Global Democracy: A Symposium on a New Political Hope

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Online publication date: 24 February 2010

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Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

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Abstract   *The idea that the values and norms of democracy can also be applied to global politics is increasingly debated in academe. The six authors participating in this symposium are all advocates of global democracy, but there are significant differences in the way they envision its implementation. Some of the contributors discuss if and how substantial changes undertaken by states, mostly in their foreign policies, may also generate positive consequences in global politics. Other contributors address the nature of the international arena and the possible reforms it should undergo starting with the reform of international organizations. The debate combines theoretical aspects with normative proposals that could also be advanced in the political arena and offers a wide range of perspectives on the attempts to achieve a more democratic global political community.*

The Hope for a Global Democracy

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A New Project in International Political Theory

Until a few years ago, the very idea that democracy could be expanded beyond the nation-state was considered an absurdity. Scholars trained in political science would immediately observe that the practice of democracy could live and prosper only within the boundaries of a state. The possibility of developing any form of post-national democracy or forming international organizations (IOs) with the values of democracy was generally quickly dismissed as utopian and its advocates treated as dreamers.[1]

Today there are fewer certainties. Of course, not everybody is convinced that the idea of democracy has any relevance beyond the realm of the state, but there is at least room for debate. University courses devoted to post-national, transnational, global or cosmopolitan democracy have increased. The issue is often debated in academic circles and the literature on the subject has grown exponentially. Last, but certainly not least, several important contributions have come from young scholars, and this alone may suggest that things, at least in academe, will change.[2]

This symposium reports a number of contributions by a group of scholars who have taken part in the debate on democracy beyond borders. Although the authors share the view that the agenda of political science and international relations should be expanded to include the global dimension of democracy, they hold different opinions on the methods and priorities. This symposium may hopefully help to clarify these different positions and, more importantly, to generate further discussions of this issue.

But academic recognition and debate are not the ultimate goal of the discourse on global democracy. The ambitions of this discourse are much greater: to foster change in global politics. One obvious example where the discourse on post-national democracy is relevant is the European Union, to date the most sophisticated historical attempt to apply some of the values and norms of democracy between and across states. But this is not the sole research trajectory: the usefulness of thinking and acting democratically is also discussed in reference to the reform of the United Nations and of the other IOs. Non-governmental organizations, trade unions, political parties, and public opinion are also increasingly advocating that specific global issues, including human rights, migration, trade, finance, and the environment, be addressed through democratic devices.

Those who call for a global democracy do not necessarily desire to impoverish the function of the state. There is full awareness that states will continue to be the

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[1] See, for example, Robert Dahl, "Can International Organizations be Democratic? A Skeptical View," in Ian Shapiro and Casiano Hacker-Cordón (eds), *Democracy's Edges* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Ralf Dahrendorf, *Dopo la democrazia* (Roma-Bari: Laterza, 2001).

[2] I have reviewed the arguments and the literature for global democracy in Daniele Archibugi, *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens. Toward Cosmopolitan Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

most powerful and relevant political players not only in internal but also global politics. Attempts to transfer some state functions and powers to other institutions have so far been underwhelming. But even the most sceptical commentators today recognize that the era of states as exclusive depositories of legitimacy has ended. Today decision-making in international affairs is also scrutinized by non-state institutions according to values different from power politics; values such as legitimacy, accountability, transparency, participation, and inclusion are in fact key ingredients of traditional democratic theory. Different governmental and nongovernmental organizations such as the United Nations and Amnesty International, the World Trade Organization and the Rotary Club, the European Parliament and the World Social Forum, all contribute to global governance and assess state behaviour.[3]

It should be clear that any form of democracy at the post-national level could not, and should not, be just a replica of the forms of democracy we have experienced at the national level. First of all, because the scale is different. Second, because the issues at stake at the post-national level require innovative forms of governance. Developing democratic practices in a new global dimension needs first of all an imaginative effort. Will democracy be able to undergo such a transformation successfully? It is not the first time that the practice of democracy has had to transform and evolve to be able to continue inspiring politics. For many centuries, democracy was a term designed to describe the decisions taken by people assembled in the very same place—what we identify today as *direct* democracy. But at the end of the 18th century, the French and, above all, the American, Revolutions adapted democracy to geographically larger and more complex political communities by re-inventing it as *representative* democracy. It is significant that in the political language of the time there was uncertainty as to whether the same term should be used to define both the ancient "direct" and the modern "representative" democracy. *The Federalist* authors, for example, did not use the word democracy to describe the political system they advocated, and they stressed that "in a democracy the people meet and exercise the government in person; in a republic, they assemble and administer it by the representatives and agents."[4] But in the long run, the word democracy has been preserved and this is not a bad thing because, in spite of the differences, the key values of non-violence in public life, popular control over decision-makers and decision-making, and political equality among the citizens are commonly held by ancient and modern democracies alike. A similar transformation is needed today to adapt and expand democracy to the new global era. Is this possible?

In principle, the contemporary environment should offer unimagined conditions to make such an ambitious attempt. First of all, because the processes of economic, social, and cultural globalization have produced stronger interactions among states, making it easier to exhibit and to assimilate good government practices. Second, because democracy is by far the winning political system. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, democratic regimes have spread in the East and in the South. For the first time in history, elected governments administer the majority of the world population

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[3] See Mathias Koenig-Archibugi, "Mapping Global Governance," in David Held and Tony McGrew (eds), *Governing Globalisation* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002).

[4] Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, *The Federalist* 14 (Chicago, IL: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1955).

and, although not all these regimes are equally respectful of basic human rights, there is significant pressure to achieve representative, accountable, and lawful administrations. Democracy has become the sole source of legitimate authority and power. It is not just that democratic countries have finally outnumbered autocracies: consolidated democracies are also the more powerful and influential states of the world. The age in which democracies had to fight for their survival, as happened in the 1930s and the 1950s, has ended. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, there is no credible opponent to democracy as a legitimate form of governance.

The fact that the number of democratic states has substantially increased in the last 20 years should be good news also for *global* democracy. But if we consider substantive issues, it is not easy to identify the areas in which such good news has turned into substantive results. War has continued to be the way to tackle international controversies, the environmental issue continues to be unaddressed, and world socio-economic inequalities have increased while official development aid has decreased. The same discouraging landscape emerges if we look at institutions of global governance. The reform of the UN has continued to be debated but not implemented, while the prospect of transforming the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, so often urged after the 2008 financial crisis, is fading away. The most important coordinating devices for global governance continue to be the G8 or the G20 summits, *fora* which do not have a charter and are not transparent, making these gatherings even less democratic than the UN. It is also true, however, that more than a decade ago a brand new international institution was created, the International Criminal Court, and that the number of states to become parties to its statute has surpassed the most optimistic forecasts. The number and scope of regional organizations has also substantially increased. But these encouraging developments are only partially satisfactory when matched with the hopes and opportunities engendered by the end of the Cold War.

If we look at the foreign policy of democracies, there are even fewer reasons to applaud. Democratic states have continued to be aggressive, selfish, and prepared to defend their vital interests by any means available. In short, before and after the Cold War the position of the realist school, according to which there is no difference in the foreign policy of democratic and autocratic states, appears to be confirmed. Scholars in the field of international relations have concentrated their attention on the hypothesis that democratic states have a low propensity to fight against each other. This should prove that at least on this single issue, namely the propensity to wage wars, democracies are somehow different from autocracies.[5] But even taking for granted such a hypothesis, it does not necessarily imply that democratic states are prepared to deal with the preferences and needs of individuals of other political communities as they deal with those of their own citizens. Moreover, as stressed by Nadia Urbinati in her contribution to this symposium, there is the danger that a democratic country may feel authorized to use coercive means to expand its own form of government in other countries. This foreign policy, which dominated during the presidency of George W. Bush, of course misunderstands one of the core aspects of democracy: it is a bottom-up, and not a top-down, political regime.

Despite the missed opportunities of the last years, the view of the authors collected in this symposium is somewhat less sceptical than the standard realist

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[5] See Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).

approach. Advocates of global democracy recognize that democratic states have underperformed in international affairs (to put it mildly), but they also predict that schizophrenia between internal and external behaviour cannot last forever. On a globalized planet, internal democracy is continuously strained by phenomena and decisions that are taken elsewhere.[6] If the problem of engaging in democratic relations with other peoples is not addressed, liberal states will face increasing legitimacy problems at home. Governments will find it more and more difficult to ask their citizens to respect the rule of law and to participate in the political process if they do not follow similar behaviour in the international scene.

The Ways toward Global Democracy

But how to move from a world order dominated by democratic states to a democratic world order? There are already a number of actions and policies underway that in themselves contribute to the achievement of global democracy. I highlight below some of the key dimensions, which will be further developed in the contribution to the symposium.

For a Democratic Foreign Policy

First of all, the priorities of the foreign policy of individual states should be revised. Democratic states should make it their priority to become good members of the international community even at the cost of hurting their own short-term national interests. US President Barack Obama stated that his country needs to press the reset button in foreign policy[7], and this metaphor could be used in a much broader sense to rethink democracies' external behaviour. For example, consolidated democracies should support foreign governments and political parties willing to foster democracy rather than those serving their national interests.

With the presidency of Barack Obama, there are great expectations of a radical change in the foreign policy of the United States, as further discussed by Didier Jacobs, and for a stronger cohesion among consolidated democracies. But this does not necessarily mean that democratic countries should create new institutions to exclude other despotic governments, as suggested by the proposal of a League of Democracies. A League of Democracies would be another inter-governmental body which would not channel citizens' participation. It would be more in line with the spirit of democracy to create institutions that represent world citizens rather than their governments (see Raffaele Marchetti's contribution).

The Contribution to International Organizations

A second line of action is democratic countries contributing to and shaping the agenda of intergovernmental organizations and their reform. As discussed by Michael Zürn, IOs can no longer be considered solely as agents of national

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[6] See David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

[7] Remarks by President Obama and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown after Meeting, March 2, 2009, Office of the Press Secretary, available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-President-Obama-and-Prime-Minister-Brown-after-Meeting>.

governments. So far, IOs have applied some of the principles and procedures of democracy, but only to a rather limited extent. There are long-term plans to reform the UN and other IOs which, in spite of the policy debates and academic writings they have inspired, have never been seriously considered for implementation. The bulk of these proposals aim to increase the role and functions of IOs and to extend participation and control over them. These reform proposals are steps in the direction of a global democracy and could substantially enhance the independent political role of IOs, making them something more than simple instruments of national governments. Surprisingly, the opponents of these proposals are not just autocratic states, but also democratic ones, first and foremost the United States.

A Global Rule of Law

A third line of action refers to strengthening the international legal system. The rule of law is an essential component of any democratic system. Establishing and respecting a global rule of law does not necessarily imply the creation of a coercive supra-national power. In fact, several IOs, including the European Union and the United Nations, already have complex legal norms and an embryonic judicial power. The decisions of these judicial institutions are often ignored and this is hardly surprising since they lack their own coercive force. Nevertheless, if international norms and jurisdiction become more sophisticated, it will be increasingly costly for governments to violate them.

Over the last years, the desire to reinforce a global rule of law has mostly focused on international criminal law. The creation of several *ad hoc* international courts and, above all, the foundation of the International Criminal Court (ICC) have generated new hopes of holding politicians accountable for their actions. Indeed, the ICC is the most significant institutional innovation introduced in the post-Cold War era. Much should still be done in order to make the court fully effective, and to induce all countries to accept its jurisdiction. But it is already possible to assess its first few years of activities. So far, the ICC has mostly acted on African suspected culprits, and on insurgents fighting against, and denounced by, incumbent governments (although the case opened against the Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir is a significant exception). All investigations undertaken are well documented, but the choice is too selective. There is the danger that the ICC will be perceived as an instrument of incumbent governments against rebels and another burden placed by the white man on the black man. Those who hoped that the ICC could be an instrument in the defence of the weaker against the more powerful have so far been disappointed. There is the need to balance the action of the court to cover also cases of crimes committed by Western individuals backed by their governments.

