

The Two Faces of Fascism in the Age of Globalization and Climate Change

Paul C. Mocombe*

¹West Virginia State University, The Mocombeian Foundation, USA

**Corresponding Author: Paul C. Mocombe, West Virginia State University, The Mocombeian Foundation, USA, Email: pmocombe@wvstateu.edu*

ABSTRACT

In this article, I put forth the argument that globalization represents a Durkheimian mechanicalization of the world via the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism under American hegemony. The latter (America), I conclude, serves as an imperial agent, an empire, seeking to interpellate and embourgeo is the masses or multitudes to the juridical framework of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism, and in the age of capitalist globalization and climate change this is done within the dialectical processes of two forms of fascism or system and social integration: right-wing neoliberalism and identity politics masquerading as cosmopolitanism.

Keywords: *Ideological domination, Capitalism, Underclass, Globalization, blacks, Theory, Globalization as Culture, Culture of Globalization*

INTRODUCTION

Globalization represents a Durkheimian mechanicalization of the world via the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism under American (neoliberal) hegemony. The latter (American hegemon), I conclude, serves as an imperial agent, an empire, seeking to interpellate and embourgeo is the masses or multitudes of the world to the juridical framework of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism, and in the age of (neoliberal) capitalist globalization and climate change this is done within the dialectical processes of two forms of fascism or system/social integration: right-wing neoliberalism and identity politics masquerading as cosmopolitanism or hybridization. In this work, I conclude, that both represent two sides of the same fascistic coin in the age of (neoliberal) globalization and climate change.

On the one hand, neoliberal globalization represents the right-wing attempt to homogenize (converge) the nations of the globe into the overall market-orientation, i.e., private property, individual liberties, and entrepreneurial freedoms, of the capitalist world-system. This neo-liberalization is usually juxtaposed, on the other hand, against the narcissistic exploration of self, sexuality, and identity of the left, which converges with the neoliberalizing process via the diversified consumerism of the latter groups as they seek equality of opportunity, recognition, and

distribution with white agents of the former within their market logic. Hence private property, individual liberties, diversified consumerism, and the entrepreneurial freedoms of the so-called marketplace become the mechanism of system and social integration for both groups in spite of the fact that the logic of the marketplace is exploitative and environmentally hazardous.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Traditionally, right-wing fascism is usually associated with radical authoritarianism, ultranationalism, forcible suppression of opposition, and strong regimentation of society and of the economy. In the age of (neoliberal) globalization the latter processes are utilized by the American empire to retrench and force nation-states to adopt the juridical rules and policies of neoliberal capitalism, i.e., private property, individual liberties, and entrepreneurial freedoms, for capitalist development and accumulation. Paradoxically, the left utilizes these same processes, via identity politics and diversified consumerism, contemporarily, in order to promote equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the white globalizing power elites of the right in spite of the climate change problematic caused overwhelmingly by the latter processes under capitalism and American hegemony. Hence, instead of promoting an alternative form of system and social integration to the neoliberal fascism

of the right, the cultural elites of the left, antagonistically, seek to integrate within it using the same methods, i.e., radical authoritarianism, ultranationalism, forcible suppression of opposition, and strong regimentation of society and of the economy, of the fascist right to promote identity politics, diversified consumerism, and equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution as the counter-hegemonic alternative to neoliberalism in the age of globalization and climate change.

Sociological theory regarding the contemporary (1970s to the present) phenomenon of globalization focuses either on these two logics of convergence and hybridization as though they represent two distinct alternatives. In this work, I argue they are not. The former, convergence, highlights the ever-increasing homogenization of cultures and societies around the globe via socioeconomic (neoliberal) rational forces. From this perspective globalization is tantamount to Westernization or Americanization of other cultures and societies via neoliberal economic, market, subjugation or by force with an emphasis on private property, entrepreneurial freedoms, ultranationalism, and individual liberties. The latter, hybridization, emphasizes heterogeneity, the mixture of cultural forms and practices out of the integration of society via globalizing processes stemming from improvements in information technology, communications, mass media, etc. In this latter form, cultures and societies are not homogenized, but are cultural forms that are syncretized with liberal democratic Western capitalist rational organization, which offer an alternative to the former process and its exploitative and oppressive logic through a diversified consumerism that emphasizes exploration of the self, sexuality, and identity within the neoliberal framework of the marketplace. Hence, the other is an “other” (rational) agent of the Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with their white counterparts.

