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# Metaphysical Foundations of Alter-Globalization

*Fundamentos metafísicos de la alter-globalización*

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### RESUMEN

El propósito del estudio es corroborar las perspectivas de civilización y el potencial anticrisis de la cosmovisión de la alter-globalización basada en la determinación de sus características básicas y esenciales. El estudio del proceso de globalización se lleva a cabo desde el punto de vista de un enfoque sinérgico, que permite centrarse en la importancia de la auto-organización y el problema de elección. Como resultado del análisis, los autores destacan los fundamentos metafísicos de la alter-globalización que determinan sus perspectivas históricas y su eficacia creciente. Estas bases incluyen los principios de libertad, deliberación y auto-organización. Se revelan los detalles de estos principios y su implementación práctica en el contexto moderno del potencial de un mundo globalizado.

**Palabras clave:** alter-globalización, globalización, antiglobalismo, discurso cívico

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to substantiate the civilizational prospects and anticrisis worldview potential of alter-globalization based on the determination of its basic and essential characteristics. The study of the globalization process is carried out from the standpoint of a synergistic approach, which allows focusing on the importance of self-organization and the problem of choice. As a result of the analysis, the authors highlight the metaphysical foundations of alter-globalization that determine its historical prospects and increasing effectiveness. These foundations include the principles of freedom, deliberation and self-organization. The specifics of these principles and their practical implementation in the modern context of the potential of a globalizing world are disclosed.

**Keywords:** alter-globalization, globalization, antiglobalism, civic discourse..

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The global crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated the extreme relevance of operational international cooperation in solving global problems. Media criticism of managerial “isolationist” decisions of national governments, pessimistic forecasts of the end of European integration and the collapse of the global world are caused, on the one hand, by the loss of stability in a pandemic situation, and, on the other hand, by the increase in the negative consequences of the implementation of the ideas of globalism. The worldview ideology of globalism is, in the figurative comparison of I. Wallerstein (1991), “the spirit of Davos”, i.e. the commercialized use of the objective trends of globalization. The integration of all for the benefit of the few is the credo of this world order. In the context of globalism, the liberal principles of free enterprise and consumer choice give rise to extreme inequality, consumerism and the degradation of ethnonational traditions. The reduction of a person to the role of producer-consumer, standardization and leveling of personality indicate dystopic tendencies of the global “risk society”.

However, the opposite position – antiglobalism does not lead to a brighter future, but a “traditionalist” dystopia, as it is based on the principles of a closed society. This is a society, which, according to the concept of K. R. Popper (1992), seeks to preserve self-identity in the absence of freedom of information and movement in the world of “global village” (M. McLuhan). A closed society is an evolutionary impasse, as an attempt to correct it is regarded as revisionism and opportunism. Paradoxically, the lack of awareness of errors at the level of mass consciousness serves to maintain social identification. Therefore, according to the principle of verification by K. R. Popper, the objective possibility of approaching the truth is not achievable. Another principle is the principle of methodological nominalism, which focuses on the study of an object in the conditions in which it exists, is also violated in the ideology of antiglobalism. It is impossible to hide from the civilizational interactions that take place both in real and in virtual space on the Thomas More’s utopian island. Radical forms of counteraction will lead not to the “best state system”, but to the fragmentation of stagnant social microsystems torn from universal societal ties. According to the authors (Leontyev: 2018, p. 53), such a reactionary utopianism of antiglobalism can be qualified as a dystopia on the same grounds as the “brave new world” of globalism.

The ideological antithesis of globalism and antiglobalism is a reflection of the same objective-historical process of globalization. Based on its objective reality, we consider alternative options for the development of a globalizing world on the way to approaching the social ideal.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodological basis of the study is the concepts that substantiate the qualitative specificity of modern society as a postindustrial one, with new technologies of communication, integration and dominion (Masuda: 1983; Toffler: 2004; Fukuyama: 2002). Understanding the principles of functioning of social communities requires an appeal to the concept of open and closed societies of K. R. Popper (1992). The study of the globalization process is carried out from the perspective of a system-synergetic approach, which allows focusing on the importance of social self-organization, the variability of global changes, as well as maintaining social integrity on the principle of “unity in diversity”. The study is based on the works devoted to the philosophical analysis of the problems of globalization of R. Robertson (2012), F. Lechner (1985), M. Waters (1995), A. N. Chumakov (2015) and others. Academician N. Moiseev (1998) outlines the contours of the future “planetary and rational” society in line with the coevolution of man and nature.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the context of information revolutions and the change of technological modes, society is making a dialectical transition to a new quality. Quantitative and qualitative changes stimulate the intensity of global social interactions, the rapprochement and interdependence of countries. In turn, according to the principle of ring causality, the "squeezing" of space and time determines the reconfiguration of politics and economics and changes the being and attitude of a social subject.

