

Racionalidad y globalización¹

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Jacinto Rivera de Rosales²

Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, España

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² Doctor in Philosophy by the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Spain).

E-mail: jrivera@fsof.uned.es

Resumen

Los argumentos centrales son, en primer lugar, que la globalización materializa y actualiza la esfera de lo que puede ser llamado racionalidad en sus diferentes perspectivas, y por tanto es la realización de algo que representa el modo de ser, es decir, el horizonte de universalidad en el que el concepto nos sitúa. En segundo lugar, se sostiene que este horizonte de la globalización requiere de ciertas condiciones físicas que lo hagan posible, que le permitan existir e incluso ser indispensable. Estas condiciones han surgido en nuestra época, particularmente a través de internet, que permite una conversación y un intercambio de ideas, sentimientos y materiales a escala global y de manera casi inmediata.

Palabras clave: globalización, racionalidad, idea, internet.

Abstract

The central arguments here are, firstly, that globalisation materialises and actualises the sphere of what may be called rationality in its different perspectives, and it is therefore the realization of something that represents the mode of being, that is, the horizon of universality in which the concept places us. Secondly, that this horizon of globalisation requires certain physical conditions to make it possible, to allow it to exist and even to be inevitable; those conditions have already emerged in our time, particularly in the form of the internet, which allows a conversation and an exchange of concepts, feelings and materials at a global level and almost immediately.

Keywords: globalisation, rationality, concept, internet.

Introduction

The topic addressed in this article is globalisation and its roots, its conditions of possibility. I would like to reflect philosophically on what makes globalisation possible, which would also help us understand its meaning and consequences. In this sense, the essential relationship between rationality and globalization has not been explored and discussed; globalization has not been associated with rationality as such, but at best with some type of rationality or way of thinking: economic, capitalist, legal, ethical, etc., always in a limited and biased way. The central arguments that I intend to discuss here are, firstly, that globalisation materialises and actualises the sphere of what may be called rationality in its different perspectives; that is, globalisation is not just a simple fact that exists now, one that can be put aside, that has come about accidentally, either by chance or as a result of an external and significant occurrence, such as the existence of a river, a mountain or a hurricane, or one which we have to fight or deny. Instead, it is a possibility that becomes embedded and digs its roots in the understanding of the human being, in his opening to the world and his development, in other words, it is the realization of something that represents the mode of being, the horizon of universality in which the concept places us. It is something, therefore, that we must necessarily learn to manage.

Secondly, this horizon of globalisation requires certain physical conditions to make it possible, to allow it to exist and even to be inevitable, and that extends the concepts and communication to the whole world. Those conditions have already emerged in our time, particularly in the form of the internet, the invention that contributes the most to globalisation. This is therefore the sphere of our time, the hermeneutic horizon of our understanding, our being in the world, our current existence. Hence, globalisation is the theme of this article, rationality is its ideal and subjective condition of its possibility, and the internet is the new most powerful material or physical medium through which rationality brings us to globalisation, with an unprecedented cultural, political and economic impact since it makes instant communication, culture and work possible within any part of the world.

Globalisation and rationalism

Knowledge, or understanding, has moments or elements of singularity as well as of universality, and one cannot happen without the other, or even with different developments or intensities.

Understanding has moments or elements of singularity. Which ones? In Heidegger's *Being and Time* (2013), we can find elements of individuality in the *Stimmung* or mood, affectedness, such as fear, angst or boredom, and be thrown into a concrete world (*Geworfenheit*) in his analysis of facticity. Classical philosophy has defined this moment of singularity using concepts such as sensibility, impressions, intuitions, feelings, even resistance, concreteness or finitude. These elements introduce us to singularity, that indicates the individuality of the 'this', the 'here' and the 'now' within the concrete contents of the individual and his place.