Amidst this argument regarding the nature and origins of globalization is climate change, which is a change in global or regional climate patterns around the world associated with the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use and abuse of fossil fuels. In this work, I want to propose that in globalization under American hegemony both positions regarding globalization are purporting the same process, convergence, via fascist measures of two groups, the right and cultural left of the American empire and other nation-states and communities, and that the only counter-

hegemonic alternative to this thesis of convergence is the climate-change effects of the earth itself. The earth is counter-hegemonic to globalizing processes because of the ecological devastations, i.e., global warming, soil erosion, resource depletion, etc., associated with capital accumulation and capitalist relations of production, which antagonistically pins the material resource framework, the earth, against the logic of economic growth and overconsumption encapsulated in the neoliberal Protestant discourse of the global social structure of inequality under American hegemony, which attempts to integrate the masses or multitudes to the neoliberal juridical framework of capitalist globalization via right-wing neoliberal ideology and force and left-wing identity politics via diversified consumerism of once marginalized others seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the former within the neoliberal framework of the contemporary capitalist world-system. Hence, the Hybridization of the latter group is not an alternative to the convergence thesis, but complement its fascist neoliberal framework because the hypothesis here is that the purposive-rationality of the hybrid cultures and practices when they encounter globalizing processes under American Hegemony is for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution, with whites within a fascist call for identity politics and diversified consumerism not to overthrow or offer a counter hegemonic alternative systemicity to a process, capital accumulation, which threatens all life on earth via neoliberal market forces, pollution, global warming, overconsumption, etc. Consequently, conflict arises between the two groups even though they share the same ideologies for two reasons: over resources and recognition of the other as another agent of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism by the white elites of the system.

THEORY AND METHODS

“Culture of globalization” and the “globalization as culture” metaphors represent two sociological approaches to understanding the contemporary postmodern phenomenon we call globalization (1970s-2000s). These two sociopolitical understandings regarding the origins and nature of globalization, as Kevin Archer et al (2007) points out, have “set off a vigorous and at times rancorous debate within the social sciences” (2007, pg. 2). On one side of the debate you have theorists who emphasize the “culture of globalization” and argue the idea that “the constitutive role of culture is critical for grasping the continued hegemony of capitalism in the

form of globalization...Culture, they assert is increasingly being co-opted and deployed as a new accumulation strategy to broaden and deepen the frontiers of capitalism and to displace its inherent crisis tendencies” (Archer, 2007, pg. 2-3). In a word, in the continual hegemonic quest of capitalism to homogenize the conditions of the world to serve capital, globalization, in the eyes of “culture of globalization” theorists, represents a stage of capitalism’s development highlighted by the commodification of culture, diversified consumerism, as a means for accumulating profits from the purchasing and consuming power of a transnational class of administrative bourgeoisies and professional cosmopolitan elites in core, semi-periphery, and periphery nation-states who subscribe to the social integrative norms of (neo)liberal bourgeois Protestantism (hard work, economic gain, political and economical liberalism, consumption, etc.). This “culture-of-globalization” understanding of globalization or the postmodern condition in late capitalist development is a well supported position, which highlights, in the twenty-first century, the continued hegemony of capitalism in the form of globalization (Hardt and Negri, 2000; Kellner, 1988; Giddens, 1991; Harvey, 1989, 1990; Jameson, 1984, 1991).