According to the fundamental definition of R. Robertson (1985), globalization can be understood as the process of "an ever-increasing impact of various factors of international significance on social reality in individual countries". M. Waters goes even further, linking the essence of social change with the removal of territorial restrictions: globalization leads "to the deterritorialization of the social, due to the expansion of symbolic exchanges" (Waters: 1995, p. 3). The intensive exchange of symbols and information is both the cause and effect of globalization, which produces not only unity, but also a struggle of opposing forces and interests. The unity is due to universal interdependence within ecumene, and the struggle is due to the positioning in relation to the process of "the formation of structures, connections and relations common for the whole planet" (Chumakov: 2015, p. 31). Natural-historical universalization presupposes openness and conventionality of national borders and creates a new quality of international relations. The main qualitative indicator of the emerging relationship is freedom. However, new degrees of freedom correlate with new risks. External negative freedom-arbitrariness of neoliberal globalism is no less dangerous than the totalitarian order of dictatorship and autocracy that destroys rights and freedoms in a closed society of antiglobalists.

The dilemma between the variability of freedom and the imperativeness of a predetermined order is removed in the worldview of alter-globalism. Its constructively positive attitude to the globalization process presupposes a movement from negative freedom, which is based either on arbitrariness, external restriction or self-restriction to positive freedom and the formation of a new sociality. The new quality of freedom involves going beyond the utilitarian need, this is the state of self-determination of the subject, its independent choice and conscious responsibility based on its own value-purpose settings. Key parameters: independence from outside interference, observance of the right to independence of others, lack of internal desire to deprive oneself or others of their independence and, as a result, self-realization in the direction of the good and expansion the realm of the good. In the value-practical aspect, positive freedom in the worldview of alter-globalization is the exploration of the world and the transformation of unfavorable circumstances into favorable ones, into "their own". Such an "appropriation" not only satisfies the own needs of one interested subject, but also expands the range of opportunities for the self-realization of others. From this follows the growing independence and genuine authorship in the life of each participant in this movement. To change globalism in the direction of increasing responsibility, it is not enough to formulate the social ideal of single humanity and to ascertain the resource potential for its realization. To achieve this goal, "globalization with a human face" implies the rejection of nongood means, i.e. negative freedom, primary for all participants. Moreover, freedom as refusal and restriction is supplemented by positive freedom, i.e. a constructive approach in which social conditions change so that the means become good. As a result, freedom "from" unfavorable conditions and means as a basic level of self-determination for each participant in the movement expands to create a new social quality and to creative freedom "for" self-realization within the global whole. In this case, the freedom of each does not end, as M. Bakunin argued, but increases where the freedom of the other begins. The self-development of each increases the space of my freedom and the freedom of the other, thereby increasing creativity and the freedom of the possibilities of the global whole. The approach of alter-globalization harmonizes the whole without absolutization and unification, since it is based on a holistic worldview, which is focused on the individual level in the professional approach of Hippocrates: man is a "microcosm in the macrocosm".

