IS GLOBALISATION A CAUSE OF ASYMMETRIC CONFLICTS? IS IT PART OF THE SOLUTION OR A PROBLEM?

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ABSTRACT

There is no place on the Earth which is not influenced by globalisation processes as for now with differing results and outcomes. It is especially influencing the Middle East and North Africa as they live with own values and those are determined by outside world influences. The paper is to research the interaction between globalisation and asymmetric conflicts that shape world politics, economy, culture and security of the modern world. It covers globalistion effects on asymmetrical warfare and the way that globalisationhas greatly increased the ability of terrorists using asymmetric means and violence, in order to achieve a political, religious or ideological goal. The paper is structured in three sections. It definesthe concepts of globalisation and asymmetric conflicts, presens an interaction between globalisation, cultures and religion and finally describes asymmetric opposition of 'weaker' toward 'strong' in the modern form of 'asymmetric warfare', namely terrorism.

KEY WORDS

Globalisation, asymmetric threat, international relations, Middle East.

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Introduction

Globalisation as a fifth rider of apocalypse is a saviour for one part of the world but damnation for another. There is no place on the Earth which is not influenced by this process; a negative influence has been seen especially in the Muslim world, mainly in the Middle East and North Africa, where 'the majority of regimes, opposition movements, and intellectuals in the region are consciously against globalisation. Moreover, there is no part of the world where violence is more often used in the anti-globalisation struggle, most notably by Osama bin Laden but generally by all radical Islamist movements' (Rubin, 2003). A small group of fanatics targeting the biggest symbol of capitalism and the globalised economic world, in the middle of

the day, flying through the well-defended airspace, changed the world security and sent a strong message to the creators of globalisation.

The aim of the paper is to study the interaction of the two phenomena that shape world politics, economy, culture and security of the modern world – globalisation and asymmetric conflict. It also studies the globalisationeffects on asymmetrical warfare and the way how globalisationhas greatly increased the ability of terroristsusing asymmetric meansand violence in order to achieve a political, religious or ideological goal. This paperargues that globalisation has caused asymmetric conflicts. This problem raises questions about the effects of globalisation on the world. To give a credible answer, this paper will cover some of questions, e.g.: What is an undesirable and dark side of globalisation? How does the Middle East experienceglobalisation? Does globalisation have overlapping ties with Westernisation or Americanisation, the process which causes conflict between western and eastern culture? Is globalisation a major threat to Muslim tradition and religion? Does globalisation cause and facilitate terrorism? The term globalisation is a very broad term, however for the purpose of this research, it is viewed strictly in terms of a relevant conflict generator. It focuses more specifically on the dark side of globalisation that causes conflicts, both externally and internally. The hypothesis suggested here is thatglobalisation is a bleary process, the saviour for one part of the world but damnation for another, and with its negative effects and one-way direction and global injustice, it causes asymmetric conflicts, terrorism and becomes a problem for the global security. The paper is structured in three sections. Firstly, it briefly defines the rather confusing and misleading concepts of globalisation and

asymmetric conflict. Then, the second part shows an interaction between globalisation, cultures and religion. The third part of the paper describes asymmetric opposition of 'weaker' toward 'strong' in the modern form of 'asymmetric warfare', and terrorism.

A 'dark side' of globalisation

Globalisation is not only a process; it is a series of uneven and contradictory processes including political, economic, cultural and technological segment. It does not advocate the only ideology of the free market. It strives to change our lives, culture, and tradition as well as local norms, making a global cosmopolitan society. Kirshner argues that 'the powerful and indefatigable economic, political, and cultural pressures associated with globalisation give rise to new conflicts between groups' (Kirshner, 2006, 8). This process strikes social cohesion and political integration. It impacts cultural barriers that divide people. There is greed, lust for power, profit and control of the rest of the world, western countries and big corporations are widening the gap between the rich and poor. Furthermore, this process is also called a neoliberal ideology for development, led by International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, 'deepens inequality between nations on a global scale, resulting in increased global insecurity through a growing sense of injustice and grievance that may lead to rebellion and radicalisation' (Poku and Therkelsen, 2013, 231).