But singularity could not be understood as such without an opposite element of universality inserted in the understanding itself, thanks to which we recognise such singularity, we interpret it, we place it in the nexus of all our experience and we orient ourselves on our possibilities of action. This universality has been called a concept. With these concepts we articulate our world, our experience, we carry out an interpretation that helps us guide ourselves in the mode of being of things and their interrelations, as well as in the mode of being of ourselves. We see this equally in the as-structure of understanding according to *Being and Time* of Heidegger. Dasein is understanding, its development is interpretation, so that the understood world is interpreted, and that which has been explicitly understood in that way has the structure of "something *as* something" (*Etwas als Etwas*) (§ 32); each thing is captured *as* something and therefore as not being something different. Singularities only take the place of the first 'something', while the second offers interpretive universality; this takes place in both the hermeneutical and in the apophantical 'as', because it is that interpretative universality what binds this singularity to others of equal quality and distinguishes it from the rest (§ 33), without being disturbed by the quantity of things thus understood. An example is understanding the human being *as* being-in-the-world: "being-in-the-world" is the concept that qualifies all human beings and distinguishes them from other entities, from trees or planets etc. On another level, if we say "this is a table", that object is bound to all tables and opposite to others that are not tables, but chairs, plates, floor, etc., or if I indicate that this table is mine, it is opposite to others that are not. To understand something also means to relate it to all realities, and in so doing placing it in a *global* sphere that reflexively delineates the particular and opens the interpreting understanding to the unlimited field of everything else, because the concept is universal and

in its ideality it is not limited by any number of objects included in, it or that we want to determine with it.

It has been shown that the concepts or expressions we use to understand whatever there is or happens in our experience originate primarily from a specific and given society in which we are educated, and therefore they have a limited universality. Hermeneutics has frequently reflected on this situation, hermeneutical situation, on the historical and cultural horizon of every reflexion, something that Herder had already emphasised in the face of the Enlightened abstract universality, arrogant and dismissive of the other cultures and peoples, and particularly in the face of Voltaire and his vision of history, a criticism that influenced the Romantics and even Hegel, in his concept of the spirit of the people (*Volksgeist*). Also, for Heidegger, Dasein is understanding and understanding has a fore-structure, so that interpretation is never a presuppositionless grasping of something given.

But it is precisely this realization of the hermeneutical situation what shows that reflection and the concept are capable of going –and can take us– beyond these cultural limits towards a rational universality. Thus, the interpretation of our existence as being-in-the-world is not thought to be so limited to a culture or a race, but rather it is intended to apply to every human being. Furthermore, my understanding is confronted with other points of view and, ultimately, with historical consciousness and the diversity of languages and cultures, which could put into question my own understanding, my individuality, and that makes me aware of my own individual, historical and cultural existence, within the broad arena of the no longer naïve but critical understanding. The consciousness of individuality is only possible with a backdrop of universality in an increasingly expanded intersubjectivity; to have historical consciousness means, to a point, to overcome that concreteness and the limits of his intra-historical perception, contrary to those who cast their way of organising existence in stone for all eternity, taking it as the only one possible, and remaining enclosed in that landscape. It is that non intra-historical moment, which makes it possible not only to understand the differences, the history, and my own situation, but also globalisation as a growing opening up process, which will also have its own concrete evolution. Such effort is not only directed towards wondering and thinking things through, and analysing them in different ways by looking at their previously unseen sides, but also to understand them better, that is to say, thinking the

thing itself³ (Rivera de Rosales, 2012a, pp. 273-290) and that which has not yet been thought in it: what is not yet thought in what is thought and what is not said in what is said. That non intra-historical element is constitutive and essential to our understanding itself, present in all human beings, but like all human capacities, it must be exercised, educated and developed. It makes us capable of reflecting on our concreteness and, for this reason, it opens us up to a thinking more according with the thought subject. Such openness to universality, specially expressed in the commitment to capture the thing itself, makes that possible, creating a crisis for the own understanding by contrasting it with other comprehensions and traditions. This reflective effort is the condition of every dialogue and every positive generation of community.

I believe that this reflection, which opens us to the horizon of universality, is made possible by the concept, expressed in language with one or more words or terms. It is in the concept where the moment of understanding is located, thanks to which this universality can capture itself, as well as its own difference and unity (this is what copula expresses in judgment) with the thing that is being understood. Because of that difference, the concept opens to the question of the real beyond the subjective, the empirical and the individual. Its universality is what today results in globalisation and makes it *idealiter* possible. In fact, the concept is the rule of interpretation that is perceived *as* a rule, as interpretation, that is, in its ideal mode of being. As a rule and because of its ideality:

1. It has unlimited use: the concept of ‘table’ is applicable to all cases, to all tables, regardless of the number of tables there are, because it does not wear out, deplete or tire, but it is used and understood in its ideal nature, not as a thing but universal, opposite to, but at the same time identified with, each case. Hence, it can make us understand this singularity *as* a table, by following the *as*-structure of understanding. The same happens when we say that something is “a war of liberation”, or we interpret it *as* “an act of terrorism” or *as* an “injustice” instead.
2. We find in each concept, as a rule of interpretation, not only the universality in its application to unlimited cases (to unlimited ‘tables’ or Dasein),