“Globalization-as-culture” theorists out rightly reject this socioeconomic position or interpretation underlying the emergence and processes of globalization. They believe “that globalization is marked by the hollowing out of national cultural spaces either consequent upon the retrenchment of the nation state or because culture continues to be a relatively autonomous sphere” (Archer et al, 2007, pg. 2). That is, “[f]or the “globalization-as-culture” group... culture is not that easily enjoined due to its inherent counter-hegemonic properties vis-à-vis neo-liberal globalization. Rather, for this group..., contemporary globalization is not merely economic, but a system of multiple cultural articulations which are shaped by disjunctive space-time coordinates. In other words, globalization is as much if not more the product of inexorable and accelerated migratory cultural flows and electronic mass mediations beyond the space-time envelopes of the nation-state system and the successive socio-spatial fixes of global capitalism” (Archer et al, 2007, pg. 4). In fact, culture, in many instances, serves as a counter-hegemonic movement to (neo) liberal capitalism as a governing “rational” system. This line of thinking is best exemplified in the works of Stuart Hall (1992), John Tomlinson

(1999), Homi Bhabha (1994), and Edward Said (1993) among many others. For these theorists, cultural exchanges are never one-dimensional, and hybridization of culture in many instances serves as a counter-hegemonic force to the homogenization processes of global capital. That is, as postcolonial hybrids in their encounter with their former colonizers dialectically convict the former colonial powers of not identifying with the lexicons of signification of their enlightenment ethos, the hybrid identity is counter-hegemonic as they seek equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with their white counterparts as an ethnic *other* (Bhabha, 1994).

Theoretically, for me, building on structuration theory, phenomenological structuralism, which views human social action as a duality and dualism tied to social structure the contents or social facts of which human actors internalize and recursively organize and reproduce as their practical consciousness, this debate between the advocates of the “globalization-as-culture” and the “culture-of-globalization” hypotheses is a fruitless debate grounded in a false ontological and epistemological understanding regarding the origins and nature of the fascist (neo) liberal capitalist system that gives rise to the processes of globalization under American hegemony. Both groups ontologically and epistemologically assume that the origins of capitalism and its discursive practice is grounded in the dialectic of reason and rationality, thus drawing on the liberal distinction between capitalism as a public and neutral system of rationality that stands apart from the understanding of it as a private sphere or lifeworld cultural form grounded in the ontology of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism as argued by Max Weber (1905). The latter ontological position, if assumed by both schools, is a point of convergence that resolves their opposition, and gives a better understanding regarding the origins and nature of the processes of globalization and counter movements to what are in fact metaphysical cultural forces. That is to say, both schools of thought are putting forth the same convergence argument, the culture of globalization position from a Marxian systems integration perspective and the globalization as culture position from a Weberian social integration perspective. For the culture of globalization position cultural practices are homogenized to integrated within the rational rules or systemicity of capitalist relations of production and consumption at the world-system level so as to generate surplus-

value from the consumption of cultural products as commodities in core nations, industrial production in semi-periphery nations, and agricultural production in periphery nations. The globalization as cultural group suggests that in the process of acculturating social actors to the organization of work within the capitalist world-system, homogenization does not take place. Instead, in the process of integration within the world-system, cultural groups intersubjectively defer meaning in ego-centered communicative discourse to hybridize the lexicons of significations coming out the globalization process thereby maintaining their cultural forms not in a commodified form but as a class-for-itself seeking to partake in the global community, via the retrenchment of the nation-state, as hybrid social actors governed by the liberal rational logic of the marketplace without discrimination.

The two positions are not mutually exclusive, however, and when synthesized via Paul C. Mocombe's (2019) theory of phenomenological structuralism highlight the same position, globalization, under American hegemony, contemporarily represents the homogenization of social discourse and action via hybridization. The latter, hybridization and its accompanying diversified consumerism, as the mechanism of social integration in globalization under American hegemony for the "other," is the by-product of the black American civil rights movement of the 1960s coupled with the outsourcing of American industrial work to the rest of the world beginning in the 1970s.