The idea of an alternative philosophy of the "new Enlightenment" for the modern world was proposed by the members of the Club of Rome in the anniversary report *Come On! Capitalism, Short-termism, Population*

and the Destruction of the Planet. Expressing concern over the current state of the world economic system, the authors call for an alternative economy, which should strive for sustainability rather than growth and increase the common good, rather than maximize private benefit (Weizsäcker, Wijkman: 2018). Based on the concept of ecologist and economist H. Daly (2007) on the transition of the world economy to a "complete world", the authors state a crisis situation. The cause of the crisis is the prolongation of the worldview attitudes that have exhausted themselves. In the "empty", poorly mastered world, the biosphere could fulfill its absorbing functions, despite the fact that nature was perceived by contemporaries as a pantry or laboratory. The instrumental attitude to nature in the Enlightenment is explained by the cult of reason, science and experiment, an orientation toward obtaining experienced knowledge and the specifics of empirically substantiated answers. From this follows the worldview specificity of the perception of human history as a linearly progressive development with unambiguous axioms, doctrines and ideologies. The modern "complete world" is the result of exponential economic growth with attendant global problems and the ambiguity of the future. According to the metaphor of H. Daly, resource consumption is like a trickle of sand in an hourglass (Daly: 2007, p. 18), humanity loses its natural capital, without which the produced capital is useless, "antigood" are produced faster than "good" and society becomes poorer (Daly: 2007, p. 12). This is a case of "noneconomic growth", the overcoming of which is hindered by group interests and the dominant type of worldview. Therefore, the formation of a planetary civilization requires a review of the postulates of classical rationalism or, according to academician N. Moiseev, "parting with simplicity" of absolute knowledge (Moiseev: 1998, p. 40). Based on this, the synergy associated with the process of coordinated interaction of opposites is considered as a key point of philosophy for a globalizing world. "The basis of this type of Enlightenment is the idea of the value of balance and not the affirmation of a "correct" doctrine", the authors of the report note (Weizsäcker, Wijkman: 2018, p. 158). Proponents of the alternative development of civilization are focused on finding a balance between countries and regions, moment and prospect, coevolution of man and nature, abandoning the race of consumption and absolutizing progress, which is accompanied by both acquisitions and losses. In our everyday world, the practical embodiment of the philosophy of balance, in our opinion, the Swedish concept of life "Lagom är bäst": "Not too much, not too little, but as much as you need". A sense of balance, moderation and concern for the environment is based on social trust and a holistic worldview, forms the Scandinavian "futures literacy". In the trend of this sociodemocratic approach, members of the Club of Rome note the demand for integrative thinking, which is able to "perceive, organize, coordinate and reunite individual fragments" of reality (Chumakov: 2015). The reconciliation of opposites for the benefit of all and not for the sake of the interests of the next center of power serves to maintain a dynamic balance in an unstable "complete world". The synergy and balance of the worldview of the "new Enlightenment" are reflected in the definition of Ernst Weizsäcker and Anders Wijkman: humanistic, but free from anthropocentrism, open to development, but appreciating sustainability and caring for the future (Chumakov: 2015, p. 11).

The philosophy of balance finds its practical embodiment in global civil movements of the 21st century, such as the World Future Council, Jakob Johann von Uexküll and Great Transition, Paul Raskin, as well as in the alter-globalization of problem-oriented social movements. The Internet creates real opportunities for its development through the mechanisms of network democracy. The principles of social self-organization are immanent to the alter-globalist movement as a complex, open social system with a high degree of dynamics. The first initiatives of alternative "globalization from below" originated in the framework of social, mainly grassroots protest movements, regardless of their type: prosystemic, off-systemic and anti-systemic (Leontyev, Leontieva: 2019, p. 5173). Nevertheless, the deliberation of the new movement, the positioning strategy based on the philosophy of balance allowed expanding the zone of its influence to the world level. In this case, the term "deliberation" is used not in the initial meaning of the intra-elite discussion of decisions made by J. Besset, but in the interpretation of J. Habermas (1981) and J. Cohen, who expanded the concept to civil discourse. This means that the subject of communication of "world level" for alter-globalists is not the conspiracy theological elite of the world government, building a society on the principle of the "golden billion", but the world community – socially active citizens who are interested in local and planetary survival and

capable of dialogue and finding balance. Functionally, deliberation is manifested in negotiation processes and interaction according to the principle of social networks, i.e. based on decentralization, openness, flexibility and equality.