The interest in the ICC has somehow overshadowed an equally important issue, namely the need to address inter-state controversies through legal instruments. The International Court of Justice (ICJ), the body within the UN system that should address these controversies, is highly under-used mostly because its activation is possible only when both parties in a dispute are willing to accept its jurisdiction. Unfortunately, this happens very seldom and for insignificant controversies. If we read the sentences and the opinions provided by the court, we will receive a very distorted view of the history of the world over the last 60 years. The Vietnam War, the invasions of Hungary and

Czechoslovakia, the Iraq War, the legitimacy of nuclear weapons, and many other key international controversies have not received any attention from the court for the very simple reason that states were not willing to submit the case to its judgement.

A major expansion of the global rule of law would require empowering the ICJ with compulsory jurisdiction.[8] In such a case, the court would no longer act as a "referee" among two states, but as a proper tribunal. This does not necessarily imply that the ICJ would have the power to enforce its own sentences. But even in the absence of enforcement, a sentence denouncing the behaviour of a given state would have an important impact on international relations. And, again, this is a change that each state can individually implement: several states have already accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ.

The Role of Stakeholders

Deliberative communities are not necessarily based in a territorial space. There are increasing areas in which political problems are non-territorial or involve stakeholders in very different capacities.[9] Professional associations, ethnic communities, and groups of citizens linked by common diseases or by strong economic interactions may be willing to deal with their problems through democratic procedures. Many of these groups have neither the possibility nor the interest in becoming a state and claiming sovereignty over a given territory but they may nevertheless find it necessary to have a political space to address their problems.[10] The number of transnational actors who are in charge of specific domains is increasing as is the number of administrative bodies involving both public and business members. Transnational movements for social justice have already experimented with ways to link subjects across borders.

The rise of new players claiming political legitimacy leads to the question: who are the stakeholders? (This is an issue that Terry Macdonald addresses in this symposium using the instruments of political theory.) For better or worse, the organization of political communities in states provides a straightforward answer: it is the state that decides domestically who the citizens are and that represents them internationally. But if the state is complemented by other forms of political representation, it will be much more difficult to assess who the stakeholders are in any given case. Who are the stakeholders of the oil industrial complex? We can name: the shareholders of the oil companies, the workers in the industry, the consumers in industrial societies, and the citizens of oil-producing countries. All of them might be considered legitimate stakeholders, but this still leaves open the question of the relative weights that each of these categories should have in the political process. In some cases it can be expected that the stakeholders themselves will find appropriate systems of representation of their interests, but in more controversial cases it is likely that they will need to rely on an external assignment

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[8] Richard Falk, *Law in an Emerging Global Village: A Post-Westphalian Perspective* (Ardsley, NY: Transnational Publishers, 1998).

[9] Carol Gould, *Democratizing Globalization and Human Rights* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[10] See John Dryzek, *Deliberative Global Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006); Terry Macdonald, *Global Stakeholder Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

of competences and electoral weights. A World Parliamentary Assembly may be the instrument to minimize political exclusion, as argued by Raffaele Marchetti, to provide political representation and also attribute competences and functions to transnational stakeholders.

Citizen Participation in Global Politics

One of the centerpieces of the global democracy proposal resides in giving world citizens political representation in parallel and independently from their national political franchise. The most straightforward way to achieve this is creating a World Parliamentary Assembly similar in composition to the European Parliament.[11] Such an institution will be the natural and most effective way to bring together the peoples of the earth, allowing them to deliberate on common issues. It is unlikely that such an organ will have effective powers (at least in the short and medium period), but even simply as a forum speaking to public opinion it could have an important role in identifying and confronting policies on world affairs. Such an Assembly should not necessarily be involved in every aspect of global political life, but it may concentrate on the most relevant issues either for their impact on global life (e.g., the environment) or for their political significance (e.g., major violations of human rights). On some occasions, the World Parliamentary Assembly may provide suggestions on what is the most appropriate constituency to address issues that cut across borders.

Such a new institution would complement the UN General Assembly and may work in close connection with it. It may provide political representation in global affairs to individuals and collective groups that have so far been deprived of it: ethnic or political minorities within states, stateless groups, immigrants, refugees and, more importantly, peoples who still live under authoritarian regimes. But its usefulness will not be for groups which are at the margins of political representation only. Individuals living in consolidated democracies will also have the opportunity to enjoy a new level of governance and representation. Some of the plans advocating a world legislative assembly have envisaged and even proposed the electoral systems and the number of deputies of such a World Parliament.[12]

Eppur si muove!

The agenda for a global democracy is still in its infancy both in theory and in practice. But something has already changed compared to a few years ago: it is an issue that may be debated and even inform specific policy actions. This symposium is a contribution to the ongoing debate, in the hope that it will generate further reflection and disagreements in academe. Contributors are often passionate about this intellectual programme and theory often turns into advocacy.

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[11] See Richard Falk and Andrew Strauss, "Toward Global Parliament" *Foreign Affairs*, January-February 2001. The various proposals are reviewed in Archibugi, *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens*, *op. cit.*, chapter 6.

[12] For a list of the endorsers, see the Campaign for the Establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly, at <http://en.unpacampaign.org/news/374.php>.

For several years, the progress toward more democratic global governance has been opposed by the most powerful state within the democratic bloc: the United States led by George W. Bush. The election of Barack Obama has been welcomed all over the world in the hope that it will possibly also bring a major change in world politics. But the move towards global democracy is not a one-man show, even if this man is the president of the United States. The fact that the conditions are today more favourable than in the past should provide an incentive to sharpen intellectual arguments and political advocacy. These contributions aim to provide some tools in the hope that at least some of these arrows will strike the target.

Peace and Democracy: Which Ends Justify Which Means?

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Kant's Maxim

In stretching Immanuel Kant's maxim to make it applicable to democracy, Michael Doyle, years ago, made popular the idea that if all states were democratic peace would be more secure.[13] History, Doyle argued, proves the validity of this maxim because we hardly know of democracies fighting each other. However we may judge Doyle's adaptation of Kant's maxim to democracy, it is reasonable to say that the challenges and criticism democracy is facing today are also a consequence of the claim that there is a direct association between it and peace. It is true that Kant referred his maxim to constitutional or republican regimes, not democracy; but we are justified in applying it to our democratic forms of government, which, as a matter of fact, embody the main characteristics of a republican order, like constitutional constrains, division of powers, representation, and federalism. Modern constitutional democracies comply with Kant's model of republican government and in this sense we are justified in holding them an essential condition for peace. Certainly, it was the constitutional transformation of popular government that amended the imperial disposition that belonged to democracy, as to any other regime, since its ancient Greek inception. In sum, the conclusion we may derive from Kant's maxim is that there is a logical correlation between peace and the containment of political power (and democratic power as well) by means

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[13] Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace* (New York: Norton, 1997), pp. 277–284. His argument was first formalized in an article, "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 12:3&4 (1983), pp. 205–235 and 323–354. This argument has recently been restated by Mansfield and Snyder, although they argue that the democratizing process may actually increase instability, domestic and international, and also provoke war; Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005). For a thorough discussion of the contemporary application of Kant's maxim see: Eric S. Easley, *The War Over Perpetual Peace: An Exploration into the History of the Foundational International Relations Text* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), in particular chapter 9.

of rules and rights. The question is that the correlation between the international order and the domestic political order brings to the fore the crucial issue of the interpretation of democracy, an issue that has become apparent the moment democracy has regained momentum, with the revolutions of the 18th century.

Beginning with the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, Kant, the Marquis de Condorcet, the Saint-Simonians, and Giuseppe Mazzini,[14] the pact of union, or the voluntary association of autonomous nations in a kind of federative covenant of mutual help and multilateral consultation, has became the language of European republicans and democrats and, in the 20th century, of the jurists (for instance Hans Kelsen),[15] who deemed the consolidation of the state of rights and constitutional democracy necessary intermediary steps toward a new international order based on human rights and rules of coexistence and, moreover, cooperation.

Yet, the association between peace and democracy is anything but self-evident. If ever, it offers us the picture of a desideratum or an ideal criterion rather than of the actual history of modern states. This is the case, not only because the democratic transformation has been most of the time the result of revolutions and wars against oligarchic potentates and recalcitrant empires, but also because the history of democracy proves that there might be, and in fact there are, different pictures of democracy.

Years ago, studying pacifism, Norberto Bobbio proposed an analytical distinction between two forms of pacifism: one normative (as procedural and moral) and one ideological (as militant and quasi-religious).[16] It might be interesting to apply Bobbio's distinction to democracy itself, since democracy tends to be interpreted by both its supporters and its detractors as more than simply a descriptive category. In order to exemplify the complexity of the association between peace and democracy, in what follows I shall apply Bobbio's distinction to highlight the difference between two exemplary models: Giuseppe Mazzini's democratic cosmopolitanism and Immanuel Kant's cosmopolitanism of rights. Mazzini's and Kant's views of the global process of democratization and peace were remarkably different, although both of them were consciously oriented toward international relations among states that were primed to stimulate and stabilize peace. Their difference echoes that between a normative and an ideological picture. For sake of synthesis I shall limit myself to a schematic outline. My proposal is to call attention to the complexity of the democratic language, to the fact, that is, that democracy is not simply the descriptive name of a form of government or a political regime. Indeed, in the course of the last decades, it has acquired a meaning that is *prescriptive*, enriched by an ideal content

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[14] Cf. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Polysynodie de l'Abbé de Saint Pierre*, in *Oeuvres completes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), vol. 3, pp. 617–634; Marie Jean Antoine Nicolas, Marquis de Condorcet, *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, trans. June Barraclough, introduction by Stuart Hampshire (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms, 1969); Giuseppe Mazzini, "Nationalité. Quelques idées sur une constitution nationale" (1835), in *Scritti editi ed inediti* (Imola: Tipografia Galeati, 1906–43) (hereafter *SEI*), Vol. 6; for the English translation see, *Giuseppe Mazzini on Nation Building, Democracy, and Intervention*, edited by Stefano Recchia and Nadia Urbinati (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

[15] Hans Kelsen, *General Theory of Law and State*, trans. Anders Wedberg (Union, NJ: The Lawbook Exchange, 1999), pp. 341–390.

[16] Norberto Bobbio, *Il problema della guerra e le vie della pace* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1997), pp. vii–xi.

in that it gives participation and people's self-determination also a formative and educative function. Democracy is not simply a system of decision-making procedures and a set of rules of the game thanks to which disagreement can be resolved without calling into question the existing political order; it is also a form of political activity by the citizens that is primed to have an impact on people's minds, behaviour, feeling, and language, even if and when it does not result in a good decision. The analytical distinction I am proposing between a normative vision and an ideological vision of democracy is intended to have a heuristic function. This is what makes it theoretically useful, although it does not claim to be descriptive of concrete and empirical democracies.

Churchill, Machiavelli, and Two Visions of Democracy

An important premise to be made is that at the core of the distinction between these two pictures of democracy there is the asserted link between democracy and the state—the fact that democracy is also the name of a form of government, not simply of a political practice performed by citizens. The link between state and democracy should alert us to the reliability of the association between democracy and peace.

