

# "Global Politicization"<sup>1</sup>

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## ***Abstract:***

Recent dramatic socio-political changes across the globe have led the international community to a period of emotional upheaval. Popular uprisings in the developing world in general and in the Middle East in particular; people's thirst for democratic reforms at global level; and the globalizing world – they all encapsulate the opaque mosaic of international order. Since the inaction of the international community in managing these transitions peacefully – see Syria, Egypt, Ukraine, Venezuela – has caused uproar, it is essential to grasp the rationale for world-crossing changes and search for ways out of contemporary morass. It is palpably clear that the world is witnessing a new current in global philosophy, that I call it Global Politicization. It is the Glocalization of the outstanding values (freedom of communication, access to information, political participation and leverage on decision-making process, political education, political maturity and awareness, global political will to mitigate global challenges) of Political Globalization by individual human beings. Individual humans gradually understand the importance of “going into politics”; they are keen on providing their inputs in the development of their neighborhood, they are interested in shaping their future, they are vigorously fighting for their independence—and in the process, they transform to political entities.

## ***Keywords***

Globalization; Politicization; Political virginity; Political maturity; Political freedoms

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is based on my short essay titled “Political Globalization-Global Politicization” which was published on Diplomatic Courier magazine in October 2012. See Ayvazyan, V.: “Political Globalization-Global Politicization”, Diplomatic Courier Magazine, October 26, 2012. Accessed on March 12, 2014: <http://diplomaticcourier.com/component/k2/1878-political-globalization-global-politicization>

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Recent developments in the world of politics beg a question: where are we looking to? The globe is currently facing vehement challenges. A global economic crisis, dramatic growth of the world population and a possible food crisis, global environmental change, the rise of non-state actors such as terrorist groups, Syrian deadlock and political morass in the Middle East, the Arab Spring and Muslim upheaval, Iranian nuclear issue, the diminishing gap between the West and the Rest, the rise of China and other members of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and their nationalistic appetite, the possible nuclear conflict between non-NPT states (Pakistan vs. India), and so forth are new nuisances and will play a decisive role in the upcoming decades. All these global trends have given birth to a more complicated structure of contemporary international relations. Yet it is globalization that should harness the skill and creativity of individual humans in order to puzzle out aforementioned concomitant hazards. In other words, worldwide political globalization is in high demand now as nation states lack the ability to address current hazards. And “global governance” has gained in popularity over recent years as concerns over the increasing lack of consistent leadership and policing forces. While mainstream IR scholars are trying to puzzle out whether such a phenomenon (global governance) is possible at all, global decision-making and global policy implementation is becoming an absolute necessity in this capricious international climate.

In the first week of October 2012, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced, “This morning, there are more than one billion people using Facebook actively each month. If you're reading this: thank you for giving me and my little team the honor of serving you. Helping a billion people connect is amazing, humbling, and by far the thing I am most proud of in my life. I am committed to working every day to make Facebook better for you, and hopefully together one day we will be able to connect the rest of the world too.” This is a decisive victory of globalization over state-made boundaries.

Globalization thus contradicts the national interest. The latter is an expression of a single state's insular passions, and does not have the ability to overcome worldwide challenges such as climate change and nuclear terrorism. The former is a broader concept, intervening in every sphere of human life in every part of the world. Globalization is an evolutionary process undertaken by global society, which in turn can be defined as an association of all human beings. *Globalization is the product of*

*individuals, by individuals, for individuals.* As the Pulitzer Prize winning New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman once stated: "This era of globalization is based around individuals ... I'm not sure economics has fully been able to capture far below the firm level. I call it gross individual product." Economic, as well as political globalization is a natural evolutionary process, hence the "global thirst" for cooperation.

Independence movements in the former Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia and the establishment of new post-socialist states (recognized and unrecognized), as well as the births of Eritrea, South Sudan, and the like were the first signs of the abrupt reversal in the political culture throughout the globe. The Arab Spring is another vivid example of the dominance of global dynamism over static state. The old is on the brink of ultimate collapse in the world in general, and in the Middle East in particular. The world is witnessing a new current in global philosophy, that I call it Global Politicization. It is the Glocalization of the outstanding values (freedom of communication, access to information, political participation and leverage on decision-making process, political education, political maturity and awareness, global political will to mitigate global challenges) of Political Globalization by individual human beings. Individual humans gradually understand the importance of "going into politics": The growing accessibility of information and communication technologies<sup>3</sup> and the unprecedented increase in public awareness in remote areas of the world has sparked political participation. This is of paramount importance as it paves the way for claiming a decisive victory over political virginity, which can be defined as people's political illiteracy and indifference to what is going on in the political arena of their country. It is not a brainwashing phenomenon or bandwagoning adventurism. Political virginity is being defeated in the Middle East, and Arab people now will never stomach the political power of old regimes. People are no longer ready to bear the burden of perpetrator governments in all innocence. People demand more than they used to: they want political freedoms, they want leverage on the decision-making processes, and they want to make their voices heard: they politicize their lives. Political virgins and virgin societies are transforming into politically mature communities. Unfortunately though, this transformation is painful and long-running. The harshness of this transformation

