

## **GLOBAL WORLD: SYSTEMIC CHANGES, CHALLENGES AND PROFILES OF THE FUTURE.**

### **AT THE CROSSROAD BETWEEN THE PRIMACY OF THE INDIVIDUALS AND THE NEW WAVE OF NATIONALISM**

One of the most prominent characteristics of this XXIst century is the central role of the individuals. Technologies have put down many barriers that limited the communication and cooperation about individuals around the planet and has given new means to them for innovating and developing their creativity. Thanks to that, the world is today like a new planet full of ideas , initiatives and actions emerging from many anonymous people, all tending to change our lives and the whole world. In parallel, the international community has produced a series of rules and principles in the area of human rights that could give to all individuals a secure environment to be citizens of the world.

However the step to create a government of the world that secures a global legal environment is too high to become reality in the short term. And there we have a problem. Because as it is widely known, the vacuum tends always to be filled and the absence of a global government that could guarantee a safe public global space for all individuals in this planet opens the door to looking back to local security through nationalism. There are too many in this world, that begin to turn the eyes to the proud of a nation as the real public space of reference. We are living today in front of a historical crossroad; either we manage to progress towards the global governance that could guarantee to all individuals a very safe global environment enabling them to concentrate on their capacity to create and produce , or either the feeling of not being sufficiently protected and the need to identify a clear , strong and close authority will lead many to support the uprising of a new wave of nationalism.

The history of human beings has been the history of a specie that is building its own space in the planet...and maybe in the Universe. We come from very primitive moments when human beings were fighting against superior animals and tried to secure its survival by dominating a minimum portion of territory to the progressive construction of public spaces every time larger and larger; from villages to regions, from regions to nations, from Nations to International quasi Sovereign International Organisations like the European Union, and from there to the desire of a real powerful global one. But human beings rarely build up their history without set backs. Thanks God, the series of set backs have always been at regional level; The Barbarians destroyed the Roman Empire and send us to a primitive stage for over 5 Centuries. China was seriously affected following the Opium wars and the subsequent essay on the Communism model lagging behind for more than one century trying to find a new way in its positioning in the world. And so on. The problem is that all the set backs bring important lessons to mankind but they are always full of suffering and disgraces.

Today the dilemma is how to accompany the great dynamism in the technological area with the renewal of the political and social thinking in order to deliver the appropriate new systems of social organisation. It is obvious that in the last decades we have been able to make great breakthroughs in the area of the science and the technology but unfortunately it remains difficult to make any real progress in the are of developing the appropriate structures on public government. How normally mankind has evolved from a political model to a superior one ,as far as the extension of its space and the deepness of the control and the efficiency in the management is concerned, has been through deep tensions and conflicts, most of the time wrapped on wars and destruction. Today we should be able to do it in a more clever way but the task is titanic. Population in general is still too much attached to their particular territory and as the gains and losses of the new global game are not the same for all, there is a tendency among the potential losers and among those who think could gain more under the old patterns to look back to

national values to confront globalisation under what they present as a "more favorable shield" . The problem is that nationalism is never a shield when it spreads but on the contrary, a source of confrontation and destruction.

The impact of the Second World War, that was an earthquake for many in this world and was a product of nationalist exaltation, acted as a deterrent against nationalism movements for a long time. The second part of the XXth century, was dominated by pragmatism and led many to work in peace under positive dynamics of cooperation . The problem is that these dynamics are always fragile because human beings need in most of the cases strong leadership, and these dynamics lack of it. It is really difficult to make everybody understand that our present model of globalisation managed in the political field through weak and fragmented political powers , although being imperfect, is the best we can have before we progress further. It is grey but it is not dangerous and it is giving enough peace to think on how to progress. But we should not waste time in postponing real progress towards global political governance based on human rights and social cohesion. In the meanwhile contend nationalistic temptations is a must and a high priority.

In the novel of Marcel Proust "*À la recherche du temps perdu*", the author describes how the young French men in Paris were happy to enroll in the army to go to the front line of the war as there had been no conflict in the last 40 years, the whole period of a generation, and fighting was seen as an "experience" that nobody wanted to miss. Only one year later , under spending horrible days and nights in the trenches, suffering the perverse effect of toxic gases, all of them prayed for that nightmare to end.

We are benefitting in our days of extraordinary progress in many areas. So mankind is not experiencing any period of decline. The problem is that there are always winners and losers and in our case, at present, the winners many time are anonymous and disperse and the losers claim louder. It is obvious that we have to

give major voice to the winners to avoid a too dangerous set back in favour of nationalism. We have progressed too much in favour of the freedom of all individuals and trusted too much in their capacities to go now back to the easy scape of glorifying "the national ideal" . We should give the political power the role of referee of the global game or even better the protector of all in order to guarantee a certain order and balance, but never to trust in the political power as the leader of our lives, the delivering entity for new ambition to our lives. Every time this temptation has been successful a horrible ending has arrived.

So, what are main challenges and threads for us in the forthcoming decade?.