It may be useful to clarify the main characteristics of these two pictures. The normative view can be synthesized by joining together two famous definitions, that of Sir Winston Churchill and that of Niccolò Machiavelli. Churchill argued that "No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time." To complete and emend this picture, I would propose we add that democracy is the only imperfect government that allows its citizens to acknowledge its imperfection openly and publicly. Machiavelli's words capture democracy's identity better than Churchill's: "Why then do people think ill of the populace? Because everyone freely speaks ill of them; they can do so without fear even when they are in power."[17]

Thus, democracy is not the best form of government for the outcomes it promises or delivers (sometimes its decisions are not that wise and are actually even unpleasant) but because its institutions and procedures are so conceived as to make decisions open to criticism and revision. One can say that democracy is a permanent process of emendation; which means that it presumes and assumes that error and imperfection belong to the individual, that fallibility pertains equally to all with no exception. For this reason, freedom of speech and the expression of dissent, that is to say an open process of deliberation and critical revision, are consubstantial to democracy while they are also an explicit recognition of our need to cooperate in order to face our anthropological limitations. Democracy does not demand that we think of it as the best possible regime. It demands that we recognize our fallibility and the need to co-operate and profit from each other's knowledge and experience in order to solve those problems that affect our society.[18]

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[17] Niccoló Machiavelli, *Discourses*, edited by Bernard Crick, trans. Leslie J. Walker (London: Penguin Books, 1970), Book II, preface.

[18] For an excellent elucidation of the cognitive, moral and psychological implication of the cooperating habit that democracy fosters see Josiah Ober, *Democracy and Knowledge: Innovation and Learning in Classical Athens* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

It seems thus correct to use the word democracy so as to define both a form of government and the political practice of participation and co-operation. In its *descriptive* sense, democracy denotes a system of rules of the game that define and regulate the inclusion, whether direct or indirect, in the decision-making process of those who are supposed to obey the law; the way through which the political class is changed and decisions are made, checked, implemented, and revised. Thus democracy refers to consented procedures of conflict resolution and decision-making, whose basic data are the opinions of the citizens: voting, electoral selection, and majority rule presume a legal system of rights protection and a written constitution that regulates and limits elected majorities and guarantees that citizens can associate and express their views freely, compete in elections, voice their criticism of how the elected behave, and monitor state institutions. In any case, democracy is directly tied to the state and a collective process of decision-making and law enforcement: for this reason democracy is attentive to protecting rights and limiting power.[19]

This normative and procedural view of democracy is aware that the coercive power of the state is not going to disappear because of its democratic transformation. It is also aware that in a democratic society there will be a permanent dialectics between actuating politics (institutional *legitimacy* or the work of democratic procedures) and counter-politics (exercise of *defiance* or the critical work of the public). The *diarchy* of will (decision) and trust (which entails opinion and judgment) is the source of the endogenous tension that characterizes democracy between the constituted or institutionalized power and the constituting or extra-institutional power; a tension that some modern political theorists (i.e., Jean-Jacques Rousseau) have felt in need to translate into the distinction between the state and the sovereign in order to safeguard the transformative and liberating character of politics. The same is the meaning of *The Agreement of the People* (1649), perhaps the first democratic document of modernity, which listed both the democratic desiderata (political suffrage and an elective representative legislature) and their potential deviations and perversions, as if to exhort British citizens not to think that achieving a consented government was identical to achieving democracy. Since the Levellers' document, the non-coincidence of institutions and democracy has been the most robust *fil rouge* that has unified history of democratization in western countries, a process that is structurally based on a permanent disagreement between institutions' legitimacy and people's trust.[20]

The ideological or militant or missionary vision—which was shared somehow by Mazzini and also Woodrow Wilson—seemed to presume that state coercion would vanish if popular consent were in place, and moreover that the maxim of consent free of coercion could be applied to all political domains, domestic and international. The principle of association, these authors seemed to imply, would replace that of selfish competition and conflict between states.

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[19] Norberto Bobbio, *Democracy and Dictatorship*, trans. Peter Kennealy (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), pp. 133–155. Bobbio's minimal or descriptive definition has been endorsed by Adam Pzreworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 10–14.

[20] Cfr. Pierre Rosanvallon, *La contre-démocratie. La politique a' l'âge de la défiance* (Paris: Seuil, 2006).

This inference brought Mazzini and Wilson to think that force could be replaced by consent whenever individuals and states learned to conform to reason rather than by the threat of force. This is the moral basis for a religious rendering of the idea that all states *should be made democratic* if peace and security are to follow. Hence, as Mazzini thought, it is the duty of a good democrat to do all that is in his power to advance democracy in the world.

The theoretical problem of the religious view of a democratic cosmopolitanism should be sought in the fact that it sponsors a *politics of the will*. The problems with a messianic doctrine of democratization come from the fact that it interprets democracy as a system of quasi-religious values that are intolerant of cultures and traditions that do not directly fit with them. "National self-determination is to produce democracy, and democracies are by definition peaceful. Wilson's stipulation that units, if they are to form a community, must share similar values is not irrelevant."[21] Messianic democrats make the same mistake as the Jacobins: to paraphrase Kant, they are impatient with the crooked timber of humanity and want to make individuals and countries into perfect circles. To them, democracy is more than simply the name of a procedural system of cooperation and decision.

Within the ideological scenario, the end of peace may easily justify war as a means to reach a goal like peace that is superior in value. Although democratic cosmopolitanism may start as interventionist for a good cause, it may also end up as a crusade for democracy. The reason lies in the fact that an ideological vision of democracy locates the source of all problems in the existence of non-democratic political orders, and moreover in the fact that history is recalcitrant in the actualization of the democratic *télos*. In this way the Kantian maxim is turned into a truly anti-Kantian one: If you want peace you must operate so that all states become democratic; or, if you want peace you must be prepared to fight in order to make all states democratic.

The normative-procedural version of cosmopolitan democracy offers a better model for a peaceful coexistence among nations and states that are and will remain culturally different because it presumes, as we have seen, a fallible (although perfectible) perspective. And, although the ideological view claims also a derivation from Kant, it is the normative one that profits the most from the logic of the author of the *Perpetual Peace*.

Kant thought that all is lost if the destiny of world peace and cooperation is left to *the will* of nations, even when and if nations are ruled by republican governments and their interventionist politics are motivated by a sentiment of solidarity and emancipation, or by a good will. "Just like individual men, they [the nations] must renounce their savage and lawless freedom ... But since this is not the will of the nations, according to their present conception of international right ... the positive idea" of an international peaceful order had to be sought elsewhere—for instance, in the juridical culture of a "pacific federation" or the construction of networks of normative relations that can abolish war as a means to solve conflict.[22]

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[21] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War: a Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), p. 118.

[22] Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (1795), in *Political Writings*, edited by Hans Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 103–105.

The problems the religious picture of democracy faces may thus be summarized as follows: If democracy within borders is the premise for a cosmopolitan order, the question arises of how the process of democratization should take place and what the international community should do in order to help it progress. Should the democratic goal be indifferent to the means? Or better said: Is the democratic goal to be achieved by any means, even with coercion or by outside actors, that is, by anti-democratic means? The paradox of the politics of the will when applied to the international arena is that while it claims to bring about an order of cooperation it is actually operating in a way that increases the occurrence of war, conflicts, and the division between cultures and peoples. The true issue awaiting democrats seems thus to be the following: How to make the democratic process *convenient and safe*, not simply how to make it desirable and possible. It seems to me that this is the model adopted by the European Community in setting the conditions for new countries to be admitted to the club.

Incentives and Indirect Action

Ideally, a peaceful environment would require that the subjects themselves feel the obligation to respect their neighbours. It is human nature, Kant contended, that does not allow us to be confident in a politics of the will, or democracy promotion by *direct* means. From within Kant's perspective, therefore, the problem might be framed as follow: "How to induce peoples to work for a democratic change of their institutions"; or, how to make democracy desirable, not only possible. For democracy to become desirable it is paramount that it proves itself capable of allowing, for instance, social and economic improvement, of repaying those who make sacrifices to obtain and sustain it.

A *normative* democratic cosmopolitanism is more solidly based than its ideological and messianic counterpart on the idea that consent is the basic requirement for a political democratic order. This is so because it deems the state structure essential, like, for instance, a routine institutional authority able to operate with the means of rules and laws, and equipped to implement legally recognized rights and work with officers who are accountable to the people and the law. No less important is the promotion of social and economic conditions of decency and basic well-being without which, social scientists have abundantly proved, democracy cannot endure and consolidate. In a classic study on democratic consolidation in Latin America, Adam Przeworski stressed a correlation between convenience and political stability. Democracy should become desirable in order to be pursued and, once instituted, should be able to offer citizens effective institutional instruments to solve their conflicts so that no individual or group can fraudulently twist the rules of the game in its own private or factional advantage.[23] As Alexis de Tocqueville reminds us, democracy is not founded on any kind of artificially induced or imposed patriotism, nor does it demand excessive sacrifices from its citizens; it is strong because it is able to generate a convenient form of patriotism, so to speak, or a "selfishness well understood" by which means people perceive the public good

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[23] Przeworski, *op. cit.*, chapter 4.

as convenient to everyone.[24] It is precisely this well-understood self-interest that I refer to when I suggest that the transition to democracy should be perceived as convenient by the actors themselves.

The Kantian approach invites us to think in terms of *incentives and indirect action*: effective incentives for peace and economic development, as a consequence of the assumption that human beings are anthropologically sensitive to interests and instrumental reasoning. The idea of a normative view of democratic cosmopolitanism is tailored around a *longue durée* and indirect perspective. Kant did not call on foreign political actors to take direct initiative in order to enact a legal world order: liberty could not be the object of a crusade. If he turned to anthropology and the logic of the *unintended consequences*, not to the will or the political intentions of leaders and nations, it was because he wanted to make sure that peace was truly perpetual, not contingent upon circumstances of time, convenience, and people's good intention. Actually, it was *the atmosphere of peace* that would make peoples feel secure and open to exchange and communication.

To conclude, cosmopolitan cooperation or *indirect means* is the path that seems to emerge from a picture of democracy that is consistently shaped according to a constitutional logic. The international community should create the conditions for a causal process to be set up, rather than setting it up directly; incentive and indirect invitation (this is the policy of the European Union) are the *external interference* more in tune with a democratic process of democratization.

Why Cosmopolitan Principles Belong on the International Agenda

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Introduction

Cosmopolitan scholars challenge the functioning of international institutions such as the WTO or the UN. They point to democratic deficits in these institutions, including the lack of identifiable decision-makers who are directly accountable for wrong decisions made at the international level, as well as the inscrutability of international decision-making processes and the concomitant information advantage the executive decision-makers have over others. Furthermore, particularly the prime actors in international politics, such as multinational businesses and the superpowers, are at best only accountable to a fraction of the people affected by their activities.[25] This critique is based on the empirical belief that international institutions possess a significant autonomy of their own and that

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[24] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, edited by J.P. Mayer (New York: Harper Perennial, 1969), pp. 236–238.

[25] See for instance: Daniele Archibugi, *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens. Toward Cosmopolitan Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

people are willing to invest resources in the participation and control of these institutions.

