

HOW TO SAVE GLOBALISM: A PROPOSAL BASED ON METHEXIOLOGY

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The goals of the present essay are the following: first, to elucidate the terms ‘globalism’ and ‘globalization’; secondly, to analyze the problems of the established process of globalization and the controversies to which it has given rise; thirdly, to analyze the incompetence and spiritual deficiency of the contemporary managers of globalization and the flaws of anti-globalism; fourthly, based on my books *Methexiology: Philosophical Theology and Theological Philosophy for the Deification of Humanity* (2016) and *The Metaphysics of World Order: A Synthesis of Philosophy, Theology, and Politics* (2015), both published by Pickwick Publications (Eugene, Oregon, USA), to ‘save’ globalism by purifying it from the flaws of its incompetent managers and misguided advocates and from the propaganda of its opponents.

In hindsight, the decade of the 1960s marks an evolution in world politics wherein the concept of globalism has become increasingly relevant. The term ‘globalism’ refers to a world that is characterized by network forms of organization transcending country borders and geopolitical constraints. By the term ‘globalization,’ we mean the velocity (namely, the speed and the direction) of globalism.

Globalism is, in essence, an objectivation of the communication among conscious entities in the realm of political life. As I argue in my book *The Metaphysics of World Order* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2015), humans and, in general, human organizations, are not only ‘earthly’ (that is, geographically or geopolitically predisposed) beings, but also ‘celestial’ ones, in the sense that they are characterized by spiritual freedom. In particular, human creativity, through science, art, and technology, helps the human spirit to overcome the forces and the inertia of the material world and to pursue structural changes. Furthermore, humans relate to beings and things not directly, but mainly through meanings, significances, and evaluative judgments; thus, the communication among conscious beings gives rise to a system of exchange of information and meanings. As a result, politics is conducted not only in the context of a geographically determined realm, but also in the context of a system of exchange of information and meanings.

Globalism is a phenomenon with ancient roots, and every significant segment of historical space-time is characterized by some degree of globalism, since no historical society has ever been an absolutely closed system. The increasing political significance of globalism from the 1960s onward is inextricably linked to the scientific and technological revolutions in the fields of communication and transportation as well as to the identification and management of intrinsically global issues, that is, issues that

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necessarily have an impact on all parts of the globe, such as the global ramifications of a nuclear war, environmental questions and ecological issues, diseases, the management of the global economy, etc.

The controversy about globalization

The increasing globalization of the international system (especially in the areas of production, finance, political communication, and political activism), the changing nature of the inter-state system in a post-hegemonic era, and the increasing significance of global issues give rise to new conceptions of and debates about global governance and world order. Most international actors address the issue of globalization in terms of political power, specifically, in terms of the distribution and the redistribution of power among the members of the international system. There is no need for extensive research to validate such a remark; it is sufficient to go through the statements of Heads of States and Government or Foreign Ministers during political debates in the United Nations General Assembly, which is, arguably, the most representative epitome of the world body politic.

The turmoil and the controversy associated with the increasing globalization of the international system are, to a large extent, the results of the interaction of at least three types of international actors. First, there are those whom I will call ‘multilateral globalists’; they are those who embrace globalism and the increasing globalization of the international system, but either they do not fully understand the cultural (that is, essentially spiritual) underpinnings and requirements of globalism or they deliberately try to subjugate globalism to the rationale of what is known in the scholarly discipline of International Relations as political realism/neorealism (whose paradigmatic representatives are Hans J. Morgenthau and Kenneth N. Waltz). Globalism primarily cultivates and expresses the sociality of the international actors’ consciousness, and, thus, a sustainable increase in globalization is possible only if it is underpinned by suitably socialized international actors, whereas political realism/neorealism primarily cultivates and expresses the selfishness of the international actors’ consciousness.

