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The Globalisation of Materialism and the Disintegration of Values

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By Ramzi Bendebka

The attention in this article is not to evaluate globalisation; however, it shows the dark side that some people cannot see.

Contemporary history has witnessed a global explosion very similar to that which occurred at the beginning of the universe but in a different way. After the matter formed from the multiple and attractive images of materialism, globalisation exploded and expanded to include almost all world countries.

The global expansion, represented in materialism, was not to replace nothingness and emptiness, as happened with the claims on Big Bang theory. Instead, this expansion of globalisation replaced the ethical side, which forms the basis on which civilisation is built alongside matter. The broader globalisation expanded, the greater the black holes occur, represented mainly in crises that afflict all aspects of life that people have become familiar with, far from values.

If the emergence and expansion of the universe is evidence of life, then the expansion of globalisation and the severity of its crises have increased the state of confusion and fear of decline. A moral decline preceded the materialism collapse. Thus, the inevitable collapse of integration between morality and materialism and thus will decrease the problem-solving to save the human race.

Far from discussing possible solutions that cannot precede the phenomenon analysis, we must understand globalisation and its method of operation that prioritises materialism and neglect ethics and values. The term globalisation, in its ideological dimension, refers to the concept of excluding others. This concept is a complex process that begins with *construction* and *gleaming* but ends with *shorthand* and *disintegration*. As a fact, the ideological dimension always needs the violator or the other party that must be confronted and eliminated.

We notice that the **construction** aspect of globalisation is to create an integrated mental image in the minds of the followers and the consumers by strengthening digital, technological, technical advance and architecture facade like buildings and outstanding facilities. However, despite its benefits for humanity, all these aspects combine to fascinate people in the underdeveloped world and make them influenced and affected by what they see and experience, enjoying or, sometimes benefiting from it and thinking that this image of globalisation in their minds, is the wanted perfection.

Moreover, if we accept that civilisation rise needs two foundations, the first is intellectual and value-oriented, when the second is the necessary material; therefore, any shift between the two foundations produces a specific type of civilisation. Values always

should control materialism until civilisation is upright. However, if materialism dominates and affects values, then civilisation begins to disintegrate and decline. The civilised act is morality, and therefore, its absence means the lack of constructive force, so the decline of civilisation became easy to reach and possible to happen.

Based on the preceding, the underdeveloped world did not rise in its intellectual and value-based balance to the stage of civilisational construction. Otherwise, it would not be called underdeveloped according to the western classification. Globalisation exacerbates the deterioration and distance from this balance by strengthening materialism. It can be said that the process of building and **gleaming** was intended to establish, in reality, the dependency and new colonialism, not to expand the existing Western civilisation as some people want to promote.

Perhaps, what makes things worse is that materialism has a rentier consumer nature in underdeveloped countries, especially in the Arab and Islamic world, and does not make people productive. Materialism is a building that has foundations and components in its nature.

However, what we see in our world reflects the fascination with the image of the West. It does not rise to originality in construction and development but rather the consumption of what is present and available. As for the intellectual and moral aspects, we did not know how to deal with and use the existing heritage, from the Quran and the Sunnah, with substantial scientific and intellectual productions. As a result, the progressive process remained missing or stagnant, far from the actual exploitation of those scientific and intellectual seeds that existed previously and did not move to advanced stages later.

Concerning the **shorthand** function, which is how the intellectual aspect and values are surrounded, an attempt is made to keep it away from followers and people from other countries. This can only be done by exploiting the shining materialism that people were attracted to, so they became satisfied with the desire for possession and well-being, as seen in the gleaming stage. With the absence of morals, the shorthand of minds and making more material consumers rather than conscious consumers in terms of

thought, paves the way for globalisation dedicating it to the principle of dependency.

I found this very similar to theatrical scenes when most people are spectators and audiences inside the theatre, while only a few are on stage to perform. The role of the actors is to influence the audiences, sometimes with laughter and sometimes with tears, through magnificent pieces that they choose, prepare and perform on stage.

While the acting is confined to a small group of people, the majority in the theatre enjoy the performance presented, not to be actors or theatrical text writers. We often hear that art and acting is a talent that has been honed by application and much trying. Therefore, it is impossible for an ordinary person who has not been given this talent to have the ability to move people's feelings as he/she wants, so he/she always remains subordinate to the theatre as a spectator or audience.

This proposition is almost entirely applicable to the concept of globalisation, but what distinguishes it from the theatre is its obligatory feature. It is not out of desire and choice, unlike theatre. Instead, we find a group of countries and giant global companies controlling the aspects of people's lives and fascinating them as audiences, with people sensing the inability to reach those levels of progress and development.

In addition, any attempt to emerge or shine cannot be done without passing through the gate of certain countries. Therefore, the issue is not how to acquire specific capabilities but rather what we call *dependency par excellence*.

After all, proponents of globalisation consider that the latter has brought the world together and made it a small village. We say that the small village is evidence of dismantling societies and cultures and making them easy to penetrate and disintegrate. If identity is the immunity that protects the dissolution of personality and nations, globalisation seeks to destroy this immunity, and the backward societies will become more dependent. They are used and harnessed to build projects of others, mainly advanced countries, consciously or unconsciously.

We need to differentiate between the terms: universality *al-alamiyah* and globalisation *al-awlamah*.

Universality is openness to the other and the openness of nations within the framework of civilised communication and interaction based on cooperation, respect and freedom. In this sense, it is an option that opens up fields and accepts diversity. As for globalisation here, it is a unification of values and practices according to a single view that does not allow diversity but rather obliges to follow, one way or another, which may make it abolish the others instead of being open to them.

Globalisation, then, **disintegrates** societies and makes them subservient to others through the denial of original identity and tampering with the culture used to bring people together, even in miniature forms. When there is no sense of belonging and national unity, or the unity of the nation, this disintegration from the origins and joining the bright rides of globalisation, which does not secure a future or unite a divide, but devotes the principle of dependence and instils a sense of separation from belonging identity and nation.

Some may defend globalisation as an ideology, citing that it has absorbed previously marginalised societies by providing them with modern means, equipment and technologies, and these societies have become more capable of keeping pace with global changes.

The answer is that what reached the underdeveloped world was intended to open more markets economically, consolidate the principle of exploitation and political dependency. The means and technologies serve those who use them better and employ them to produce and develop things.

As for the one who cannot produce, unfortunately, will become a consumer, and therefore, the one who consumes and does not produce is the backward one, who in turn will remain dependent on others until he/she finds the ability to open this closed circle into which he/she was entered in the name of progress, openness and development. There is no room for moral theory in globalisation in this way.***

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