³ I have discussed this topic in the article “Pensar la historia. Gadamer y la hermenéutica” published in the book *Acontecer y comprender. La hermenéutica crítica tras diez años sin Gadamer* (2012a, pp. 273-290). Italian translation in “Pensare la storia. Gadamer e l’ermeneutica”, published in the book *Tempo e praxis. Saggi su Gadamer*, (2012b, pp. 93-121).

but also the universality beyond it, to which our understanding opens because of the limited meaning or essence indicated by every concept (since these concepts only define the tables or Dasein and not any other entities), that is, that each concept is not only the affirmation and identity or the identification of the applicable cases, but also the limitation of, and contraposition with, all other rules, concepts and beings that do not fall under it. In that way, by limitation and contraposition, it also acquires a specific meaning and enters into a relationship with the unlimited field of all other concepts and cases, forming an intricate network. There is therefore a tendency to establish a network of order and interpretation of the world and ourselves that links, by similarity or difference, everything with everything.

3. The concept, as a rule of interpretation, confronts the plurality of interpretations, both synchronic and historical and of different languages, facing in that way the challenge to revise the pre-judgements and to obtain the best possible access to the thinking of reality. Therefore, it is by means of the concepts that we interpret and order the world and give sense to our existence within a framework of an unlimited universality, which is the realm of rationality. And I do not refer only to nouns as concepts or rules of interpretation, but also to all other particles and expressions of the language: articles, adjectives, verbs, prepositions, linguistic dialects, metaphors, etc., all of them being inexhaustibly applicable.

It is in this ideal horizon of the concept where the question of totality arises: the totality of our existences, of the entities and the being, of the world, the gods and the truth, the scientific and philosophical questions. But that is also why it makes us more fully conscious of limits, finitude and death which, for Hegel, is what marks the passage from nature to the sphere of the spirit (Hegel, 2010, §§ 375-376). It is into this horizon of ideal universality that the concept opens the understanding, where it enables the phenomenon of globalisation and, as a necessary contrast, what makes possible the larger reflexive understanding of singularity and of limitation. Globalisation is not just a simple fact nor an accident, it is not something that happens to us externally, fortuitously, but it also belongs to our mode of being; this is so because its condition of possibility is in our understanding itself, specifically in the universal horizon of the concept and rationality.

It could be added that the understanding and its tendency towards totality, together with the limitation, embed their real and ideal roots into the

limitation and into the functional and organic totality of living bodies, of the body of animals and certainly of our body, our subjective-objective body, where we would find a pre-reflexive perception of the world that knows itself as a finite totality (or synthesis of a certain multiplicity), and this self-organising totality senses the limitation or the boundary between the inside and the outside, between itself and the others and act accordingly. But that totality is still trapped in its concreteness, that is, the ideality or subjectivity that lives within it does not manage to become free of the singularity that makes it concrete, and to open itself to the universality because of the lack of a language that objectifies this universality and that expresses it as such. But it is that pre-reflexive ideality which, by creating the language, rises or enhances itself and reaches the concept in the reflexive understanding, thanks to the creation of the human language. Then the rule begins to be understood as such, encompassing and limiting the interpreted object, captured in its condition as an ideal, repeatable and universal rule, thanks to which the understanding is capable of perceiving and experiencing its own mode of being, different from that of a thing. The most important material basis of this new understanding is, therefore, the human language, because it allows the understanding to acquire a body and a presence in the world. The language is that idealised materiality that makes the reflexive understanding and its concepts possible; it is not just sound or objectivity, which is how a totally alien language would appear to us, nor a simple ideality without sound or body, but the union of the two moments, understanding and materiality, like our own body is and as globalization also needs to be, albeit neither mixed or confused; this is demonstrated by the ability to express the same thought in different languages, or in the same language but using different words and styles; thus proving the creativity of the understanding⁴.