It is very challenging to define globalisation. Such notions asintegration, openness, transnational, interdependence, multilateralism, closeness, interconnectedness and conflicts, and many others are echoing as globalisation. So, hundreds of different definitions are available from many experts, dependingon in which circumstance

they were created. Academic thinkers are usually divided in the approach of defining globalisation. An interconnection and interactive dimension of an inevitable and very helpful process 'can thus 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' (Giddens, 1990, 64). However, others (Lerche, 1998, Hoffman, 2002, Amin, 2003, Hanafi, 2003, Jones, 2000and Rubin, 2003)are very criticalabout this process stating that,

> 'globalisation has also been portrayed as having a very dark side... driven by economic power, clearly promotes the hegemony of Western culture and corporations; puts jobs and communities at risk in the rich countries and exploits cheap labour in the poorer countries; increases threats to the environment; and undermines the foundations of democracy and social stability by subjecting national political institutions to forces of economic change beyond their control' (Lerche, 1998).

Furthermore, Hoffman argued that 'globalisation, far from spreading peace, thus seems to foster conflicts and resentments' (Hoffman, 2002). Other points of view consider globalisation with its radical effects as 'involving radical reorganizing and reconfiguration of the relationship between individuals, groups and organisations, so that regardless of whether or not individuals become more globally mobile, multiple distant influences affect their lives' (Jones, 2000, p. 15). French-Egyptian economist Amin describes new globalisation led by the political system in the service of global market disturbing the sense of the old process of globalisation. Furthermore, he advocates an alternative humanistic project of globalisation with a socialist perspective.

He argued that 'the erosion of the old system of globalisation is not able to prepare its own succession and can lead only to chaos' (Amin, 2003, p. 41). He presents evidence of two periods of globalisation. The old one which was helping undeveloped regions with a long-term of gain and the modern one, led by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, with the short-term of gain. As a consequence, instead of creating 'New World Order', a globalisation process creates the new form of economic, political and cultural polarization leading the World to new world disorder. This world polarization is especially expressed between industrialized centres and non-industrialized part of the world, between the North and the South.

Most of the Southern thinkers have opposing thoughts about globalisation. One of them is Hassan Hanafi who argues that 'globalisation is one of the common forms of Western hegemony, not only achieved through military action or the economy but also, through the market' (Hanafi, 2003). He accused several western industrialized nations of making the new age of slavery transforming the Third World into one big market using the process of globalisation as 'one of the forms of Western hegemony based on the laws of the market and military power, a concept which goes back to former imperialism.' Further on, the professor called it 'Americanisation, as the United State is now the only existing block which challenges the rest of the world' (Hanafi, 2003). Another Middle Eastern thinker Barry Rubin argued that 'globalisation refers to the spread of ideas, customs, institutions, and attitudes throughout the globe and originated in one part of the world. At present, they are usually Western in origin. Thus, it is easy to see globalisation as largely equivalent to Westernisation' (Rubin, 2003). The process of the world

globalisation is opposed to an inexorably growing anti-globalisation movement. This movement does not reject globalisation as such. It is against weaknesses and current globalisation process defects. Instead of well-being economy or 'happiness', there is the process which goes toward economic profit and clash of civilisations.Although there have always been struggles between individuals, between the small and the big, the rich and the poor and the strong and the weak, globalisation made it even worse in the last few decades. It created bigger inequality between the North and the South. Those differences are the growing sources of tension between globalised and non-globalised, the strong and the weak, therefore creating conditions for conflicts. The majority of conflictsmentionedabove are asymmetric in nature; they are waged within the borders of one country among the dissatisfied and the government, or on the international arena betweendissatisfiedgroups and big centres of power,or between global hegemons and local forces.

