

Peace and Democracy

Benchmarking

by Alain Caillé

Introduction by Boutros Boutros-Ghali



**International Centre for Human Sciences, Byblos
International Panel on Democracy and Development**

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President of the International Panel on Democracy
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Correspondence regarding
this publication should
be addressed to:
Division of Foresight, Philosophy
and Human Sciences
Sector of Social and Human Sciences
UNESCO
1 rue Miollis
75732 Paris CEDEX 15, France
Tel. (00 33 1) 45 68 45 55
Fax. (00 33 1) 45 68 57 29

Centre international des sciences de l'Homme
B.P. 225 Byblos (Jbeil), Liban
Tel. (00 961 3) 65 33 85
Fax. (00 961) 954 64 00

Contents

Introduction by Boutros Boutros-Ghali	9
Peace and democracy: Benchmarking	21
Note to the reader	23
Foreword	25
I WHAT KIND OF DEMOCRACY: SOME DEFINITIONS	27
I.1 The different dimensions of democracy.....	28
• The constitutional dimension	28
• The symbolic dimension	29
• The social dimension	31
• The issue of pluralism and public space.....	32
• Freedom and equality. Individual or collective?	34
I.2 Democracy, from opprobrium to glorification.....	35
I.3 Is democracy natural, universal and/or universalizable?.....	37
II DOES DEMOCRACY PREVENT CONFLICTS?	41
II.1 “Democracies do not make war against each other”	42
II.2 Imposed democracy, the tripartite vision of the world and the question of just war.....	44
II.3 It is not so sure that democracies do not or cannot make war against each other.....	51

Peace and Democracy

- There is democratic imperialism and democratic militarism.....51
- Correlation is not causality54

III IS DEMOCRACY INTRINSICALLY PACIFIST?56

- III.1 Democracy, justice and conflict57
- III.2 Democracy and development.....62
- III.3 The problem of democratic unity67

IV DOES DEMOCRACY MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO AVOID WAR?74

- IV.1 The question of democratic political culture74
- IV.2 Democratic legitimacy and sustainable peace.....77
- IV.3 About the Anglo-American intervention in Iraq and the temptation to impose democracy from outside and to ensure peace through war.....80
- IV.4 The example of Germany and Japan cannot be generalized85
- IV.5 The dangerous paradoxes of democratic pacification. Democracy and democratization.88

CONCLUSION: TOWARDS NEW WORLD REGULATIONS?.....92

- The issue of the role of the United States.....94
- The problem of the UN and international organizations97

A PROPOSAL FOR UNESCO – Notes for the creation by UNESCO of an International College of Moral, Social and Philosophical Sciences103

Bibliography107

Introduction
by Boutros Boutros-Ghali

This topic focusing on “peace and democracy” is set in the context of a series of reflections made in the course of two years at UNESCO, by the International Panel that I have the honour of presiding, on the interaction between democracy and development.

In the introduction to our debates published *verbatim*, I highlighted the hypothesis we adopted which situated the relationship between democracy and development firmly in the context of peace. A hypothesis necessary to our debate since democracy and development become totally “frozen” in a situation of conflict.

But in examining democracy in the context of peace, we are ignoring the political context that precedes and follows conflicts and its potential impact on democratic development.

For this reason, I hope that we will be able to complete this debate rather than simply restructure it, by choosing a different angle, that of the interaction between democracy and peace.

At this stage, I am almost tempted to speak of an interaction between democracy and war. Since, on the one hand, we will be led to examine, not only the preventive and curative role of democracy in relation to conflict, but also paradoxically, its capacity to expand and trigger conflicts. And, on the other hand, because the political context of the past fifty years has been marked by two major phenomena that are:

- The increase of intra-state conflicts
- and the increase of international action undertaken in favour of democratization within States.

Concerning the first phenomenon, while we have noted a marked decrease in inter-state conflicts, we are forced to acknowledge that since the end of the Second World War,

the world has never witnessed as many intra-state conflicts. These conflicts are of a new and complex nature, their causes varied and often intersecting.

That is why almost half of the internal conflicts are related to issues of identity. They find their roots in ethnic, religious or cultural differences, and are often exacerbated by repressive measures taken by non-democratic regimes. Other conflicts are of a political-military nature. They take the form of civil wars aimed at seizing power or at changing regimes. These wars are triggered by excessive corruption, failure of democratic transition, severe socio-economic crises, or by a combination of all the above-mentioned factors.

In addition, these internal conflicts could spill across national borders and thus cause external conflicts that overlap with the internal ones and complicate the situation.

Hence, we are facing an unprecedented situation: since the end of the Cold War, the known threat posed by an identified enemy State, has been substituted by a more blurred, uncertain, and unpredictable notion of danger emanating from actors other than the State namely, armed groups, rebels and terrorists.

At the same time, an unprecedented democratization movement was being established. This wave began in the 1970s in Southern Europe. It reached Latin America and West Asia in the 1980s, and attained its peak in the 90s with the fall of the Soviet Empire and the emergence of new democracies in Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union.

Numbers speak for themselves: in 1974, there were 39 democracies in the world. This number reached 76 in 1990 and more than 120 in 2003.

This conclusion, however, is nuanced. Actually, this wave of democratization, supported by the West, and by international organizations, first in line of which is the United Nations, responded to different objectives during and after the Cold War.

During the Cold War, this measure was part of a strategy mainly aimed at countering the spread of communism.

Since the end of the Cold War, the Western and international democratization strategy was based on two series of arguments: democracy to promote development and democracy to promote peace.

First series of arguments: democracy is the best system to promote good governance and economic and sociocultural development.

Indeed, it has been proven and is recognized that the establishment of democracy allows for dealing with corruption, or in other terms, the more civil freedom there is, the less corrupt governments will be.

All we need to do is look at the most corrupt governments during the past few years to realize that all were dictatorships that started out as “kleptocracies”.

Another convincing argument in this series states that institutions favouring economic development couldn't be established and function except in a democratic environment.

We are back to the heart of the issue of the interaction between democracy and development, which I mentioned at the beginning of this introduction. In this regard, we can also mention the unanimous conclusion of the members of the Panel, regarding the existence of a close relationship between democracy and development and the fact that justice is the catalyst for democracy and development. There is no democracy without justice and no sustainable development without justice.

Peace and Democracy

It would be presumptuous and even dangerous to affirm or set as dogma the fact that development leads to democracy or, the contrary, that democracy leads to development.

In certain cases, economic crises create standards of living and conditions of well-being, which favour the establishment of democracy, as in Thailand, Taiwan or the Republic of Korea.

In other cases, the opposite is true. Holding a totalitarian regime accountable for a disastrous economic situation would lead to the establishment of democracy. I am thinking, in particular, of the reaction that arose in some countries of Latin America in response to the incapacity of the military dictators to deal with the debt crisis in the 1980s. In this context, the case of Indonesia or the Philippines comes to mind.

In not taking into account the specificities of the situations, we risk having the international financial institutions weighing heavily on the “whole economy” to the detriment of the social and political issues. We even risk seeing the “great number of enthusiastic friends” of democracy and human rights being obstinate about the conditionalities.

Second series of arguments supporting the democratization wave:

The establishment of democracies will give birth to a more peaceful world, since democracies will not declare war on each other.

The idea of a democratic peace, since it is our main subject, is not new.

It has been discussed, since 1795, in “The Project for Perpetual Peace” of Emmanuel Kant. Considered as Utopia, this theory was reiterated in the 1980s, by sup-

porting studies, empirical research and demonstrations, until it became the credo of the American Administration.

The theory of democratic peace relies less on the peaceful character of democracies than on the fact that they will not declare war on each other over disagreements.

In this regard, the following three reasons are often evoked:

1. Citizen participation in calculating the cost and advantages of a violent solution, as well as the “incentives” to peace with which leaders will be confronted, make military adventures or aggressive actions less attractive to these leaders as they risk harming their citizens’ well-being, as well as having a negative impact on their performance and image;
2. Constitutional restraints, especially the separation of executive and legislative powers – and the complexity of decision-making processes tend to limit the leaders’ autonomy and action, thus reducing the risk of abuse of power;
3. the political culture of democracies will prompt negotiated solutions, transferring from the national to the international level, standards, regulations and procedures, which allow for compromise and consensus.

Many things could be said regarding this last point. I will come back to them later, when I discuss democratization of international relations.

We cannot but notice that although democracies do not declare war on each other, they do not have friendly relations with countries known to be “non-democratic”, rogue or barbaric.

Peace and Democracy

From colonial conquests to *coups d'états* organized in certain countries, by Western democracies, passing through the preventive war led recently by the USA in Iraq, there are many examples that tend to prove, as Tocqueville used to say, that "if democratic countries want peace, democratic armies want war".

Although this attractive theory of democratic peace has been and may still be subject to criticism and skepticism by researchers, this does not mean that the interaction between peace and democracy does not deserve to be studied in depth, especially in the light of these past years' experiences and failures.

In this regard, if we acknowledge the long-term advantage of democratic institutions in consolidating peace, we should also measure the short-term risks encountered by regimes in transition, as well as the difficulty of establishing democracy in countries where institutions are relatively weak and need time to strengthen themselves.

A small group of countries was able to reach this state of consolidation in less than ten years. These are: Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Brazil, Chili, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, Taiwan (China), and, to a certain extent, the Philippines.

Similarly, the overall outcome is still inconsistent owing to breakdowns in the democratic system, the failure to consolidate democracy, and to the perversion of democratic institutions in certain regimes in transition phase.

I shall mention just a few examples.

First, recent history has shown that the chances of democratic transition ending up in inter- or intra-state conflicts, are very high.

Some researchers state that if the risk is minor during the first stages of a regime change, it grows considerably in the

ten years following the transition. We all remember the conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation and Chechnya, Croatia and Serbia.

Similarly, regimes in transition can trigger internal conflicts, as for example with the repression of ethnic minorities in autocratic regimes. Over time, a climate of interethnic violence sets in and leads to the emergence of radical ethno-nationalistic movements.

Dictatorships dismantle ethnic divisions, but do not eradicate them.

The failure of these kinds of regimes often contributes to reviving identity resentment in multi-ethnic societies.

At the same time, the established transition – generally in a semi-liberal regime – does not allow for full democratic participation which would release identitarian frustrations.

The situation becomes more complicated when breakaway movements arm small groups considered as “terrorists” by ethnic groups or dominant ethnic groups as was the case in Kosovo or in Timor-Leste.

Second, the establishment of a democratic regime does not necessarily guarantee quality governance.

Indeed, we often find that the leaders of countries which became democratic recently, corrupt democratic institutions in order to protect their own interests and save their regimes from the popular vote and constitutional restraint.

In this respect, the wave of democratization during the last twenty years has sometimes favoured the birth of “sham democracies”: rigged elections, leaders not answerable to the parliament, weakness of the rule of law, and little protection of civil liberties.

The birth of these democracies causes a serious problem for the international community for three reasons:

Peace and Democracy

First: what is missing in such democracies is what some people defined as “horizontal responsibility”, i.e. the fact that the leader is not answerable to the legislature, to any court of law nor to the media.

At institutional level, these new democracies do not have separation of powers or clear boundaries, which define the power of different components of the State. Although this separation of power exists on paper, the strengthening necessary to their effectiveness and functioning have not been adopted, which leaves the executive authority able to encroach on the prerogatives of other institutions.

Second: “fake democracies” focus on electoral rights to the detriment of human rights: freedom of the press, right of association, freedom of religion and minority rights.

Third: political participation led by democracy does not always benefit, in these kinds of regimes, the ordinary citizen and even less the marginalized and disadvantaged citizen. On the other hand it is profitable to the elite and the wealthy. Thus, there is a high risk of seeing these democracies transformed into oligarchy.



Given these conditions, what are the challenges facing the international community?

I think that the real challenge is not only to prevent violent conflicts in countries in democratic transition but also to promote democratic institutions in societies where violent conflicts have been avoided, but where real democratic governance is not yet effective.

We should acknowledge, in this respect, that the democratization policy adopted over the last few years was, most of the time, hesitant, opportunistic and inconsistent.

Consequently, we have four courses ahead of us.

We have, in the first place, to adopt a long-term approach, focusing on the development of actors or institutions essential to the democratic process: political parties, judicial and legal systems, civil societies, independent medias, professional and non-politicized armies.

Western democracies should, in this respect, be convinced that in the long-term such efforts will serve their own interests, and that it is not a matter of small projects intended to “build” nations.

Weak countries are, most of the time, the result of a failing authoritarian regime or an aborted transition to democracy. These kinds of countries often become the breeding ground for conflicts of identity, religious fanaticism and international terrorism. All we have to do is look at the case of Afghanistan and the Taliban. Countries of this type not only inflict terrible suffering on their people, but they also constitute a threat to peace and international stability.