We live in an important part in the understanding, which means that we also inhabit in the language. It is in the language that the human condition begins, the language is the basic place that makes the reflexive consciousness possible, and therefore the globalisation; in it the question of totality is posed, which engenders first the gods and then philosophy, and the sciences, it positions us in the cosmos and aims to clarify its meaning. At that moment

⁴ There are some 7000 living languages (<https://fr.babbel.com/fr/magazine/combien-de-langues-y-a-t-il-dans-le-monde>). This number of individualities would make globalisation impossible, it is necessary to have a common language, or at least a reduced number. The language that currently leads our world in English. Here we also need the universality within the individuality.

the individuality is understood from within universal and global coordinates that even go beyond death; we open to a ‘world’ (*Welt*), whilst animals are almost deprived of world (*weltarm*), according to Heidegger⁵ (1983, § 42). As a result, animals do not achieve that openness to globality, even though they are organic beings, because they lack a language, the characteristic language of human beings, the language with the double articulation in phonemes and morphemes⁶, with its unlimited possibilities of expression and, therefore, animals lack concepts, science, religion and philosophy. Even if an animal species managed, or had managed, to dominate the entire earth in terms of numbers, strength and expansion, like the dinosaurs for instance (which would have made the appearance of man impossible), they would not be capable of experiencing the phenomenon of globalisation, that is, to consciously live in a unique, pluralistic world, to be part of *an* interactive community, a global village, instead, each one or each group, would have continued to exist in their own surroundings or landscape. Animals live in their own environment whilst man has reached the horizon of the universal, of the global, from which he understands himself. In addition to the surroundings, man has a world, that is, he opens to the totality of the real, to the real as such and to its different modes of being, while animals only live in an environment, enclosed in concrete surroundings, in one part of the Earth without capturing its globality or becoming interested in it; they do not know that the Earth is one of the many celestial bodies because they do not raise their eyes to observe the stars. For example, animals cannot understand the meaning of money, which is a crucial factor in globalisation as it expresses the most abstract universality of the interchangeable. Globalization is also a consequence specific to our mode of being.

This universal sphere, the ideal opening to globalisation, that capacity to place things and matters into the realm of the concept, to ask about the real and understand it as real, is what is usually referred to as *rationality*, which has a tendency to, and lives in, the universal, in the open, and not solely with an instrumental interest or gaze. Economically, it aspires to move in the world as a whole made up of relationships, sources of wealth and trade,

⁵ “Der Stein ist weltlos, das Tier ist weltarm, der Mensch ist weltbildend”.

⁶ Morphemes, which are the minimum units of meaning, and phonemes the minimum units of signifiers, that is the letters, signifiers without meaning in themselves, so that with a limited number of phonemes (22 letters or sounds in Spanish), an unlimited number of words and messages can be formed.

but without exploiting the others or destroying the biosphere. Culturally, it is interested in all cultures, evaluating their different features. Legally, it seeks and states the rights of all human beings. Politically, it would aim to some sort of fair union of all nations and cosmopolitanism. I am referring to the rationality that creates the ideal framework, from where it therefore can be criticised the revealed status quo.

But that universality of the concept, that unlimited aspect of its ideality is, at the same time, what it enables wishes to escalate with no desire to accept any limitations and become passions. It also allows man to be the only animal always incomplete and even dissatisfied, and the existence of the inclination to dominate and own, colonise and use power without frontiers, generating injustices, wars and a predatory globalisation; this behaviour has been present throughout the history of humanity and consequently characterises it. The rational capacity may also be used as an instrument for the total affirmation of an individual or group against the rights of others and the so-called instrumental reason has also served to destroy individuals, peoples and even the biosphere, which is the only house accessible to us, at least for now. Globalisation offers in this sense ever more powerful instruments, but any criticism of this can only be based on the defined ideal rational framework. Rationality is not only calculating, objectifying, techno-scientific in its universality, and capable of placing itself at the service of exclusive individual interests, but it is also predominantly moral and legal, practical, recognising and respecting the original free mode of being of the human person, precisely because, in its own universality, it is the understanding and opening to the different modes of being (Rivera de Rosales, 2011, pp. 379-411)⁷.

Conclusion. The individuality of feeling and the universality of the logos are the two extremes, between them are the understanding and human actions, our very existence, movements, and we are unable to exist without either of them. We go from the closeness and individuality of feelings and needs, of family affections, friends or the work environment to the universality of all human rights and of the cosmopolitanism (Stobaeus, 18 63, pp. 671-672)⁸. In addition, due to our finitude, rationality does not only point towards

⁷ I have written extensively on this topic in my article “El ser y los cuatro ámbitos de la acción moral. Un ensayo de ética ontológica” (2011, pp. 379-411).

