

Introduction

Globalisation, as a social phenomenon has been the subject of research of social sciences for the last several dozen years. The best way to present their results is a scientific theory which becomes an interpretation of the phenomena occurring in the world. We are able to define what a scientific theory is and what conditions it has to meet in order to be recognized. We cannot force social scientists to meet these requirements while describing social phenomena, including globalisation. Whether we like it or not, we are obliged to qualify other theories to the scientific theory of globalisation despite the fact that they really have little in common with it and do not fulfil all the theoretical requirements.

Often, however, it is not clear, what globalisation actually means. It is an interdisciplinary concept understood differently in different fields of science. From the point of view of economists, globalisation is an economic expansion that contributed to economic growth and independence of nations and which intensified integration among them. In politics, globalisation strengthens international contacts. In culture, it is perceived as global communication and standardization of cultural patterns, covering the entire world, leading to a widely-understood standardization. In this sense, we have to deal with, among others, the phenomena of Coca-colonisation and McDonaldisation. Sociologists consider social globalisation as a process in which geographic barriers, as a result of social and cultural arrangements, lose their importance with the simultaneous increase of public awareness.

The process of globalisation takes place synchronously in the fields of economy, culture and politics. Globalisation processes are closely related in all above mentioned spheres. However, it seems that the economic changes over the centuries gave the impulse to the development of this phenomenon.

Globalisation, as an economic process, raises growing interest among theoreticians and practitioners, but more and more often, it affects the lives of particular groups and individuals in society. If we treat globalisation as a process of internationalization of economic relations and, consequently, popularization of free movement of goods, services, capital and labor on the transnational scale, then, there is nothing specific and new in it. Therefore, an urgent need appears for a scientific analysis of the phenomenon known as globalisation, resulting not only from a pure academic nature, but also from an attempt to solve the socio-economic problems of the world of today. The starting point for such a scientific exploration is an assumption that the socio-economic reality is not a chaos and that the development of the world is subject to certain regularities. These regularities may be distinguished from the apparent chaos in the form of an operating model. This model, if properly quantitatively and qualitatively constructed, should give the possibility to program different development options. In the era of a state interventionism the economic policy, without such a tool, cannot be reasonably implemented. It may even bring irreparable losses.

The concept of globalisation coincides with two other notions: globalism and world-wideness. In my dissertation I have assumed that globalism means a situation, in which the world market eliminates or supports political – economic action. This is a reduction of globalisation to only one - economic - dimension.

Globalism is defined as the state of the world, in which new multi continental branches split and develop. New branches represent a combination of capital and goods, information and ideas, and also environmental and biological substances. Globalisation and de-globalisation refers to the increase and decrease of globalism. Globalisation is the process of enhancing, expanding globalism. De-globalisation is the resistance of the people against globalisation, crystallized in a variety of anti-globalisation movements. I assume that world-wideness is the feeling that we live in a world-wide society. One cannot speak of it as limited to a certain area, such a belief may be just an illusion. These concepts are used by experts in this field interchangeably with the term globalisation.

On the occasion of organizing knowledge on globalisation which characterizes modernity, it is worth to pay attention that globalisation is a process, not a state. I think that both ways of perception are correct. If we treat it as a mechanism that allows us to cross borders and space, it shall be understood as a process. If, however, we want to evaluate its effects, then we shall treat it as a specific condition. It is worth to note that the majority of the theory of globalisation founders pay attention to the effects of this phenomenon, therefore, they do not perceive it as a process, but a state.

The title of this book is: *Globalisation in theory and practice*, the author tries to show what impact globalisation has on modern nations, on political theories and on sovereignty, whether it limits the political thought or just modifies it, and whether the nations in order to exist on a global scale have to undergo this process. The choice of the subject stems from an attempt to answer a question about the correlation of the processes of globalisation between economic and political issues.

The aim of this dissertation is to analyze the processes of globalisation with particular emphasis on political and economic matters, define the concept of globalisation and to determine a correlation between the perception of globalisation in the strictly economic and political domain. In order to achieve the goal, it is necessary to consider the process of globalisation, but also to define the process itself. An indication of the areas of modern civilization in which the processes of globalisation are clearly visible and constitute an integral part of a specific area of life, education and the functioning of the international communities and various organizations shall help to form an adequate definition.