Second, we should adopt a flexible strategy that takes into consideration the socio-political and cultural context.

We could thus perhaps avoid errors committed in the past in the name of a strategy copied from the American or Western socio-economic development model, that ignores some realities and local forms of government.

A strategy of waste that led to the support of projects that had no chance of succeeding in the long-term. A simplistic strategy placing the emphasis on elections as a guarantee of a sound democracy, whereas elections are only the starting point of democratic processes.

Western democracies should, on the other hand, stop “exporting”, especially by force, democratic institutions.

Peace and Democracy

Promoting democracy will not be effective unless it is willed by the people.

Finally, we should realize that we can no longer entertain a static, disembodied view of democracy, a view restricted to the frontiers of the nation-State.

Democracies, even the most solidly anchored ones, developed around the idea of State and nation, have entered into a weakened phase because of globalization.

While the international community is made up of various political communities organized around a separation between States, the world society aspires to achieve universality.

Starting with the information and communication technology revolution, through the growing importance of the multinational flow of resources and networks, ending with the global dimension of numerous problems and their solutions, the globalization process seems to have become a new scale of reference, for decisions and for action.

The result is that we are currently facing national societies closely linked to one another, and that have achieved democracy to differing degrees, as well as an anarchic global society, not to say anti-democratic. This situation will lead to a loss of substance for national democracy, and to a loss of power for citizens.

So we are saying that globalization has forced us, beyond the spread of democracy, to reconsider, at the same time, the modalities adopted by the democratic citizen community to guide the State's action according to shared objectives.

In addition to actually achieved democracy, which we must protect, now we also need to develop this transcendent level organized through globalization.

In fact, can one still talk of democracy when the international order is structured by transnational interests, by organizations, associations and multinational forms on which citizens and even many States no longer have any or only very little control?

Local and national democratization processes make the prospect of a global democracy credible. But this does not mean that we can limit ourselves to merely transposing the way in which we consider democracy on the national scale.

Democracy on the global level is not the sum of national democracies; global democratic institutions do not result from national institutions even if they were democratic.

I will not go into further detail here of the necessary democratization of globalization. But I would like to draw to your attention four major priorities.

First Priority: a better spread of democracy within the UN system.

The United Nations has as its mission to impress upon nations respect for the Charter's goals and principles. It has also elaborated one of the main sources of international judicial standards. It is also the only forum where small countries, poor countries and weak countries can be heard.

Second priority: engage non-State actors – NGOs, parliaments, mayors of big cities, universities and multinational companies – in the development of standards and decisions that affect the future of the planet.

If we want to establish an open, participative and vibrant global democracy, we should take into consideration not only the political will of subjects and the performance of economies, but also the aspirations of sociocultural actors.

Peace and Democracy

Third priority: fight the division between North and South.

The international community's duty begins here. Speeches in favour of democracy should be backed up by concrete action.

Fourth priority: promotion of cultural diversity and the dialogue of cultures.

If we want to avoid yesterday's Cold War from becoming a cultural confrontation provoked by growing international migration movements, we have to establish, as soon as possible, this dialogue of cultures, which has as a prerequisite the recognition of and respect for plurality and diversity of cultures.

**Peace and Democracy:
Benchmarking**

by Alain Caillé

Note to the reader

This text was written in two stages. The initial version was to be used as a working document at the meeting, on the 2nd and 3rd of June 2003 in Beirut, of the International Panel on Democracy and Development, chaired by Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Having discussed the links between democracy and development – the subject of the previous panel meeting -, the participants had to examine those between peace and democracy. Does installing democracy, if ever achieved, lead to peace? This is obviously a burning issue, especially for the Middle East. So it is not surprising that in addition to the panellists, around two hundred people followed and participated in the discussion with passion. Should there have been a report of what was said and the proceedings of that meeting published? This could have been an interesting possibility because of the richness and passion of the discussions, but writing has rules that are different from those of oral debate. Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Mr Pierre Sané and Ms Moufida Goucha thus preferred that I complete and enrich the initial working document by incorporating some elements of reflection emanating from the Beirut meeting, yet without expressing any other than my personal point of view. I deeply thank them for the trust they have shown me by giving me a chance to gather some ideas on such an essential issue. I am fully convinced that the most important debate today is about what remains of the democratic ideal. This is not the direct theme of the following text. But it is clear that if we had a better understanding of the links between peace, war and democracy, we would be better

Peace and Democracy

qualified to decide whether the democratic ideal is still alive in its inherited forms, and achievable as is, or whether it should be partly amended and revised in order for it to be more effectively universalized. Obviously, I do not claim to provide set answers to such delicate and complex questions. Rather, what I am proposing, is essentially a form of benchmarking that might make it possible to better formulate certain questions. In accordance with the first request made by UNESCO, this approach is presented in an order that might seem arbitrary. Can we really make a distinction between whether democracy prevents conflicts and whether it can put an end to them? Isn't what comes after just like what comes before? However, in practice, the somewhat academic tri-partition that organizes this text – democracy before, during and after conflicts – did not seem to me too artificial and had the advantage of permitting an initial classification of the problems. Let us hope that the readers will feel the same way.

10 August 2003

Foreword

We remember the enthusiasm that followed the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989: after two devastating world wars, after the terrifying experience of the exterminating totalitarianisms from the left and the right and their dozens of millions of victims, this monstrous parenthesis seemed to be closing definitively; the world was finally going to follow the normal and rational course of history, as everybody thought, and see the dawning of a new era of peace, democracy, justice and prosperity for all men and women in all countries. The ideals of the Enlightenment, once forgotten or deprived, were about to be achieved on a global scale. It was at that time that Francis Fukuyama acquired his celebrity by announcing the "end of history". This thesis, maligned and misunderstood by some as much as it was acclaimed by others, did not mean that the world would witness no more events, crises, wars or conflicts; rather, it meant that it had become clear for any informed and genuine analyst that there were no plausible economic and political alternatives to the coupling of market economy with parliamentary democracy. According to Fukuyama, this concept (market plus parliamentarianism) of European origin but generally perfectly applicable worldwide, was a final response to Marxist criticism by proving its capacity to provide individuals the world over with both material well-being and equality and dignity before the law.

Peace and Democracy

About fifteen years later, the good results that had been announced were not achieved. If a number of countries witnessed unprecedented economic development, others – in Africa, Latin America, and the former Soviet Union – suffered a complete collapse of their living standards. Instead of seeing peace being established everywhere, we witnessed in many regions of the world a true explosion of conflicts and massacres along with an unprecedented increase in social disparities, criminality and corruption. So a growing number of the world's people considered that the promise of democracy had not been kept. The wonderful hope that had risen fell again, pushing international institutions, and in particular UNESCO, towards a drastic and frank questioning of their objectives and their constitutional certainties. For half a century, all their actions and all their proclamations followed the conviction that by spreading democracy and human rights all over the world, by improving the general education level, by better meeting material needs, thanks to science and technologies, we would inevitably head towards a more peaceful and harmonious world. In short, peace and democracy seemed to be closely linked and go hand in hand. But is the link between peace and democracy that certain? Is it really obvious? Shouldn't we take a closer look? And isn't the democratic ideal itself more and more threatened today?

WHAT KIND OF DEMOCRACY? SOME DEFINITIONS

The famous definition of democracy given by Abraham Lincoln "the rule of the people, by the people and for the people", has the advantage of being very expressive: this is what spontaneously comes to our minds when we mention democracy. But it also has the disadvantage of raising more questions than it solves. What people? Who is part of it? What relationship do they have with their rulers since it is recognized that they cannot rule by themselves? What does "government" mean? Etc.

But is it necessary to go into such complexities? Can't we just content ourselves with a simple operational definition, one that is widely accepted today and, without entering into useless subtleties, describe as democratic those countries that enjoy free elections, freedom of publication, association, and differing opinions within the respect of law and human rights? Or, in a simpler way, shall we say, like Joseph Schumpeter in his famous book *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*, that there is democracy where the leaders are replaced according to peaceful competitive procedures? Or is it where the rules of the political game resemble most those of the goods and services market and where political parties struggle to conquer votes in the same spirit that drives enterprises seeking consumer support? In this vision of democracy, parliamentarianism and the market are not only complementary, they become almost interchangeable.

It is indeed tempting to simply stick to these definitions and to ask ourselves directly about the relationship between democracy as it is defined here and peace. However, we have some reasons to suspect that this relationship is more complex than expected and to think that the democratic ideal has mobilized such passions, for and against, because other stakes are involved than the sole peaceful renewal of the elites in power. We must therefore give more attention to the definition of democracy and raise certain points.

There is no need for the reader to worry. We will not review the two or three dozen definitions of democracy that are more or less different and that we can find in specialized literature. But there is a need to mention at the outset three series of points that are essential for the present discussion.

1.1. The different dimensions of democracy

To start with, let us consider five main ways of approaching the democratic experience, which are also a reflection of its different dimensions. Their diversity and their implacability demonstrate how sensitive it is to talk about democracy in general, as if its essence were unique and homogeneous.

The constitutional dimension.

The most common definitions of democracy see it first or exclusively as some form of political regime, as a kind of constitution. As we see it today, it is widely associated with parliamentarianism, and with free competition among political parties in order to accede to the State control, i.e. according to the famous statement by Max Weber, to the "monopoly of legitimate violence". In this general framework, the variants among different forms of democ-

racy differ according to the weight given respectively to the legislative, executive and judiciary bodies on one hand, and according to the degree of freedom of the press and associations on the other hand. But parliamentarianism cannot grow or function alone, as in a vacuum, without any contact with the outside. In order for it to be something other than an illusory and precarious sham, it is necessary that, at the very least, a significant part of the population and the existing political forces accept the rules of the game. Further, the political pluralism proclaimed by the Constitution must be supported by respect of social, cultural and religious pluralism above and beyond the political and constitutional sphere. In brief, political democracy cannot grow or function alone, as in a void. It only develops in contact with the other components of democratic demand.

The symbolic dimension.

An important tradition of thinking holds the constitutional dimension of democracy to be secondary to the social and symbolic dimension of democracy. If aspiration to democracy has, for Tocqueville, the characteristics of a "providential" force, i.e. an irresistible force that pushes all previous social forms out of its way, it is because of its all-powerful affective and imaginary content. Before taking the form of a specific political constitution, democracy is first an irrepressible belief in the intrinsic equality-identity of all human beings, rejecting hierarchy based on differences said to be natural and intangible – differences between blue blood aristocrats and common people, the pure and impure, the white and the coloured, men and women, etc. – and considering human beings to be all

alike in principle, regardless of differences in wealth, prestige or power which in reality separate them.

Similarly, for Claude Lefort, democracy consists of a particular symbolic regime that, by considering power as a void that cannot be appropriated (contrary to patrimonialism), makes it impossible to associate power with knowledge and forbids society to consider itself as a unified body, as an organic community. It is this symbolic dimension of democracy that is expressed by the human rights claim. So human rights appear to be something totally different from the dominant classes' or imperialistic powers' simple ideology. Instead, they represent the primary symbolic affirmation of respect for the differences between individuals without which any pretension of democracy would soon become totally meaningless. And it is in their name that it is possible, according to some authors, to claim democracy while refusing the verdict of the polls when the latter might bring anti-democratic forces to power. Let us remember, for instance, when Hitler took power in 1933. Perfectly democratically.¹ We see very clearly here that – in our understanding of what is essential in democracy – the issues of the electoral mechanism and majority rule are secondary with regard to the major institutive and symbolic affirmation of human rights.

In the same context, it is possible to think that the *sine qua non* condition for a democratic society to emerge lies pri-

1. A more contemporary case, and one that is not clear-cut, is that of Algeria. Should the verdict of the votes have been rejected to prevent Islamist militants, who were likely to have no sympathy for democracy, from taking power, as human rights philosopher Claude Lefort thinks? Or, as Algerian sociologist Lahouari Addi maintains, that the Algerian people should have been allowed to have their own experience and that nothing was worse than the denial of democracy in the name of democracy? In more general terms, it is worth noting that in Africa we no longer count the sanguinary tyrants whose accession to power has been validated by more or less free elections. The most recent example is that of Charles Taylor in Liberia.

marily in accepting to separate the political order from the religious order and ensuring that the first is not submitted to the other. In this vision, and even if it is true that the modern democratic ideal has deeply religious roots, democratization goes hand in hand with secularization.² This explains both the seduction that democracy exerts and the rejection it arouses. Does democratization taken to its extreme imply the exit of religion?

The social dimension.