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<sup>3</sup> India, for instance: The number of Facebook users in the world's largest democracy has soared from 8 million to over 60 million people in the past 4 years. (see the Globalist: <https://twitter.com/theglobalist/status/372282716521496576>. Accessed on March 12, 2014) or Arab world: Twitter users in the Arab world almost doubled, from 2 million to 3.7 million, in the past year as Arabic-language tweets ballooned (see "Much more tweetering in Arab world", The National, June 23, 2013: <http://www.thenational.ae/business/industry-insights/media/much-more-tweeting-in-arab-world>. Accessed on March 12, 2014)

notwithstanding, it is highly seductive because it is a looking forward road to the normal future. The wait and see strategy is no longer an option, so people are building a nation without states, a map without borders. They are championing for political maturity. Individual humans are establishing United Individuals via ICT -- Facebooks, Twitters, free communications, and information sharing. They are challenging state supremacy.

The old methods to retain the elite's power what are usually called “stick” and “carrot” methods are not successful any more. Though it may sound odd, “stick” method is a decisive factor in the elimination of political virginity. A “stick” method can be defined as the imposition of the dictatorial and authoritarian governments' insular will on their own population by force or by the threat to use force. It is a ubiquitous phenomenon in the developing world – in states in transition, in quasidemocratic states, and in conflict-affected states in particular. Despite the harshness of the political “stick” method, current developments are witnessing benefits from it: people lose their political virginity thus becoming 'mature victims'. Apparently, victims of this method feel unbearable pain but that process transforms to an 'assault course'. Arab people, for instance, who are currently pushing for socio-economic and political changes, are becoming experienced mature victims. People are no longer afraid of suppression. They have realized that the costs of inaction outweigh the costs of struggle. They are entering into the era of political maturity, so yesterday's governments and elite can no longer thumb their noses at their citizens. As H. Arendt excellently stated, “Violence, like all action, changes the world, but the most probable change is a more violent world.” To put it bluntly, the “stick” method boomerangs on the elite as they lose legitimacy and, in consequence, political future. The events in Libya, Tunisia, and in the broader Mideast region were vindications of this *boomerang effect*.

The “carrot” method can be described as “I give you money, you obey” policy. But current developments in developing world show that economic wealth brings “political health” with it. About 96 percent of population growth today is occurring in developing countries, and Asia accounts for 54 percent of that growth. As the population grows, the emerging middle class also grows, thus challenging the foundations of old regimes in developing world as the historically driving force for sociopolitical and economic reforms. In 2008, a Goldman Sachs report predicted that people with an income of \$US6000-\$US30,000 would increase by some 2 billion by 2030. Recent protests in Brazil and Turkey proved that people won't lack for reasons to protest and push for a change even in relatively economically well-doing countries. In

Francis Fukuyama's words, "China's middle class gets political.", so a similar Chinese scenario seems quite possible. This huge middle class boom will be a strong earthquake for the 21<sup>st</sup> century's politics.

Last but not least, international affairs have undergone drastic changes: the rise of Asia, the global south, and Africa signal an increasingly interdependent structure of international affairs. A dictatorial regime can no longer count on a Cold-war giant – the Soviet Union or the United States – to receive sufficient economic, military and political assistance. A regime must open its economy and society to the neighbors and international community in order to survive and to catch up with the remainder of the world. Otherwise it will play havoc with itself and the nation. The Burmese opening up is an excellent example of this type. Rampant political virginity is gradually, but constantly becoming a rare phenomenon across the globe.

All the aforementioned "freedom projects" are not the struggle for the establishment of new states; rather they are the battle for individuals' supremacy over perpetrator-states. They are just inventing their own networks, making their own choice, exercising the power of their political will, delivering their message to the world, and changing old stations. They are going globally.

Global politicization is a rare glimpse into the 21st Century's new undertakings. It is time to revisit the very idea of state supremacy, throw away insular state-like passions, and put forward global initiatives to meet the application deadlines of the project "Sobering our world!"