



**Universitatea „Al.I. Cuza” din Iași, Facultatea de Filosofie și Științe
Social-Politice**

SUMMARY of PhD THESIS

THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE NATION STATE IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

SCIENTIFIC COORDINATOR,

Prof dr. CARPINSCHI ANTON

PhD STUDENT,

TRANDAFIR ANDREEA ALINA

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The research staying at the base of this PhD thesis comes to complete and synthesize the results of my theoretical study from the faculty years and later on, master years, on globalization. The starting point was represented by a huge surprise: the thesis according to which globalization, seen from the point of view of technological determinism and the generalization of certain measures of economic policy, resolves the problems of mankind, ends up simplifying reality to a great extent. Putting aside any type of personal assessment approach regarding this “memorable change”, one of the main questions that boosted me to make this analysis refers to the motivation for which this belief in the decline of nation – states metamorphosed in a defining marker of our times.

Issues of the research

The idea of the research starts from the fact that within the discussions about globalization, at the level of political sciences, prevails the problem of the nation-state. Too often and too easily its ending is invoked, too often is mentioned the beginning of a homogenous global culture. Bringing into

question the limits of such an idea and the clear delimitation of the demarcation lines between reality and potentiality are two actions which, in this context, become necessary.

The main hypothesis thus states that the nation - state remains, at least for now, the main actor of the contemporary international relations, despite the destructured effects of globalization and the apparition of some powerful supernational and transnational actors which bring into question its supremacy. The second hypothesis relies on the fact that the EU member nation-state is in course of adjusting its functions. The evolution of the globalization process did not diminish or dissolve the role it fulfilled as it was thought before the end of the Cold War. The state is interested in surviving, its existence being still necessary even if only for providing a sense of identity to its people. Acting within the international organizations, the state cannot transfer its sovereignty, nor freely nor constrained for thus it would alienate itself as a self-governing entity. What we experience is, on the other hand, a cession / delegation of certain attributes, process conceived within certain limits. Unlike the classical realist and neorealist perspective on international relation, which shift the focus on the state of anarchy with war potential, on

the notion of competition for power and security and on the calculations related to surviving and hegemony, the present analysis intends to demonstrate that small and middle states too, not only the large states, have the capacity of achieving influence and signification at the level of the international system.

Actuality and opportunity of the research theme

The theme's actuality is conditioned, on one side, by the profound metamorphosis of which the contemporary world is part of, and on the other side, by the necessity of shaping a new level of consciousness of state's development in the context of globalization.

At the beginning of the 21st century, globalization, positions itself as a "fashionable" concept of social sciences, a key term for journalists and politicians worldwide. It is widely stated that we live in an era in which most part of our social life is subsumed to global processes, an era in which cultures, economies and national boundaries are about to disappear. Alerts about diminishing or even the disappearance of nation states under the "tyranny of globalization" have and will definitely be drawn in the future. It is important to see who

takes advantage from the diminishing of power prerogatives or if the “breaches” that might appear are meant to facilitate the apparition of interests outer to the national area. What can be quantified up to a certain point are the nation-state’s reactions to the attempts of cracking the system of power.

The generous theme of the Ph.D. thesis required the study of a wide bibliography, both physical and electronic format (more than 300 titles). Although numerous specialists refer to globalization as an all-inclusive concept with coordinates understood from the start, in reality, the problem is much more complex, both theoretically and practically.

Structure and content analysis of the Ph.D. thesis

The thesis is structured in four pillar chapters. As custom, the paper begins with the argumentation of the theme chosen and it ends with a chapter dedicated to conclusions, bibliography and annexes. Each chapter of the thesis is developed based on a complex, specific bibliography, which I consider fully relevant for the theme analyzed, the thesis’s

coherence being provided by the logical succession of the chapters throughout the paper.

In introducing the thesis I have tried to clearly put forth reasons for the premises, the motivation for choosing the theme and the research directions considered, underlining the theoretical importance of the paper.