When we see that the democratic claim exceeds largely the political field, it becomes obvious that the symbolic dimension of democracy is more essential for modernity than the sole constitutionalist dimension, that it is more matrix and generatrix, if we can say so. Beyond the electoral regime alone, it is all the fields of social experience that modern men and women intend to democratize:

2. *A contrario*, the minister in charge of the Law in the current Government in Afghanistan, Kacem Fazelli, explains in an interview (*Libération* of 29 July 2003) how the Americans are manipulating the former *moudjahidin* against the *Taliban* and the remnants of Al-Qaeda without understanding that the true problem which led to terrorism and refusal of democracy lies in the excessive weight given to the religious aspect in the design of the State. Yet, on this point, the two parties "agree 90%" and support the *ulémas* who met in Kaboul in May 2003 to require that "the Sharia be the only source of legislation, that the veil should be obligatory, that anything that might appear against Islam in the press should be sued, that secularism, which is assimilated to heresy, *should be rejected*", etc. (underlined by myself, A.C.). The mistake, according to K. Fazelli, is in relying on religious factions to the detriment of others, since the first problem is to be able to reduce the control of religion over politics. Here we talk about the key issue that clearly is faced by all the countries that are subjected to the influence of Islam. Are they ready, and to what extent, to accept the separation between religion and the State? And not only in fact but also and foremost in law. Symbolically. We can consider, along with many historians, that the main factor leading to the democratic multi-secular process in the West was the reiterated failure of all attempts to subordinate temporal power to the spiritual power of Rome and to (re)create a theological-political empire. The conclusion seems to be self-evident: there can be no democracy without separation between the political and the theological.

from business to education, from family to religion to gender relations, etc. Here it is also a matter of knowing to what extent a parliamentary regime can last if it is not supported by this general aspiration for social, economic and religious democracy. And, vice versa, it is likely that most of the hostility towards parliamentary democracy results not so much from the rejection of this constitutional form as it does from the fear that it might encourage the other processes of democratization, and especially, without any doubt, the democratization of gender relations, a true anthropological revolution.

The issue of pluralism and public space.

Transversally to these various components of the democratic ideal, it is still worth noting that there is a constant swaying between two major possible interpretations of the democratic ideal. The first, which can be described as utilitarian, focuses on possession, on "*having*". The second – let us call it expressivist – is more about identity, about "*being*". For the first, the main virtue of the democratic order is of instrumental nature. By guaranteeing the right to possessions, democracy allows everyone to pursue his/her goals and reach peaceful contentment of material wealth. This respect of the right to property is by its nature good for the good functioning of the market and for the accumulation of private wealth. As for the second interpretation, to which democratic citizens aspire, it is first about the capacity for all to express their own and peculiar identity. In this second interpretation – of which Hannah Arendt and, in a very different way, Jürgen Habermas are the outstanding representatives – the most important element is the existence of public spaces in

which the subjects can discuss, formulate opinion and obtain the acknowledgement of their value and the certainty to exist legitimately and conclusively in the eyes of others. The democratic society is first of all a pluralistic society. And Arendt is not far from thinking that the real value which should be preserved much more than democracy itself, is that of pluralism. This raises the formidable issue of knowing to what extent democracy is always and necessarily pluralist. It also raises the question of whether traditionalist social systems are sometimes in fact more pluralist, but at the price of imposing a hierarchy and some social forms of domination that are unbearable for those with modern views.

The paradox of Arab-Muslim pluralist autocracies

One of the best experts of the Arab-Muslim world is professor Daniel Brumberg (Georgetown University), the president of the Foundation for Democratization and Political Change in the Middle East and member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Democracy*. He analyzes very well the paradoxical specificity of the dominant political regimes in the Arab world which he calls pluralist autocracies (or populist authoritarian regimes). In order to avoid Latin-American military authoritarianism or Marxist-Leninist dictatorships, these regimes were established on the basis of the following compromise: using a client and corporatist approach to satisfy the biggest possible number of social classes or groups in exchange of a confiscation of power which is exercised through a permanent balancing act. These regimes developed surprisingly efficient survival strategies that put an end to all democratization attempts by maintaining a certain pluralism (with a some freedom of the press and civil society and even an electoral system, although highly controlled) which, itself, would run the risk of being jeopardized by a logic of effective democratization [Brumberg, 2003, p. 38]. These authoritarian populist survival strategies face two major obstacles. On one hand, they rely on a strong inefficient public sector unable to meet the multiple demands of the client social layers, making it necessary to resort to external loans and to submit to IMF standards. All this encourages market liberalization measures at the

Peace and Democracy

risk of systematically frustrating the interests of the client layers that depend on subsidies and public funding. On the other hand, by maintaining a certain degree of social pluralism, solely the religious groups can benefit from an autonomous public space through the network of mosques. So they continuously threaten to be the winners at the game of pluralism (to the degree of abolishing it in their favour), especially when they succeed in gaining the support of the client layers of the old public sector sacrificed by the liberal opening up to national and international markets.

Freedom and equality. Individual or collective?

This oscillation between aspiring to own riches and expressing the self is traversed by a central opposition between the two cardinal values of democracy, freedom and equality, which are not always easy to reconcile. To this should be added the opposition between individual freedom and/or collective freedom, and between equality of individuals and/or equality of nations. It is not possible, or at least not easy, to defend the freedom of individuals and at the same time the freedom of nations, cultures or peoples when many of these take their identity from an assertion of their superiority and are internally structured along a hierarchical principle that precisely denies the equality of rights of individuals. Besides, can we say: I love my culture and my people although, or because, they are inferior to others or, at best, equivalent to others? Moreover, no collective social body – society, State, party, Church, etc. – can accede to autonomy and freedom without encroaching more or less upon individual freedoms and without subordinating them to it. So, in order to escape all subordination, must we abandon all forms of collective freedom? Should democracy be limited to what Isaiah Berlin [1969] used to call negative freedom, to the detriment of any hope of positive freedom? Should democracy of the Moderns, to use Benjamin Constant's

famous expression, be exclusively that of individuals who are withdrawn in their private sphere, contrary to that of the Ancients, which used to promote above all collective commitment in the affairs of the city? By becoming more and more individualistic, isn't it likely that democracy will in the end "turn on itself", as philosopher Marcel Gauchet [2002] has written, and thus undermine its own foundations?

This first overview of the various components of the democratic ideal allows us to measure how wide the scope of possible interpretations is, even between countries that have followed similar historical paths. The English-speaking countries, for instance, give absolute priority to individual freedom over equality, while the French tradition is more concerned with equality and yearns for collective freedom by giving primacy to the political over the economic aspect. In order to understand the link between peace and democracy, we must ask ourselves which of those components are indeed peace-producing. But before we go further, it is important to remember how recent is this celebration of democracy, now adorned with all virtues to such a point that no political regime dares present itself as anything other than democratic.

1.2. Democracy, from opprobrium to glorification

Let us go back, with some detail, to the major difference between democracy of the Ancients and democracy of the Moderns. The first asserts the need for citizens, present in the same public space, to actively participate in making collective decisions, while the second is increasingly (and easily) leaving this work to professional politicians in order better to let citizens spend all their time on purely private pursuits. The first designates leaders by a draw (from amongst volunteers who accept the prospect of hav-

ing to give account of their handling of funds in front of a hardly indulgent *agora*), and the second resorts to election. Until the nineteenth century, modern Western philosophical tradition (since Hobbes) took the word democracy to mean nothing other than the Ancients' direct democracy, and gave it extremely negative connotations. This needs to be mentioned because a kind of retrospective illusion could lead us to believe that all theories of a good political regime, such as those put forth in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by the theoreticians of the social contract – by Hobbes, Locke, Spinoza, Rousseau, Kant, etc. – were an apology of democracy. Nothing is less true. What could have been more terrible for all those authors than democracy, the reign of the masses and of the uncultivated? The good political society, in their view, is not democratic but republican or monarchic. Only gradually and lately has another view met with acceptance: that decisions should come from all members of the community and not just from the most enlightened amongst them, from the "capacities" as they used to say in France in the first half of the nineteenth century; and that, little by little, the republican ideal would enter into a coalition with the democratic ideal, thanks to the substitution of the equality principle (represented in the draw) by a logic of representation allowing a selection of the "best" through elections.³

We conclude from this short overview that the current substitution of democracy for the republic or contractualistic monarchy of the great thinkers of the Western tradition leads to two symmetric problems: on one hand, it too easily sidelines the aspiration for access to the public space and for participation in collective political freedom that

3. As is well noted by Bernard Manin, whose work on this issue remains irreplaceable, the idea of representative democracy, founded on election, still contains an aristocratic component. [Manin, 1998].

the Ancients' democracy used to satisfy, and on the other hand, it leads to the assumption that the conditions attached by philosophical tradition to a just social contract between the members of the political community are too easily and quickly satisfied. However, as we will see further on, it is possible that today the main problems are being acted out in the arena of yet another kind of democracy: no longer the direct democracy of the Ancients or the representative democracy of the Moderns, but a democracy of opinion – that we might call “postmodern” – that is becoming applicable on a world scale.

1.3. Is democracy natural, universal and/or universalizable?

Before concentrating more specifically on the discussion about the relationship between peace and democracy, it seems that we must say a few words about a somewhat puzzling, but undoubtedly most important point. The certainty that the extension of democracy in the world will contribute to the pacification of relations between human beings, between cultures and between nations is based on an implicit premise that is almost never stated – because difficult to accept – but is logically inevitable. There is no use hoping for a victory of peace thanks to universalization of democracy if we do not suppose beforehand that all human beings wish or would like *a priori* to live in a democratic way, and that this is so because democratic aspiration is both natural, established in the nature of human subjects, and universal or universalizable. At first view, such a hypothesis seems untenable for two reasons: first, the history of past centuries and even millennium offers little empirical evidence to defend it; and second, the very idea of a natural character of man has been increasingly eroded by contemporary social science and philosophy, both massively “deconstructionist”.

Peace and Democracy

Let us summarize the implicit position which has never been declared as such but is in fact extremely dominant with the quasi-totality of contemporary thinkers: except for the example of Athenian democracy, which cannot be reproduced, no other society has ever known democracy until the advent of modern representative democracies. The main reason for this is that, by promoting the past, tradition, religion and the existing social order, considered to be natural and thus unquestionable, pre-modern societies systematically avoided reflecting on and reappraising their symbolic foundations. Only the Moderns could be democrats because, by freeing themselves from tradition, they opened up an almost infinite field for inventing the new. And if they could do that, it was because they denied any naturalness and therefore any legitimacy to what had existed until then.

The imagined democratic form *par excellence* would thus be the one that refuses even the idea of nature by asserting itself as being resolutely and radically constructivist. However, the inherent problem in this position is that if "everything is constructed", so everything can be as easily deconstructed, and there is no reason to believe that this would be any different with democracy. Here we see this risk of democracy's self-refutation that we underlined before. According to the philosopher John Dewey, in *Freedom and Culture*, this risk cannot be fought, unless a certain naturalness of the democratic ideal is asserted in a normative way and as a regulating ideal. "Democracy," he wrote, "cannot be separated from the belief that political institutions and the law have to fundamentally take into consideration human nature. More than any other form of political institution, they have to give it complete freedom." However, he continued, there is nothing to ensure that human nature is effectively pushing in that direction. "We have to see that democracy identifies itself

with the belief that democracy should prevail and acknowledge with all sincerity that this proposal constitutes a moral proposal." Finally, we should ask ourselves about "the faith that we can have in the potentialities of human nature to promote the democratic ideal" [Dewey, 1939, 2002].

It is obviously impossible to enter into such complex debates between naturalist and constructivist-deconstructionist positions.⁴ However, we will be asserting in an apparently dogmatic way, contrary to primary proofs and by repeating part of the line of argument presented by Jean Baechler in his remarkable book *Démocraties* [1975], that the human race has some tendencies towards democracy (even if there are other trends towards other political forms), and that democracy defines in one way or another the state of political health of societies. Anyway, before monarchies, great primitive empires and religions were formed, democracy had indeed constituted the political regime of humanity, whether in the case of "hunter and gatherer" societies in many Amerindian or Berber tribes, or in the case of ancient or Italian cities. But it is clear that such forms of wild, archaic or ancient democracy have not much in common with modern Westminster-

4. To which the *Revue du MAUSS* (Anti-utilitariste movement in social sciences,) has consecrated two big issues: *La Revue du MAUSS semestrielle* n° 17, 'Chasser le naturel. Constructivisme, écologisme et naturalisme', 2001, 1st semester ; and n° 19, 'Y a-t-il des valeurs naturelles ?', 2002, 1st semester. In n° 19 there is a partial translation in French of Chapter 5 of the book by J. Dewey mentioned above. There is also a text by Charles Cooley, founder of the American sociological tradition, an extract from his book *Social Organization: A Study of the Larger Mind* (1909), which shows how primary groups, those that are based on a face-to-face and interpersonal acquaintance logic, are schools of democracy. For Cooley, democratic ideals should be understood as an extension of the ideals that are proper to primary sociality. [Chaniel, 2002] : "Equal opportunities, equity, devotion and allegiance of all to common interest, free discussion and kindness towards the weaker [...] these aspirations are renewed every day in the heart of people, because they stem from ordinary and familiar experiences and are corroborated by them". The same idea, in an ethno-methodological perspective, with Ann Rawls [1990, 2002] in 'Emergent sociality: a dialectic of commitment and order', in *Symbolic Interaction*, vol. 13, n° 1, p. 63-82, 1990 (JAI Press).