Secondly, there are those whom I will call ‘unilateral globalists’; they are those who embrace globalism and the increasing globalization of the international system, but, inspired by Immanuel Kant’s theory of the categorical imperative, they give priority to the logical form of the international actors’ behavior and overall activity, specifically, to the international actors’ formal, rational conformity to the rules of the established global system, over the international actors’ actual mental contents and states. However, Hedley Bull, in his book *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (second edition, London: Macmillan, 1995, p. 253), pointedly argues that the case for globalization and global governance as it is made out by Kant and, generally, by those whom I call ‘unilateral globalists’ is flawed, because it contains the following contradiction: it postulates that “sovereign states are in a Hobbesian state of nature, from which they need to escape by subordinating themselves to a common government,” which is a fallacy, because, “if states are indeed in a Hobbesian state of nature,” then “the contract by means of which they are to emerge from it cannot take place”; in short, as Bull correctly argues, “the difficulty with the Kantian prescription is that the description it contains of the actual condition of international relations, and the prescription it provides for its improvement, are inconsistent with one another.”

In my book *Methexiology: Philosophical Theology and Theological Philosophy for the Deification of Humanity* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2016), I articulate a thorough criticism of Kant's ontology and ethics, and I explain why the foundations of a genuine society (whether national or international) cannot be exhausted in reason. In particular, in my aforementioned book (p. 224), I argue that "reason does not have the power of communion . . . because reason is based on a sharp distinction between the subject and the object, and, therefore, reason can lead to a unified perception of the object of knowledge, but it cannot unite the knower with the known." In other words, reason keeps individuals separated from the ultimate, transcendent, supra-individual, and, hence, essentially universal source of the significance of beings and things. But it is exactly the individual international actors' communion with the ultimate, transcendent, supra-individual, and, hence, essentially universal source of the significance of beings and things that is needed in order to give rise to a viable global system.

Therefore, due to their philosophically flawed approaches to globalism, the aforementioned advocates/managers of globalization have degraded globalization into a process of globalizing brutal power politics, selfishness, institutionalized corruption, fraud, and turmoil. Furthermore, due to the aforementioned spiritually deficient advocates and/or managers of globalization, the notion of globalization has been given a bad reputation and has triggered various forms of reaction.

Thirdly, there are those whom I will call 'anti-globalists'; they are those who oppose globalization, because they primarily want to intensify the experience of their ego and to fortify their ego defenses against other egos. Usually, anti-globalists have strong feelings of existential insecurity and threat, and, therefore, they are highly introverted. As a result, anti-globalists seek to impose severe controls on the exchange of information and meanings among international actors, and their philosophical underpinnings and arguments mainly stem from the philosophies of Hegel, German romanticism, and Heidegger (for a criticism of these philosophies, see my book *Methexiology: Philosophical Theology and Theological Philosophy for the Deification of Humanity*, Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2016, chapters 1–3 and 7).

What does it mean 'to save' globalism?

It should be clear by now that neither those whom I call 'multilateral globalists' nor those whom I call 'unilateral globalists' can give rise to and manage a viable global system. Therefore, apart from the anti-globalists, who openly and actively oppose and impede the progress of globalization, both 'multilateral globalists' and 'unilateral globalists' undermine globalization, because they do not approach international actors as conscious human systems, nor do they contemplate the philosophical-anthropological underpinnings of globalization, and, therefore, they are unaware that the ultimate enemy of and obstacle to the progress of globalization is a fundamental injury in the sociality of the international actors' souls, since, as I have already argued, globalism is a historical manifestation of the sociality of the international actors.

In my book *Methexiology: Philosophical Theology and Theological Philosophy for the Deification of Humanity* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2016, p. 224), I argue that, from the perspective of my philosophy of *mēthexis*, or methexiology, salvation means "ontological fulfillment," and not "a static, passive, and actually

tedious state, nor an infinite extension of time” (ibid, p. 224). In other words, I maintain that “‘salvation’ does not mean that one is ‘saved from’ something (e.g., from a danger or from a penalty), but it means that one is integral, whole, precisely, that one has reached ontological fulfillment . . . ‘salvation’ means the full actualization of one’s existential potential” (ibid, p. 224).