Intergovernmentalists do not subscribe to this view. They argue that international organizations are tightly controlled by member states. The administrative apparatus and the budget of most of these organizations are tiny. They do not receive taxes and do not get involved in redistributive issues. International organizations are considered as institutions with delegated authority but not as part of a political order that requires legitimacy.[26]

The debate between cosmopolitans and intergovernmentalists is thus based on two different empirical assessments. First, can international institutions be considered as tightly controlled by their members, and thus as prime examples of delegated authority, or are they an autonomous source of power which contains elements of independent authority? Second, are international organizations considered by the people as political and thus requiring legitimacy or not? In this contribution, I want to briefly sketch an argument according to which international institutions increasingly undermine the consensus principle. The legitimacy problems come with the silent constitutionalization of norms and rules of international institutions. As a result, a global political order that requires political legitimacy is emerging. While the empirical data provided in support of this argument are necessarily of an illustrative character in this short essay, they help to outline an argument that can be falsified empirically.

The Deepening of International Institutions

The intergovernmentalist argument is based on a model of international institutions that arose after World War II. The principle behind these international institutions was summed up in the term "embedded liberalism."[27] This term describes an orientation towards free trade and open borders while at the same time resting firmly embedded within national political systems which are able to absorb the shocks and irregularities of the world market. International institutions thus established a form of intergovernmental governance which enabled national governance to function effectively and initially even led to an extension of state activities.

Embedded liberalism was engendered by a distinctive method of international decision-making and thus also contains a procedural component that I suggest we call "executive multilateralism." The term is used to describe a decision-making mode in which governmental representatives (mainly cabinet ministers) from different countries coordinate their policies internationally with little national parliamentary control and away from public scrutiny. On the one hand, multilateralism refers to a decision-making system that is open to all states involved, includes a generalized principle of conduct, creates expectations of diffuse reciprocity, and is seen as indivisible.[28] On the other hand—and this aspect

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[26] See Miles Kahler, "Defining Accountability Up: the Global Economic Multilaterals," *Government and Opposition* 39:2 (2004), pp. 132–158.

[27] John G. Ruggie, "International Regimes, Transactions, and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Post-war Economic Order," *International Organization* 36:2 (1982), pp. 379–415.

[28] John G. Ruggie, "Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution," *International Organization* 46:3 (1992), pp. 561–598.

was long neglected—multilateralism after World War II was heavily executive-centered, since the rules of embedded liberalism were negotiated and implemented nationally without the contribution of legislatures and without the systematic incorporation of national or transnational societal actors.

This has changed in the age of globalization. It can be said, therefore, that embedded liberalism has a dynamic of its own: the growing number of international institutions since World War II has made national borders less significant for societal transactions, and this in turn has led to an increase in the number and political scope of international institutions. It is this institutional dynamic that puts the establishment of an expedient political order onto the international political agenda.

What characterizes this institutional dynamic? A first measure of the extent of this institutional dynamic is the growth in the number of international multilateral agreements that exist. Indeed, there was a linear increase from 150 in 1960 to 517 in 2005.[29]

A second measure of institutional dynamic is the new quality of international governance. This development becomes manifest when one contrasts the typical traditional multilateral institutions of embedded liberalism with the new international institutions in the age of denationalization. The GATT regime is a good example of a traditional international institution. Its form of regulation has three distinctive features:

- The states are the ultimate and exclusive addressees of the regulation. They are issued with directives not to increase customs tariffs or to apply them in a discriminating way. The objective of the regulation is therefore to influence state behaviour in order to solve the problem in question.
- Such regulations take effect at the borders between states, and in this sense they primarily constitute a form of interface management, regulating the transit of goods and bads[30] out of one national society into another.
- There exists a relatively high degree of certainty as to the effects of such regulations. The actors are able to make relatively precise, empirically sound predictions about the economic consequences of their tariffs.

Today international institutions have different features. International regimes for overcoming global environmental problems provide typical examples here.

- The ultimate addressees of these regulations issued by international institutions are largely societal actors. While the states act as intermediaries between the international institutions and the addressees, it is ultimately societal actors such as consumers and businesses who have to alter their behaviour in order, say, to reduce CO_2 or CFC emissions.
- The new international institutions are no longer merely concerned with interface management. The reduction of pollutants requires regulations that take effect behind the national borders, within the national societies. In this sense, the international climate regime regulates behind-the-border issues and

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[29] See <http://treaties.un.org/Pages/Home.aspx?lang=en/> (accessed April 20, 2009).
[30] Public bads (as opposed to the traditional concept of public goods), include pollution, financial instability, insecurity, and others that can be combated through governmental intervention; see Inge Kaul *et al.* (eds), *Providing Global Public Goods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

the new international trade regime, with its focus on the prohibition of subsidization and overcoming discriminatory product regulations, has also developed in this direction. Equally, the measures of the Security Council of the United Nations have for some time now increasingly been directed at intrastate rather than interstate wars.

- International institutions today are for the most part concerned with finding solutions to highly complex problems, complexity being defined as the number of interconnections with other issues. There is therefore a high degree of uncertainty as to the ecological and economic consequences of, say, a particular climate regime. The same is also true for financial agreements and regulations on product safety as well as security issues.

In order to successfully tackle highly complex behind-the-border issues with societal actors as the ultimate addressees, a more sophisticated institutional design is needed. This leads to a relative rise in supranational and transnational institutional features through three mechanisms.

- A high density of international institutions gives rise to collisions between different international regulations as well as between national and international ones. In such cases a supranational arbitration body is a sensible means of settling differences. The dispute settlement procedure of the World Trade Organization (WTO), for instance, decides in cases of collision between WTO rules and domestic regulations as well as in cases of collision between environmental and trade goals, as with the "Codex Alimentarus." Furthermore, increased complexity also gives rise to a greater need for independent dispute settlement bodies. Today, the number of international dispute settlement bodies amounts to around 80 compared to 20 three decades ago.
- Supranational and transnational institutional features also increase with the growth of regimes that are concerned with behind-the-border issues and that specify societal actors as their ultimate addressees. In such cases verification problems become more complicated. The more difficult compliance and monitoring become, the greater the need for supranational and transnational agents to gather and provide reliable information on compliance rates. Hence, many international secretariats are assigned to gather information about rule-compliance, at the same time that transnational NGOs, such as Amnesty International, are most active in this area.
- Finally, the growing need for international institutions to gather and distribute impartial knowledge and information on complex international problems also strengthens the trend towards supranationalization and transnationalization. The conferences and institutes created by the United Nations Environmental Program are good examples of this development.

As a result, a dense network of international regulations and organizations of unprecedented quality and quantity has developed. These new international institutions are far more intrusive than the conventional international institutions. The democratic decision-making processes within nation-states are thus losing their anchorage. They are superseded by organizations and actors who indeed are mostly accountable to their national governments one way or another, but at the same time quite remote and inaccessible for the nationally-based addressees of the regulations in question. Given the extent of the intrusion of these new

international institutions into the affairs of national societies, the notion of "delegated, and therefore controlled authority" in the principal and agent sense no longer holds. At best, the agents—the new international institutions with transnational and supranational institutional features—are answerable to a few governments, but not to all the societies into which they intrude, and certainly not to a transnational society.

The Politicization of International Institutions

The process of supranationalization and transnationalization is closely linked with a second process: the increasing politicization of global governance.[31] Politicization should be understood as a process in which societal actors, be they organized at the national or transnational level, make increasing demands on governance beyond the nation state. Politicization changes the rationale of international institutions: the *logic of effective problem resolution* becomes a *logic of legitimate governance*. International politics is then no longer to be evaluated against the yardstick of political wisdom and efficacy; instead, the evaluation of international politics is subject to the criteria of legitimate political order.

The politicization of international institutions involves two dimensions. The new international institutions are, on the one hand, subjectively ascribed greater relevance by a growing number of societal actors. Thus increased expectations are more likely to be disappointed. Such disappointments can trigger, on the other hand, manifest political opposition whose outward forms can range from a lack of compliance and critical public focus to violent protests.

Relevance

Population surveys indicate the increasing significance of international institutions. For example, Eurobarometer surveys demonstrate that the European institutions are being perceived as increasingly important and that citizens are well able to differentiate between the individual institutions. Surveys from a series of western societies on the influence of the United Nations on international politics point in the same direction. Thus, not only do a significant proportion of citizens attribute considerable influence to the UN, such assessments also influence central preferences, for example for or against the use of military force as a political means.

In addition, different associations obviously consider international institutions as politically relevant. The scale of international activities undertaken by nationally constituted interest groups, such as trade unions and associations of companies, is increasing significantly.[32] Thus, it can come as no surprise that transnational movements also directly approach international institutions with political demands in order to obtain certain international regulations. The

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[31] Michael Zürn, Martin Binder, Matthias Ecker-Erhardt, and Kathrin Radtke, "Politische Ordnung wider Willen," *Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen* 14:1 (2007), pp. 129–164.

[32] Michael Zürn and Gregor Walter, *Globalizing Interests. Pressure Groups and Denationalization* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005).

transnational campaign for the banning of landmines or the activities in the context of the Anti-Bribery Convention, are good examples.[33]

Opposition

In view of the political relevance of international institutions, their bases of legitimacy are often subject to intensified scrutiny in the affected societies. Insofar as international institutions disappoint normative demands for autonomy, representation, transparency, and also principles of justice, they have enormous problems developing societal legitimacy. As a result, societal approbation for transnational and supranational governance remains connected with the short-term consideration of interests. If the issue of costs dominates, the willingness to acknowledge and adhere to individual decisions as binding decreases. Even if governments prove comparatively cooperative, global governance repeatedly fails in the face of societal opposition—"compliance problems" are often homemade.

Thus, transnational protests such as those which took place in Seattle in 1999 and thereafter at numerous other summits organized by international institutions, and the opposition to international institutions emerging within national political systems, can be interpreted as part of politicization—now in the form of open opposition. Societal opposition can assume different forms here—from the support of Euro-sceptic parties and the unconventional forms of action adopted by anti-globalization groups against the WTO, IMF and World Bank, to the politically motivated violence against the USA as the dominant world power.

Societal opposition, be it transnational or national, can affect international politics. The Clinton administration's rejection of a number of multilateral agreements is best understood as anticipatory obedience *vis-à-vis* the deep-rooted scepticism towards international institutions held by the US Senate and the American public in general. By the same token, the fact that French and Dutch voters rejected the proposed EU constitution had an impact on the process of European integration, and the increasing opposition against interventionist international institutions on the part of developing countries, which became highly visible during the WTO ministerial conference in Cancun, also had a strong societal component. The times of executive multilateralism and permissive consensus are gone.

Conclusion

Cosmopolitans are often blamed for being idealistic. In particular, the intergovernmentalist critique of cosmopolitan views of global democracy is based on two empirical criticisms. In their view, international institutions are considered to be tightly controlled by their members and thus not as relevant as cosmopolitans believe. The intergovernmentalist notion of delegated authority implies, secondly, that international organizations are seen by the people as not requiring political legitimation.

In this contribution, I have argued that the intergovernmentalist focus on international organizations as agents is misleading. The legitimacy problems

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[33] Günter Metzges, *NGO-Kampagnen und ihr Einfluss auf internationale Verhandlungen* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2006).

come with the silent constitutionalization of norms and rules of international institutions. As a result, a global political order that requires political legitimacy is emerging. People are beginning to judge international institutions with the same measures that they use in their political order at home: fairness and legitimacy have made their way into the international sphere. Both, the demand for effective international institutions and the demand for legitimizing those institutions are growing. Meeting the demand for effective international regulation with the means of executive multilateralism and not taking into account the growing demand for legitimacy will increase resistance against international institutions and possibly undermine them in the long run. This is why cosmopolitan principles belong on the agenda of international institution-building.