Peace and Democracy

type representative democracy. It is nonetheless essential to remember their existence if we do not want to give modern Westerners an excessive monopoly over the democratic ideal and democratic reality.

As a conclusion of this first examination of the nature of democracy, it seems that we should talk about *democracies* rather than democracy not only because modern democracy is multidimensional, but also because there have been many other expressions of democratic aspiration than the political forms that prevail today. The issue of the links between peace and democracy must then be approached and relocated within a more general questioning on how the hope for democracy was formed and demonstrated throughout human history, how it was constantly lost and found again in an immemorial and dialectical struggle against, and with, the many forms of domination and oppression that were foreign to it, opposed to it and also consubstantial with it. Every type of historical democracy has been established and concretely determined according to the specific forms of domination that it intended to abolish and, very often, was based on their model and with the support of inherited forces of the old order.⁵ Every concrete democratic form, although it resembles the others, also depends on the particular history that produced it.

5. As Tocqueville has shown so well in *L'Ancien régime et la révolution*, the Jacobin republic created by the 1789 revolution can also be seen as the event that abolished the absolutism of the Old Regime, or as the historical movement that completed the centralization and universalization movement undertaken in France by the monarchy.

|| DOES DEMOCRACY PREVENT CONFLICTS?

Let us now get to the heart of the problem. Does the extension of the representative democracy system – or, rather, of liberal democracy – supported by free and regular elections necessarily constitute a peace factor? The affirmative answer to this question is now the subject of a large consensus in the West and among international bodies, and it nourishes the belief that if democracy should be spread all over the world, it is not only because it would be intrinsically and ethically desirable but also, and mostly, because it is a factor of security.⁶ The idea of a collective security provided by a balance of powers that characterized nineteenth century diplomacy and that ruled over UN decisions until the end of the Cold War was followed by the theme of "democratic security" conceived as a safer and less costly means of ensuring security for all: security, or peace, through democracy.

What is peace?

In order to be totally rigorous and deal with the links between peace and democracy in a systematic manner, we should give the notion of peace almost the same attention as democracy. In fact, it is not enough to say that a state of peace is characterized by the absence of conflicts or declared cases of violence. If conflict emerges five minutes after, should we say that five minutes before we were in a

6. Cf. UNESCO, 1997a et 1997b. (These two publications were produced under the supervision of Moufida Goucha, René Zapata and Isabelle de Billy.)

state of peace? On this point, let us refer to the analyses undertaken by Harald Müller who proposes the following definition of peace: "Peace is a state between specific social and political collectives characterized by the absence of direct violence and in which the possible use of violence by one against another has no place in the discourse between the collectives." [Müller, 2003, p. 13]. There should also be a clear distinction between the problems of peace and those of democratic security. As is strongly suggested by Ulrich Beck in his famous *Risikogesellschaft* (Risk society), class differences are now being taken over by differences in exposure to risk. Although we may be living in a society of peace with our neighbours, we can be highly exposed to risk and insecurity if we live near a nuclear plant or a Seveso-type factory. And a fortiori if it is likely to be the target of terrorists. Between war against foreign States, civil war, exposure to risk or to urban violence, there is a whole continuum to take into consideration. Our comments here will be more limited and mainly restricted to examining to what extent the increase of democratic regimes has a positive influence on the number of wars of aggression and can reduce the risks of civil war.

II.1. "Democracies do not make war against each other"

This doctrine was launched in January 1994 by Bill Clinton who, in his *Address on the state of the Union*, declared that "democracies do not make war" [cf. Blin, 2001, p.55]. Tocqueville had already observed in *Democracy in America* that "democratic peoples naturally wish peace". But the main ideas of democratic security are now attributed to the *Project of Perpetual Peace* by Kant (1795), written in the tradition of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre and Rousseau – at the expense however of attributing to democracy what Kant had indeed written only about republics. Perpetual peace, as explained by Kant, will be the product of the association between republican States, the number of which was destined to grow because these States have a natural tendency to live together in peace, even though they may not have this tendency with regard to despotic States [ibid., p.77].

It is only with hindsight that the specialists in international relations rediscovered the Kantian ideas. In fact, the idea of a link between peace and democracy has now come to light through entirely empirical observations, at the end of a comparison of a number of democratic countries and of a number of conflicts, inspired by the first compilations made in 1942 by the war historian Quincy Wright.⁷ Many studies, in particular American, have widely confirmed the theorem henceforth almost established as a socio-historical law and even canonized, as we saw, by Bill Clinton's statement: democracies do not make war against each other. Specialists note only five exceptions, and these are open to debate: USA/Great Britain (1812), USA/Mexico (1845-46), USA/Spain (1895-98), France/Great Britain in Fachoda in 1898, and the Allies against Finland, allied with Nazi Germany. None of these cases, however, represents a real challenge to this general hypothesis which, according to Arnaud Blin "nobody questions anymore". In *Geopolitics of the democratic peace* [2001] he has provided a useful synthesis of these discussions. During the UNESCO panel on "Democracy and development", Bruce Russett concluded: "Looked at together, pairs of States that are democratic, very interdependent and very much tied together by IGOs have been less than one-fifth as likely to get into even low-level military conflicts with each other as States which are neither democratic nor interdependent nor members of the same IGOs." [cf. Boutros-Ghali, 2002, p.147].

7. This comparison was first made by Quincy Wright in 1942 [cf. Wright, 1942] and then restated and verified thirty years later by J. David Singer and Melvin Small [1972]. The philosophical implications of this empirical discovery were drawn by Michael Doyle [1983] who connected them to Kant's perpetual peace doctrine.

The cause seems to be clear. We will see in a few moments, however, that it is indeed much less clear than what these first indications seem to show. But before reexamining this issue, it is important to mention the potentially dangerous conclusions that we might be tempted to draw from a too hasty and non critical acceptance of the axiom which asserts that democracies do not make war against each other and which can be summarized in a kind of syllogism that can be described at the very least as paradoxical:

- democracies do not make war against each other;
- in order for peace to prevail in the world, it is thus necessary and sufficient that all regimes become democratic;
- since they are not, the confirmed democracies have to make them democratic, by resorting to war if need be; and
- if need be, also by freeing themselves from the rules of democratic functioning established by international organizations.

Or, more briefly: since we are democratic and peace-loving, we have the right to act in a non-democratic way and to impose peace – our peace – through war. Although it has appeared in a particularly obvious form since 11 September 2001, what is really worrying in this kind of reasoning is that it is deeply rooted in an intellectual terrain that is much older and that it has gradually led to a disturbing reformulation of the old themes of just war.

II.2. Imposed democracy, the tripartite vision of the world and the question of just war

If all the countries of the world were democratic and if under these conditions it were still true that democracies

do not make war against each other, hypothetically and tautologically there would not be any war. This reassuring perspective was largely shared by analysts in the early 1990s, both by partisans of a linear vision of democratization (Seymour Martin Lipset or Karl Deutsch) and by theoreticians of "democratic transitions" (Guillermo O'Donnell and Adam Przeworski, for instance). They insisted on the necessity and the possibility of old authoritarian regimes to make "democratic compromises" by conceding some degree of political openness to populations in the hope that they would accept indispensable but painful and not very popular liberal economic reforms. These analyses are still being applied even in the face of rapidly growing skepticism and pessimism. How can we render such democratic compromises viable in the absence of social forces that effectively hold the democratic ideal? Will we be witnessing the emergence of democracies without democrats, according to the saying by Ghassan Salamé [Salamé, 1994]?

If the social forces aspiring to democracy are finally too weak and too rare, and if consequently many authoritarian or despotic regimes are not open to the democratic compromise announced by the theory, shouldn't democracy be given a hard push by attempting to impose it from the outside, including, if need be, by means of war? Wherever democracy does not exist and does not constitute itself endogenously? This is the choice that the American Administration now seems to be favouring. Can we find justifications for it?

It is striking that a whole part of recent philosophical, sociological and economic literature adopts a tripartite vision of the world that tends to legitimize such a gamble. There would be recognized (free) democracies (as we saw above with the classifications of the Freedom House NGO or with the World Bank study), political regimes that are not very

pleasant but acceptable as the lesser of two evils (sometimes called "Confucians") and, finally, the rest: the unacceptable regimes, the *rogue States*.

The irruption of such a typological tri-partition in the thinking of international relations completely reverses the terms of the classical debate. At the basis of the UN doctrine, and within its constitution, lies the idea that peace should be maintained between the sovereign, equal-in-rights States, and that any act of belligerence violating this sovereignty should be condemned. Peace preservation in this perspective presupposes that intervention forces – the Blue Helmets – are sent to intervene between States at war or between the fighting parties in a civil war, and that free elections are organized, free elections being the only way to give sufficient legitimacy to a peacemaking power. In a whole series of cases, thanks to these UN interventions the worst was avoided, massacres were stopped and it was possible to start again on a new footing, with the hope that time would heal the wounds and ease passions.⁸ And in any case, obviously the utmost must be done just as soon as possible to put a stop to bloodbaths already under way or being prepared.

The difficulty is that the UN presence alone is not enough to start a virtuous political circle in favour of democracy, even if it is crucial that all of the parties present be aware that they will not enjoy the international recognition they need – as well as the financial assistance that comes with it – as long as they continue to scorn human rights. Observers and people responsible for UN action, however, acknowledge that these interventions can only be fully effective if UN representatives are ready to stay for a long

8. In 1996, the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Federico Mayor considered that in El Salvador, in Namibia, in Mozambique, in Angola and in the Near East, the UN had proved its efficiency [cf. Mayor, 1997a, p.29].

time, yet the UN hardly has the means to ensure such continuity. Finally, during a UNESCO symposium, Colonel Jean-Louis Dufour concluded: "The UN has largely failed in maintaining peace" [cf. UNESCO, 1997a, p.39].

In the United States, even before the present administration took office and going beyond the most hawkish circles, it is undoubtedly, *inter alia*, the acknowledgement of this relative impotence that gave rise to a much more interventionist conception of democratic peace, aiming to legitimize war by democracies against some States. If peace cannot be guaranteed by a constant UN military presence, shouldn't we then, as a means of prevention, destroy non-democratic regimes and warmongers? Should we not renew with the concept of a just war as has the philosopher Michael Walzer, director of the New York leftist intellectuals' magazine *Dissent*, who had first taken up this issue over 25 years ago?⁹

The issue of a just war is very old. Born with ancient Judaism and present in ancient Greece, it was renewed by Saint Ambrosius and Saint Augustine, and was systematically promoted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by doctrines said to be "jusnaturalists", in particular by Grotius. He distinguishes between the right to war (*jus ad bellum*) and the law in war (*jus in bello*). By combining these two rights, we reach a synthetic formulation that considers that a war is just if it is led "for good reasons and with good means". More precisely,¹⁰ there is agreement that a war is just 1) if it is declared by a competent authority, 2) for a just cause, 3) in a just

9. Cf. Michael Walzer [1977]. This text is already old, but it is becoming particularly relevant, especially because M. Walzer did not hesitate to give his critical support (against the opinion of a part of the editorial committee of the *Dissent* magazine) to President G. Bush's foreign policy.

10. Cf. Christopher W. Morris' presentation of jusnaturalism in the *Dictionnaire d'éthique et de philosophie morale* directed by Monique Canto-Sperber [PUF, Paris, 1997, p.618-19].

intention, 4) with means that are proportionate with the ends, 5) with a reasonable hope of success, and 6) if it constitutes the last resort. As for the *jus in bello*, it involves proportionality of the means (cf. point 4) and discrimination, i.e. the prohibition of attacking noncombatants (but Mr. Walzer partly questions this last point).

