cooperation does not exist and is not even remotely imminent, the fundamental core of a state's politics has shifted dramatically from the core agenda under the early Westphalian state system. Historically, sovereignty was based on the premise of a territorial world. In such a world, governments exercised total and exclusive authority over their domain. Recent developments – the end of the cold war, the onset of the fifth Kondratieff – fastened an ongoing development towards a more globalized world. The nation-state itself nevertheless remained highly robust and might even be gaining in psychological importance at the dawn of an era that sees the now post-sovereign state affected by increasing international influences, often beyond its control. Only through the means of substate and suprastate global governance can the nation thrive, prosper and survive under the challenges imposed by globalization. Typical phenomena transcending the nation state are global ecological problems, diseases such as HIV/Aids or bird flu, nuclear disasters, communications in the age of the telephone and internet, international migration or the nation's currency. Many forms of suprastate global governance try to deal with these challenge, for example the United Nations, the European Union, the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank, even though they are often opposed by anti-globalisationists as the driving forces of unfettered globalization. Most of these suprastate agreements or institutions are by no means democratic, as the global spread of democracies has not resulted in an increased democracy among states. In certain cases, even the opposite seems to be happening, as, for example, the United States strictly seems to follow the concept of a grand imperial strategy, aimed at a unipolar world without a peer competitor, a world in which the US would seek unquestioned power in order to limit any exercise of sovereignty by nation states that might interfere with the US's global design (Chomsky).

Economic globalization: Nowhere can the results of globalization be observed easier than in the economic sphere. Increased trade interdependencies and the international integration of investment have created a world in which governments have little authoritative control over their national economies or currencies. It can be argued that the forces of the spreading neo-liberal world order have resulted in a global "race to the bottom": governments, fighting for new investments or scared of a never ending process of outsourcing, appease the new superpowers, transnational corporations, as they are capable to, which results in a downward-leveling of environmental, labor, and social conditions. Of course, devoted neo-liberals would bet to differ, but it is highly questionable whether structural adjustments and development programs forced upon almost 100 countries by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have in all cases served the best interests of the global economy or first and foremost the interests of few nations, while creating a world dominated by neo-colonialism. The limits of economical globalization have not been reached, and crucial problems, such as 120 different currencies in 193 independent countries and the remaining, generally weakening, trade barriers of borders still exists. An exception is the realm of finances, which is even more globalized and unregularized than trade and indicates that free markets do not always deliver favourable results, as the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis illustrated.

Social globalization: "Primitive" tribes (pre-modernist humans that had not yet developed the capabilities to wreck havoc upon earth) perceived their world different than the first explorers (who, in the course of their explorations, expected to fall off the world) or humans today, who not only know how to destroy the round globe, but also understand themselves as citizens of one earth, increasingly so since the 1960s. Even though half of the world's population might have never used a telephone, a growing minority of the world can theoretically communicate with each other – regardless of any border – as more than 800 million people are connected to the internet. Globalization has not been experienced equally – for many in Sub-Saharan Africa little might have changed since the tribal era (they can just enjoy the sunset with a Coke and wear donated clothes featuring emblems of sport-teams they have never heard about) – but a growing number of humans develops a broader perception of world affairs. For example education (we learn foreign languages or even study abroad), entertainment (more than two billion people watched the last World Cup of Soccer) and migration have become increasingly global (in 2004 2% of the world's population resided outside their nation of birth).

Conclusion: Obviously, there are no neat division lines between political, economical or social globalization in the real world, as all spheres are highly interdependent. The process of globalization has transformed the role of the nation state. The rules of survival have changed from those of the early stages of the Westphalian system. Nevertheless, the nation state remains strong and faces no imminent challenge by a world government. Instead, matters of global governance are often subject to undemocratic international institutions or hegemonic forces.