The first chapter of the thesis – *GLOBALIZATION – BETWEEN REALITY AND NECESSITY* – consists in a wide study, structured such to bring light on the most important aspects related to the evolution of the phenomenon of globalization. It was not my intention to fully deal with what globalization is about (this would turn out to be impossible from the start), so to draw up the complete context of a multidimensional phenomenon; what I wanted was to underline the shades of this phenomenon. For good reason, I have chosen to deal with the contemporary meaning of this problematic in a separate part, mainly from the constructivist perspective, choosing to point out elements as semantic complexity, the danger of terminological and explanatory abuse (in case of excessive and improper use of the concept) or the diversification of approaches.

Globalization has accompanied, at least in the past 5000 years, the written and unwritten history of mankind, but the matrix of contemporary globalization is the result of a specific social-economic, political, cultural and technological conjuncture, characterized mainly by the quick assimilation of humanity's global condition. Implicitly, A. Carpinschi noticed that time and space compression have favored the conscience of supraterritoriality and past, present and future ecstasy in a continuous supra-spatial and supra-temporal form. Consequently, from an ontological point of view, globalization represents the consciousness of “*becoming into being*” of human diversity¹. The problem which rises is about locating the historical proximity of this flux of becoming into being – transposition of the onto-theological conception of globalization in the cultural and political context of modernity, post-modernity and trans-modernity as well as the identification of the transformations it generates². To a more

¹ Anton Carpinschi, *Globalization and Multiculturalism. Towards a New Paradigm: The Comprehensive Politics*, in Sandu Frunză, Nicu Gavriluță, Michael S. Jones (eds.), *The Challenges of Multiculturalism in Central and Eastern Europe*, Editura Protopress, Cluj-Napoca, 2005, pp. 22-23.

² Anton Carpinschi, *Cultura recunoașterii*, Editura Fundației Academice AXIS, Iași, 2008, pp. 27-28.

general view, globalization seems to pose in a whole impossible to explain and include, with parts, components and microelements whose classification could not shed light on the ambiguous nature of the huge process in which they integrate. U. Beck, was definitely right about globalization when he defined it as: *”the word (key and litigation) most widely used and abused, the rarest defined and probably the most misunderstood, nebulous and politically spectacular over the past and future years”*³, pointing out very well the dynamism of the contemporary world and the ideological and social changes such a phenomenon ends up generating.

As any other type of discourse about immediate, tangible reality the subject of globalization gives birth to powerful controversies and suffers from conceptual imprecision. The phenomenon’s analysis shows that we are confronting ourselves with false, ideologising perceptions of the phenomenon or simply inappropriate or fake. Knowing and understanding globalization derives mainly from the way the concept is defined. The concept’s dissection should include a keen and critical assessment of the term itself. A

³ Ulrich Beck, *Ce este globalizarea? Erori ale globalismului – răspunsuri la globalizare*, Editura Trei, București, 2003, p. 37.

confused basic concept or misunderstood later on compromises the general understanding of the problem. By contrast, a clear and revelatory definition, includes responsibilities, orients the process' evolution in the positive directions. The specialized literature abounds in definitions of globalization, causing certain confusion in using the concept as it is interpreted differently by each field. Thus, the term is quite vague used, *“as a word among others, for simply designating the pronounced internationalization of economic activities, through the high level of interdependence and integration of national economies”*⁴. In fact, more than once terms related to globalization are used but their meaning is not made explicit. Many of the definitions proposed thus sin either by their minimalist approach – reducing the phenomenon exclusively to its economic manifestations – or by excessive generalizations – connecting it to all the modern changes in global society.

⁴ Grahame Thompson, “Introduction: situer la mondialisation”, in *Revue Internationale des Sciences Sociales*, no. 160, June, 1999, p.159, article available online at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/Ulis/cgi-bin/ulis.pl?database=&lin=1&ll=1&gp=1&look=default&sc1=1&sc2=1&nl=1&req=2&au=Thompson,%20Grahame>, site accessed on March 3rd, 2011

Having as starting point the diversity of the positions regarding globalization and the nature of global activities and changes, there are, too, radically opposed positions as far as the politics regarding this phenomenon are considered. On one hand, neoliberals state that globalization should be guided by the power of the market, public authorities being responsible only of facilitating this dynamic, without interfering. By contrast, the reformists reckon that globalization should be permanently oriented and guided through public politics, including state and super-state measures. From an even more radical position, the traditionalists seek for de-globalization measures, being interested in a return to the previous status-quo of pre-globalization. At the same time, globalist socialists and postmodernists support the continuation of globalization but they think it should be accompanied by a revolutionary transformation, apart from the capitalist or rationalist social structure⁵.