Clearly, the whole problem is knowing what constitutes a "just cause" and a "just intention" as well as who decides that this is so. Can the just cause be the intention to impose democracy? And more particularly, if democracy were to be established by an external intervention, can this be considered a just cause 1) because it corresponds to the deep wish of all people, and 2) because it can, by itself, convert aggressive and threatening States into peaceful States? Such a representation is rather ironic (if not cynical) and hardly defensible. The tripartite vision of the world mentioned above can justify an intervention aiming at transforming aggressive and murderous States into States that are less dangerous and more respectful of the lives of their constituents; but the idea of transforming them into democracies in no time, as with a wave of the magic wand, is in itself extremely dangerous.

Even if it does not directly lead towards this conclusion, the tripartite representation of the world is no less worrying. In one of his latest important studies on international law ("The Law of Peoples", 1993) the philosopher of justice John Rawls goes back to the jusnaturalist questioning of the modalities that should prevail in relations between nations when we acknowledge (contrary to the intuition that prevailed in the first formulations of the *Theory of Justice*) that no unique legitimate constitutional regime, no one regime chosen freely by rational subjects is possible and that, consequently, we must abandon the objective of achieving a homogeneous political world society. What relations should democracies

maintain with non-democratic regimes? The answer is that they should remain peaceful with what J. Rawls calls the "well organized hierarchical regimes" – those, in substance, that do not want war – and should not fear war with the others. The "others", in other words the third type of regimes, namely the hierarchical regimes that are not "well made", tyrannical and dictatorial regimes, have to be clearly outlawed (see J. Rawls, 1996). Concerning these expansionist societies, he states that "there is no peaceful solution except domination by one camp or peace born out of exhaustion" (p.111).

But how can we detect ill-made or "rogue" regimes? The danger here is that liberal democracies believe that they can alone designate those regimes that are "not well organized" and could be dangerous for peace. It would be up to the liberal democracies to decide to which extent regimes that do not resemble them enough can be considered illegitimate. Thus the logic of law risks self-destruction as soon as we take for granted that wars decided by liberal democracies are fair, and that they do not need international and democratic approval for their decisions since non-democratic regimes are represented in the international bodies. The new emerging doctrine is that there will be no democracy in the face of enemies of democracy.

For sure, the international community will have to defend itself against the expansionist visions of some States. But there is a serious difference between an intervention as a means of legitimate defense and a pre-emptive intervention that follows a logic of supposed legitimate attack against regimes considered threatening. Since it is difficult to forbid a State to have an army and to defend its geo-strategic interests, the first question is who decides a pre-

emptive attack and for which reasons. Should the new doctrine of just war lead to a justification of unilateral pre-emptive interventions, without the approval or against the opinion of international organizations, then there would be good reason to be concerned about the future of the idea of justice and democracy.

Where do legitimate defense and legitimate attack stop?

The whole problem is knowing when do we start to get out of the area of legitimate defense, knowing that the latter might include the pre-emptive legitimate attack. We know too well the price paid by the world for the Munich agreements, apotheosis of the capitulation to Nazi Germany that was translated into a systematic renunciation of legitimate preventative defense. As Joseph Goebbels bluntly explained in 1940: "In 1933, a French Prime Minister should have said (and had I been in his place, I would have done so): 'The new Chancellor of the Reich is the man who wrote *Mein Kampf*, who says this and that. We cannot tolerate that individual in our neighborhood. Either he disappears or we attack!' But they did not do it. They left us in peace and allowed us to cross the danger zone. Therefore, we managed to by-pass all the dangerous reefs. And when we had finished and become well armed, better than they were, then they launched the war!" [quoted by Kagan, 2003]. However, when does preventative legitimate defense turn into a pure and simple attack? We can find some material for reflection on this subject in comments made by Ilan Halevi, permanent PLO representative to the Socialist International: "My generation," he wrote, "was cradled with the idea of 'just war'. And I still think that when violence is defensive, it is fundamentally legitimate even if it is armed. Legitimate, but not necessarily desirable, nor preferable to other forms of resistance. Besides, it is the original meaning of the Arabic word *djihad*, which is not, as it is very often translated, the sacred war, but the effort, and whose legitimacy depends, for Islamic law, on its defensive characteristic. It is, classically, the case of resistance to occupation, or to tyranny, etc." I. Halevi further notes a growing refusal of any violence at all in the contemporary conscience: "There is, in this refusal, a true cultural revolution [...] We have all been, at various degrees, shaped by the idea of just war, of legitimate revenge, of State murder. However, with the last logical repercussions of the abolition of

the death penalty and of the renunciation of State murder as a foundation for any social order, there was a definite delegitimation of war as a legitimate resort. In fact, if it is no longer justified to kill the bad and even the monsters, one by one, it would seem that killing them in masses is also not justifiable, and even less so when the people concerned are simple forced conscripts in "enemy" armies, without mentioning civilians whose life and goods are supposed to be protected by international law and particularly by the humanitarian law of war" [Halevi, 2003, p. 62 et 63].

II.3. It is not so sure that democracies do not or cannot make war against each other

However, there is something apparently irrefutable in the arguments that we have just examined: if it is true that democracies do not make war against each other, if we consider that peace is the most desirable of all good things, then we must transform the largest number possible of political regimes into democracies and, for the rest, tolerate the peaceful non-democratic regimes and fight those that are not clearly peaceful. This tempting reasoning is however too simplistic. Its starting point, the axiom that democracies do not make war against each other, is in fact much less certain than it first seems.

There is democratic imperialism and democratic militarism.

If democracies do not make war against each other, this does not mean that they are necessarily peaceful and peace building in their relations with the non-democratic world. As we have seen, Kant did not think that at all. As for Tocqueville, he asserts that democratic peoples naturally want peace, but adds that "the democratic armies [naturally want] war" [1961, p.270]. Then, what about democratic societies in which the army, because of big

industrial interests, occupies a predominant position?¹¹ Anyway, it is difficult to forget that Athens, the prototype of all democratic regimes, was at the head of an empire which paid it tribute, and that it relied on the work of foreigners (and women) to fund the participation of free citizens in politics. It should also not be forgotten that the history of modern Western democracies begins with the history of colonial conquests, that these conquests were carried out in a manner that was all but peaceful and that the number of their victims was as high as that of the victims of totalitarianisms [cf. Ferro, 2003; Davis, 2003].

The assertion that democracies do not make war with each other is considerably weakened also by observing the more or less discreet role played by the former colonial powers (France and the United Kingdom) or the United States in the internal political affairs of many countries around the world. And this role does not always respect the rules of electoral democracy...

In more general terms, the above mentioned count undertaken by experts only reports five cases of war between democracies; this is much debatable because only direct and obvious armed interventions are taken into account and nothing is said about the actions through which colonial or imperial democratic powers intervened in order to destabilize democratic regimes that were not in conformity with the *desiderata* of the dominating democracies. The most spectacular case is undoubtedly that of the action undertaken by the US State Department and the CIA in order to overthrow

11. We know of the famous denunciation of the military-industrial lobby presented by President Eisenhower as he was leaving office. He denounced it as being the main danger for American democracy. In 1981, the US military expenses were 322 365 million dollars, those of the European Union 149 424, those of Russia 63 684, of China 46 849 and Japan 39 513 [De Beer, 2003].

Salvador Allende's regime in Chili, about which we are now well informed after the publication of the National Security archives by George Washington University. In the aftermath of the election of Salvador Allende, in 1970, Henry Kissinger ordered a coup. One month later, Thomas Karamessines, assistant director of the CIA, wrote to the CIA Santiago unit: "It is our firm and persisting policy to overthrow Allende [...]. It is necessary that such actions be accomplished in a clandestine way so that the hand of the United States can be well concealed" [Patrice de Beer, *Le Monde* 30 November 1998]. It is important to remember that it was the electoral and democratic success of the UP, S. Allende's party, at the legislative elections of March 1973 (43,39% of the votes, a true vote of confidence) that persuaded the CIA and those involved in the putsch to forget about the possibility of a "legal coup d'État" and pass to open military action.

There was also a coup organized by the British in August 1953 to overthrow the Government of Mohammed Mossadegh in Iran that was standing in the way of their oil interests. Or more recently, there was an attempt to overthrow President Chavez in Venezuela (whatever our opinion about him may be). As for France, the close and somewhat secretive intermingling of the electoral funds of some political parties with the private funds of many African dictators is not exactly a good example of defending democracy at any price.

So we can conclude that if, until now, liberal democracies have not made war against each other – except for severe commercial wars sometimes – they do not hesitate to resort to war against emerging democracies if these seem to be turning against the former's immediate interests. And for good measure, let's add that even though the majority of experts may believe the theory that stable democracies are peaceful towards each other, not everyone accepts this point of view.

On completing a very learned study, Harald Müller concluded that a minority deems the statistical data to be non-significant or questionable (Layne, Elman), or only of minor significance (Rummel, Oneal/Russett), not to mention those who think that the democratization of democracies is not far enough advanced for us to be sure of much at all (Czempiel) [Müller, 2003, p.22].

Correlation is not causality.

Even if it proved to be true that established democracies hardly fought wars against each other, we would still need to know whether this is so because they are democratic. It is possible to doubt this given that the absence of war is not the exclusive particularity of liberal democratic entities. The economist Jurgen Brauer of Augusta State University notes in this regard that "the Asian Regional Forum, the ASEAN branch that deals with common security, has obtained rather good results. The number of conflicts between its members since World War II has been very low, even nil in fact" [Brauer, 2003, p. 99-100]. Likewise, the political scientist Martin Shaw answers in the negative the question about whether democracies did not make war because they are democratic: "Democracies in this era did not fight each other. But this was hardly *because* they were democracies. Rather, they did not fight and were democracies for a common set of reasons: their mutual subordination to the major victor of the war (America) and their common rivalry with the Soviet bloc. As the Cold War period lasted for over forty years, Western-bloc integration developed apace, encompassing many sorts of economic and political as well as military institutionalization, so that war between the component nation-states became less and less likely. Again, while democracy was

a factor in institutionalizing this integration, it was hardly the principal independent reason for it" [Martin Shaw, 2000]. Above we noted the following observation made by the political scientist of the UNESCO panel on democracy, Bruce Russett: "Looked at together, pairs of States that are democratic, very interdependent and very much tied together by IGOs have been less than one-fifth as likely to get into even low-level military conflicts with each other as States which are neither democratic nor interdependent nor members of the same IGOs." [cf. Boutros-Ghali, 2002, p.147]. We might ask ourselves whether, of these three peace factors, democracy really constitutes the prevailing factor.

Hence we should ask ourselves also whether democracy is an intrinsically peaceful political regime and coextensive with peace or not.¹²

This is the question we have to tackle now in order to ask a third one: is democratization necessarily or potentially peace-making? Or is introducing or imposing the norms of liberal democracy a good way to go from war to peace?

12. When we see the current acrimony of the United States vis-à-vis the questioning of its policy by other nations, including democratic nations, and that a part of its press can write "after Iraq, France" we wonder about the peaceful virtues of liberal democracies acceding to a position of hyper-power.

||| IS DEMOCRACY INTRINSICALLY PACIFIST?

The doctrine of democratic security considers that if democracy is desirable, if it should be extended as much as possible throughout the world, it is first because it guarantees peace and security, the best proof of this being that "democracies do not make war against each other". The preceding exposition made us seriously moderate this thesis. So, it is a question of knowing whether it is because democracy is what it is that it can lead to peace, or whether it is because it promotes the emergence of situations or feelings that are intrinsically peacemaking, such as the sense of justice, tolerance, love of the public good or material prosperity.

In order to continue this discussion, it is no doubt useful to remember how Plato characterized justice in *The Republic*, the "all-time most influential" work of political philosophy, and not only in Europe, according to philosopher Léo Strauss. Plato sees justice as a state in which the city is at peace because everybody has the feeling of getting what he/she is owed and is content with his/her fate by contributing in his/her way to the common property of the city. This leads to a number of partly interdependent questions: Does democracy guarantee peace by achieving justice? Does it ensure that everyone receives what is owed to him/her by providing everyone with material prosperity? Do justice and material well-being provide the mediations and necessary conditions between democracy and peace? And finally, does democracy suffice to build a city – or the political community – and to promote its unity?

III.1. Democracy, justice and conflict

It is clear that no democracy can survive if the citizens who claim it do not feel that it provides them with justice. More precisely and more concretely, as was stressed by Roger Badinter and B. Boutros-Ghali in the UNESCO panel on "Democracy and Development", there is no possible democracy without rule (and a State) of Law, and without solid judiciary institutions. And there is no doubt that the existence of strong values and democratic claims is today one of the conditions for the reinforcement of the judiciary institution and the respect of its decisions – take, for instance, Italy and its popular movement *mane pulite* that contributed to a certain streamlining of Italian justice. But, inversely, this does not mean *a priori* that democratic decisions are always and by definition just.