There have been no equal powers in the worldsince the fall of the Iron Curtain. So, after it fell, the symmetry of conflicts lost its meaning.Rogue governments, nations and non-state actors rely more on asymmetrical means to attack its very superior enemy. Symmetric old-fashioned warfare is replaced by 'asymmetry in armed conflict', which'has been most often interpreted as a wide disparity between the parties, primarily in military and economic power, potential and resources' (Stepanova, 2008, p. 14). Most of the conflicts after the Cold War are seen as intra-state conflicts. In the last two decades, usually coalition led by a strong power fightsthe weaker within internal conflicts between states or government and non-state actors. Stepanova gives a reliable definition of asymmetric conflict explaining a role of the USA as the great power in the world, where 'the absolute military–technological superiority of the USA over any other actual or potential opponent means that nearly every armed conflict in which the USA may be engaged is by definition asymmetrical' (Stepanova, 2008, p. 15). Thus, following that logic, the asymmetric way of fighting is the only choice for an opponent to express their disagreement. It is not new and it was not been born with globalisation but it was intensified by globalisation afteran transnational terrorist organisation Al Qaida attackedthe World Trade Centre and Pentagon in 2001. This way of fighting has been and will be the biggest challenge for the countries. Global battlefield, the wide spectre of weapon, unknown adversary, non-traditional methods, new technology and borderless environment will portray contemporary conflicts.

Globalisationreshapes the nature of conflict, bringing it from the local environment to the global stage through economic, cultural and political pressure creating violence and new vulnerabilities of global security. Globalisation pressure moving toward union or uniformity undoubtedly creates demand for insulation and forces the weaker to resist. It is obvious that globalisation is a destabilizing factor in the relationship between individual and groups. Creating 'new cultural world order', global forces interfere into a very sensitive cultural and religious domain, awakening neo-fundamentalism as a product of globalisation. However, the 'dark side' of globalisation is driven by interaction between McWorld from one side and the defenders of fundamental cultural and religious values from another side. Instead of having a 'new world order' sufficient for all, globalisation aroused the holy war from local to global stage as a reaction against McDonaldization.

Globalisation, cultural and religious values

The world will clash because of globalisation.Huntington asserted that 'the great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural' (Huntington, 1993). He claimed that the endeavour of the Western countries promoting their democracy and liberalism as universal values, in order to maintain their military preponderance and to advance their economic interests will cause violent response from other cultures or civilizations. Globalised civilisations promote a modern way of life and democracy, forcing others to accept it without their will, whichcauses tension, even anger. Robert Wright argued that 'the modern world – featuring alcohol, satellite-beamed pornography, lapel-wearing alpha females – is an offense to traditional Islamic values. And globalisation sticks modernization in the face of Muslims, whether they like it or not' (Wright, 2002). There are fewer and fewer 'Third World' countries with whichthe West shares cultural and moral, social and political beliefs and aspirations. In essence, globalisation has led to harmful consequences to different cultures around the world, especially to the Muslims world. Modernisation, integration, openness, transnational, interdependence, multilateralism, closeness, interconnectedness and others describing globalisation are going to be against conservative culture and religion of the Muslim world. The Western aspiration for financial interests and benefits are becoming bigger and bigger, leading Western policy to suffer disasters or encountered problems in the Muslims world.