From the perspective of the aforementioned definition of ‘salvation,’ ‘to save’ globalism means to drive globalism to its ontological fulfillment, to make it integral and whole, by transforming the members of the international-political system into what I call in my aforementioned book “international-political hypostases” (ibid, p. 71). A ‘hypostasis,’ or ‘person,’ is “a socialized individual, or an-individual-in-a-relationship” (ibid, p. 69). Therefore, the members of the international-political system “can become ‘persons’ only if they are partakers of a truth that transcends them. As a result of its participation in the transcendent, an international-political actor acquires an individual value (exactly due to its relationship with the transcendent), and the different international-political actors that are aware of their participation in the transcendent constitute an international-political society, that is, they recognize each other as members of a truth that can be participated by each one of them but transcends every one of them. In other words, international-political actors can become persons only if they have a common, universal, existential mirror in which they can look at themselves and evaluate themselves” (ibid, p. 69–70).

The aforementioned meta-political argument leads us to the realm of ontology, and it calls for a philosophy of ‘participation.’ This scope is served by my philosophy of *mēthexis*, or methexiology, which “is a system of philosophical theology and theological philosophy that is focused and founded on the concept of *mēthexis*. The Greek word *mēthexis* literally means participation and sharing. It is important to understand that *mēthexis* is something much deeper and more specific than the term ‘relation,’ because *mēthexis* emphasizes the event of an ontologically grounded union” (ibid, p. 1).

My methexiology suitably reinterprets, updates, and restores classical/pre-modern metaphysics and fuses philosophy and theology, treating the first as a way of life characterized by spiritual freedom and the latter as the completion of the first, thus leading to the “deification of humanity.” Without an ontologically grounded humanism, globalization is essentially problematic, and it degrades into a self-defeating power game. In order for the human individual to be endowed with an *a priori* value and sacredness, the following two conditions must be fulfilled: first, there must be an ontologically solid truth (i.e., the ultimate source of the significance of the beings and things in the world, or the good-in-itself), and, secondly, this ontologically solid truth must be knowable, specifically, humans must be able to establish a personal relationship with it.

Globalization as a philosophical question

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, globalization and the information revolution made amply clear that the communication of conscious beings with each other makes time operate as a multiplier of space by transcending all spatial barriers and divisions (for more details, see Paul Virilio, *The Information Bomb*, London: Verso, 2000, pp. 89, 94; Lee Sproull and Sara Kiesler, *Connections: New Ways of Working in the*

Networked Organization, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991, pp. 15–16). Neither space nor time exists without the human being. If, therefore, an international actor conquers space, but fails to culturally ‘conquer’ the human factor, then spatial conquests will be annihilated by time. The quick collapse of the Hunnic Empire that was formed by Attila in the fifth century AD is a characteristic case in point.

Classical geopolitics (founded by the German geographer Friedrich Ratzel, the Swedish political scientist Johan Rudolf Kjellén, and the German general and geopolitician Karl Ernst Haushofer) substitutes intuitive cognition, which has a direct, subjective character, with geographical intuition, which ‘spatializes’ its object and distances it from the thinking subject. Geopolitical calculations can yield benefits, indeed, but, if they fail to take the dimension of time into account, even the most sophisticated geopolitical calculations will be shuttered by time. On the other hand, a spiritually significant and fruitful geopolitical achievement, like, for instance, the Greek and Greco-Roman empires, by conquering both the spatial and the temporal dimensions, can survive over time by being continually interpreted and reinterpreted, just as it is the case with artefacts. As I argue in my book *Methexiology: Philosophical Theology and Theological Philosophy for the Deification of Humanity* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2016), a thing or being is meaningful if it is united with a significance that transcends the corresponding thing or being itself.

‘Philosophy’—which is a Greek word literally meaning ‘love of wisdom’—should be understood as a way of life that manifests and expresses one’s conscious choice to seek truth freely and “for the sake of *theoria*”; in the context of classical Greek philosophy, *theoria* means gazing at the real truth. According to Herodotus’s account (1.29.2), Solon, one of the so-called “seven sages” of ancient Greece (i.e., seven early-sixth-century BC philosophers, statesmen, and law-givers), having given the Athenians new laws, travelled around the world “for the sake of *theoria*” (Patricia Curd and Daniel W. Graham, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Presocratic Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 512). Therefore, “philosophy is a self-sufficient conscious enquiry that is nurtured and enriched by the given activity itself, since *theoria* (i.e., gazing at the real truth) is the ultimate pleasure of the mind, and, therefore, an end-in-itself” (Nicolas Laos, *Methexiology: Philosophical Theology and Theological Philosophy for the Deification of Humanity*, Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2016, p. 182).

