

Will there be a next stage?

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In the world history, the trade has always been one of the main issues for human beings. They had targeted the economic power via world trade. In that sense, it always requires a system, which creates benefits for the world nations.

Under the explanation of Wallerstein, the world is ready to give a birth to a new child for the human history. In his terms, the world had exercised developmentalism, then globalization. However, due to the several problems of the globalization, there has to be a new system, as it was said before, which is beneficial for all of human beings.

I

However, there should be a deep analysis of the globalization from the perspective of world order in order to understand to its death reasons. According to Wallerstein, the first reason for that possibility is the inability of the globalization to provide wealth for the rest of the world.¹ Wallerstein explains the inability of capitalism to achieve that issue with several reasons. Firstly, the gap between the top and the bottom, the core and the periphery, has never gotten smaller. Over the five hundred years under the order of capitalism, the distribution of wealth in the world became more inegalitarian.

Secondly, he talks about the monopolization of productive activity. During the time, the industrial powers in the world reduced the degree of profitability of such production.² In that sense, we experience the fact that the east produces more than the west in some sectors but at the end of the day, the high value added products are still produced by the western powers. Therefore; there is a type of dominance in the balance of power into the economic activities. In the next step, this causes the imbalance of political powers in the world order. In other words, there is a kind of world hegemony led by the west, especially by the USA.

In the next stage, Wallerstein gives his arguments to illustrate the reasons of ending capitalist order. In that part, the main argument was summarized like that: "Systems collapse

¹ Immanuel Wallerstein, "After Developmentalism and Globalization, What?," *Social Forces*, Vol.83, No.3, (March 2005), p.1266.

² *Ibid.*, p.1267.

not primarily because of rebellion from below but because of the weakness of the dominant classes and the impossibility of maintaining their level of gain and privilege.” According to Wallerstein, the basic weakness of the capitalism (the ability to guarantee the endless accumulation of capital and the political structures that kept the dangerous classes in line) are collapsing simultaneously.³

II

On the other hand, Wallerstein is not able to say about the next stage for human history. He only says that the replacement system will be hierarchical and polarizing or will be instead relatively democratic and egalitarian.⁴ As a result, it depends on the current policies of the world leading power. In order to analyze the further step for the human history, we should understand that what will be the existed system more in political and cultural terms. After that stage, the picture will be less blurred for us to understand the analysis of Wallerstein about the end of globalization.

By using the term of globalization, there are several perceptions about it. In order to summarize them, using Kaplinsky’s perspective will be more effective. In his explanation, globalization has several faces. In that sense; a) Globalization reduces the systemic barriers and all of the factors such as labor, capital, information, ideas, goods, services, etc. can easily flow everywhere; b) Globalization makes individuals, institutions, states, and nations more purposeful to pursue their objectives into the wider area where the national boundaries become blurring. The global institutions can impose their values on the people who live in other countries; c) In terms of technology, globalization makes technological complexity and advances more wider. The technology also revolutionizes the production process. It means that the production of any commodity becomes more international. Therefore; the producers can gain the international reserve army as Marx used in explanation of the features of capitalist society. In that perspective, the capitalism becomes transnational and it can exploit the existing situation of the developing countries. Due to that reason, the production bases are moved from the developed countries to the developing countries because of the cheap labor

³ Ibid., p.1269.

⁴ Ibid., p.1275.

forces. However, the moving production bases are now not profitable for the develop countries.⁵

Additionally, there are other explanations of the globalization. It can be called as a neo liberal apology that means an ideological incantation to the triumphalism surrounding capitalist expansion on a world scale.⁶ Therefore; globalization is the systemic extension of corporate capitalism across borders and has surged over the past several decades.

According to Susan George; it is the neo-liberal or neo-conservative globalization, we exercise, that is corporate-led and finance-driven (resulting in extremely unequal terms of inclusion in the world economy) the Washington Consensus that supports this doctrine (promoting competition in all endeavors, the free flow at capital, a focus an exports and trade volume, tax havens for corporations and the rich, etc.) It assumes the growth benefits the poor without looking at how growth is distributed. There is also the lack of respect for environment in that neo- liberal globalization.⁷

On the other hand, as Henry Kissinger remarks, the globalization is another term for American domination or America imperialism.⁸ In that sense, it should be determined whether the globalization is an American imperialism or not.

In that modern era, the us has its vast intelligence network, its five global military command, its more than 1 million men and women at arms on five continents, its carrier battle groups on watch in every ocean, and its 30 percent control of the world economic product. Therefore; as Michael Cox argues what word other than empire better describes the American international order?⁹

Especially, after 9/11, in an age of unparalleled global dominance the US had every right to see itself into the international role of setting standards, determining threats, using force and meeting out justice. As a result, it is imperialism by any other name.¹⁰

⁵ Raphael Kaplinsky, "Global Dynamics," *Globalization, Poverty and Inequality*, (Polity Press, 2005), pp.8-13.

