

We are condemned to globalization, one would say if one wanted to use existentialistic language.

Indeed everything is global and globalistic since everything is part of a system and each system is part of another system.

Globalization falls upon us in many ways and from many realms: political, economic, technologic, religious, cultural, etc.

Technology makes it possible for globalization to be achieved at a very rapid pace and very intensely. That is why the face of today's version of globalization is technology.

According to Michael A. Casey, technology leads to secularization and when that is imposed on peoples and cultures that do not want to be secular, then a major problem is created ("How to Think About Globalization", in *First Things*, Nr. 126, Oct. 2002, p. 55).

But there is another way in which we can understand the entire process.

If globalization is making the world a village, we might get back to our rural identity which, in many ways, can be good news for our future.

In fact, Mircea Eliade is right when he talks about the eternal return which has more than just a mythical dimension. It is religious in nature. The return to religion, then, whose role is to permanently warn culture on the authentic values so that people can have a good and stable point of orientation in life (Teofil Tia, "On the Ignored Fragility of the Western Civilization", in *Credinta Strabuna*, Year XII, Nr. 9, Sept 2002, p. 3), becomes an imperative for today and for our future. It is the only source available to give balance to globalization.

Religion is probably the most powerful phenomenon in human civilization. That is why globalization, another cultural phenomenon, though not at the same level, will have to take religion very seriously in order not to become suicidal.

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What globalization is, how different points of view explain its positive and negative features and implications, the complex and multiple ways in which it affects our life today, and many other related issues will be explored through the presentations and discussions that we will have at this Symposium.

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invite you to

The Twelfth Ecumenical Theological Symposium

**Globalization from A (Archeology)
to S (Spirituality):
What Is It and Who Needs It?**

Saturday, December 4, 2004
5:00 PM

Metropolitan College of New York
75, Varick Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10013

George Alexe

Senior theologian of the Romanian Orthodox Church, member of the Union of Romanian Writers, director and founder of *Romanian Communion*; Chairman of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality:

A Contemporary Dilemma: Globalizing Religion or Spiritualizing Globalization.

Bert F. Breiner, Ph.D.

Adjunct Professor, Department of Religion, Hunters College, City University of New York:

Faith and Reason in a Global Age

Steven Cressap, Ph.D.

Chairman of Professional Development and Education for the Audrey Cohen School for Human Services and Education; Assistant Professor, Metropolitan College of New York:

The Effect of Mass Virtual Pleasure on Cultural Sectors

Richard Grallo, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Applied Psychology, Metropolitan College of New York:

Global Change: Prospects for Plutocracy on a “Learning Planet”

Theodor Damian, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Philosophy and Ethics, Metropolitan College of New York; President of the Romanian Institute of Orthodox Theology and Spirituality
Globalization as Reconstruction of the World: The Theological Value of Recapitulation.

Vadim Moldovan, Ph.D.

York College, The City University of New York; Metropolitan College of New York:
Capitalism versus “Vertical Solidarity”: A Social Work Perspective on Globalization

MODERATOR:

Dr. Paul E.C. Hamilton

Adjunct Professor, Audrey Cohen School for Human Services and Education, Metropolitan College of New York; Episcopal Church, USA.

Globalization is a worldwide process, driven by economic and technological forces. It brings with it a multitude of social and political developments, some benign, others anything but benign (as recent events have made clear in a compelling way). But globalization has also had massive consequences in the area of culture, including the central cultural phenomenon of religion.

Peter L. Berger

The fundamental characteristics of today’s global politics and America’s global role, however, are the result not of what happened in 2001 in New York and Washington but of what happened over a decade ago in Moscow. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War produced changes in three central aspects of the global geopolitical and strategic environment: the global power structure; the bases for the alignment and antagonism of states; and the prevailing type of war in the world. These developments have significantly affected the American role in global affairs.

Samuel P. Huntington

In the post-Soviet era, globalization denotes the evolution of a supernational role that Western industrialized nations are going to play under the leadership of the United States in shaping the social, political, and economic future of humankind. Whether imagined or real, this emerging supernational role of the U.S. and its seminal influence in global politics is the source of fear in the rest of the world, including the European nations.

Abdulaziz Sachedina

Religion is a system of practice, belief, and belonging that people cling to in the face of the many dislocations of a now global and globalizing modernity (or, if one prefers, “global modernities”).

Joshua J. Yates