⁸ Recall the theory of the circles of Hierocles of Alexandria according to the *Anthologium* or *Florilegium* of Stobaeus.

universality but also to necessary means and mediations, framed within a globality where they can acquire rational sense, for example the different levels of government: the city, the country, the nation, the UN. There should not be a contraposition between ‘globalists’ and ‘patriots’, but an articulation of both, with patriotism as an intermediate step to achieve the affirmation of all human beings and a fair world order, a rational ideal from which we are still a long distance away.

Globalisation is, therefore, a process of material realisation of the unlimited horizon, which opens to us the concept and the rationality and which, as a result, expresses and shows the human mode of being. It is not something casual or eventful but rooted in the unlimited ideality of the understanding. Hence, the destiny or the task of the human being today is not to escape from globalisation or try to eliminate or deny it, with everyone becoming enclosed in their own province or nation, but to face it as our last framework of life, that is, to be concerned about finding a fair order for that coexistence, which includes not only human beings but also the welfare of animals and other forms of life, about the biosphere, and as far as possible, about the universe, even though we are just in the beginnings of its exploration.

Material conditions of globalisation

The concept and rationality are the idealities of understanding that make globalisation possible and to some extent inevitable. But that possibility and the final and ideal horizon of rationality will become a reality and reach the common empirical consciousness of men when the material conditions of its objectivation are obtained, because the understanding, the subject, the human being, is not a substance that could exist without a world; previously globalization as well as cosmopolitanism could only be a mere possibility, an idea in the most open minds. Universality has only gradually reached the real consciousness of men, as experience and the new findings and inventions now available allow that the entering into contact with other human groups has been defined and realised. Lived universality, as is the case of globalisation, could not happen without material conditions and real connections; ideality and material realisation are mutually complementary, they mutually implicate in the subjectivity. Understanding is not something from another world, it is not a transcendent entity that could exist without a material world and would not take place if it were not objectivised in some way. Similarly, the opening of understanding to totality, which has been called rationality or logos, would not occur if that connection with a certain totality is not objectivised. Such

objectivation is ultimately known as globalisation, which started with the discovery of America and the trip around the world by Magellan and Elcano. Materially, it is made possible by the connection of everyone with everyone else, by virtue of transport and communication media.

This process has been very gradual prepared and only notably accelerated in the last two centuries. Here we can only outline it as a sort of reminder. With the arrival of stable settlements during the Neolithic, owing to the invention of agriculture and cattle farming, the social and political organisation started to expand, as did the means necessary to enter into continuous contact with other peoples. Since those beginnings, the slow process of globalisation has been spreading like a stain. China was, without a doubt, pioneer in this process but became stagnated when their society enclosed inwards and did not manage to take the decisive material step into modern science and technology, or towards a democratic organization of society.

The first thinkers who open up ideologically to this globalisation were the Stoics (and his predecessor the cynic Diogenes of Sinope), with their cosmopolitan vision based on the Logos that rule everything, the world and man. The city-state and its borders, on which Aristotelian thought was still based, had been left behind and the empire of Philip and Alexander had erased some of the frontiers between the Greeks and 'Barbarians'. The same happened during the five hundred years of the Roman Empire. During the Middle Ages the silk routes and the spice trade opened up paths in that direction and gave rise, through the search for other roads, to the decisive step that was the discovery of America, which was followed by successive explorations and colonisations of the land by Europeans. The two world wars and the creation of the UN in the 20th century made clear to many people that they were living in a comprehensive world.

This globalisation was possible, firstly, through the scientific and technical discoveries which substantially improved the transport of people and products, making it ever faster and safe. In this sense, we find ourselves today in the third revolution. The first, as I have pointed out above, was during the Neolithic, with the invention of the wheel for example, which today continues to be a crucial element for modern transport and machinery. The second was the industrial revolution during the 18th and 19th centuries, which made possible the replacement of manual labour by machinery and mass production; machines also accelerated transport: steamships, trains, cars, aircraft, etc. This in turn gave rise to industrial capitalism. The third revolution has been

technological following the Second World War, advancing from mechanical implements to self-regulating machinery using computer programs, which led to the robotisation of industry, and partly of agriculture and cattle farming⁹. This has revolutionised the means of production making it more efficient and cheaper, even if not always yielding better quality products; there has never had so much wealth in the world (and at the same time so much inequality), for instance, today for the first time, we have the technical possibility and enough material resources to eradicate hunger from the world, which makes it more evident that the nature of this problem is political, cosmopolitan and of global conscience. This has also transformed transport, today causing for example the phenomena of mass tourism (against which already some cities are taking restrictive measures, starting with Venice), and a massive emigration, both political and economic, due to already mentioned increase in information, wealth and inequality at a global level. This is the world that we have to manage.