⁶ Robert C. Dash, "Globalization: For Whom to What," *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol.25, No.6 (Nov. 1998), p.52.

⁷ Susan George, "Another World is Possible If..." in Michael Marien (ed.), *Future Survey*, Vol.26, No.11 (Nov. 2004), p.5.

⁸ Sam Gindin, "Challenging Globalization," *Canadian Dimension*, Vol.36, No.4 (July/August 2002), p.18.

⁹ Michael Cox, "Empire? The Bush Doctrine and the Lessons of History," in David Held and Mahtias Koenig-Archibugi (ed.), *American Power in 21st Century*, (Polity Press, 2004), p.23.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.25.

As Cox argues that global order presupposed power, power resided with states, and it was up to the strong state (the hegemony in using the jargon) to pay the bills and enforce the rules of game.¹¹ By the current unilateral foreign policy of the US, it loses local alliances and it cannot provide wealth for the world nations. However, they are the main elements to discriminate any strong state from empire to hegemony. If any strong state has these tools, it can be called as hegemony, but the US is far from that concept.

In economic terms, the US economy accounts for nearly 30 percent of world product, it is roughly 40 percent bigger than many of its rivals, the US dollar still remains mighty and the Wall Street is still located at the heart of the international financial system. Furthermore, the world economic system is not completely out of control; states still have a key role to play and enormous resources of at the American state provide the huge influence on the world economy.¹²

As Wallerstein tries to show us the current or existing system, it is a crossroad whether it will continue or not. As he assumes the system will change due to the several reasons. In other perspective, if we look at the existing system is called globalization from the understanding of it as an American Empire or new imperialism, the system also in a crossroad.

According to Michael Mann, there are four principle reasons for the end of the American Empire. These are ideological, economic, military, and political powers.¹³

In ideological matter, it is the age of nationalism in world politics. The world experienced de-colonization, which is an output of raising nationalism in the third world countries. The US also had no powerful local alliances to bargain with those nationalist movements in today's events. There is also a struggle against the modernist approach in the third world countries. This reaction by the nationalist addresses the US since it is the ruling part of the modernization and world capitalism. Additionally, with today's means of

¹¹ Ibid., p.35.

¹² Ibid., p.39.

¹³ Michael Mann, "The First Failed Empire of the 21st Century," in David Held and Mahtias Koenig-Archibugi (ed.), *American Power in 21st Century*, (Polity Press, 2004), p.52.

communication, it becomes easier to express ideologies such as nationalism, anti-imperialism, racial equality and human rights into the global level against the ruling elites in the world.¹⁴

In economic perspective, the US now dominates the world economy much less that it did in the first decade after 1945. The US is the biggest debtor nation in the world. When the British Empire was collapsed, its military cost were about 2,5 about percent of its GDP, but the US has military costs which is 4 percent of its GDP.¹⁵

In military, the US military budget for 2003 was 40 percent of the world's total military spending, exceeding the spending of the next 24 states combined. It is 25 times greater than the combined spending of all seven "rogue states" identified by the US as its enemies. However, as Mann illustrates empires require conventional, not nuclear forces, which the US spends on. In that sense, the US conventional forces include 1,45 million men and women under arms less than China's 2,5 million. The US has only 5 percent of the world's soldiers. However, you need people to control the world.¹⁶

In political power, there is an ideological group in the US who believe that the world's biggest power can act unilaterally without the political mandate of the UN incurs cost in military, economic and ideological powers. The mandate brings unconditional permissions to use foreign bases, allied troops, the cash to fund the venture and above all legitimacy.¹⁷ As it was said before, the US loses its local alliances by acting unilaterally and ignoring the UN and Europeans.

As a result, as the British and Romans had done in the past, the American Empire will experience the same end since she does not take the lesson from history. When the barbarians took over the Roman Empire culturally first and then delivered a left hook and overrun it militarily, the disaster became inevitable. In other words, the British Empire met its final and fatal setback in Suez and the French Empire collapsed in Algeria. Finally Afghan misadventure was the Soviet's final and fatal blunder.¹⁸

¹⁴ Ibid., pp.72-75.

¹⁵ Ibid., pp.57-59.

¹⁶ Ibid., p.64.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.67.

¹⁸ Abdelwahab El-Affendi, "Waiting for Armageddon: 'The Mother of Empires' and its Middle East Quagmire," in David Held and Mahtias Koenig-Archibugi (ed.), *American Power in 21st Century*, (Polity Press, 2004), p.258.