The literature overview showsthat globalisation in a many ways helps people in the Third World countries. If globalisation is taken as phenomena of inter-dependents and interaction in the world, it helps not only individuals or benevolent organizations but fundamentalist and Islamic groups, too. Griffel argues that 'Islamic fundamentalism has been, in fact, strengthened by globalisation. In the Middle East, it is one of its driving forces' (Griffel, 2003). The Middle Eastern fundamental groups benefit from the flow of information and spread of communication. It is clear that globalisation has made a 'global village' ofthe world; however, itmakes an Islamic global village too. Modern technology and interconnectedness make it easy to spread the message among fundamentalist and Islamic groups. So, it is unproblematic to present the humiliation and killing of a Muslim youth in Palestine, western drones of death bombing Syria's and Iraqi's towns, and Islamic fundamentalist executing westerners. There is no need for fundamentalist from all over the world, either Islamic or Christian, to come to the Middle East to see it and start revenge in their neighbourhood in France, US, Belgium or elsewhere in the world. However, western support for Middle East governments in the process of globalisation fuelled conflicts between those pro-western governments and fundamentalist movement. An anti-westernization idea is not related only to the national state level or the particular territory, that idea is in '*Ummah*' (the unity of the Muslims) and it spreads all over theworld. So it would not be a mistake to name this conflict a 'global jihad' caused by globalisation, according to Griffel. Although globalisation helps fundamentalists and other radical groups to spreadtheir ideology, it encroacheson Islamic culture, religion and other values, too.

Even if economic rapid growth and easy integration into the global market using modern information technologies help Muslim countries, there is still the strong impact of globalisation on Muslim culture.

Globalisation as a phenomenon is going beyond information technologies and liberal market as it involves culture, morality and religion, too. Many Arab thinkers share an opinion that globalisation is directed by the West, e.g. there is 'a general fear that globalisation has brought an 'invasion' of American culture to Muslim societies that will 'hollow us out from the inside and domesticate our (...) identity' (LeVine, 2002). Globalisation is understood as the development of forced difference which guides societies to deepen poverty and inequality inside as well as between countries. The result is the same, the continuation of Western domination and its hegemony as it was a hundred years ago. The only differenceis that Western countries usea new tool to overthrow present Islamic cultural norms and establish its cultural values. Globalisation is a new Western approach to achieve imperialist aims in the Muslim world. Fighting against capitalism and materialism over two centuries,the Muslim world is again at the edge of the ending of its realm of quietude and immaterialism. The global 'War on terror' after 9/11 attack on the US made it even worse, killing innocent civilians increases terrorism.A radical Islamic movement uses it to mobilize young and unemployed Muslims against western globalisation promoters and the negative effects of globalisation.

Taking Islam and its '*Ummah*' in entire Islamic civilizationinto consideration, it is obvious that many countries and populations are unable to accept global transformation, especially those negative effects of globalisation which confronts tradition and religion. Rubin argues that globalisation in the Muslim world is 'seen as a major threat to tradition. Where religion is far more traditional in its practice, the defence of religion also conflicts with the acceptance of modernization' (Rubin 2003). The Islamic religion is based on holy Qur'an and the *Hadith*[1]. If modernisation means replacing seven century- old tradition by a new Western tradition, it will not be possible because the Quran is not subject to be changed. In the same article, Rubin is convinced that 'the very size and cohesion of an Islamic community builds a religious, and hence cultural wall against many aspects of globalisation' (Rubin, 2003). Islam is the religion with its own *Sharia*[2] law based on the Qur'an and Hadith and ensures the proper orders to its society, so the elements of globalisation will be in conflict with Islamic belief. However, as a result, western product, globalisationis seen as a devil's work in many Islamic countries and as such will be seen as hostile in the future.

It is obvious that globalisationleadsthe world to chaos. Lynch argues that 'the Arab Middle East stands at the centre of the conflicts and the fear associated with the backlash against the globalisation and Americanisation of the culture' (Lynch, 2006, p. 172). A globalisation process unifies radical Islamic movement in the Muslim world. The easy and fast spread of anti-globalisation Islamists messages lets it be clearly understood and hugely supported among fundamentalist creating an anti-western vision justifying a reason for jihad. Muslim anti-globalisation movements should not be underestimated. Learning about Islamic culture and its religion, understanding and respecting its 'right to be different' could be the way to mitigate effects made by a ruthless process. Otherwise, theworld is

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[1] Hadith, Arabic Hadîth ("News" or "Story"), also spelt Hadît, record of the traditions or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, revered and received as a major source of religious law and moral guidance, second only to the authority of the Qur'ân, the holy book of Islam. (http://www.britannica.com/topic/Hadith)

[2] Sharia, also spelt Sharî'ah the fundamental religious concept of Islam, namely its Islamic law. (http://www.britannica.com/topic/Hadith)

going to face brutal violence between civilisations, manifested through the only possible way, asymmetric warfare known as terrorism.