One clear challenge is how to integrate the still not successful populations in the new positive dynamic. At this respect there are large parts of the Arab World still lagging too much behind. The Arab Springs have not bring around the new era of prosperity that many were hoping and there is too much instability in many of those countries to be confident in the immediate future. In this part of the world the lack in many cases of a performant political model is blocking the population to innovate and take advantage of the new opportunities. Countries continue to be very fragmented and fragile with quite limited capacity for the private sector to compete at global scale. Terrorism is trying to get a physical base in the region (the ISIS thread) and to prevent this has become a great priority. Things look more promising today that a few years ago but nothing is definitively settled. Two major handicaps block the developmenmt of the region; On the one hand the existance of very deep international conflicts unresolved for decades like the Middle East conflict to settle the legitimate demands of the Palestinians and the fragility of the regional map as a result of the Sykes-Picot agreement that places the whole area as a space of quicksand where dangerous internal confrontations can be triggered at any moment. On the other hand the lack of a performant management scheme in political and economic terms well adapted to the new global area, that setting public rules encourages the individuals to be the locomotives of the constant

transformation of the society. For one reason or the other we see that many times the taking decision process in these societies is slow and too hierarchical to give the society the same degree of flexibility and speed reached in other parts of the world. And thus, their place in the global competition deteriorates. A model of convenient political organisation combined with a more efficient dynamism in the civil society has to be found.

In our days the key is not the intention but the result. When things do not work we need to have the courage to recognize it and commit to change. All targets can be reached relatively quickly if the right method is identified. A clear example on this is China. This big civilization (it is more than a country it is a whole civilization) has showed to the world that the integration in the world economy in a fast and successful way it is possible when the north is well placed. China that from 1880 to 1980 was in the labyrinth of darkness because of different facts, has been able to take off in a very impressive way in the last 30 years. Until 1980 China had not experienced any important increase in GDP and was lagging quite backwards in Science, Technology and Innovation. When Deng Xiaoping decided to reorientate the course of the country and to redesign the political and economic dynamics for opening the game to the civil society, China had to base the initial steps in boosting exports on its only comparative advantage; internal low salaries. But with a precise and right strategy the country has gone in only 30 years, from a per capita income of 380 US dollars in 1982 to a very impressive per capita income of 8,000 US dollars in 2016. The country has been able to develop a huge internal market and in absolute terms it is the largest economy of the planet. The whole country evolving integrating the rural areas into the modernity at a speed of 70 millions per year! More than impressive!. We are talking about the tremendous change of a group of 1.5 billion people. If this has been achieved in the largest civilisation of the planet the same can be achieved in the very much limited realities of the national states. The moto of president Obama, "Yes we can" should apply to each lagging case.

Another important challenge is the ageing population in the most advanced countries. The countries that today play the leading role in the world have to confront the "cancer" of the aging factor. This is a very important issue because their future appears less promising than their present and once the fear to the future gains ground in those countries the emergence of defensive attitudes will spread and we will have a world with less enthusiasm and dynamism towards the unknown. The pattern will be more grey, more of distrust . In the next decades the very young population in the new emerging countries will definitively attract the production capacity of many industries, getting larger shares of the private sector. Little by little the existing centres of power of many highly developed countries will begin to fade and this will be seen by their population as a serious threat to their well being , pushing for protectionist practices in a desperate effort to defend themselves against the unavoidable. The lack of a very wise thinking via a vis migration in many of those countries, is taking them to lose the window of opportunity they have for surviving through a more multicultural model. This issue is key for the global stability.

And what about the profile of the future?

On the one hand we have the imperative of the short term and this has a name : to preserve the basic balances of power in the world managed under the principle of "realpolitik". We have to avoid any deterioration in the fluent dialogue among the four big powers ; the United States of America, Russia, China and the European Union .

Then we have on the other hand the big target of the long term , the one towards where we have to set our course of action , the northern star that should guide our long standing efforts. We can sacrifice the timing but not the central course of our action. The big target is to reach a world where human rights are the spine in the organization of the global society and where we put in place important global

institutions that work in favor of the social cohesion at global scale and guarantee peace vs any potential conflict. Transition to this world can take very long but certitude on which is our final destination port is essential. This will help to prevent set backs and close the door to any dangerous temptations of involution that will force us to major efforts of recovery. We have to create a planet where the capacity of each individual can flourish and where we can arbitrate to compensate the different energy of each one in such a way that no blockade is put on any one but at the same time the less able are not abandoned behind.

Never before mankind had the enormous possibilities of our generation. The challenge of a successful architecture of the public spaces can not overpass our capacities. On the XXth Century we proved that the Universe could be reachable for us. Before going to the outer space on sustainable basis we should be able to organize our model of coexistence at global scale in the place that is our home: Planet Earth. We know were to go we just need to improve our efficiency in our course of action and discard Mermaid caterpillars. This is the Odyssey of our XXIst century and each of the individuals is the new Ulysses.