The second chapter, *NATION STATE – TYPE OF SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL AGGREGATION*,

⁵ J. A. Scholte, *Globalization – A Critical Introduction*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 2000, pp. 33-34.

includes the theoretical aspects of the evolution of nation – state and its structural and functional particularities. The arguments of economic globalization, creating the image of a world economy which cancels borders, have neglected some deep processes through which powerful state actors themselves have changes the rules of the game, including those related to national defense and international security. Nation states present a considerable adaptability and variety as far as the reactions to periodic changes are concerned and the capacity to meditate and coordinate the relations established at international and internal level as well. The tendency to see these constrains as absolute and not just relative, with the uncontested finality “the end of state history”, does not have much in common with the state’s adaptation process to the external and internal challenges which are generated by globalization and the new international order.

To continue this approach, naturally, in the third chapter - *EUROPEAN UNION – POLE AND ACTOR OF GLOBALIZATION* - I chose to point out the specific aspects of a theoretical analysis of EU’s role within the present international political system, characterized by the

(geo)political rearrangement at planetary level, regarding the importance of European integration for international relations. The Europe of the new millennium represents the result of profound transformations due to the evolution of globalizing processes and to the old continent's measures to project a new identity and consequently, a new role in global politics. Europe is seeking to fulfill its desideratum in becoming a powerful worldwide political-economic actor, but also a security provider with international projection.

I have chosen to structure the analysis so to start from the general and get to the particular (from the theories of integration to governance and then to its components and implications). The first part was thus dedicated to theoretical and methodological considerations, as well as to a brief analysis of integrationist theories, contributing in this manner to better understanding the theoretical approaches on European integration and also understanding the way in which the new interpretations of EU's political and institutional architecture have appeared and grown stronger. In this sense, related to the debate on the theory of international relations and compared policy, I have underlined the divergent projections on the Union (international organization, sui

generis system, possible future feudal state) and I have briefly presented classical or contemporary theories on European integration starting with the influence of federalism, functionalism, neofunctionalism and transactionalism, continuing with the debate between neofunctionalism, intergovernmentalism and constructivism for finally pointing out the features of the new approaches on European integration.

I have tried to clearly present the parameters of the present international political system and of EU as an entity reported to this structure, and I have started from the hypothesis that the contemporary international system is experiencing a structural transformation and not one of the system as a whole, transformation supported and conditioned to a great extent by the readjustment of the international economic base and the international financial-economic system. In this context, I have tried to point out the manner in which EU penetrates the peripheral regions, a series of political-military, economic-social and institutional mechanisms turning into instruments used to strengthen its presence in various regions around the globe and (re)establish the relations with the other main actors of the international

scene in the context of the new coordinates from politics and world diplomacy.

The fourth chapter of the thesis, *THE ANSWER OF THE EU MEMBER NATION STATE TO THE CHALLENGES OF GLOBALIZATION*, is dedicated to the attempt of demonstrating that the processes of European construction, direct consequence of the evolution of globalization, does not annul the nation – state, but on the contrary, demand a thorough examination of the state and of its role, a difficult attempt which takes into consideration all balances: between interior and exterior, centre and periphery, state and society. In Europe can so be noticed two contradictory megatendencies: on one hand, a profound study of the integration determined precisely by globalization and in particular, by the integration at financial and economic level, and on the other hand, an intensification of the process of promoting and assuming national interests. The attempt of understanding the EU has always been a challenge, mainly because its massive expansion, the new institutional architecture and the continuously changing political concerns. The interaction between the member nation-states has experienced, in time, various changes which naturally, lead to

a dynamic of the modifications appeared at the level of international diplomatic relations. EU has brought along a radical and profound modification of the limits set between internal and international policy. What are globalization's challenges and which are EU's political options and implicitly that of the member states for facing them effectively? This is the key question around which the analysis presented in this chapter is structured, a synthesis of the attempt of trying to find an answer for the destiny of nation –state in the middle of globalization.