Fighting Transnational Exclusion: From Cosmopolitanism to Global Democracy

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The year 2001 was a signal year in the changing context of global politics. Both the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the first gathering of the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre strongly reaffirmed the need to discuss again the terms on which the current political system is built. From the different world fora to the United Nations General Assembly, from national to regional parliaments, the issue of the effects of increased global interconnectedness, with its unchecked intrusiveness into the daily life of virtually every citizen, occupies the center of public debate. The responses to these new global circumstances vary.[34] On the one hand, the reaction to increased interdependence has often been negative, characterized by an attempt to protect local prerogatives against the competition of powerful external agents. Evidence of this attitude can be seen across a wide spectrum of political phenomena, including the US/EU protectionist positions in some key areas of the negotiation rounds of the World Trade Organization, the widespread rise of right-wing nationalistic parties, the Islamic movements in defense of traditional values, the isolationist stance of groups such as the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (Landless Peasants Movement) in Brazil, or the openly antiglobalization view of the influential newspaper *Le Monde Diplomatique*. On the other hand, a number of equally at-odds positions can be distinguished among those who claim to foster a more global approach to politics. They comprise among others: neoliberal support of global capitalism,[35] the neo-imperialist ambitions of the US,[36]

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[34] Raffaele Marchetti, "Mapping Alternative Models of Global Politics," *International Studies Review* 11:1 (2009), pp. 133–156.

[35] Jagdish Bhagwati, *In Defence of Globalization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Martin Wolf, *Why Globalization Works* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004).

[36] Robert Kagan, "The Benevolent Empire," *Foreign Policy*, 111 (Summer, 1998), pp. 24–35.

liberal-democratic reformists advocating a more democratic global governance,[37] and those advocating the radical alternative of "globalization from below"—of transnational solidarity outside the current global market system.[38]

Underpinning the debate between the different views on the phenomenon of globalization is the issue of democracy (as well as human rights) in its various interpretations: various in terms of both scope (local, national, or global) and method (participatory, deliberative or representative). Whereas isolationists, for instance, advocate self-contained communities under the assumption that real democracy is only feasible at the local, participatory level, supporters of globalization argue, conversely, that a global capitalist system represents the unique basis for an effective democracy in which the individual can pursue his or her entrepreneurial activities in unconstrained competition with minimal, representative institutions. Those holding onto traditional political thought have been reluctant to recognize global phenomena as such, for a long time almost ignoring the political discussion on the new forms of democracy and concentrating mainly on the individual and domestic domains of justice. Even theories of liberal democracy, based as they are on the principles of self-governance, consent, representation, and popular sovereignty, have been at a loss to offer a viable response to global phenomena until very recently. However, over the last 30 years, this traditional bias privileging domestic agendas has become a crucial focus of criticism within the debate on international political theory. In this debate cosmopolitan theories have played a leading role in stressing the key relevance of the expanding scope of moral agency, and thus political responsibilities. No conception of political theory can afford to ignore the global dimension of the socio-political system and the correlated demands for its democratization. The perspective of cosmopolitanism has become central to normative discussion on international relations.

Today, almost 40 years after its re-emergence, and in light of our experience of globalization during that time, what observations can be made on the strengths and weaknesses of cosmopolitan thinking? Starting with the former, the capacity to accompany and facilitate the profound revolt against *realpolitik* in the academic and political debate remains a crucial achievement of cosmopolitan thinking. Cosmopolitanism has offered key conceptual tools to interpret current political circumstances and to propose alternative arrangements. However, with the passage of time we are also able to identify a number of significant limits in cosmopolitan scholarship that need to be overcome in order to formulate a stronger proposal for global democracy. Beyond the realist-style critiques, three principal types of relatively sympathetic criticisms have been advanced. From a normative point of view, cosmopolitan proposals have been seen as too universalistic and "modern" (or more pointedly, western-centric and colonialist) for they have not been sufficiently sensitive to cultural pluralism. From an institutional point of view, they have been considered too centralized, in that they have not been attentive enough to the claims

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[37] Robert Keohane, "Governance in a Partially Globalized World," *American Political Science Review* 95:1 (2001), pp. 1–13; David Held, *Global Covenant. The Social Democratic Alternative to the Washington Consensus* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004); Daniele Archibugi, *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens: Toward Cosmopolitan Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008).

[38] Donatella della Porta (ed.), *The Global Justice Movement: A Cross-National and Transnational Perspective* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm, 2007); Jackie Smith, *Social Movements for Global Democracy* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2007).

of rooted social actors. Finally, from a more political perspective, cosmopolitanism has also been accused of being too much embedded within neo-liberal globalization and thus too supportive of predatory capitalism. It is from these criticisms that we need to begin rethinking the project of global democracy in non-exclusionary terms.

Either democracy is global or it is not democracy. That is the fundamental message of a renewed project of global democracy.[39] Any political system that applies allegedly democratic principles within a limited scope is either hypocrisy or an illusion. The ideal of democracy requires the creation of a system in which all citizens have a voice in the formulation of norms and decisions that have a public scope. In particular, such an ideal requires a system to be framed on different layers, each of them allowing for the maximum participation of all citizens. By contrast, a system that allows for public actions that do not undergo citizens' political scrutiny and yet have a public impact does not qualify as democratic. And this is the current situation at the international and transnational level. Vast sections of the world's population have, in fact, no say in trans-border decisions that (often profoundly) affect their lives. From a democratic perspective this lack of voice is not acceptable, and it is just this kind of institutional discrimination that is here challenged.

We need to refocus the discussion of global democracy on the crucial pathology of political exclusion. Transnational exclusion occurs when an actor is deprived of his/her entitlements to influence public decisions at the international and global level. This kind of exclusion is here considered to be the key deficit of the international system and thus the component that must be addressed in order for the international political system to regain legitimacy. An analogy may help illustrate this point. Suppose the activity of a private club pollutes a river that passes through the club's grounds. The members of the club argue that it is their right to allow this as long as the club governing body accepts it. That is one side of the story. The other side of the story concerns the citizens of the area surrounding the club. After passing through the club, the river is in fact polluted and the neighboring citizens cannot take a bath, go fishing or simply enjoy the river any more. They complain about their well-being, and more generally about their health, which has been damaged by the activity of the club. Their children will face an even worse situation in a few years' time because of the cumulative effects of environmental depletion.

In a situation like this, any democrat would be ready to defend publicly the citizens' right to protest and impose restrictions on the club. The democrat would not accept as valid that decisions taken by a limited group could significantly affect the life prospects of those outside the group without the latter having the legal opportunity to contest the outcomes. Since the non-members suffer from the consequences of actions that have a public effect, then, a democrat would reason, they should be politically entitled to voice their concern and vote for a law to protect the environment and preserve their quality of life. At the local and national level this logic would be fully endorsed by any democrat; i.e., were the private club and the surrounding citizens in the same national jurisdiction, the non-member citizens would certainly be granted institutional power to block the polluting activity of the club members. Were, however, the club in one country and the surrounding people in another, the situation would be entirely different; and far fewer so-called

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[39] Raffaele Marchetti, *Global Democracy: For and Against. Ethical Theory, Institutional Design, and Social Struggles* (London: Routledge, 2008).

democrats would be ready to protest. A national boundary is thus enough to invalidate democratic justice. At the international or global level, the situation is in fact very different and activities such as those of private clubs are most of the time allowed. Still too few, for instance, are those people who believe that a state should not be allowed to pollute the world's atmosphere. Still too many tolerate the fact that individuals worldwide do not have a voice to complain about global environmental issues. The environmental case is just one clear instance among many of the democratic limits of the current international system. It is a case of a larger phenomenon that I call transnational exclusion, a phenomenon that is, among other things, pushing people in the street to protest against the kind of executive and exclusionary global governance that is increasingly the standard mode of decision-making nowadays in global politics. The motto of the demonstrations in Genoa in 2001 "you are G8, we are six billion" aptly summarises this concept.

As a response to the current international political fragmentation, which generates political exclusion, the alternative political project offered here envisages a cosmopolitan system in which all world citizens are included within a scheme of direct representative participation under an overarching authority that governs the democratization of world affairs. The pursuit of the democratic ideal in terms of scope is thus implemented in this proposal through a reworked notion of citizenship as global, multi-layered, and all-inclusive. In essence, this entails an expansion of the domestic model of democracy to the transnational level, structured on several layers that take into account different jurisdictional boundaries as coordinated through a world federalist system. Only through the radical project of stretching the paradigm of democratic inclusion to encompass the whole of humankind, together with recognizing the legitimacy of multiple political allegiances, can the inhuman mechanism of partial inclusion as exclusion-generator be avoided. If the phenomenon of illegitimate political exclusion is to be avoided, the authority to define jurisdictional boundaries needs to be reallocated, from groups with a circumscribed scope, to a public democratic mechanism which is global in kind.[40]

This proposal is meant to articulate a criticism of this exclusionary situation. In a novel bridging of divergent strands of contemporary cosmopolitan research, this study focuses on the need to include globally marginalized actors by shining a light on the institutional side of transnational exclusion. There are three such strands. First, there is the original international political theory/international ethics research on cosmopolitanism of the 1970s and 1980s—i.e., moral cosmopolitanism.[41] Second, there is the subsequent international relations/political science research on global institutions of the 1990s—i.e., institutional cosmopolitanism.[42] And third, there is the

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[40] Raffaele Marchetti, "A Matter of Drawing Boundaries: Global Democracy and International Exclusion," *Review of International Studies* 34:2 (2008), pp. 207–224.

[41] Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1:3 (1972), pp. 229–243; Charles R. Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979); Robert Goodin, "What Is So Special About Our Fellow Countrymen?" *Ethics* 97:4 (1988), pp. 663–687; Thomas Pogge, "Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty," *Ethics* 103:1 (1992), pp. 48–75.

[42] Daniele Archibugi and David Held (eds), *Cosmopolitan Democracy: An Agenda for a New World Order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); Daniele Archibugi, David Held, and Martin Köhler (eds), *Re-Imagining Political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998); David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995).

more recent sociological research on global inclusion of the 2000s—i.e., social cosmopolitanism.[43] Ethical theory, institutional design, and social struggles represent the three key dimensions of any viable political project. Consequently, any theoretical reflection that does not grapple with all three equally will inevitably miss an important aspect of the bigger political picture. This position is committed to critically articulating the phenomenon of transnational exclusion and to proposing an alternative project for global democracy, keeping a multidisciplinary perspective that includes all three of these dimensions. Reinterpreting the cosmopolitan ideal in the light of marginalized people and translating newly acknowledged subaltern claims into an inclusive institutional design, this essay bridges these dimensions of cosmopolitan thinking and thus advances the discussion on global democracy.

The viability of this interdisciplinary project requires the revision of a number of first principles so that the limitations determined by methodological nationalism can be overcome. Corresponding to the aforementioned strands of cosmopolitanism, three are prominent among these principles: moral agency, multilevel dimensionality, and rootedness. The principal challenge political exclusion poses for international political theory is thus played out on the interpretation of these latter notions.

The major distinguishing characteristic of the version of global democracy presented here consists in its consideration of moral and political agency as mutually dependent on and operating within a universalistic and all-inclusive conception of responsibility and vulnerability. The strength of this theory is the flexibility of its paradigm, which allows it to respond more strongly than others to social and political reality. This is a particular strength in these times of radical transformation. Our world system increasingly attenuates the relationship between those who take decisions and those who bear the costs of those decisions. This has the double effect of broadening the possibility for cooperation (e.g., the improvements in transportation and communication) and impoverishing the moral ties of disapproval. In the past, the effects of actions were principally circumscribed by a defined territory; most people influenced, for better or worse, the lives of a limited number of other people. The situation is now different, with many of the actions/omissions we perform often having an (unintentional) relative impact on thousands of others. Even if these effects are imperceptible when taken singly, they often become decisive when combined with the effects of thousands of similar actions. Consequently, insofar as local possibilities acquire a global dimension, our moral responsibility is revealed to encompass a far greater field of inclusiveness. The moral question must, therefore, evolve into the following: in what way is my action part of a complex set of actions of different agents, organized by public rules, which taken together affect others? Hence the concept of global agency, with its correlate of negligence, becomes a crucial component of any international political theory.

