

кризис внутри Ливана. За период кризиса значительно возрос государственный долг Ливана.

Конфликты в арабском мире вынуждают страны региона увеличивать расходы на безопасность и оборону, и как следствие сокращать импорт продукции гражданского назначения, а также приостанавливать свои инвестиционные проекты в других странах. Подобная ситуация наблюдалась в начале 1990-х гг. в связи со второй войной в Заливе. Между тем, Беларусь не ставит приоритетным направлением военно-техническое сотрудничество с арабскими странами, хотя возможность белорусско-арабского военно-технического сотрудничества не исключается. Но наибольшие результаты белорусская экономика получит от торгово-экономического и инвестиционного сотрудничества, а также взаимодействия в сфере образования. Развитие этих направлений сотрудничества позволяет рассматривать двусторонние отношения в долгосрочной перспективе, что немаловажно для страны, которая осуществляет свои первые самостоятельные шаги в таком сложном регионе, как Арабский Восток.

## **SOCIAL TRENDS GLOBALLY – CONSUMER SOCIETY**

**И. В. Жаркевич**

«Shop Less, Live More»

«Buy! Buy! Buy! – Why? Why? Why?»

Buy Nothing Day, November, 27-th – worldwide campaign against overconsumption. «Overcoming Consumerism» is becoming a growing philosophy, especially in the developed countries. It is a term that embodies the active resistance to consumerism and its most heinous form – consumercide (a term introduced by sociologists combining consumer or consumerism with the suffix ‘cide’ which from the Latin caedo means «to kill»). The term brings about plenty of associations – suicide, homicide, envirocide). Buy Nothing Day, Slow Food Movement, Adbusting, Carbusting are popular movements representing the new philosophy of today that counterstands values of consumer society.

Why are there so many alarmists in the countries of the West? Is overconsumption a real curse of today? We can state ‘yes’ when taking into account the data given by the Worldwatch Institute. According to it, more goods and services have been consumed by the generation alive between 1950 and 1990, measured in constant dollars and on a global scale, than by all the generations in all of human history before!

Consumer society is the reality of our life. But how does it change us and our habits, our environment and our perception of the world? I will look at 2 dimensions – our environment and our perception of the world.

Commercialism is the right word to describe the drastic change in our environment. It has become pervasive and visible almost in every sphere of our lives – from architecture to education. A multiplicity of small individual specialized shops in the center of the town are replaced by impersonal hypermarkets located on the outskirts of cities; busy old-fashioned shopping streets are replaced by shopping malls; centers of cities are turned into food deserts, zones of malnutrition, hardly offering food at affordable prices, perhaps – only for some tourists.

Even the social sphere that has been perceived as non-profit is gradually being commercialized. Medical care and education which are the principle pillars of the public sphere are no longer free and accessible, moreover they are turned into battle-fields between huge pharmaceutical, food ect. enterprises fighting for their shares in these parts of our life that were once unalienable from public sphere and our social rights. But now they are viewed as a part of global market which brings huge profit...

Fetishization of goods and services is another side of commercialism that is imposed on humankind to a large extent through advertisement. It is no longer goods that people are buying, but brands and the lifestyle they personify. People identify strongly with products or services they consume, especially those with commercial brand names – it is more prestigious to wear Armani than Kalinka, and it is more obliging as well, though the latter may not be at all very much different from the former... But brands are a kind of a signal or to be more precise a password that gives access to certain circles.

The actual worth of a good or service is devalued and its market price often no longer describes its qualities and merits. Many goods have already been developed to perfection and industrial enterprises need to create myths to make their product more popular with the public. Cars can no longer run faster, mobile telephones be more precise and clothes more comfortable – but capitalism demands profit, the latter – larger outputs, and to consume these large amounts of the same, hardly essentially modified goods they all need easily manipulated consumers. And advertising is the driving force of it all.