It is noteworthy that the prevailing political philosophy of the last thirty years, since John Rawls' *Theory of Justice*, does not appear explicitly as a reflection on democracy but on justice, and that the links between the two remain deeply uncertain. Certainly, as is demonstrated by Ronald Dworkin, one of the theoreticians in this field, author of *Taking Rights Seriously*, there is no plausible political theory today that does not consider equality as the ultimate value and that does not consider in principle that every person has as much importance as another person and should be treated with equal consideration. In the words of Will Kymlicka [1995, p.5], what makes the difference between theories of justice is not knowing whether or not we should accept equality, but how to interpret it.

So we can easily agree on acknowledging that all contemporary theories of justice are located within the symbolic space of democratic revolution and take for granted the absolute legitimacy of the aspiration to equality as underlined by

Tocqueville. The most obvious problem that then arises is not the most difficult one. The obvious problem is that once the imprescriptible value of equality is acknowledged, we not only still have to know how to interpret it, but we then need to consider equality along with the values of freedom and solidarity. Finally we have to ask ourselves whether justice should be conceived in terms of distribution of property that meets people's needs – thinking in terms of "having" – or in terms of acknowledging identities – thinking in terms of "being". The transversal question related to these two aspects of having and being is that of knowing how to defuse envy and jealousy. So there are many questions for theoreticians to practice their talents and to distinguish themselves *ad infinitum*.

But whatever our answer to these questions may be, the most delicate point is still knowing whether decisions taken in a democratic way always tend towards justice. Another eminent philosopher, Philippe Van Parijs, asks whether there is "a pre-established harmony between justice and democracy" [1993, p.142]. His answer is clearly negative: between the two, there are on the contrary "acute conflicts" for reasons that are intuitively easy enough to understand. For instance, if the only question asked is that of maximizing monetary revenue, it would suffice if 51% of the electoral population vote for a party that ensures the quasi totality of the cake and leaves almost nothing to the 49% who are the least privileged. In other words, we can obtain with a perfectly democratic procedure a totally unjust distribution.¹³

Or even – and here we are at the core of the difficulties of democracy in ensuring peace – if a country is divided into two ethnic, religious or cultural communities and each of the members of the two communities votes exclusively and sys-

13. I am simplifying and transposing the more sophisticated line of argument by P. Van Parijs (AC).

tematically for a representative of his/her community, it is a safe bet that, within the framework of a democratic regime, the majority community will clearly get much more than its share in terms of revenue and honorary as well as lucrative positions. Each one of the two communities will have the feeling that the other has done the same thing in the past, or would be doing it if it became a majority community or took power in a *coup*.

This situation is quite generalized throughout the world and explains most of the cases of failure of democratization. The most striking example is undoubtedly that of Israel where, between Jewish and Arab Israelis, doubt, suspicion and grievance are not only about the other community having taken or being able to take by force the major part of power and wealth, but that it aims at or could aim at the pure and simple liquidation of the rival community. In such a situation, the decisions taken by the majority are seen by the latter as perfectly democratic and therefore fully legitimate, while for the minority community they appear to be highly unjust. The situation gets even more complicated when there are not only two communities but a mosaic of communities. The most typical example is probably that of Lebanon where the following communities live together: Muslim (Sunni, Shiite, Druze, Alaouite or Ismaelian), Christian (Maronite, Latin, Syriac, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Armenian Catholic, Assyrian, Nestorian, Chaldean, Copt, Evangelical), and Jewish – just to mention the religious groups that are officially recognized by the Lebanese State. Further, these communities are themselves crossed with political ideologies and varied foreign sympathies (for France, the USA, Iran or Syria mainly). But let us focus on the issue of material inequalities and injustices. When we observe that after thirty years (since the theories of

justice started flourishing), the difference in income between the one hundred best remunerated American executives and their ordinary employees passed, according to economist Paul Krugman [2003], from 39 to 1 to around 1000 to 1, we see that this difference has increased by 25 times (with a less dramatic but similar evolution in Europe and, more generally, worldwide). We think that such a phenomenon, linked to what could be called the Van Parijs theorem (democracy tends (can tend) to democratically generate injustice), strongly contributes to democratically transforming the Western democracies into oligarchies. Are oligarchic democracies still democracies? There are doubts about this.¹⁴ In a small book that caused quite a stir in the USA at the beginning of the intervention in Iraq, the novelist Norman Mailer wrote: "Nobody, as far as I know, has ever stated that an authentic democratic system allowed the richer to gain a thousand times more than the poorer." [Mailer, 2003, p. 101].

We thus feel that it is unfortunately possible to go democratically and gradually from justice to injustice, from democracy to oligarchy and finally, from oligarchy to denial of democracy. P. Van Parijs, for his part, concluded that, if we have to choose between justice and democracy, the choice is clear: "Let us keep the goal of justice and let's sacrifice democracy". This answer, which Van Parijs himself considers as certainly too brutal, is in line with the thinking of all those who, from Schumpeter to Hayek, feel that, to quote Schumpeter "democracy is a political method [...] but cannot be an end in itself independent from the decisions it will generate". It would not be intrinsically desirable.

To us, this conclusion seems too dry and dangerous. Let us rather say that democracy leads to justice and is valid only as

14. and to doubt of the capacity of those oligarchies to spread democracy in the world.

long as it maintains an open debate on the norms of justice, that this debate is spread in and around many public spaces and across the many layers of public opinion, and is not limited to professionals in the Parliament or Ministries. The main corollary of this conclusion is that democracy presupposes debate and that debate presupposes a battle, a conflict between opposing political choices.

Let us be well aware of all of the implications of this point which at first may seem paradoxical, but is essential to democracy. Democracy can only play a peacemaking role if it includes and contains (in the two meanings of the word) conflict: when it allows the expression of agonistic passions through which each one asserts his/her identity, as well as the claim to legitimately define what is just.¹⁵ Just like the archaic offering, which substitutes war of all against all with a war of generosity and splendor, thus transforming enemies into allies [Caillé 2000], democracy creates peace as long as it substitutes declared or latent civil war with general rivalry that will contribute to democracy. To set rules and provide a stage for conflict, and not its suppression or denial, is vital for democracy. Extremisms emerge from repression or denial of conflict. And when competition is no longer a matter of rivalry and imposing a particular notion of democracy, but instead, one of fighting so as to take advantage of it or destroy it. Hence, the decisive political

15. It is namely the thesis that is defended by the philosopher Chantal Mouffe [Mouffe, 2000]. In a recent text ('La "fin du politique" et le défi du populisme de droite', *La Revue du MAUSS semestrielle* n° 20, 'Quelle "autre mondialisation"?', 2002), she shows how the rise of the extreme right wing in Europe can be interpreted as the result of a growing denial of conflictuality that is inherent to any social and political relation. In order to avoid that conflict leads to irreducible antagonism, we should never try to abolish it or to suppress it. On the contrary, it has to enjoy a space of expression that makes it bearable.

question is knowing to what extent conflictuality can be accepted without endangering the contradictory unity of the political community. Economic mediation is one of the main keys for answering this question.

III.2. Democracy and development

Does democracy lead to economic development? Is it the first condition for development? The UNESCO panel devoted to this issue answered these questions without any ambiguity. B. Boutros-Ghali [2002, p.280-281] summarizes as follows: "All the Panel members agreed that there is a close relationship between democracy and development, and that human rights are an essential component of democracy. (...) In the view of the Panel as a whole, justice is the catalyst between democracy and development. There can be no democracy without justice, and no sustainable development without justice." This conclusion is increasingly accepted today and questions "the Washington consensus" which imposed on the IMF that it concentrate on macro-economic variables without worrying about the political institutions of the countries in crisis. For the Americans, so influential in the IMF, the dogma was, and still is, essentially that democracy will result from economic development and that for this reason the latter should be promoted above all else; democracy, in short, will follow.

However, this does not seem to be the case. Based on 2001 data covering 192 countries, the American NGO Freedom House considers that 85 of these countries are free (41% of the earth population, i.e. 2.5 billion people), 59 are "partly free" (24%, or 1.46 billion people) and 48 are "not free" (35%, or 2.17 billion people, including all of the Middle East except for Israel which is classified as "free", and Kuwait and Jordan

which are classified as "partly free"). For this NGO, the population of "not free" countries has increased in absolute terms since 1990. Likewise, Daniel Kaufmann, director of the World Bank Institute, stated that there has been "a stagnation of democracy since five or six years [cf. Eric Le Boucher, *Le Monde* of 20-21 April 2003, p.22], concluding that the IMF's reasoning and the Washington consensus should be reversed. It is not development that produces democracy, on the contrary: "Analysis suggests," he writes, "that good governance has a large effect on development".

But what is "good governance"? During the UNESCO panel, the vice-president of the Chinese National Council, Guo Jiading, put a damper on B. Boutros-Ghali's opinion: "Western experts maintain that democracy and political freedom pave the way for economic development, whereas experts from many developing countries believe that economic progress and social stability play a crucial role in the attainment of civil and political rights. [p.233]. We can understand him... It is clear that the current high growth rates of China or Vietnam are not correlated with an excessive opening up to democracy. And the four Asian dragons also have not developed in perfect conformity with the norms of democracy prevailing in the West. We lack global studies that would allow us to draw clear conclusions on these issues. So we should avoid affirming an abstract norm of good democratic governance just as much as we should avoid the opposite and older dogma of the IMF. The crucial question is knowing what degree of democracy can be reached under conditions of bearable debt rate and budget deficit. As is the case in medicine, all depends on appreciation, dosage, good timing, and on the constitution of the subject...

On this point, we can find important food for thought in *Kicking away the ladder* [2000] by Ha-Joon Chang, lecturer at Cambridge [see also Ha-Joon Chang, 2003]. This has shed doubt on economicist and financial recommendations of the IMF, as well as on what we could call the excessive democratization that seems to be developing today. *Kicking away the ladder* is what developed Western countries do by imposing on less developed countries, in the name of neoliberal economic science, norms of free-trade openness and economic policy that they never respected themselves. Watching this, Renato Ruggiero, the first Director-General of the WTO, wrote that from now on we can "eradicate poverty in the world as soon as the early next century [the twenty-first century] – a utopia just a few decades ago, but a real possibility today" [Ha-Joon Chang, 2000, p.63]. However, none of the developed countries has truly developed on the basis of liberalism and free-trade. It is only *after* having ensured its industrial supremacy and conquered solid competitive advantages that England came around to free-trade and worked on converting others to it. "Between 1816 and the end of World War II, the United States practiced one of the highest average customs rates in the world" [ibid., p.68]. As for the economic and political institutions that we want the less developed countries to adopt, these developed only very slowly in the West. For instance, "until the beginning of the twentieth century, countries such as Sweden, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and the United States did not have a central bank". We know how long it took to establish universal suffrage and create institutions for social security or employment protection... Ha-Joon Chang concludes by saying that it is not realistic to demand, as is done today, that developing countries create institutions that are in conformity with international standards "without any delay or after a very

short transition of five to ten years". By inducing developing countries to do so, the advanced countries are indeed "kicking away the ladder" that they had used themselves to climb up on and are now preventing the others from climbing up behind them.

This is fully (and dramatically) confirmed by a recent editorial in the *International Herald Tribune* (published by the *New York Times*) [21 July 2003, p. 6]. Under the title "Trade rigged against the poor", the (anonymous) editorialist develops comments that we would expect to hear at the Social Forum of Porto Alegre rather than see in a leading newspaper of the American elites. This is an account of the dramatic fate that Philippine farmers have suffered since the Philippines joined the WTO, passing from a slight agricultural surplus to a massive deficit. The editorialist writes that these people found out that their American or European competitors did not only have better seeds, superior fertilizers or equipment. They also have the advantage of high customs tariffs as well as massive subsidies that make their products artificially cheap. African cotton producers must struggle against the three billion dollars that are paid annually to their American competitors and the sugar producers face the huge European subsidies that are paid to beet growers. The American, European and Japanese subsidies given to their respective small farmers are about one billion dollars per day (320 billion dollars per year). A sum compared to which the 50 billion dollars of annual development assistance pale into insignificance. Furthermore, according to the IMF, a one point increase in the African share of world exportations would yield 70 billion dollars, 5 times the global amount of "assistance" Africa gets.

In conclusion, this editorialist clearly agrees with Ha-Joon Chang: "By rigging the global trade game against farmers in

developing nations, Europe, the United States and Japan are essentially kicking the development ladder out from under some of the world's most desperate people. This is morally depraved. America's actions are harvesting poverty around the world." And the editorialist concludes by saying: "The glaring credibility gap dividing the developed world's free trade talk from its market-distorting actions on agriculture cannot be allowed to continue [...] The rigged game is sowing ever-greater resentment toward the United States, the principal architect of the global economic order. Somehow, we Americans expect the nations to take our claims to stand for democracy and freedom more seriously than they must take our insincere free-trade rhetoric."