Accordingly, the present proposal of global democracy includes consideration of both sides of the equation of global ethical concern. Choice-makers, i.e., those who have the power to decide and carry out an action which produces

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[43] Boaventura de Sousa Santos and César A. Rodríguez-Garavito (eds), *Law and Globalization from Below: Toward a Cosmopolitan Legality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Sidney Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

consequences, are made responsible through a precise method of multiple accountability based on the capacity to influence the outcome, wherever it takes place. Choice-bearers, i.e., those who suffer the consequences of others' actions are, by contrast, identified as potentially vulnerable and as a result protected.[44] According to the normative ideal of democracy, and in opposition to that of Hobbesian realism, a mechanism of congruence should be established between choice-makers and choice-bearers, in which the latter can impose on the former a duty of accountability concerning their actions. Since there can be multiple agents on both sides, an ethical-political theory based on impartiality cannot in fact be complete when it fails to identify clearly the moral position of every agent involved in the situation under scrutiny.[45] In presenting a comprehensive reading of the issue of international agency, this essay challenges its rivals by offering a consistent version of interlinked political responsibilities and social vulnerabilities.

The politically most relevant consequence of this comprehensive conception of moral-political agency is its insistence on the institution of cosmopolitan citizenship. Against state-centric logic, this essay holds that the concept of citizenship is not linked to the notion of a sovereign state, insofar as it can be unfolded and spread out over a number of different political spheres. Consequently, no normative obstacles impede the expansion of the traditional notion of polis to the entire cosmos. Among the consequences of such a normative shift, a significant change is related to the issue of migration. According to a fully developed cosmopolitan position, migrants and residents should be ultimately considered equal, as citizens of the world. When this is accepted, a new truly global migratory regime should be established.[46]

Moreover, it is through this new interpretation of the meaning of political membership that a comprehensive understanding of political responsibility can be consistently linked with social vulnerability. The ideal of political responsibility can only be fully realized through the conceptualization of an all-inclusive system of political membership, which, avoiding exclusion, imposes on each political agent his/her correct burden of responsibility, or alternatively alleviates him/her from the condition of social vulnerability. Once some basic social and political entitlements are identified, the agent, i.e., the one in the position to influence the outcome concerning the potentially vulnerable, needs in fact to be made responsible, and in case of failure to comply with his/her duties, needs to be sanctioned proportionately. This legal setting, though, has to be complemented by a multi-layered political system which enables responsibilities to be enforced through a net of intermingled and subsidiary duties.

In this way, the issue of global moral agency also directly informs the second significant characteristic of this version of global democracy, namely that concerning multi-layered dimensionality. As individual and social existence is increasingly spread over a number of different domains, a common socio-political

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[44] Robert Goodin, *Protecting the Vulnerable: A Reanalysis of Our Social Responsibilities* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1985); David Held, "Law of People, Law of States," *Legal Theory* 8:1 (2002), pp. 1–44.

[45] Onora O'Neill, "Agents of Justice," in Thomas Pogge (ed.), *Global Justice* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 188–203.

[46] Raffaele Marchetti, "Toward a World Migratory Regime," *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 15:2 (2008), pp. 471–487.

framework is needed to bring together this diffusion of engagement. This can be achieved through neither the traditional intergovernmental system nor the recent global governance arrangements. Both of these institutional solutions generate transnational exclusion at their foundations and thus deny the democratic assumptions on which they claim to be built.[47] The failure of these frameworks fragments the social and political existence of individuals, and therefore renders any pursuit of a good life most likely self-defeating. The only solution to this issue of exclusion consists in the creation of a center of federal democratic power able to coordinate and govern global affairs. Once the recognition of multiple and yet integrated political actions is accepted, then the issue of jurisdictional boundaries and equilibrium arises. The system proposed here claims, as one of its virtues, the capacity to balance properly the complex inter-jurisdictional tension—the tension between the different levels of political action—through the use of a single, all-inclusive principle of justice. In a highly pluralistic world the only legitimate exclusion is self-exclusion, and that can only be warranted after an all-inclusive mechanism with which to draw jurisdictional boundaries has been established. With this all-inclusive mechanism in place, the normative content of political action at both the individual level and the state level is consistently integrated with that at the regional and global levels of interaction.[48]

Global multidimensionality, however, must not and need not fall into a hidden defense of current transnational power positions. Any global project today in fact risks supporting the predominant trend of western-centric institutionalism, with its correlate of insensitivity or even exploitation of other cultures and social institutions. A genuine project for global democracy is needed first and foremost for the excluded and ostracized individuals at home in the weaker parts of the world. This is the third key challenge of international political theory: rootedness within a global political project. Within current global circumstances, global democracy constitutes a revolutionary project that aims to be true to the democratic principles that are widely, if not unanimously, accepted worldwide. It is a project that intends to give a legitimate voice to the voiceless, and thus a voice to subaltern social actors. In this vein, the framework of global multidimensionality has to be coupled with a strong tie to local emancipatory politics, thus recognising the value of political pluralism. The transition from the desirability to the feasibility of the normative objectives needs to pass through the integration of institutional and social components of global democracy. In being all-inclusive, global democracy has thus to be simultaneously multi-layered and rooted. Articulating the feasibility of this is the challenge ahead of the project of global democracy.

A further overall remark concerning the degree of this proposal's comprehensiveness must be made here. In order to avoid misunderstandings, it is important to stress from the beginning that the theory elaborated here does not aim to be a comprehensive theory of the good life; it does not aim to tell people how to live. On the contrary, it aims to clarify the normative weaknesses of the current political system and to propose an alternative scheme of public rules. In this vein, the question with which it is engaged is not metaphysical, but political. It

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[47] Raffaele Marchetti, "Global Governance or World Federalism? A Cosmopolitan Dispute on Institutional Models," *Global Society* 20:3 (2006), pp. 287–305.
[48] Marchetti, *Global Democracy, op. cit*.

is about how we are to live together, given that we have different ideas about how to live, and not about what is the right idea of a good life. In this regard, it outlines a theory and a political framework within which each individual can participate agonistically in the elaboration of public rules on an equal standing, while maintaining differing ethical perspectives on the meaning and values of life. The present perspective remains fundamentally pluralistic in that it recognizes that different individual life projects cannot be reduced to a single political project. Hence, politics (and especially world politics) is intended as the place of the agonistic encounter of different world views. In more concrete terms, it is a proposal to dispute the power positions which characterize the international social reality by redefining the legal institutional setting. Its ultimate institutional objective consists in providing to every human being an equal opportunity to influence the public decision-making and frame-setting (i.e., the institutional meta-rules that organize the concrete decision-making) processes, and so maximally preserving his or her own freedom of choice. In this regard, it is different from phenomenological and postmodern directions of research insofar as it firmly believes in the unique value of political institutions to resist and redress social inequality. Even more, it holds that some form of democratic participation is necessary for any viable project of critical theory, in that without the support of such an egalitarian participatory structure no dialogue aiming at genealogical self-investigation can hope to be freed from power relationships; indeed, be a dialogue at all. A minimal democratic structure is necessary to frame the basic mode of the relationship, be it political or cultural, from which any phenomenological enquiry is to be carried out. Failing such egalitarian and all-inclusive structure, no viable principle of respect for otherness can be identified, and without these grounds for recognizing difference, an undifferentiated acceptance of any alternatives, including those based on power positions, remains as the only possible attitude. Global democratic institutions are thus needed both to reinterpret critically the current international system, and to redress practically part of its illegitimate inequalities.

The Ideal of Global Stakeholder Democracy

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Introduction

One of the central questions posed in this symposium concerns the best reformist strategy for fostering greater democratic legitimacy at the level of global politics. While there is now wide agreement that much of the power wielded beyond the boundaries of nation-states suffers from a significant "democratic deficit," it is not clear how this deficit can most successfully be remedied in practice within the constraints of real-world international political life. My contribution to the symposium responds to this question by setting out the rationale for a particular

institutional strategy for global democratic reform: an approach to global democratization that I have elsewhere called "Global Stakeholder Democracy."[49]

The Practical Challenge of Democratic Global Reform

To understand the nature of the challenge entailed in the task of democratic global political reform, we must first recognise that the primary source of the global democratic deficit is a *system-level* disjuncture within the global political order. This means that the problem is concerned with how the two fundamental constitutive elements of a democratic political system—the agencies through which "public" political power is exercised,[50] and the communities that engage in collective democratic decision-making—*fit together as a whole*.

Instituting appropriate (representative, participatory, or deliberative) mechanisms of social choice and political control within democratic communities is necessary to achieve democratic legitimacy, but it is not sufficient. The best possible democratic decision-making processes cannot confer any democratic legitimacy upon a political system overall if these processes are disconnected from the locus of public power and unable to achieve effective control of its exercise. This is because democracy requires not only that communities have access to the right kinds of procedures for making collective decisions, but that their collective decision-making is able to exercise *effective control over the agencies of public power that affect their lives*.[51]

Although a deficit of democratic decision-making processes within many communities contributes to the overall problem of the global democratic deficit, a more fundamental source of this problem is the *system-level institutional disconnect* between the exercise of public power and the collective decision-making activities of political communities within global political life. Public power is now wielded at multiple transnational levels—by powerful states, international organizations, corporations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)—within what can be characterised as a highly "pluralist" structure of global power.[52] Yet no adequate

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[49] See Terry Macdonald, *Global Stakeholder Democracy: Power and Representation Beyond Liberal States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[50] I employ the term "public power" here to characterise all those forms of power that are legitimately subject to democratic control by some affected democratic "public" or "people." For a more detailed discussion of the concept of "public power" as the subject of democratic control see *ibid*.

[51] Another way of putting this is that the boundaries of public power and the "boundaries" of democratic decision-making communities must be aligned. For further discussion of this idea see Terry Macdonald, "Boundaries Beyond Borders: Delineating Democratic 'Peoples' in a Globalizing World," *Democratization* 10:3 (2003), pp. 173–94.

[52] For further analysis of the "pluralist" structure of global power in the context of globalization see: Terry Macdonald, *Global Stakeholder Democracy: Power and Representation Beyond Liberal States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Terry Macdonald and Kate Macdonald, "Non-Electoral Accountability in Global Politics: Strengthening Democratic Control within the Global Garment Industry," *European Journal of International Law* 17:1 (2006), pp. 89–119; Philip Cerny, "Plurality, Pluralism and Power: Elements of Pluralist Analysis in an Age of Globalization," in Rainer Eisfeld (ed.), *Pluralism: Developments in the Theory and Practice of Democracy* (Opladen: Barbara Budrich Publishers, on behalf of the International Political Science Association, Research Committee, No. 16 [Socio-Political Pluralism] 2006), pp. 81–111 Philip Cerny, "Globalization and the Erosion of Democracy," *European Journal of Political Research* 35:5 (1999), pp. 1–26.

democratic institutions have been established in conjunction with these myriad powerful agencies, through which democratic political control could be exercised by the communities affected by their decisions.