Following the Protestant Reformation and the rise of Protestants to positions of power within the Westphalian nation-state system all social actors were interpellated and socialized via Protestant churches to be obedient workers so as to obtain economic gain via the labor market. Be that as it may, the church and the labor market (via education) became the defining institutions for socializing social actors as both Protestant agents and agents of and for capital. That is individuals, Protestant agents, with a work ethic that would allow them to pursue economic gain via their labor in a market as either agents for capital, laborer, or agents of capital, administrative bourgeoisie. The relationship, therefore, between the Protestant ethic and the capitalization of labor or the constitution of the labor market are not mutually exclusive. Instead they were and are necessary components for constituting a capitalist society under the metaphysical discourse of Protestantism. The Protestant Ethic and God, in a word, legitimated

the organization of social actors as laborers, and the labor market was constituted to ensure that workers were rewarded, accordingly, to ensure that the discursive practices of the labor market were in line with the metaphysical discourse of the Protestant ethic.

What the two sociological approaches to understanding globalization have done is to separate the dialectic and theorize their respective positions from opposite sides of the dialectic, the culture of globalization scholars from the side of labor organization (forces of production) and practices and the globalization as culture people from the side of social integration (social relations of production). The "culture of globalization" scholars identify the economic practices by which Protestant agents organized and organize social practices the world over to socialize individuals to become "agents of and for capital" for the purpose of generating surplus value or economic gain for capital. In a word, the organization of work and its relation to the desires of capital is the dominating factor in understanding the processes of globalization for the culture of globalization group. Given the mutual constitution of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism this latter position is not inaccurate as the labor market also serves to integrate the social actor as not only an agent of capital but also a Protestant agent, i.e., a worker who gains, status, upward economic mobility, etc. by being obedient and working hard.

For the globalization as culture scholars the emphasis is on understanding how national cultures avoid being both an agent of capital and a Protestant agent to successfully carve out a national space within the globalizing process so as to achieve equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the globalizing power, America since World War II, which is seeking to integrate the multitude into the capitalist processes of globalization. This position is not an alternative to the culture of globalization group but is actually saying the same thing. That is, in globalization under American hegemony the attempt of capital, the upper-class of owners and high-level executives operating predominantly out of the US, is to have national cultures carve out national spaces, nation-states, within a global marketplace wherein every group can have a comparative advantage disseminating their natural and cultural resources so as to accumulate economic gain for themselves and national and global capital. So through the commodification of natural and cultural resources

and cultural identities (their comparative advantage) for sale and consumption, diversified consumerism, on the labor market global elites hybridize and universalize national discourse and discursive practices.

Hybridized national cultures in this process are not counter-hegemonic they are converging to meet the desires of global capital operating in postindustrial economies with emphasis on servicing the financial wealth of a transnational multicultural (phenotypically, sexually, etc.) capitalist class. Their discourse is not, however, the economic neoliberalism of the globalizing power seeking to fascistically homogenize their practical consciousness to benefit global capital. On the contrary, identity politics or cosmopolitanism, i.e., respect for human rights of “the other” to participate as agents seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution in the fascism of the neoliberal processes of the hegemonic power, is the *modus operandi* of the multicultural “other” elites.