What is true about economy is undoubtedly also true about the norms of free democracy. Certainly, once democracy has been established and the economy stabilized, a circular and virtuous relationship between market and democracy develops. A study indicates that "no democratic country with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita exceeding 6000 dollars has ever returned to a regime of dictatorship" [cf. Przeworski, Alvarez, 1996, quoted in Blin, 2001, p.52]. But what holds true for stable markets and settled democracies does not necessarily for developing economies and new, hesitant democracies. But how do we accede to the state of sustainable democracy capable of sustainable development?¹⁶

16. We are only indicating some possible areas for reflection. In order to tackle all the problems mentioned here in their entirety, we should resituate the discussion within the more general *framework* of the debate on links between capitalism and democracy. Is the first the condition for the second, as most theoreticians of the "democratic transition" think, or is the second a prelude for the establishment of sustainable and reproducible capitalism?

III. 3. The problem of democratic unity

Prisoners of our time, adopting as evident the thinking that is in vogue, we are not aware of the extraordinary mutation that speeches on democracy and on politics has undergone over the last two or three decades. No matter how striking this may be, we have not even noticed it, yet. The only questions asked are whether a country practices free elections or not and whether it respects human rights. And while this is a very crucial issue, it is far from being the only one.

We need to remember the basic and founding theories of democracy (or the republic) which used notions that are apparently obsolete today and that raise questions which now seem strange. They intended to root "power" in "peoples" organized in the form of "nations", and they wondered who would be the "sovereign" of the political choices and how to ensure sovereignty of the nation. The contemporary analytical-style and Anglo-Saxon inspired political philosophy avoid such synthetic notions which are considered as obscure and dangerous, loaded with uncontrollable communitarist passions.

But the problem is that we cannot get rid of human passions and, furthermore, that we should not do so. First, if no one were to get passionate about the democratic cause anymore, its chances of survival would be feeble. Second, and more deeply, before answering the question of whether a population, a people, a culture, a country can or must be democratic, these entities first need to exist and be able to think, express and represent their unity. This explains the emotional content of all politics. Before being able to say "we are democrats, our country is or must be democratic", it is necessary to build this "we" and to

answer the questions of what and who define it: Is it a tradition? a religion? a culture? an ethnic origin? an institutional or constitutional choice? a political ideology? a mixture of all this? The question of "power" and sovereignty is that of knowing who has the practical possibility and the legitimate capacity to answer these questions, and to define this "we" in contrast with and in opposition to a "they".

The choice of democracy is the choice that consists of leaving the answers to these questions open by organizing a non violent struggle between the holders of the various possible options, subject to the condition that the winners agree to stake their victory at the next election and that the defeated accept in return to acknowledge their temporary defeat. The least we can say is that such a choice is anything but obvious.

The risk is indeed always present and the rational and empirical possibility always envisaged that the winner may monopolize power in order to avoid calling into question his victory and putting it into play. The choice of democratic alternation would even be practically impossible and unconceivable if we had to believe in the logical parable that has been at the core of economic, sociological and political theory these last thirty years, the famous prisoner's dilemma, and that has generated an almost infinite amount of scientific literature since its formulation by Buchanan.

Let us recall the parable. A rational judge, accepting the hypothesis that the two suspects he is trying to condemn are purely rational individuals in the sense of economic theory – i.e. that both are seeking to optimize their own satisfaction without any consideration for others to whom they are indifferent – places these suspects in a situation

where they cannot communicate nor confer with each other, and proposes to each of the two accused the following deal:

- if you denounce your accomplice (and if he denounces you on his part), you will be sentenced to four years imprisonment;
- if you do not denounce him and he denounces you, he will be free but you will get eight years (and vice versa);
- if none of you denounces the other, you will get each one year imprisonment.

It is clear that the best solution for the two accused, the solution described as "cooperative", the one that could be also considered as a reasonable solution, is the third one, which limits the damage to one year imprisonment for each. This reasonable solution is however forbidden hypothetically for rational persons who suppose that the others are also "rational" because in this case each one of the two accused must necessarily think that the other, since he is rational (i.e. he only thinks about his own interest) will see more profit in "betraying" than in "cooperating" since, if he betrays while the first one is "cooperating", he will be free. Each one of the two suspects, being rational and anticipating the other's rationality, will thus rationally have to bet that the other will betray and protect himself from this betrayal. Therefore, each one will betray the other, and thus each will do four years whereas if they were more cooperative and less "rational", they would spare themselves three years of imprisonment each.

We see it clearly: the strict calculation of the rational interest must include mistrust; but by including mistrust, it reproduces it and imprisons the actors in the

vicious circle of distrust and generalized suspicion, thus forbidding them from benefiting from the obvious advantages they would get by cooperating. Once trapped in suspicious rationality, it becomes impossible to enter into a logic of the reasonable. In order to get out of this devastating vicious circle one has to bet on the humanity of the other and on his capacity to do likewise, and enter the realm of alliance and the reasonable.¹⁷

The situation described above is very close to the logic of the archaic gift (or offering), as analyzed by Marcel Mauss in his famous essay (*The Gift. Forms and functions of exchange in archaic societies*) revealing the profound logic and structure of archaic societies. This concerns the time of what may be called the primitive social scene, in short the crucial moment when two tribes, two clans, two already formed communities (incapable or no longer able to purely and simply ignore each other) have only one alternative: "To distrust or to absolutely trust". The first gift – apparently made without anything asked in return – this gesture, this step forward made towards the other to get out of hostility, is the expression of a bet on confidence. If the two parties make the choice of confidence, everybody will be a winner. The gift will be returned, and beyond that even enemies will become allies capable of cooperating.

But what if this is not done? What if divisions and conflict overcome the wish for alliance, what if mistrust of all

17. The dilemma of the prisoner describes a still too optimistic and idyllic situation in the sense that it assumes that every prisoner (or, in more general terms, every actor) knows very well what his own interests are and those of the others. The true conflictual situation is that in which conflict does not happen between agents, but between interests or variable motivations with the same individual or in the same institution [Dembinski, 2003, p. 3]. *Here*, the worst is always possible, including the pure and simple destruction of the actors. But it is also in this situation of generalized uncertainty that the best can happen, going as far as reaching reconciliation and peace between the actors.

towards all prevails, and there is a struggle for the monopoly of power so that others do not do the same, what if this remains the only social link? Then, of course – let us transpose now – the choice of democracy will seem impossible since nobody believes in it enough, and the only way to avoid war of all against all, and general chaos, will be the common subordination to an overarching power known to be intangible and indisputable. This is, as we all know, Hobbes' solution: getting out of conflict not through democracy but through common subordination to absolute despotism.

In order for democracy to happen and develop, there has to be a "people", in other words a group of individuals, families, communities, who consider that what they have in common is more powerful than what divides them and that they can consequently mutually express a trust that is superior to the distrust that remains. A same shared aspiration to democracy can be a powerful ferment of this unity. But it is doubtful that this will suffice if the various groups or communities that form a society do not see themselves sharing a tradition and common cultural references allowing them to overcome primary distrust.¹⁸

18. Although we might have some regrets about this, it is thus obvious that the Jews and the Arabs will never constitute *one* Israeli people. This fact, which is the cause for many tragedies in the Middle East, can also become a factor of peace if everybody accepts to look at it and face it. Yossi Beilin, a former minister in the governments of Rabin, Peres and Barak, explains that one of the main motivations of Ariel Sharon for establishing at least an *ersatz* Palestinian State is that by extending current demographic trends, and if Israel keeps the West Bank, in seven years the Palestinians will outnumber the Jews [Beilin, 2003]. According to the academic Tanya Reinhart, who since 1994 writes a fortnightly chronicle in *Yediot Aharonot*, the most widely distributed Israeli newspaper [Reinhart, 2002], the whole question is knowing whether this Palestinian State will enjoy enough coherence and autonomy or whether it will be made up of unmanageable parcels and pieces conforming to what has been the constant policy of Israeli governments — long before Ariel Sharon.

Building democratic peoples took centuries in Europe and it followed extraordinarily complicated, contradictory and ambiguous paths. Even a quick look at the map of current conflicts is sufficient for us to be convinced that conflicts explode when and wherever communities that are not unified by the same tradition are compelled to coexist in the same space, under the same power and according to the same rules; they are unable to acknowledge primary unity and their primary reflex is that of mutual distrust.

More specifically, in these countries it can be frequently seen that power is held and monopolized by the representatives of minority communities who consider that they have much reason to be afraid of free elections. That was the case in Iraq, where the Sunni community was afraid of being submerged by the far more numerous Shi'ites, or, as is the case in Syria, where power was in part appropriated by the small Alawite community. Their role is therefore ambiguous. These powers are dictatorial, tyrannical and sometimes bloody. But they are not as easily rejected and condemned by their populations as we might think because they also represent and maintain the tendency towards the unobtainable unity of the population and the nation, thus preventing, with many particular forms of violence, the explosion of general violence.¹⁹ Wars, conflicts, massacres occur when this type of

19. We previously saw how in the Arab-Muslim world, they manage, at various degrees, to preserve a certain pluralism. Daniel Brumberg [2003] shows that the latter constitutes the basis of their domination since by manipulating different groups against each other they keep themselves in power. The more this pluralism fails, the weaker will be their power.

power has difficulties in establishing or maintaining itself, thereby making war of all against all again possible. Is installing or imposing a democratic constitutional regime the good solution for getting out of this type of conflict and war?

IV DOES DEMOCRACY MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO AVOID WAR?

If democracy had to rely solely on the rational calculation made by *Homo economicus* type individuals, seeking to optimize the satisfaction of their interests as separate and mutually indifferent individuals, democracy would be impossible. These rational individuals can, hypothetically, only live in general mistrust of each other since each one has rationally to suspect the others of being like himself, and thinking only about his own interests and therefore ready to cheat or betray on any occasion. If there have been, there are or there can be political regimes that really resemble democracies, without being reserved for "a people of gods" as Rousseau used to say about democracy, it is because commitment to democracy relies on factors other than the sole calculation of interest [Chantal, 2000]. But on what else? What can be mobilized in its favour?

IV. 1. The question of democratic political culture

All this could be expressed by one of the main notions used in political science and political sociology over the last thirty years: the notion of "political culture" (civic culture), which can be understood to mean, according to R. Koselleck [1990; 1997, quoted in Cefai, 2000], "fields of experience where horizons of expectations and memory appear".²⁰ "Activities

20. Introduced into scholarly debate by Almond G. Verba with *The Civic Culture* [1963]. For outcomes of the use of this notion see also in A.G. Verba [1980].

and interactions that take place there," as Daniel Cefai has commented, contribute to the creation of new social situations. They are shaped by a re-articulation of territories and memories, of organizations and milieus, and also of reference points and the schemes of knowledge or the action frames of reference required for finding one's way and intervene in a coherent and relevant way. Political cultures emerge and are transformed in these temporal contexts". In other words, parliamentary democracy is bound to remain, at best, formal and superficial if it is not supported by a democratic political culture.

Sociologist Robert Putman considers that there will be no democracy and no economic development if there is no strong "social capital", that is to say, a whole set of relations of trust between the members of a society that permit them to devote themselves to the good of the enterprise or the nation instead of remaining prisoners of "amoral familism" which is seen by ethnologist R. Banfield as peculiar to the culture of the south of Italy (and by extension to the Mediterranean world, the world of Islam, etc.) and which considers that the only moral rule consists of sacrificing everything to the interests of the family or the clan. Where familism, clanism or amoral tribalism prevail, at best there will be economic stagnation and a state of endemic corruption, and at worst there will be instability of the whole society, the outburst of conflict and massacres.

These analyses give much to think about. But it is important not to reify the notion of political culture and also to avoid establishing too strong oppositions between some cultures that are imagined to be made of one block, massively and as if by essence turned towards economic development and democracy, while others are fully turned towards misery and

despotism.²¹ We have already seen that, first of all, democracy is not one but plural, and that it only finds its relative unity by incorporating many diverse aspects that are not always coherent with each other. But, on a deeper level, we could support the idea that, just as each cell contains the whole genetic code but only activates some genes depending on its localization, each cultural code contains (in terms of potentialities) all the possible choices of humanity even if, depending on the historical trajectories that are followed, only some potentialities are privileged at a specific time and a specific place in the history and geography of a cultural universe.