Insofar as the global democratic deficit results from this system-level problem, it is in need of a system-level solution. Because there is not any intrinsic problem with the structure of one or the other (the system of global public power or the boundaries of democratic communities), but rather a misalignment between the two, there are three logically distinct possibilities for remedying the democratic deficit.

First, we could leave the boundaries of democratic communities where they are (predominantly at the level of nation-states), and restructure the framework of global public power to ensure that no significant public power is wielded across or beyond state boundaries. The main reform agenda here would involve strengthening the authority of weak state institutions, and winding back the power exercised by international organizations, transnational non-state actors, and interventionist states.

Second, we could leave the framework of global public power in its existing pluralist structure, and restructure the boundaries of democratic decision-making communities. The main reform agenda here would involve establishing new mechanisms for collective decision-making and political control within the transnational communities affected by powerful transnational actors.

Third, we could adjust *both* the structure of public power *and* the boundaries of democratic communities—to achieve a democratic alignment in accordance with the requirements of some additional exogenous normative standards—such as a conception of social justice, or some instrumental welfare-based policy objectives.

Which of these three is the best broad reformist strategy to pursue? The first option is generally favoured by nationalists, who advocate strengthening the domestic power-bases of state institutions to help isolate them from external political interference or control, thus bolstering democratic legitimacy on a national scale. The third solution is generally favoured by cosmopolitans, who endorse *both* restructuring global public power, to create new global and transnational institutions capable of pursuing collective global policy goals and implementing cosmopolitan forms of justice, *and* restructuring the boundaries of democratic communities, to facilitate democratic decision-making at these new global and transnational political levels.

But these two approaches share a common problem: each would require major transformation of the entrenched pluralist structure of global public power, as it exists in the present historical "epoch" of globalization.[53] This would be a massive undertaking in social engineering, the enormity of which should not be underestimated; the prospects of achieving extensive success in such a project in the foreseeable future would be dim. As Thomas Nagel has recently argued in the context of a related set of debates about global justice:

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[53] The notion that political systems have different entrenched structural characteristics in different historical "epochs" is discussed in John Ruggie, "Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations," *International Organization* 47:1 (1993), pp.139–74.

[I]n thinking about the future, we should keep in mind that political power is rarely created as a result of demands for legitimacy, and that there is little reason to think that things will be different in this [global] case.[54]

A key reason for believing that the system-level structure of public power is unlikely to yield to reformist democratic pressures is that the structure of public power is embedded within *deeper social structures* that extend well beyond the domain of formal political institutions. These deep social structures include economic production and distribution systems, ideational and solidaristic cultural structures, and material social infrastructures, which are generally transformed only over long historical timeframes or through major crisis events.[55] In this context, the practical problems associated with trying to tackle the global democratic deficit via a reconfiguration of the existing structure of public power appear insurmountable—at least within any but the longest of timeframes, or in lieu of some exogenous social crisis event.

These considerations suggest that the most promising reformist strategy for tackling the global democratic deficit is the second of those identified above: that is, leaving the framework of global public power in its existing pluralist structure, but restructuring the boundaries of democratic decision-making communities. Rather than attempting a wholesale reconstitution of the system-level structure of global public power (and the deeper social structures that sustain it), it is more realistic to approach the task of global democratization by making the powerful agencies that we already have more democratic and accountable to those they affect—that is, more accountable to their "stakeholders". This is the general reformist strategy upon which the "stakeholder" model of global democracy is based.

A New Institutional Framework for Global Stakeholder Democracy

To translate this general reformist strategy into a practical programme for global democratic reform, it is necessary to articulate in more depth the concrete institutional structures through which an ideal of stakeholder democracy could be realised. The proposition that we can democratize global politics by subjecting existing powerful actors (states, IOs, corporations, and NGOs) to the direct democratic control of their overlapping "stakeholder" communities challenges us to re-think our assumptions about each of the three constitutive elements of a democratic political system. These are: the nature of the "public power" that is to be subject to democratic control; the characteristics of the democratic communities ("publics") that can wield this democratic control; and the mechanisms of social choice and political control through which this control is to be exercised.

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[54] Thomas Nagel, "The Problem of Global Justice," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 33:2 (Spring 2005), p. 145.

[55] For further discussion of practical obstacles to transforming structures of public power see Macdonald, *Global Stakeholder Democracy, op. cit.*, Terry Macdonald, "What's So Special About States? Liberal Legitimacy in a Globalising World," *Political Studies* 56:3 (2008), pp. 544–65. For a broader but highly pertinent discussion of the limits of design in political transformations, see Paul Pierson, "The Limits of Design: Explaining Institutional Origins and Change," *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration* 13:4 (2000), pp. 475–99; Paul Pierson, *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

First, the stakeholder ideal requires us to re-conceptualise the nature of "public power", as the subject of democratic control. In general terms, public power can be defined as any power that impacts people's lives in some special problematic way (via coercion or other constraints on individual autonomy), generating a need for special political legitimation through the democratic process. Traditionally, democrats have associated the concept of public power with the structures of sovereign states, or more recently with the "constitutionalized" global political structures proposed by some cosmopolitan theorists. But the prospect of a stakeholder model of global democracy, through which the multiple agencies within a pluralist global political structure are held to direct democratic account, requires us to recognise that myriad non-state actors as well as states can wield "public" forms of power, when they affect people's lives in coercive or autonomy-constraining ways.[56]

Second, the stakeholder ideal requires us to re-think certain common assumptions about the constitutive features of a democratic "public", or decision-making community. Traditionally, democrats have modelled theoretical understandings of a democratic "public" or "demos" on the characteristics of the national communities that participate in collective democratic decision-making within state-based democratic systems. As such, democratic communities are often assumed to be *territorially* bounded, to share broader *cultural* values and solidarities, and moreover to constitute "*closed*" societies, materially intercon-nected through a single shared framework of public power (paradigmatically a sovereign state) by which all are equally affected and in which all therefore share an equal stake. Abstract democratic conceptions of the *political equality* associated with membership in a democratic community commonly reflect this latter assumption, insofar as they presuppose that equality within a democratic process can be achieved by granting equal input to each individual member of the demos, without regard for the *degree* to which different individuals may be affected by a particular political decision.

In a departure from this familiar image of a democratic "public" or "demos", the stakeholder ideal considers democratic communities to be comprised of all individuals who are subject to the exercise of public power by a given political agent (such as a state, IO, corporation, or NGO), irrespective of whether these individuals are territorially concentrated or dispersed, or whether they are culturally homogenous or diverse. Moreover, stakeholder communities need not be "closed"; rather, individuals can be members of multiple overlapping stakeholder communities, and can have greater "stakes" in some than others, in accordance with the differing degrees to which they may be affected by the power of different political actors. This latter departure from standard models of democratic community has implications for more abstract conceptions of political equality, since it requires us to recognise that achieving meaningful equality within a democratic community may require some principle of *proportionality*, whereby appropriate account is taken in decision-making processes of individuals' differentiated interest intensities.[57]

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[56] For a more in-depth discussion of "public power" see Macdonald, *Global Stakeholder Democracy, op. cit.*, chaps 1–3.

[57] For a more in-depth discussion of "stakeholder" communities see *ibid.*, chaps 4–6.

Third, the stakeholder ideal requires us to devise new institutional mechanisms for democratic social choice and political control, capable of functioning effectively within the pluralist political boundaries of a stakeholder system. Traditionally, elections have served as the primary institutional mechanisms for democratic social choice and political control. Within a democratic system in which public power is "sovereign" or "constitutionalized" and democratic communities correspondingly "closed", a mechanism based on "one individual one vote" can deliver political equality and democratic legitimacy. However, electoral mechanisms cannot deliver equivalent legitimacy within a pluralist stakeholder system in which individuals hold differentiated "stakes" in particular political decisions. Instead of relying heavily on electoral forms of global democratic participation, we need to develop new *non-electoral* mechanisms for democratic social choice and political control within a global democratic system. First, we need to develop a new set of institutional mechanisms for authoritative decision-making that accord a greater role to 'multi-stakeholder' *deliberative* decision-making processes, since these can take better account of differentiated interest intensity than can aggregative electoral alternatives. Second, we need to build more flexible and open processes of *authorisation and accountability* (based on forms of stakeholder input other than votes cast in elections) to foster effective political control of the plural agencies of public power within a stakeholder system.[58]

Conclusions: Prospects and Problems for Global Stakeholder Democracy

Given that the stakeholder ideal challenges some well-established democratic ideas—at the levels of both abstract normative conceptions and practical institutional mechanisms—we must consider a question of the following kind: even if the stakeholder ideal were to be accepted as *legitimate*, does it stretch the concept of democracy too far to call it *democratic*?

This is a fair question, but to appreciate the genuine democratic credentials of the stakeholder model we must remember that democracy has always been a *practical* institutional ideal—furnishing a set of prescriptive principles for the regulation of real political life—rather than an abstract moral standard detached from concrete empirical realities. As W.B. Gallie observed over half a century ago, democracy is a paradigmatic case of an "open" political concept, insofar as ideals of democracy must inevitably change and adapt in keeping with the empirical constraints of particular historical epochs:

> [p]olitics being the art of the possible, democratic targets will be raised or lowered as circumstances alter, and democratic achievements are always judged in the light of such alterations.[59]

Even so, it must be acknowledged that the stakeholder model is not without its own practical disadvantages and institutional challenges. First, there are some serious challenges associated with the *pluralist* structure of public power within a

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[58] For more in-depth discussions of non-electoral mechanisms of social choice and political control (authorisation and accountability) see *ibid.*, chaps 7–8, and Macdonald and Macdonald, *op.cit.*

[59] W.B. Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 56:1 (1956), p. 186.

stakeholder system, since a pluralist framework of public power permits both gaps and duplications in the powers and responsibilities held by different actors in the system. This can hinder effective democratic accountability by creating uncertainty and ambiguity regarding which powerful actors should be held accountable for which political outcomes.

Further, there are some challenges associated with establishing effective and legitimate processes of social choice and political control within geographically dispersed and culturally diverse stakeholder communities, since communication and coordinated collective political action will inevitably be more difficult than within territorially concentrated and culturally homogenous groups. The stakeholder ideal also shares with other models of global democracy the problem that genuine political equality within formal political decision-making institutions will be very hard to sustain in the absence of greater social and economic equality than now exists within global society as a whole.

But despite these very real and serious practical difficulties, a reformist programme for global institutions based on a stakeholder ideal can still achieve progress towards greater democratic legitimacy in global political life. While cosmopolitan models of global democracy may have certain normative advantages over the stakeholder model at the level of "ideal theory", the stakeholder ideal equips democrats with a more immediately practicable strategy for advancing the project of global democratization. The ideal illustrates how the prospects for global democratization need not be wholly contingent upon success in fomenting revolutionary transformations to the deep pluralist structures of power, which are entrenched within the historical epoch of globalization. Even when and where it proves infeasible within a proximate timeframe to restructure global public power, the project of global democratization can still proceed via a different reformist route, taking its bearings from the ideal of Global Stakeholder Democracy.

From a League of Democracies to Cosmopolitan Democracy

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Toward a Progressive Foreign Policy Doctrine

What is President Obama's foreign policy compass going to be?

After the debacle of the "Bush doctrine," Democrats can be forgiven for shunning big ideas in favor of pragmatism. Obama will rebrand America, collaborate with other nations to solve global problems like climate change and the financial crisis, but also flex military power to combat terror and nuclear proliferation in places like Pakistan and Iran.