Globalisation and terrorism

Terrorism existed even before the globalisation process started. It was seen as the weapon of the weak in the conflict between states or parties within one state. The phenomenon as an old terrorism form appears in the first century in Palestine, up to new one, global, modern or jihadist terrorism seen today. It is hard to draw the line between those two eras of terrorism, but it is sure that attacks on US embassies and military installations followed by the attack on Twin Towers and Pentagon on September 11, 2001, have changed the world. A well-known terrorist organisation Al Qaeda made the deadly plan somewhere in Tora Bora mountains and executed it a few thousand miles away, in the heart of superpower. It could be evidence that 'Islamic terrorism, for example, is not only based on support for the Palestinian struggle and opposition to an invasive American presence. It is also fuelled by resistance to "unjust" economic globalisation and to a Western culture deemed threatening to local religions and cultures' (Hoffman, 2002). Other thinkers share the same claim, for example, Lafraie argues that 'the formation of Al Qaeda itself can be seen as a manifestation of globalisation. Itadvocates causes directly or indirectly linked to the globalisation process, and its establishment was facilitated by globalisation' (Lafraie, 2014, p.115). The main players in September 11 attack, the members of 'the Hamburg Cell' were the product of the globalisation process in their countries – Egypt, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, United Arab Emiratesand Lebanon. As a group of young, unemployed people with different education level and religion, disappointed by the role of the West in their countries were an easy target for terrorist recruiters. A group indoctrinated by anti-globalist, used all benefits of globalisation to travel around and conduct training, it easily received money from its founders, and in the end, they used globalisation means, passenger planes to attack the heart of globalisation.

Terrorism grows in both domestic and international arena, especially after the end of the Cold War. Modern terrorism acts violently trying to influence an international system. According to Coker, 'the information technologies of the 1980s facilitate internationalcrime and assist terrorism' (Coker, 2002). Globalisation tools to develop societies as 'the engines of globalisation – the information revolution, cheap and open intercontinental transportation, global 24-hour media, electronic finance infrastructure, increasing participation in international organisations, and liberalized trade and investment' (Pollard, 2002), now used by terrorist to weaken or even destroy those societies. Globalisation provides power and any other means to those nonstate actors or terrorists needed to project its power and methods of violence from one to another part of the world. It was not the case of the old or ordinary terrorism seen at the local level sponsored by the state. Modern terrorist groups act out of national borders, they act at international stages using globalisation tools, simultaneously attacking the most valuable means of globalisation and power canters of globalisation holders. That is exactly what Al-Qaida does at an international level. Those terrorist organisations disrupt the integration of political, economic and cultural activities and with their violent acts, they nationally separate people. Al Qaida identified globalisation as the process of Americanisation that explains why they choseglobali-

sation holders, World Trade Centre towers, and the US military power centre, Pentagon, as their targets and changed the security future of the world. It showed that terrorists do not distinguish civil form military targets to achieve their objectives.