However, and secondly, the transmission and exchange of information is as important, if not more, than the transport of people and products around the world. There is no doubt that the first significant step in this area, after the advent of language, was the invention of writing, which gave a certain degree of permanence as well as better and safer transmissibility to what was said, becoming something more than fragile oral memory, that is, it gave what was expressed by language some more universality in space and time, because its materiality or medium was less volatile and immediate. The spoken language has little mileage, it is soon forgotten and is not capable of storing a large number of things and knowledge in the memory, whilst writing is a more reliable transmitter and allows a better review and analysis, or progress, of what is being recorded. The great invention that gives the language the capacity for globalisation is writing, which gave rise to the onset of cultural and political development and of history itself.

The next step, also important, albeit minor, was the invention of printing, which made possible the fast reproduction of writing and ideas, thus facilitating their dissemination and making them more accessible. The impact of printing on the transmission of messages was equivalent to the generation

⁹ This will be strongly enhanced by the implementation of 5G, or fifth generation mobile network, which promises greater reliability, almost total connectivity with hardly any latency, almost in real time, which has been called the internet of things given its multiple applications in the electronic manipulation of objects, so that some consider it the fourth industrial revolution.

of assets in industry during the second part of the 18th century; industry was to manufacture what printing was to writing. Thanks to printing, information spread through newspapers, magazines and leaflets, important tools in the globalisation process. Without printing Luther's Reformation would not have taken place, and even less so the Enlightenment movement.

Since the 19th century, the invention of almost instant means of communication based on a speed nearing that of light was a decisive factor in this efficient and fast transmission process. During the decade of the 1830s the telegraph was invented, capable of transmitting written text by cable from a source to a faraway receptor. The telephone could also transmit voice messages using a cable since the 1870s. By the end of that same 19th century the cinema appeared, adding images and real movement to the text (and from 1927 also to the sound), although this used celluloid as its material medium, which needs to be transported. Towards the middle of the 20th century, radio limitlessly multiplied the number of listeners of the telephone, and similarly, television, which offered cinema images without the need of a cable or celluloid and in real time, enabling us to witness the arrival of man on the moon, possibly the first global event, together with the Olympic Games.

But the last revolution, the most decisive and influential because of its instantaneous nature and its infinite ability to produce and reproduce texts, images and sound, transmissible from everyone to everyone, is the Internet and the cellular phone that quickly followed and is linked to it; then the beginning of this century saw the advent of Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and other systems (GPRS, UMTS, etc.), making the connection mobile and wireless. Internet improved its functionality particularly from the 1990s, due to the arrival of the Web or the WWW (World Wide Web), a group of protocols or computer language called HTML (Hyper Text Mark-up Language), to which the massive use of electronic mail is associated, even though its invention was prior to the Internet. These two tools, cellular phones and the Internet, also mutually interactive, (mobile phones are progressively becoming portable computers), are at the verge of conquering the world even though there are still some places with no signal coverage, an issue that will gradually be addressed by means of satellites. It can be said that this technology is still quite primitive because it has only just started, but Internet is already the great space of globalisation, the third major communication and information (and sometimes disinformation and fake news) revolution and explosion after writing and printing, and superior to the latter since it incorporates sound

and movement and is also in real time. It has only just started its route; it will grow exponentially both in content and in technical functionality.

Even more, the internet is profoundly changing ways of working, doing business and trade, as well as the economy. It is the fundamental instrument of the new financial capitalism in which it moves, 70% of the global economy according to estimates, opening the possibility to carry out operations worth millions in seconds and anywhere on the planet, from stock market transactions to money transfers, payments and investments that implies a qualitative leap in such processes and contributes to an expansion previously unknown in the finance economy: with a click, millions are transferred from one place to another, and also to tax havens, thus generating a global finance economy at almost the speed of light.