This approach is reminiscent of the Clinton administration. That administration enabled significant advances of multilateralism: the World Trade Organization, International Criminal Court, Kyoto Protocol—although the US

Senate never ratified the latter two. But it was overrun by events and fell into reactive crisis management mode: failed military intervention in Somalia, lack of intervention in Rwanda, and an intervention in Kosovo that undermined international law, sowed the seeds of discord with Russia, and made the recent Georgia crisis worse than it could have been.

Clinton squandered the opportunity at the end of the Cold War to shape the world with a grand progressive idea. Obama has inherited a world that is even more complex and in which America's power is relatively diminished. The situation makes it more difficult to be visionary. And yet it makes it more necessary: America remains the most likely global leader, and leading requires a clear sense of direction.

The grand foreign policy idea of the 2008 elections was defeated. Oddly, it was a bipartisan one. Senator John McCain embraced the League of Democracies proposal[60] that had originally been advanced by Democrat-leaning advisors.[61] The concept is to create a new multilateral body open to democratic governments only, which would "act where the United Nations fail to act," such as stopping the genocide in Darfur.

That idea is basically a synthesis of neo-conservatism and liberal internationalism. Like neo-conservatives, McCain maintained that spreading democracy across the world was the North of his compass and that democracies should not shy away from using force. Like internationalists, he recognized the importance of collaboration and said that, while the United States should try to persuade its allies, it should also "be ready to be persuaded by them."

The idea has been roundly criticized, and for good reasons: McCain emphasized action at the expense of the United Nations, isolation of Russia and China, and US leadership to the detriment of allies.[62]

Nevertheless, the League of Democracies contains the germs of a much-needed progressive foreign policy doctrine. We already have a League of Democracies: it is NATO, which should transform itself into a global organization (this would involve changing its name). The progressive doctrine would then consist of three principles that should guide NATO.[63] They are prevention, inclusion, and power-sharing—the counterpoints of what came across McCain's message. In the words of Nadia Urbinati in this symposium, these three principles would together move us from a missionary to a normative approach to spreading peace and democracy.

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[60] John McCain, speech at the Los Angeles World Affairs Council, March 26, 2008. See also: Robert Kagan, "The Case for a League of Democracies," *Financial Times*, May 13, 2008.

[61] Ivo Daalder and James Lindsay, "Democracies of the World, Unite," *The American Interest* (Nov/Dec., 2006); G. John Ikenberry and Anne-Marie Slaughter, *Forging a World of Liberty Under Law: US National Security in the 21st Century* (Princeton, NJ: The Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, 2007).

[62] Thomas Carothers, "A League of Their Own," *Foreign Policy* (Jul/Aug 2008); Thomas Carothers, *Is a League of Democracies a Good Idea?* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 2008); Gideon Rachman, "Why McCain's Big Idea Is a Bad Idea," *Financial Times*, May 5, 2008; Shashi Tharoor, "This Mini-League of Nations would Cause Only Division," *The Guardian*, May 27, 2008.

[63] The doctrine proposed here builds on ideas presented in Didier Jacobs, *Global Democracy: The Struggle for Political and Civil Rights in the 21st Century* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2007), and <www.global-citizens.org>.

Prevention

NATO is currently an island of peace in an uncertain world. People living within NATO borders are the most secure. It is not surprising that Georgians and Ukrainians want to join in. The progressive doctrine's goal is to peacefully, incrementally, but intentionally expand that island of peace and security.

NATO is a defensive alliance. Its core proposition is dissuasion. It has protected its member-states without firing a shot for decades (until the Afghanistan war). It is that benign character of NATO that a progressive doctrine underscores.

At the end of the Cold War, experts claimed that NATO was going to go "out of zone, or out of service." It opted for the former, and transformed itself into an expeditionary force. The new doctrine calls for NATO to go out of zone in another way: by expanding its membership worldwide. The US already offers some defense guarantees to many countries anyway. NATO membership would strengthen the credibility and hence dissuasive power of such guarantees.

Beyond collective self-defense, the North Atlantic Treaty makes it clear that NATO should follow the lead of the UN Security Council. That foundational principle has unfortunately been eroded by both rhetoric and the Kosovo War. Humanitarian interventions and pre-emption of nuclear proliferation are two popular reasons advanced to challenge the Security Council's authority.

NATO's intervention in Kosovo not only undermined the Security Council's authority but also created a legal mess: it is unclear whether Kosovo is a sovereign state given that only a mere 40 states have recognized it as such. And Russia has grossly mimicked NATO by recognizing the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

That said, the case of Sierra Leone shows that humanitarian interventions can be very helpful in some circumstances—but it also demonstrates that the Security Council can endorse them. The cases of Rwanda, Darfur, or Congo illustrate how costly insufficient action can be—but they are also evidence that the West's reluctance to engage combat troops in Africa can be as big a stumbling block for humanitarian interventions as the Chinese veto.

As to nuclear proliferation, the foreign policy establishments of Western powers are now united to call a nuclear Iran "unacceptable" and leave all options on the table to avoid it. And yet NATO has experienced the power of dissuasion when facing off the mightier Soviet threat. A nuclear Iran could be dissuaded, too.

Nonetheless, I am not going to resolve the debates on humanitarian interventions and nuclear proliferation in the short space of this article. In its purest form, the progressive doctrine would rule out NATO using force other than in collective self-defense or as authorized by the Security Council (as required by its Charter). That would project a powerful message—a "change we can believe in"—susceptible to sap the realist logic that leads all governments into a cycle of war.

A less pure form of the doctrine would call for the expansion of NATO into a global organization emphasizing its benign dissuasive power, but would allow exceptions to use force against emerging nuclear powers or genocides. That would unavoidably blunt the benign rhetoric and antagonize China, Russia, and others, which is what opponents to the idea of a League of Democracies have emphasized.

However, it is worth noting that these opponents got their targets partially wrong. What alienates Russia and China is primarily the West's willingness to act in spite of their veto at the Security Council. Whether the West acts through NATO (as in Kosovo) or not (as in Iraq) is secondary. Russia and China resent NATO's expansion mostly (though not exclusively) to the extent that NATO asserts the Security Council's role of global policeman, which it should avoid to do.

Inclusion

Far from alienating Russia and China, the second principle of the progressive doctrine is inclusion. It is first about rhetoric and diplomacy. McCain's aggressive rhetoric toward Russia and China undermined the concept he proposed. NATO members should not only be more diplomatic in words, but also in action. They should continue working in good faith within the UN and other universal institutions. The action should continue to take place there. NATO should be about prevention.

Second, the progressive doctrine is not about creating another exclusive club. It is about making an existing exclusive club (NATO) more inclusive.

Third, NATO should not exclude any country from membership: it should simply not force states to join. All countries meeting certain objective membership criteria should be let in if they so choose.

The membership criteria should cover four areas: human rights, peaceful settlement of any outstanding border dispute or other international conflict, minimum defense spending and military preparedness, and collaboration on a range of multilateral agreements tackling security issues such as international terrorism, money laundering, and arms transfer.[64]

The human rights criteria, at the core of the League of Democracies idea, is necessary because defending liberal democracy is the glue that binds NATO members and because strong respect of civil liberties is the best guarantee of civil peace—one would not want to admit members undergoing civil wars (although there are unfortunately precedents). The European Union provides a great model for applying objective human rights criteria to potential members, which then face a strong incentive to "clean up their acts" before they are admitted to the club. NATO's admission criteria might not have to be as stringent, but should at least include having conducted several free, fair and competitive national elections.

New members would strengthen NATO by bringing additional military power. On the other hand, they could decrease the alliance's credibility if they eroded the solidarity that strongly binds existing members. Georgia offers an interesting case. Had Georgia been admitted in NATO in spite of its ongoing conflict with Russia, and had Russia attacked it regardless of its new NATO membership, would NATO nationals have been ready to die for Georgians?

Existing members would not lightly turn away from their treaty obligation because that would undermine their own reliance on NATO protection. Nevertheless, this critical question underscores the importance of the selection criteria and the way they are administered. If applicants went through a rigorous

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[64] Jacobs, *op. cit.*

vetting process ensuring they truly are nations striving to internal and external peace, solidarity would be stronger.[65]

Georgia and Ukraine are existing aspirants toward NATO. If NATO opened its membership beyond the North Atlantic region, and if it projected itself as a dissuasive force rather than the world's policeman, other countries would be likely to apply. Southeast Asian countries might find NATO valuable to balance a China that could increasingly flex its military muscles in the future. (Right now, they court China to balance the West!)[66] Mexico and other Latin American countries might want to join the elite club of NATO to increase their influence. Even African countries like Mali or Botswana could meet the membership criteria with some assistance in the not-so-distant future, and would benefit greatly given their unstable neighborhoods.

Power-sharing

Prevention and inclusion would make the League of Democracies idea more attractive to potential members. Sharing power would help seal the deal.

Carothers (2008) and Daalder and Lindsay (2006) disagree on the ease with which democracies would agree on foreign policies. The latter are right that NATO's experience has demonstrated that democratic governments negotiate well because they trust each other. They can therefore reach compromises easily. While the Iraq war has, of course, exposed the potential for irreconcilable disagreements on vital questions, serious disagreements would be less likely if NATO were to refocus on its preventive role, following the lead of the Security Council on more sensitive issues like humanitarian interventions and nuclear proliferation.

Nevertheless, Carothers (2008) rightly argues that a larger and more diverse group of countries facing a more complex world could not function in the way North Atlantic allies did during the Cold War, following the lead of the United States. Because indecision and paralysis would be very dangerous for a defense organization, difficulty in reaching consensus could prove fatal to the organization.

As it slowly expands geographically, NATO would therefore need to adopt features of cosmopolitan democracy.[67] Through a series of incremental institutional reforms, the supranational—as opposed to intergovernmental—character of NATO should be emphasized. This could entail more contested decisions, made by a qualified majority after an open debate in which the minority would make its case but eventually own the majority decision. It would also involve more transparency, more participation of civil society, and more judicial arbitration where it is warranted.

The current lopsided defense-spending makes it hard for the United States to share decision-making power within NATO. While voting rights should reflect

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[65] *Ibid*.

[66] Parag Khanna, *The Second World: Empires and Influence in the New Global Order* (New York: *Random House*, 2008).

[67] Daniele Archibugi and David Held, (eds), *Cosmopolitan Democracy: An Agenda for a New World Order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); Daniele Archibugi, David Held, and Martin Köhler, (eds), *Re-Imagining Political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

population, not military power, all alliance members should be held accountable for contributing fairly to the common defense burden. Rebalancing both voice and resources is a bargain that public opinions could accept both in the United States and allied nations.

As argued by Michael Zürn in this symposium, globalization deepens and politicizes intergovernmental organizations. That is true for defense alliances as well as economic institutions. Not only smaller NATO members have long lost self-sufficient military capabilities, but even bigger members can undermine each other's security with foreign policies working at cross purposes. For example, some NATO members complained that the American-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 fuelled instability and boosted terrorists' recruitment, while the United States suffered from the low legitimacy of its intervention that even its allies criticized. Since all citizens of NATO members are stakeholders in each member's foreign policy, more direct forums of citizen participation are required to debate respective interests, make collective decisions, and hold actors accountable.[68]

There is no doubt that such reforms would require a great deal of trust. That is the wager of the preventive foreign policy doctrine. In the end, there will be no sustained global peace and security without overcoming nationalism. In today's world, one cannot expect all UN nations making leaps of faith toward one another. But we could wager that a slowly growing number of democracies with NATO at its core would make that leap of faith, and accept truly joint ownership of their collective defense policy.

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[68] See the essays of Raffaele Marchetti and Terry Macdonald in this symposium.