This dissertation analyzes the impact of globalisation on socio-economic diversity. Thus, the cognitive focus of attention is, on the one hand, the processes of globalisation - their reasons, nature, the moving spirits, types, symptoms and effects, on the other hand, one of the essential elements in the process of globalisation - political factor - perceived as a loss of sovereignty (its conditions, mechanisms of formation, nature, size and consequences). This dissertation does not contain an exhaustive knowledge on globalisation because it is focused mainly on just two aspects of globalisation: economic and political.

Studies generally cover a period of the last several dozen years in the context of the analysis of globalisation processes taking place on a global scale. Although the aim of this dissertation is to analyze the processes and theories of globalisation in the modern world at the beginning of the twentieth century, the sources of some of the factors of the analyzed processes have begun decades ago. Therefore, the undertaken analyses could not be limited only to the current situation in the scope of the studied aspects of the concept of globalisation.

This dissertation is of an interdisciplinary nature and attempts to describe the phenomenon in a comprehensive way. The study focuses on a wide range of issues relating to the economic, political, social and cultural sphere, as various parts of human activity interact with each other.

The design of the study includes an introduction, five chapters and conclusion. The first chapter presents an analysis of the historical processes of integration and globalisation. It describes the course of the integration processes, globalisation and their evolution. The author focuses also on the factors determining the stages of the development of the phenomenon. In this chapter there is a hypothesis that, globalisation is not a new concept as one may indicate processes of a similar nature in the past. In addition, this chapter concerns global changes in the political sphere and their determinants, evolution, the role of the nation in modern economy and the impact of globalisation and the rules promoted by it on national sovereignty.

The second chapter argues that contemporary globalisation is different from the earlier processes both in terms of its scope and aspects. It shows the interdependence of politics and economy in the processes of globalisation. The author focuses her attention on key and fundamental trends of globalisation in the early twenty-first century and the components of the process of globalisation, including the expansion of transnational corporations, system transformation, the development of information technology and regional integration. It describes both the contemporary globalisation, its features, risks and opportunities associated with the processes related to it.

In the third chapter, the definitions of globalisation have been grouped by area of knowledge to which they relate, or in which they operate. The analysis of the listed definition indicates lack of full and unambiguous compliance of what those terms mean. Definitions of globalisation are here divided into two groups. The first group presents economic definitions of the concept and the second socio – political definitions. The author also attempts to prove that, in the social sciences there are many definitions of globalisation, but most of them only refer to certain aspects of it ignoring other especially the impact of technical progress on the scope and progress of globalisation. It also shows that there is a clear definitional difference between economic and social globalisation. The author gets on towards a specific definition of a globalisation of research and knowledge.

The fourth chapter presents the opportunities and risks which are related to the process of globalisation. In this chapter, the author argues that, information society and correlative technological advancement are important, if not the most important, components of contemporary globalisation. It also describes generally overlooked aspects in the literature, such as the impact of the information society and knowledge-based economy on globalisation in terms of its evolution, as well as the impact of democracy on the processes of globalisation.

The dissertation ends with conclusions and a summary of the study. In this part the author describes the process of globalisation seen from the angle of principal trends observed in the political and economic theory.

In the initial phase of the research an important source of knowledge were reference books that enabled the author to identify the theoretical basis for research: methodology for the analysis of currently existing definition of broadly understood globalisation, the essence of the concept of globalisation, the aspects of political thought, historical and practical relations, political and economic

conditions of globalisation, ways of explaining the method of analysis and the selection of individual components and factors of globalisation processes taking place contemporarily.

To solve the research problem the following research methods and techniques were applied: analysis of the literature, press releases, special reports, statistics, analysis of public opinion, a comparative method, the system method, standard method, the method of intuitive thinking, analogical reasoning. Furthermore, the direct observation of reality was used and a method which was based on synthesizing distributed information and observations and on their basis formulating specific conclusions based on the principles of logical analysis and deduction.

The author made use of a significant amount of the worldwide research on globalisation, including economic, social and political globalisation. However, due to the enormous number of publications on the subject, their limited availability, and the lack of novelty concerning some of studies, not all studies could be quoted in this book.

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