Taking into consideration the results of the analysis presented in the first four chapters of the thesis, the fifth chapter synthesizes a series of *conclusions* on the impact of globalization on the evolution of the nation – state. Finding itself in a moment in which it must deal with its own weaknesses and faults, the world sees itself forced to improvise along the way without having the necessary time to objectively analyze the basic concepts in defining society. Globalization represents more than a system based on clearly stated economic and political rules. More likely, it is a new way of being, an entire universe which interferes with the life of every individual through the direct or indirect effects on the

community he is part of. For this reason, globalization deserves to be (more) attentively examined for fully understanding its complexity due to the multitude of reunited dimensions and avatars, for trying to fructify both chances and advantages, but mainly for succeeding in reducing costs and undesired effects. The political dimension of the globalization process aims at changing the place and the role of contemporary states in the political – economic structure of world community.

The evolution of the globalization process did not lead to the diminishing or the dissolution of the nation – state's role, as it was thought before the end of the Cold War. Nonetheless, it is necessary to recognize that its role finds itself in an intense process of reassessment and adjustment. In case that nation –states assume their role of main subjects of international relations, globalization contributes to the apparition of new actors and active structures. There is an objective necessity for maintaining the state as center for consolidation and development of culture, original political and legal features and support of national identity. The nation-state does not disappear nor does it become useless, as many comments suggest, but it is subjected to a certain evolution

trend. In this way supplementary levels at which problems can be solved appear – both superior and inferior to the nation – state. The frontiers, rigid not until recently, thus enjoy greater permeability which finds itself at quite an advanced level in European Union's Europe. Here, member states have transferred to a new supranational organization from central competences up to monetary sovereignty.

Referring to the EU model in the context of political globalization, we can state that the Union has generated a significant institutional impact by reconfiguring national agendas and by inviting to institutional innovation. The internal and external challenges EU confronts itself with and implicitly, its member states, manifest themselves as a complex, dynamic and opened system. They are complex, in continuous expansion and interdependence. Their effects are practically, cumulative and the consequences cover a wide range of aspects. On the other hand, the consequences of these effects influence the EU member states differently, either positive or negative. Consequently, their efforts will have various intensities, natures and directions. Analyzing and synthesizing the components of social life we notice that the historic process in its complexity, sometimes contradictory,

presents itself not as an irrational and chaotic flux of phenomena and events, but with a logic of its own, demonstrating a continuity and the relationship between phenomena and events, thus presenting a complex and multidimensional unity and demonstrating the existence of certain universal, functional laws from ancient times, manifesting in all life's components both as functional and development laws, as dynamic and static laws. This mark of the intersection of history and traditions, cultures, religions, various mentalities and behaviors materializes into the unity of a social organism whose components function perfectly, in their own rhythm. Men always aim at a certain unity with their fellows without which cohabitation becomes impossible, an unity which does not contest diversity in any way.

It is very possible that in the near future the discussions about united Europe to be transferred from the political and economic sphere to the cultural area. For the time being, it is certain that the present context presents a Europe highly divided by unequal economic development levels and by an important series of differencing realities. The antagonisms which have marked the continent's history have come to an end, obviously, but their marks have remained

present in representations, images, mentalities and attitudes from which come to the surface periodically in manners which cannot be ignored. The mechanism of European integration, which has functioned successfully on economic, legal, institutional and monetary levels, cannot be used as a pattern in the cultural field as well. Cultures – as the final shape of creative genius – do not integrate as economies, legal and/or administrative systems do. The question is if it is possible to harmonize the plural identities in tomorrow's integrated Europe. And if this is possible, how will it happen? No one can have a previously prepared answer. The European Union will not annul Europe's main richness: its cultural diversity, human diversity, and the diversities which make creation and history possible. Every detail must be considered as part of a puzzle which once put (back) where it belongs completes the entire ensemble. Historical analysis manages best, probably, to do such.