The optimal model of the negotiation process for alter-globalists as a self-organizing community, in our opinion, was laid down in the framework of the Harvard Negotiation Project by R. Fisher and W. L. Ury (2011). They considered the "positional" communication of the subjects as not promising. "Positions" have the characteristic of fixity; in the worldview aspect, they are ideologemes or rigid normative concepts that exclude variability. However, any position is based on a combination of interests, and their awareness creates the conditions for a mutually beneficial solution to the problem. Therefore, in line with the Harvard, the so-called "principle negotiations" or the interested parties do not work with positions, but with interests. The appeal to the "fundamental", basic interests is relevant for alter-globalization, since its worldview and practical content develops in the unity and struggle of opposites. On the one hand, this is an optimistic recognition of the civilizational relevance and prospects of globalization, on the other hand, a rationally critical approach and protest. The final constructiveness of the negotiation process serves as the basis for concerted action by the alter-globalists.

Based on contractual rational actions in the communicative space of alter-globalization, an adhocatic form of power is born with a predominantly informal character of interaction and a high degree of freedom. This is a decentralized power that moves from subject to subject, depending on the problem being solved, on the level of competence and creativity. The authority of knowledge and the joint efforts of experts provide a rational and efficient choice of ideas and actions. Therefore, A. Toffler defined adhocacy as "the power of intellectuals mobilized on a specific occasion" (Toffler: 2004, p. 215). In the conditions of a modern dynamic external environment, adhocacy is extremely effective, since it increases the adaptability of the system due to its flexibility, ability to quickly reconfigure and mutually agree. Despite the fact that the alter-globalization movement does not have a single official center or hierarchical, functional and role structure, it has the mobility and mass character of the participants, united on an equal footing. Each self-organizing entity has the right to be the initiator, informant and coordinator of global and local actions for socially responsible globalization. The total effectiveness of the movement is due to selective decentralization, situational leadership of public organizations and technological capabilities for the implementation of network communications that form a global identity. Unlike antisystemic movements and opposition theories of the past, alter-globalization seeks a global "counter-power" of civil society, rather than the conquest of centralized political power.

The successful consolidation of civilian forces is evidenced by the vast geography of countries and cities in which alter-globalization demonstrations were held to solve specific practical problems generated by globalization. In the discursive space of the World Social Forum (Porto Alegre, Brazil, 2001), the first "negative program" of the movement was formulated. In our opinion, public crowdsourcing is a modern effective technology for the network accumulation of civic initiatives and the implementation of innovative projects. The social community, integrated on a specific information platform, is able to quickly receive relevant ideas and carry out their selection and development, using the collective mind of the participants in the movement. Broadcasting of practical events with online inclusion of interested individuals and organizations is available on streaming platforms that provide not only direct, but also real-time feedback. Information and communication technologies stimulate the development of social self-organization of supporters of the ideas of alter-globalization and global and local actions, coordinated based on adhocacy and the philosophy of balance.

## **CONCLUSION**

Thus, the philosophy of the “new Enlightenment”, designed to synergistically reconcile contradictions, accepting them as a blessing and a sign of integrity by the principle of complementarity, is already present in the worldview installations of alter-globalization, which seeks to balance the world-systems, maintain global dynamic balance, and soften contrasts. The new world of alter-globalization implies nonresistance to the objective movement of society towards single sociocultural integrity, inadmissibility of the ideologization of the idea of “holistic world” or its situational use in corporate-selfish or geopolitical interests.

It is proved that the alter-globalization movement is generated by the dystopic aspiration of the ideologies of globalism and antiglobalism. We conclude that there are three whales on which the world of alter-globalization rests:

first, the concept of positive freedom “for” the construction of an alternative future in the process of practical adjustment of the present;

second, civic discourse involving the global audience in the information space of alter-globalization;

third, network self-organization with the creative potential of adaptive adhococracy that stimulates freedom of discussion of relevant ideas and actions.

The principles of freedom, deliberation and self-organization acquire the functional and technical form of their embodiment in real and virtual space. Maintaining social balance is facilitated by contractual rational actions in the format of “principled” negotiations, the effectiveness of public demonstrations and forums is increased in the streaming video format, and the crowdsourcing mechanism ensures the scale of civic initiatives in social networks.

Thus, the modern era produces new risks and new opportunities, according to which alter-globalization is an anticrisis strategy, a movement towards the era of the “new Enlightenment” and a philosophy of balance.

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