In the context of globalization studies, ontology is necessary not only in order to search for universal values and endow humanism with ontological underpinnings, but also in order to find out what is one’s *real* interest (given that every international actor seeks one’s interest). If one is insensitive to ontology, then he is unable to realize his *real* interest, and then power politics is determined by blind instincts and delusions. It is then that psychopathic personalities come to power in order to satisfy their psychopathic tendencies through politics; for instance, the former U.S. Foreign Secretary Henry Kissinger is notorious for having cynically admitted that, for him and those who share his ethos, “power is the ultimate aphrodisiac” (as quoted in *The New York Times*, October 28, 1973). In general, the manner in which political realists/neorealists construe the ‘national interest’ is simplistic, because it cannot answer to the following question, originally posed by Plato: “was this how you meant to define what is right, that it is that which seems to the stronger to be his interest,

whether it really is or not?” (Plato, *The Republic*, trans. D. Lee, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987, 340c).

In his *Republic*, Plato argues that politics would betray itself if its purpose were not the moral improvement of both the individual and the society. However, in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Thucydides (ca. 460 BC-ca. 395 BC) puts in the Athenians’ mouth the following words toward the Melians: “Of the gods we believe, and of men we know, that by a law of their nature wherever they can rule they will” (*Thucydides*, tr. B. Jowett, ed. A. P. Peabody, Boston: D. Lothrop & Co., 1883, book 5). Furthermore, in his “First Olynthiac” Speech, Demosthenes argues that the policy-maker must make decisions instead of debates and that every policy must be judged on results and not on moral principles. Walking in the path of Demosthenes’s pragmatism, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) argued that his political method consists in drawing maxims or rules for successful political behavior from history and experience. Machiavelli’s method is based on a pragmatic and utilitarian approach to politics (*The Portable Machiavelli*, selected writings trans. P. Bondanella and M. Musa, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979).

However, Plato has posed a crucial political question that has been rather evaded in an unsuccessful manner by Thucydides, Demosthenes, Machiavelli, and twentieth-century political realists/neorealists: “was this how you meant to define what is right, that it is that which seems to the stronger to be his interest, whether it really is or not?” Contra the self-complacent ‘political realism’ of the Athenians, their decision to destroy the Melians, even though it seemed to be their interest, proved to be “wrong and deluded” (W. Liebeschuetz, “The Structure and Function of the Melian Dialogue”, *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 88 (1968), p. 76). Furthermore, if we judge politics on results, as Demosthenes urges us to do, then history vindicated Philip II of Macedon and Alexander the Great and not the pragmatist Demosthenes. In addition, Machiavelli wrote the book *Discourse on the First Ten Books of Titus Livy*, in which he qualified and moderated the political model he had previously proposed in *The Prince*.

Methexiology is not a particular theory, but rather a general philosophical orientation. Therefore, in *Methexiology: Philosophical Theology and Theological Philosophy for the Deification of Humanity*, I elucidate the significance of methexiology for the study of ontology, epistemology, ethics, philosophical psychology, theory of justice, philosophy of history, and philosophy of religion. I argue that, faced with the modern and the postmodern crises of meaning, humanity needs a new myth, a new spiritual formula, for the resacralization of man and his cosmos, without restoring defunct totems, without using tales as ‘cheap’ substitutes for the lack of a life-giving myth, and without negating history (my goal being to reconcile ‘history’ to ‘eternity’). In my *Methexiology*, I study the ‘archaeology,’ or ‘genealogy,’ of the modern and the postmodern crises of meaning, I delineate a new interpretation of Plato’s and Aristotle’s philosophies as well as of the Greek church fathers’ (especially the Hesychasts’) essays on the deification of humanity, and, based on my interpretation of classical Greek philosophy and Hesychasm, I propose methexiology as a way of overcoming the modern and the postmodern crises of meaning and as a way of resacralizing man and his cosmos through a new metaphysically grounded humanism.