The internet has enabled the opening of new markets, on-line shopping, companies and institutions. The richest men in the world today work in that environment or with that medium. The internet offers new teaching and research tools, provides instruments for publishing in different places of the planet, for public relations and business meetings¹⁰, for communication between friends or on social media, even to find a partner as well as new ways of democratic participation and debate. On the Internet we can find all manner of information, a vast number of books, journals and newspapers, conferences, classes, news, art, films, shopping, travel, virtual visits to an infinite number of places, etc., progressively everything we may need, often free of charge (what we offer in return is our personal details to advertisers), etc., as well as access to all cultures from around the world. Each connection point is becoming the Aleph dreamed by Borges. This is a tool that places a huge amount of material within our reach, and therefore there is the need to be selective to avoid getting lost in so much information; however, in no way though does it prevent us from thinking and from pondering for ourselves. But as a tool, the Internet is morally neutral, and thus it has also become a powerful means for organised crime, for dictatorships, to control people, spread fake news, or to be used as a means of attack to fight political and trade wars: it is said that we are already facing the first cyber world-war, with theft, espionage and cyber-attacks, between individuals and also between nations.

¹⁰ Not long ago, we saw on television how, during a web-conference, it was possible to see the speaker who was thousands of kilometres away by means of a hologram.

These media, together with the technological revolution already discussed, have made the material process of globalisation possible and inevitable, a process that characterises our historical position and where national barriers are becoming ever more transparent, something that neither the coronavirus pandemic nor illegal emigration will be able to prevent. Instant communication in real time and the acceleration of the transport of people and goods have enabled peoples, cultures, mentalities, ways of life to enter into contact, sometimes in an aggressive manner, others to obtain certain advantages (even commercial ones) from their differences. There is a growing interdependence and communication between all corners of the Earth, and tribes that still have not been involved in this process are very few, all of them in the Amazonian region. Everything is more mobile, permeable and interconnected, for better or for worse, according to its use and organisation and to various intermediate degrees; but this is a fact which we cannot escape except by renouncing our condition, our vocation or human task as finite and rational beings. The greater complexity, towards which life and conscious life is directed (against entropy), tends to accelerate the processes towards a richer and more powerful configuration, as long as it is not destructive because weaker and less creative users have become lost in it.

A consequence of these changes is that historical processes have also accelerated. If the formation of the Earth required a long period of time, the emergence of life on the planet was considerably shorter, and even more so the evolution of man from animals. In the same way, changes in human life were very slow at first but progressively accelerated as man increased his control over the Earth and the population multiplied. By virtue of that technological and computing revolution, man now finds himself in a previously unknown moment of acceleration that has its own pressures. We see such pressures in the crisis confronted by Western democracies, in the face of the financial global capitalism, in the democratic and antidemocratic movements present not only in the Muslim world, in the restructuring of emerging countries, in the displacement of global power towards the Pacific region following the known route of the Sun, in the huge level of immigration, the gradual disappearance of the space that once separated us, as well as the fear of losing their purchasing power felt by the middle and lower classes in rich countries, in the impossibility of an open world war (not sectorial) because the more powerful would also be involved and in danger of being massacred, in the increasing outcry for national and global reform, etc. I believe that the two greatest dangers lie in the progressive ecological degradation of the biosphere

and in the fact that peoples choose more dictatorial political forms in order to feel more protected against the increasing complexity of our globalised world.

Therefore, globalisation becomes an important part of our historical and hermeneutical situation, which confront us with thus far unknown powerful theoretical and practical challenges. One of the tasks of our times is to think about and manage globalisation. The financial crisis of 2008, which started with the collapse of Lehman Brothers, has greatly affected us all; wealthy nations have realised that, with the ease offered by globalisation, many companies have moved to regions where the labour force is cheaper (delocalisation), and much of the population in rich countries find themselves out of work, a fact that also carries a decrease in the Welfare State. As a result, we are now witnessing a movement of anti-globalisation and the withdrawal of rich countries within themselves, of new protective borders, as well as an increased immigration driven by better means of travel and access to information. We have seen this in Trump's America, in Brexit against the European Union, and likewise within Spain, in Catalonia, where people think that the poor part of Spain is robbing them of their wealth and that they would be richer and have better pensions and public services if they became independent, giving them a feeling as a superior society. With the current coronavirus pandemic, it seems that the idea of each nation having to produce the basic elements to cover its needs, including health elements, has been enforced. We will therefore see that there will be oscillatory movements of gradual openings and closings, but the universality of the concept and reason and the growing development of the means of communication and transport will lead us towards an increasingly globalised world.

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