

EDITORIAL NOTE

The articles published in this ordinary issue all satisfy, in some sense, the purpose of the Geoproggress Global Forum, promoted by this Journal to examine and discuss important global problems, connected to processes that affect the whole world, even if examined at various geographical scales in their territorial specificities. These are often economic processes and problems, generally intrinsic to capitalism, but also political, geopolitical and cultural, and not least, in our day, ecological, all interacting with each other.

The first article - by Tullio D'Aponte, a Master of Italian Geography - examines the financial crisis of 2007-2008 that exploded in the United States stock exchange; the effects of which show that the United States, although the world economy was increasingly multipolar, was still the undisputed center of the world market, as it had already become evident with the crisis of 1929.

After discussing the situation created in the international and European level in terms of regulation of financial assets, this paper focuses in particular on the European reality and addresses the issue of strategies that the Union's banking system tends to assume, in a context made further complex following the UK's recent abandonment of the European Partnership.

Reflecting, in conclusion, on the possible directions of the "new financial geography" in the globalized world, he rightly considers, together with the consequences of that financial crisis, the EU's inability to put in place shared cooperative instruments at Community level, capable of promoting growth and development. This inability before the financial crisis would be one of the factors of the same detachment of the United Kingdom by the European Union, with major implications in the financial geography and geopolitics.

Due to the inability to become a political union - that is to say with a common fiscal policy and its own and common foreign and defense policy - the European Union has so far been unable to contribute to the construction of an international multipolar system, which is desirable. The multipolarity of the system is possible not only on the economic-financial level but also on the political-military one; the opportunity for the construction of this multipolarity has been offered to us since 1990: since the end of the USSR and the bipolar world - founded on the "balance of terror" between the US and the USSR.

From this historical event that put an end to the world that emerged from the Second World War, the greatest contributions to the construction of a desired multipolar world came from China and partly also from Putin's renewed Russia. As is known, China, with its continuous economic growth and recently also with its global strategy, has been contesting American hegemony, but still without taking on the weight and responsibility it should have in international monetary and financial institutions. Russia, in the Putin era, not only economically reorganized itself but above all it assumed a leading political role in the system of international relations - but no longer the same as the USSR one, despite the representations given by the dominant political forces in NATO, under the pressure of the military industrial complex needing to always identify an enemy to survive and do business.

The growing global role of China, not only economic, is highlighted in the second and third articles, respectively by Teresa Amodio and Alessia Amighini, who particularly deal with the recent major project One Belt One Road Initiative (BRI) and its implications for Italy and Europe. The first paper focuses on transport infrastructures, offering a summary of maritime transport of goods and Chinese investments in Mediterranean ports considering their strategic role for Chinese access to continental Europe via the renewed Suez Canal. The second essay offers a satisfactory synthesis of Italy-China economic relations and mutual interests, considering commercial relations, investments and tourist flows.

These contributions underline that “Italy has been targeted by Chinese investors since quite some time, ...but Chinese interest in Italian ports has intensified over the past few years. This led to the signature of a MoU (memorandum of understanding) on BRI in March 2019”.

Considering the global role assumed by China, confirmed by this recent initiative and by others on every continent, a joint action of Russia and the Union of States of Europe, which would also find support from other emerging nations and regional associations of states, could induce the United States and China to accept the creation of a new international order - by reorganizing in a multilateral form the system of international important bodies -: a more just and stable order, both from a monetary and financial as well as from a political-military point of view, with an authority that guarantees both monetary and economic stability and lasting peace, even in the Middle East.

The fourth contribution, by Maria Giuseppina Lucia, Ludovica Alessio and Alessandro Volpe, deals with one of the topics most studied by regional economists and geographers of the economy in the last thirty years of the twentieth century: the industrial district and more generally the local systems of small and medium enterprises. In particular, the work assigns attention to the challenges that SMEs must necessarily face in order to remain competitive in the era in which international integration has taken the form of globalization. To compete globally, SMEs must establish a constant presence in the markets they intend to oversee in order to integrate the most common light internationalization practices. In this sense, the tool of the network contract has proved effective, which allows companies to make critical mass and overcome the criticality of the small size and to take advantage of all the tax and access to credit facilities provided for by the legislation.

The crises and conflicts created by an international system without rules, the social problems created by delocalization and by an economic system dominated by companies whose sole objective is the realization and accumulation of profits - issues that many, including myself, raise - represent the need to build stronger democracies capable of imposing internal and international rules that guide the market towards greater social justice. They certainly also pose the need for economic players, workers and consumers and not least entrepreneurs to assume greater social conscience, an ethics based on the principle of respect for others and the priority of general interests over individual ones.

The last (but not least) article, by Monica Maglio, focuses on this moral requirement, which is an essential condition for the promotion of greater social justice that requires adequate choices and social rules and states capable of enforcing them. However, such an ethic would seem in itself insufficient as the results achieved so far by the preaching of millenary religions seem to highlight.

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