It is this incessant claim for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution of the successful socialized hybrid liberal bourgeois Protestant “other” agent of capital the “globalization as culture” left-wing scholars identify as being counter-hegemonic. This counter-hegemony highlighted by the “globalization as culture” camp is grounded in the fact that the hybrid liberal bourgeois Protestant is allowed, and seeks to, compete in the global capitalist marketplace as a hybrid elite or Protestant agent and agent of and for capital against the gaze of their former colonial masters. This agential moment of hybrid others to participate in the global organization of labor is not counter-hegemonic—as the purposive-rationale of these hybrid agents is economic gain for themselves as an ethnic, sexual, gendered, etc., other at the expense of their poor—but, contemporarily, represents the means by which Protestant agents operating out of the US attempt to universalize their purposive-rationale among the others of the world so as to generate economic gain/surplus value or what amounts to the same thing reproduce the Protestant capitalist social system globally amidst is debilitating effects, i.e., climate change. The global other, via the language of identity politics of its elites, seeks to integrate within the systemicity of globalization not to offer an alternative to it in the face of climate change associated with capital organization, accumulation, and exploitation.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Globalization represents the discursive practice, “spirit of capitalism,” of American agents of the Protestant Ethic seeking to interpellate and homogenize, through outsourcing, mass mediaization, and consumption patterns, “other” human behaviors, cultures, around the globe within the logic of their metaphysical discourse, “The Protestant Ethic and the spirit of capitalism,” so as to accumulate profit, via agricultural, industrial, and post-industrial/ consumerist production, for the predestined from the damned. That is, via globalization social actors around the globe are socialized, through state ideological apparatuses such as education and neoliberal market forces, funded by the IMF via the US nation-state, to become agents of the Protestant ethic so as to fulfill their labor and consumptive roles in the organization of work required by their nation-state in the global capitalist world-system under American hegemony. Integration via the retrenchment of the nation state under American global hegemony subsequently leads to economic gain and status for a few predestined, administrative bourgeoisie, or transnational capitalist class, that in-turn become cultural consumers, given the mediaization of society, of bourgeois goods and services from postindustrial societies like America while the masses are taught (via the church or school) the Protestant work ethic to labor in agricultural, industrial, or tertiary tourist or financial industries. Hence, proper socialization of the other in the contemporary capitalist American dominated world-system is tantamount to hybridization, i.e., the socialization of the other as a liberal bourgeois Protestant *other* seeking equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with their white counterparts within the neoliberal framework of the global capitalist nation-state world-system under American hegemony. This left-wing process of integration via hybridization is just as fascistic as the right-wing integrative measures of the globalizing nation, i.e., America.

American capital beginning in the 1970s sought to outsource work to other nation-states in order to escape the high cost of labor and environmental laws in the US. Given the new civil rights legislations enacted in the 1960s, as a result of the civil rights movement, to reinforce the American liberal bourgeois Protestant social order without regards to race, creed, nationality, etc. that discourse would be exported to other nation-states. American capital, therefore, sought to hybridized other ethnic cultures/practices the world over via the retrenchment of the nation

state and color-blind legislation in order to make social actors of other cultures known for two reasons, to socialize them to the individualized and entrepreneurial work ethic of the neoliberal globalizing process and to accumulate surplus-value as American capital sought to service the others of ethnic communities as agents of and for capital, i.e., consumers and administrative bourgeoisie controlling production for global capital, for their postindustrial economy focused on financial investment and cultural entertainment. Upon the encountering of the liberal bourgeois Protestant discourse of the metaphysics of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism under American hegemony, the response of the “other” cultural group was and or is participation in the world market system, using the ideological apparatuses of their nation-states and transnational corporations of globalizing forces to enforce this mantra via identity politics for equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution with the elites of the globalizing force. Hence, the hybridization, or liberal bourgeois Protestantism of cultural “others,” which guides the behavior of many “other” cultural identities in the world-system as they seek to open up their nation-state markets for investment and participation in the global market place is a subversive-less hybrid simulacra of white liberal bourgeois Protestant ideals and actions and, contrary to the globalization as culture position, is not counter-hegemonic to the globalizing process under American hegemony. Instead, like the right-wing fascism of the globalizing power seeking to retrench the nation-state system under the control of corporatist dictators within the juridical framework of neoliberalism; the left-wing identity politics of the elite others also adopt the radical authoritarianism, ultranationalism, forcible suppression of opposition, and strong regimentation of society and of the economy of the right in order to promote their purposive-rationality of equality of opportunity, recognition, and distribution for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc. within the juridical rules and laws of neoliberalism in the face of its deleterious effect, i.e., climate change.

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Citation: Paul C. Mocombe, "The Two Faces of Fascism in the Age of Globalization and Climate Change", *Journal of Philosophy and Ethics*, 1(4), 2019, pp. 30-37.

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