Advertising is the most rapid growing industry of today. In the USA its output exceeds 100 billion dollars annually, more than is spent on public higher education. Its impact is made inescapable by an annual barrage of 21,000 TV commercials, one million magazine ad pages, 14 billion mail-order catalogues, 38 billion junk-mail ads, and a billion signs, posters, and billboards. To it must be added a number of industries affecting popular taste and

spending, including promotion, public relations, marketing, design, and above all fashion, not merely of clothes but many other consumer products – a further \$100 billion-a-year enterprise. Thus through means of them people are transformed into consumers and easily manipulated objects of advertisement technologies. To illustrate it vividly – all of us are acquainted with lurable offer – «buy 4 shampoos with a price of two or buy this shampoo and you will get a sop free». The majority understands that it is a trick but still follows the ad in chase of making a bargain.

The change of environment is only a part of the process which is inseparable from the psychological dimension that is characterised by the revolution of needs.

Though in general the population is far better off than it was in the 50-th, it feels more deprived, more dissatisfied and more depressed than ever before. Development of communications and of modern technologies makes the most bold plans a reality, and people having hundreds of them in their minds feel frustrated when they fail to realise them, forgetting that there is only 24 hours in a day. We want all and everything and as quickly as possible – and what is more important we take it as granted that we must feel more contented. «Feeling good» is a hallmark of a successful person according to consumer philosophy.

We appoint more meetings, travel longer distances, produce more outputs, experience increasing activity – but get no real satisfaction. But we need more time to arrange and gain it all and we constantly steal time for something and somebody – from our inner selves. And this proliferation of options makes it increasingly difficult to know what one wants, to decide what one does not want, and to make ones one way through the jungles of offers and choices. Therefore more and more women in the developed countries plunge into addictive shopping trying to heal their dissatisfaction with purchasing commodities – thus continuing the vicious circle of consumer fever.

Scarcity of time is becoming another curse of our civilization and it is directly connected with exploding options of today. We no longer understand the well-known «time is money» figuratively – rather directly. In the East they have a proverb – In the West you have a watch, but in the East we have time.

To illustrate the difference in time perception and its value. I would like to tell you a parable by Heinrich Boell:

A Western tourist in the developing country takes a picture of a man sleeping in simple clothes in a fishing boat. The camera clicks, the fisherman awakens. The tourist offers him a cigarette and launches into a conversation: «The weather is great, there is plenty of fish, why are you lying around instead of going out and catching more?»

The fisherman replies: «Because I caught enough this morning.»

«But just imagine,» the tourist says, «you would go out there three or four times a day, bringing home three or four times as much fish! You know what could happen?» The fisherman shakes his head. «After about a year you could buy yourself a motor-boat,» says the tourist. «After two years you could buy a second one, and after three years you could have a cutter or two. And just think! One day you might be able to build a freezing plant or a smoke house, you might eventually even get your own helicopter for tracing shoals of fish and guiding your fleet of cutters, or you could acquire your own trucks to ship your fish to the capital, and then...»

«And then?» asks the fisherman.

«And then», the tourist continues triumphantly, «you could be calmly sitting at the beachside, dozing in the sun and looking at the beautiful ocean!» The fisherman looks at the tourist: «But that is exactly what I was doing before you came along!»

In the constant chase of tomorrow, success, profit or opportunities we abandon the beauty of today. We may have plenty of things, but be poor in time. And it is the time that enables us to get non-material satisfaction from life. The full value of goods and services as well as of communication can only be experienced when they are given attention, it means being connected to things and people and not just consuming or using them. It means actually preparing dinner and not just ordering pizza, writing your own congratulation on a post-card but not just signing it, playing games yourself and not just watching them on TV, planting your own tomato or picking up berries yourself, not just buying them, planning trips yourself and not just buying offered package tours, staging a play with your friends or drawing pictures or...or...Otherwise there is a danger of us being transformed into pervasive consumers of both material and non-material sides of our being – painting, literature, theater as well as food, clothes- I would say not incapable but unwilling and lazy of creating something of our own world of ideas.

Therefore «Live Your Life, Don't Spend It» – a motto of Buy Nothing Day, which is becoming more and more vital for our society.

## **ДИСКУРСЫ ВЛАСТИ И ТЕЛА В ГЕНЕАЛОГИИ М. ФУКО**

**О. Жук**

Современная философия стремится избежать ограниченности традиционной теории субъективности и придать привычным понятиям, как, например, <сознание>, <значение> или <личность> пространственно-телесные очертания. Преодолевая психологизм и абсолютизацию соци-