Globalisation changed the nature of terrorism, especially after the end of the Cold War. Many civilians were killed in the last two decades by terrorists because 'the main reason people are targeted is that terrorists no longer distinguish between limited and restricted uses of violence' (Coker, 2002). According to Coker, terrorism is 'the dark side of the global village – the ability of that village's alienated minorities to hit out at their perceived oppressors over huge distances' (Coker, 2004, p. 40). Coker argues that radical terrorists do not reject the means of globalisation but they fight against its message only. They use the common language of globalisation, the internet, a cell phone network, which is an authentic product of the globalised world, even if they are fundamentally against or in conflict with it. They have one thing in common with the forces of globalisation and both sides use it to control the other or to influence each other. However, the influence of global terrorism as a tool of an asymmetric anti-globalisation war will increase with the development of modern technology. Modern technology will be equally helpful and at the same time dangerous for modern societies. There will always be some groups or societies not able to become a part of the global world and they will always be anti-global. These societies or anti-global groups are the dark and dangerous side of the globalisation process. Globalisation through information infrastructure will give them more ability to wage anti-globalisation war in the future.

Cyber warfare presents an imminent threat to highly globalised countries. Considering the cyber threat in the context of globalisation, there is no state which can claim that it has a good capability of understanding its vulnerability within its information infrastructure and its networks. Moreover,

> 'national borders are becoming irrelevant in the global and information environment and globalisation and ICT remove the differentiation between international and domestic threats. The rapidly changing nature of the threats enabled by globalized ICT infrastructure makes vulnerabilities difficult to understand and to identify' (Phahlamohlaka, 2008, p. 104).

Terrorists, spies, hackers and other non-state actors can, relatively easily, access and offensively use Internet Communicational Technology to support their causes and acts and in this way, they easily pose threats to national security of any state. Internet networks and computers democratise access to information and knowledge. 'Malicious hackers, virus and worm writers, identity thieves, terrorists, and transnational criminal organizations reach easily across state borders to threaten individual citizens, economic infrastructure, firms, and government operations themselves' (Herrera, 2006, p. 78) They have become the tools of an asymmetric war. Contemporary terrorists do not depend on their headquarters. It is not important of how far away the terrorist head is; it is easy to act if they know their final goals, their common enemy. Tactics, training and procedures are available with one click onthe Internet. In the globalised world, even big and powerful states do not guarantee invulnerability because becoming a part of the global network of states has become more vulnerable than before.

The population of big cities, strategically important energy resources, information systems that support the life of a modern

state, the transportation means, tourist and banking infrastructures of the worldwide countries are only a part of thetarget list of attacks that have already happened and may happen in the future again. Al Qaeda and organisations which share the same ideology, conduct attacks at the global level by unprofessional combatants led by an ideological and religious view, acting as individuals or groups, attacking civilians and businesses. 'War on terror' in Afghanistan and Iraqdid not stop terrorists;instead, it helped them. It inflamed 'Third world' society's passion and increased terrorist morale, recruiting power, support and ability to act within the international arena.

Conclusion

Globalisationas one of the most important processes of the world development is seen as the integration of world economies. It tends to promote western common values, economy, democracy, culture and a better way of life. Nevertheless, this paper shows its dark side as a conflict generator in the world. This processstrives to change lives, culture, and tradition by shaping the word toward 'the global village', even thoughthis process is not welcomed by others, by the rest of the world,and by those who see globalisation as Americanisation or Westernisation.As the destabilizing factor of global security, globalisation encroaches on a very sensitive cultural and religious domain, awakening Islamic neo-fundamentalism and terrorism. An ideological tool of world's industrialized power centres,glo balisationimposes global hegemony over non-globalised world. Instead of being welcomed, it is rather seen as a return of western neocolonialism and hegemony in the Middle East and North African countries.

It has always been challenging to cross the line which divides civilisations and different cultures, causing failure to respect the right to be different. Globalisation provokes more and more conflicts among global actors. Especially, itrepresentsan impact on the culture and religion among civilisations arousing conflicts and decreasing international security. It is clear that theopaque processgives the large share in the global insecurity and causes asymmetric conflicts. Globalisation became the large part of the problem for global security.This unstoppable process leads the world to new merciless conflicts. In countering global conflicts in the future, the biggest challenge will be to ensure that ordinary lives continue and after all, the protection ofordinary people's lives in this ruthless process.

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