In this context, many motivations can be brought forward to confirm the main hypothesis from which this research started – that nation – state and its destiny in the process of political globalization is far from having reached its “historic expiration” period:

1. *Nation-state remains the main fundamental actor of the international system.* To the extent in which globalization might reach to erode until disappearance nation – states, the present international system would disappear itself too, or this type of scenario is the least utopic.
2. *Nation – state represent the main regulatory factor for the status of territories and that of populations;*
3. *Nation – state continues to remain a powerful economic actor;*
4. In the conditions in which globalization brings along an unprecedented amplification of risks – unconventional terrorism, natural disasters, catastrophic epidemics – the security function performed by the state remains essential. It is important that this function is exercised by a legitimate institution, subjected to a minimum public control.
5. *Nation – state represents the main legislative instance and the main warrant of respecting laws.*

The purpose and the objectives of the thesis

The main purpose of the paper consists in studying the problems and the development prospects of the modern nation – state, the specific of its functional-structural transformations and fortification within the globalization process. For achieving the aim previously mentioned, the following specific objectives have to be reached:

- ✓ **O1.** Analysis and materialization of the main interpretations for the concepts of globalization and nation – state;
- ✓ **O2.** Pointing out the shades of nuances when referring to globalization, from its common meanings to the institutional explicative models;
- ✓ **O3.** Mentioning and generalizing the approaches regarding the phenomenon of globalization;
- ✓ **O4.** Identification and study of the influence mechanisms of global processes on the development of the nation – state and of society;
- ✓ **O5.** Reconciliation of the two concepts of globalization and state – nation respectively, demonstrating that they are objective – compatible phenomena;

- ✓ **O6.** Identifying the task modification tendencies and the nation – state’s priority functions within EU and the global environment;
- ✓ **O7.** Determining both ways and means for optimizing the EU member nation – state’s functioning for maintaining the status and its fundamental role in international relationships;

Methodological and theoretical – scientific base

From the research methods used in the present paper, the following can be mentioned:

- ✓ *Analysis of specialized literature* referring to the nation – state for identifying its role in initiating and developing the process of globalization, as well as the analysis of the role given to it in time;
- ✓ *Institutional method* which allowed the analysis of the political aspect of the issue studied through the state’s and the politic system’s activities;
- ✓ *Historical method* represented the basis for the research on how the nation – state was formed in the context of historical evolution, which allowed

pointing out the interconnection between past, present and future;

- ✓ *Analysis of social documents*. During the research I have considered the use of primary sources of information to be pertinent: (a) official documents of organizations – constitutive acts, conventions, decisions, etc. and (b) official web sites of European institutions and / or belonging to other member states. The decision to use these sources of information was influenced not only by the need of maintaining objectivity, inherent to any scientific initiative, but also because it was my intention to remain consistent in the analysis process;
- ✓ *Genetic method* – following the events’ genesis and research;
- ✓ *Method of systemic analysis*;
- ✓ *Comparative method* – has provided the possibility to underline the characteristic features of the main phases of the setting up process and the evolution of various types of states within EU;
- ✓ During the research I have equally used elements related to *generalization, abstractization and*

concretization, to deduction and induction method or content analysis.

The theoretical importance of the thesis

The thesis itself represents a study in which the problem of establishing the place and the role of nation – state in the context of globalization is dealt with in a systemic manner, with the aim of pointing out the development tendencies and prospects and its consolidation. The scientific and theoretical importance of the thesis is provided by the systemic analysis of the notions, the essence and the consolidation prospects of the EU member nation – state in the context of globalization. The thesis's content and results can be useful at improving the political activity and the diplomatic practices, and also as starting point for the further research studies dealing with the issue of world contemporary development, for preparing scientific publications dedicated to international relations, political sciences, sociology, etc.

KEY-WORDS: globalization, nation-state, European Union, international system, risk, legal, controversy, functionalism, neo-functionalism, transactionalism, federalism, constructivism.

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