

BOOK REVIEW

“TOWARDS A GLOBAL CURRENCY. PRELIMINARIES”

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Abstract

Review of *Spre o monedă globală. Preliminarii/Towards a global currency. Preliminaries* by Napoleon Pop and Valeriu Ioan-Franc. Book published at Expert Publishing House, Bucharest, 490 p., ISBN 978-973-618-306-5, 2012.

Keywords: global currency, monetary research, financial ethic

JEL Classification: Y30

This book represents the first part of a longer term project undertaken by the authors, in their quest to uncover the subtleties of the global currency topic. And, as the authors state from the very beginning, this book is not a treatise on money but a philosophical analysis of the transformations that money induce in social behavior. In consequence, if questions regarding the authors' view on the issue of the global currency remain unanswered, the probable reason is that they will be dealt with in the future parts of their research.

The authors are distinguished researchers of the “Costin C. Kirițescu” National Institute for Economic Research of the Romanian Academy. It is important to note that this is not the first time the two authors work together. As a matter of fact, they have a long experience of common research, some of the more significant previous results being the book *Faith and economy* (2009) and the book *About crisis without anger and with discernment* (2010), written with Amalia Fugaru as a third co-author, which received the prestigious “Victor Slăvescu” prize of the Romanian Academy in 2012.

The two authors' experience and skills are complementary, leading to a paper which has both depth and breadth in its approach of the analyzed subject. Therefore, the reader has the chance of

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following a solid and structured approach of the technical aspects, all placed in a cultural and philosophical context, with elegant phrasing. There is an extensive use of mottoes throughout the book, quoting a variety of personalities, from writers to politicians and scientists. This surely helps in establishing a context for the entire discussion.

As a general note, in the course of discussing the global currency, the authors do not refer to a currency that could be simultaneously used in all countries of the globalized world but to a complex instrument of operating the globalized world, perhaps with the use of the European model as a “regional experiment”. They state the following as the main hypotheses of their research: 1) the creation of a global currency should be a mainly political project; 2) a global currency does not necessarily imply that such a currency would circulate in every country in the world; 3) there is a choice between an authentic global currency and a new global monetary standard.

The book has a balanced structure, with a preface, a prologue, three chapters and an epilogue. The preface is used to describe some elements of the inner and outer context that provided motivation for the writing of the book, while the prologue is used to briefly identify the origins and the motivation of the authors’ approach of the global currency issue.

The first chapter of the book (*Financial innovation – a stimulus for a global currency?*), after a number of preliminary ideas, presents the concept of order, from planetary to international, social, and financial level. A few pages are dedicated to financial ethics and morality, with obvious references to the recent financial crisis.

The second chapter (*The global financial system*) starts with a historical perspective over the Bretton Woods system, leading to a lengthy discussion of a new international order, under various aspects: historical and philosophical grounds, the implications of the financial crisis, Europe and its role in such a new order.

The third and final chapter (*Euro functioning governance*) deals with the political project of the single European currency and with the necessity of changes in the economic governance of the European Union.

The book and the research project that led to its writing provided the substance of several public presentations made by the

authors at prestigious scientific events. Of particular importance are the presentations made at the Financial and Monetary Economics – 2013 International Conference of the “Victor Slăvescu” Centre for Financial and Monetary Research (entitled *Is there a need for a public currency?*) and at the Economic Scientific Research - Theoretical, Empirical and Practical Approaches – ESPERA 2013 International Conference of the “Costin C. Kirițescu” National Institute for Economic Research (entitled *Towards a global currency*).

This is not necessarily a book aimed only at specialists. Certainly, it presents the knowledge on the subject of specialized researchers and much of its content derives from their in-depth research and experience, providing a distinctly technical character. However, the content benefits from an elegant use of language and a broader perspective over economy, history and humanity, which allow the non-specialist reader to understand the issues discussed and gain valuable knowledge.

The book is published in Romanian and has a rather generous synthesis written in English (consisting of a translation of the conclusions found at the end of each chapter), which facilitates the access to its content to non-Romanian members of the research community.

To conclude, this is a valuable contribution to financial and monetary research. It will probably be best understood when the authors’ entire research on the subject will be finalized and published, allowing the reader access to their complete perspective on the subject.