In economic dominance, the US can no longer be taken for granted, especially in an age when it becomes increasingly dependent on the financial largesse of others to manage its growing debts.¹⁹

III

In that stage at this paper, it will be tried to show the main features of the next system after the American dominance or globalization. There is a parallel insight with Wallerstein about the end of the existed system, but he does not say enough about the next stage in human history. Therefore; there will be a challenge to give some sources of “de-globalization”. In other words, the system is ought to be based on some principles. For instance, the new system should eliminate any possibility of creation of a new empire. In that sense, human beings ought to build a world order which is based on the distribution of wealth equally. It means that nations are holding \$ in their treasury because of the risk of financial crisis. However, this is an illusion was created by the world dominant power. They can’t use their sources for investment instead of reserving them. If there will be no upper hand on the world trade, there will be no need to wait any blessing from the ruling power of the world. Another assumption for the new system is to produce for you. It means that in the current system, developing nations produce for export to increase their \$ reserves and to make their economies more stabilized. However, they ignore their masses in terms of their necessities. This situation also creates destabilizing effects for developing countries. As a result, they can’t change their status because of social and economic instability. Additionally, as Thomas Panniah argued in the World Social Forum in 2003, there are more debates for us to solve in order to build the new system to alternative to globalization (or American dominance). Those debates are:

- Trans local governance predicated on decentralized network versus these who believe civil society should negotiate with the traditional, hierarchically oriented institutions of global governance. This is formulated in term of revolution versus reform.
- The second debater is about the struggle between environmentalist and developmentalist approaches. Environmentalist approach to reduction of growth and consumption, but other side of the issue supports to more growth to employ more labor.

¹⁹ Michael Cox, “Empire? The Bush Doctrine and the Lessons of History,” p.23.

- There is a debate between north and south among the labor issue. Northern labor's call for human rights standards to be included within international trade and investment agreements, but they also question the South's commitment to human rights.

- The fourth challenge is about the geographies of consciousness. To what extent do "universal values" overlap with Western values? Is cultural relativism the only alternative to universal values?

- In the fifth conflict, it is the issue that local and national interests are in a struggle with global interests. Does the primary agent of progress lie in localization, with direct democracy, local governance, subsidiary, economic self-sufficiency, cultural autonomy and food sovereignty? Or are the global forms of regulation such as taxes or financial speculation, world parliaments and referenda the main agents of progress.²⁰

After the solving debates, which were said before, there can be some possible alternatives to globalization. Those alternatives will be based on the strengthening and protection of local economies and communication both North and South. This is the approach that includes international trade without disastrous social effects, with long-distance trade gradually being used only for arguing what cannot be provided within the region.²¹ This is the case of localization. Additionally, another issue for localization is about ecological primaries via production bases. It means that the revolutionized production process brings the greater dependence on long-distance trade and transport. This turns the increasing consumption of fossil fuels. So globalization is directly linked to climate change. In that sense, localization is about shortening the distance between producers and consumers. It is not about eliminating all trade, but rather about reducing to an absolute minimum the exorbitant waste.

There is also another approach to generate an alternative to globalization called Third Way Movement. The theory first was provided by Anthony Giddens, the advisor of Tony Blair. He offers some values for third way under the following seven headings: equality; protection of the vulnerable; no rights without responsibilities; cosmopolitan pluralism; philosophic conservatism; raising a few hackles amongst his less moderately inclined

²⁰ Thomas Ponniah, "Democracy vs Empire: Alternatives to Globalization," *Antipode*, (Blackwell Publishing, Oxford and Malden), pp.130-131

²¹ Caroline Lucas, "Eliminating World Poverty," *The Ecologist*, Vol.31, No.1 (Feb. 2001), p.60.

colleagues, the prescriptions are innocuous enough to arouse neither enthusiasm nor opposition.²²

In conclusion, the analysis of Wallerstein about the next stage of the human history was tried to understand. In that sense, the raised question by him was followed in a different way. In other words, the existed system was analyzed according to perspective of the American Empire in order to give an alternative and added example for the insight of Wallerstein about the end of globalization. At the end of the story, the main challenge was to provide a greater and detailed explanation about the possible features of the next system. In that sense, the next stage, there will not be any type of imperialism. People will act as an idea of protecting our planet from disastrous effects of our modern life and they will have an idea of distribution of wealth more egalitarian. In that sense, human beings will get that ideal since the majority of them suffer form the new imperialism and they will also suffer from environmental disastrous. Those factors will make them more rational about their life.

²² Otto Newman and Richard De Zoysa, "The Third Way alternative: America's new political agenda?," *Contemporary Politics*, Vol.6, No.3 (2000), p.232.