But sometimes it can take little to deflect trajectories. Is there a major religion that in principle is more anti-equality and democracy than Hinduism which is tightly linked to the cast system? None, of course; but how can we explain that it does not accommodate itself that badly with liberal democracy – to the extent that India can be said to be the biggest democracy in the world? This may be explained by observing that some aspects of Hinduism, such as subordination of the temporal and power to the spiritual, or the generalization of possibilities to accede to salvation, are much more "democratic" than we would say at first sight. Muslim countries hardly know liberal democracy, but one might ask whether one of the reasons

21. The famous thesis by Samuel Huntington on the clash of civilizations is all founded on this type of reification of the notion of culture. Good criticism of this thesis is provided by Amartya Sen [2003], Nobel Prize winner in economics, who is of Indian origin and refuses to "put people in rigid boxes" [p.21], and concludes by saying that there is a need to acknowledge the plurality of our identities and that "our responsibility as human beings asks us to 'choose'" (and not only to 'discover') which priorities to give to our associations and various affiliations" [p.27]. Whereas Ghassan Tuéni, Lebanese, former Minister and journalist, pertinently writes: "Let's stop calling it 'clash of civilizations' when to everyone it is clearly 'barbaric fighting'" [Tuéni, p.57].

for this is a too strong attachment to patrimonial, tribal and distinctive forms of democracy. It was also patriarchal, which does not make things any easier. For these reasons – because even the most authoritarian and hierarchical regimes or cultures are sustained also by democratic components -- it is not unreasonable to bet on a triumph of democracy in the long run, made possible after internal evolutions have taken place. But the foremost question here today is whether democracy can be imposed from the outside, by the UN or by democratic countries, and whether its establishment can then contribute to the establishment of peace.

IV.2. Democratic legitimacy and sustainable peace

We lack studies that would allow us to make a global evaluation of the impact of UN interventions aimed at establishing democracy among former belligerents. However, the available data do not permit us to be very optimistic. The Security Council resolution 1244 that established in June 1999 a protectorate in Kosovo set forth “a long process for the restoration of peace, the establishment of democracy and a return to stability”. In an article published by the *Le Monde* newspaper (3 May 2003) under the title “*Au Kosovo une réalité chagrine*” (Sad reality in Kosovo), the journalist Françoise Lazare draws a somewhat discouraging assessment of the UN presence that mobilized up to 40,000 men from 37 nationalities, within the military intervention of NATO. She states: “The idea of ethnic diversity is slowly fading, the region is becoming an ideal place for the extension of mafia-like practices and Kosovo is becoming one of the main centres of international prostitution”. The UN administrator, Mr Steiner,

describes his protectorate as follows: “a legal grey zone. No investments. No jobs. No future”. As far as we know, the situation in Afghanistan is hardly any better.²²

This is due to the fact that the conditions for success are particularly difficult to bring together. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, UN Deputy Secretary-General in charge of the department of peace-keeping operations writes: “To consolidate a legitimate State, it is necessary that this State be accepted by the citizens of this country, the region and the world.” It is also necessary at the end of “meetings that are sometimes endless, to forge an idea about those who will really make a difference”, and “the support of all neighbouring countries” is very important. It is also necessary to establish a state of law and to develop the security forces and the judicial system. Moreover, Jean-Marie Guéhenno states “a whole process of local ownership is needed [...] to make sure that the action of the international community will not take the responsibility from those who will live with this decision”.²³ Obviously this situation is not an easy one. That is mainly because the institutional structure of the UN and the major agencies of world governance, organized according to an interstate logic, seems to be increasingly inappropriate for facing conflicts that are taking place on a scale other than that of nation-States, or when conflicts arise from the latter’s decomposition or from the impossibility that they be reborn and reconstitute themselves.

22. In Bunia, located in the east of Congo-Kinsasha, the retreat of Uganda, solicited by the UN, has already led to the death of thousands. There is apprehension about an extermination war between the Hemea and Lendu ethnic groups. It seems that the UN Observance Mission (Monuc) will have difficulty containing this war. (Cf. *Le Monde*, 16 May 2003, p.4). The later dispatching of UN troops, primarily French, seems far from sufficient to bring a long-term solution.

23. *Le Monde*, 9 May 2003, p.3. Interview conducted by Corine Lesne.

One of the main reasons for the partial failure of the UN to maintain peace and contain the universal explosion of violence throughout the world lies in the fact that its doctrine was established within the framework of the conception that wars emerge between States and that it is thus necessary to interfere at the interface of these States to avoid the eruption of the conflict and its development. However, notes Jean-Louis Dufour (UNESCO, 1997a, p.36), if before 1939 four conflicts out of five were in effect between States, "since 1945, four conflicts out of five have been internal, most of the time complicated by foreign interventions", which radically changes the nature of the general situation of conflict.

Based on the relative inefficiency of UN interventions, we could plead for the support of more powerful actions allowing the association of power with legitimacy. This would legitimize the Allied intervention in Iraq and would show that the disrepute of the United Nations brought about by the present American administration was well founded. However, one should not think that the final result will be much better than the one achieved in Kosovo and Afghanistan since the occupying force is not ready to remain in the field much longer than UN soldiers. In addition, the occupying force seems to have had some idea about what it did not want but no clear idea about the concrete regime that might emerge from the chaos generated by the war. It is obvious here that the intervention falls within the framework of a more general project aimed at reorganizing the geo-strategic balance in the Middle East. The least we can say is that the project has not been clearly described and is not the object of a local or international consensus. The project has therefore little chance of mobilizing enthusiastic energies in favour of liberal democracy.

IV.3. About the Anglo-American intervention in Iraq and the temptation to impose democracy from outside and to ensure peace through war

It is instead the exact contrary, it is the total and dramatic failure of the allied intervention in Iraq that is to be feared, and this is what we wrote in May 2003. When rereading these lines and completing them, it seems to us that our prediction, although very pessimistic, was not enough so. There was already cause for thinking that the pretext presented by the American and British governments, the existence of weapons of mass destruction dissimulated in Iraq, was just a simple "bureaucratic means" for obtaining the approval of the American Congress and the British House of Commons, if that of the UN Security Council could not be obtained, as was later acknowledged by the influential advisor to the White House Paul Wolfowitz. But we could think and hope that the justification given was made with good intentions, that the Allies took their speech about defending democracy seriously and that beyond the case of Iraq, we were going to witness a major attempt to indeed introduce democracy in the whole Near-East and to find, at the same time, an effective solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which is undermining the region and dramatically crystallizing the ambivalence of relations between the Christian West and Muslim countries and the terrible dangers this poses to the world.

In truth, for many of the reasons that we have already suggested, it was difficult to give much chance of success to such a project. But, after all, the worst is never completely sure, and nobody could exclude the fact that if the Allies had deeply believed in their own proclamations, if they had declared themselves ready to ensure both a massive and sustainable presence and investments (and not only for financial and oil

interests) in the region, if they had succeeded in quickly organizing free and meaningful elections, if the United States had known, following the same objective, how to show sufficient firmness *vis-à-vis* Israel so that the peoples of the region would not be tempted to conclude that, once again, in this conflict the United States was using a double standard, in that case, evolutions that at the beginning might otherwise appear unlikely could have taken place and changed the face of the world. If this had been the case, if a revival of enthusiasm for democracy had prevailed in the Middle East, if in the name of human rights and freedom, considerable energy had been freed, determined to struggle against the arbitrary, corruption and State terror, if this climate of trust and enthusiasm had caused a real start of economic dynamism that would permit the eradication of stagnation and poverty, if, finally, a dignified, honourable and definitive solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had been outlined, then the initial justification and the refusal to submit to international legality would have been quickly forgotten and forgiven.²⁴

24. It is obvious for almost the whole world that the *sine qua non* condition for a possible pacification comes through the creation of a viable Palestinian State. Some Jewish intellectuals consider that this creation is useless since there is already a Palestinian State: Jordan (which was Golda Meir's position). This argument is questionable and, anyway, absolutely inadmissible politically. Besides the issue of the status of Jerusalem, which is not necessarily the most insoluble one, the two main bones of contention are on one hand the permanent extension of Israeli settlements that materializes or illustrates, willingly or unwillingly, the will to create a Greater Israel (terrifying project for all the countries of the region), and on the other hand, the Palestinian claim of the right to return which is obviously inadmissible for the Jewish community that cannot live under the threat of a strong Arab-Muslim minority, and even less a majority, constituting itself inside the current borders of Israel. With these two aspects of the problem, the role of the USA is decisive because it alone has sufficient military and financial power for dealing with them simultaneously as they should be. On one hand, at a dissuasive level, each of the two parties has to be obliged to respect the international agreements (no settlements, no attacks) and, in terms of incentive, each could be offered the necessary financial rewards. As is well explained by Richard D. Murphy (*senior fel-*

Peace and Democracy

We have just seen too many *ifs*, we might say. Everything in the hypothetical overview we have just sketched is however not fully improbable *a priori*. It was astonishing to see how in Iran, after Saddam Hussein's fall, some of the highest dignitaries of the regime noticed in a part of Iranian youth a wave of massive infatuation with the USA and thus launched a self-criticism that was as deep as it was surprising, showing regret for not having given more hope to the Iranian people. On that occasion we saw a considerable ambivalence. The West, and more precisely the United States, and liberal democracy as well, are both feared and despised and, at the same time, envied and desired. In such a situation, many things can tip over very quickly and very deeply. Much depends on the gestures that are made, or not made, and on the words that are pronounced or, on the contrary, kept silent.

According to Western experts' talk about democratic security, and the certitude that is hammered in by the Allied leaders, all men (and women) wish democracy; it suffices to give them this opportunity – by freeing them with weapons from their tyrants – and they will all enthusiastically seize it. Yet, with this scenario, we would have expected an important commitment on the part of the Allies to try building demo-

low at the Council on Foreign Relations) and David Mack (vice-president of the Middle East Institute) [Murphy, Mack, 2003], an Israeli survey showed that 80% of the new settlers of the West Bank and Gaza are motivated by strictly economic considerations and by the perspective of better quality and highly-subsidized housing conditions. They would easily accept to be rehoused elsewhere with the same conditions. Symmetrically, one of the most respected analysts in the region, Khalil Shikhami, a perfectly thoughtful nationalist, author of an in-depth study on Palestinian refugees, shows that if the overwhelming majority of them require the acknowledgement in principle by Israel of the right to return, the greatest number are open to pragmatic solutions and ready to accept a financial compensation in exchange for a stable settlement within the borders of a Palestinian State once it has been created, or for emigration. Only a minority considers this perspective to be a betrayal. The Geneva Plan, which offers a glimmer of hope in this conflict, gives shape to these ideas of good sense. The ball is in Washington's court.

cratic institutions in Iraq as soon as possible, just like they had tried to do for a moment in Afghanistan. Wasn't this an ideal showcase, an opportunity for fantastic publicity for liberal democracy and the "American way of life"? So it is particularly disconcerting and discouraging to notice that nothing had been foreseen in this sense, that no serious contacts had been established with credible political forces and no transition leader who was acceptable to the populations had been approached or was available.²⁵ But, in addition, the Allied forces seem incapable of ensuring the minimum that has to be ensured by any power – whether of conquest or domination, and *a fortiori* if it presents itself as a power of liberation and in charge of building democracy – in terms of maintaining basic security, medical care and supplies (in particular water).

Hobbes' absolute sovereign, the one who is chosen by everybody to put an end to the struggle of all against all and to living in permanent fear of death, ensures year in, year out

25. How could we pretend to understand from outside (even with a supposedly efficient secret service) the political complexities of a society that has remained largely impenetrable for decades? At best, we are told that the country is divided into three major confessions - Shiite, Sunnite and Kurd. But groups coming from Sunnite-influenced regions founded the Baath party that was radically secular and atheistic before Saddam Hussein forged an alliance with the patrimonial power of the tribal chiefs. As for the Shiites, who are all supposed to be supportive of Iran, they are divided into four main groups and it is difficult to foresee which ones will be imposing themselves [Cole, 2003]. And we must not forget that a part of the Shiite, also secular themselves, were the spearhead of the Iraqi Communist Party in the fifties [de la Gorce, 2003]. Moreover, contrary to what we might think, Iran may not be in favour of the establishment of an Islamic predominantly Shiite Republic in Iraq [*ibid.*]. Of course, nothing is simple. The only thing that is clear is that for the time being, we see no force showing any project of liberal democracy, and that the only forces that momentarily pretended to have such plans while in the wake of the Americans, are already completely discredited. One should not conceal, in the reverse sense, the big difficulty of Middle East societies in heading towards effective democratization. The nodal point here is undoubtedly the quasi-total absence of autonomy of the intellectual field that is deprived of public space, while the "religious people have their mosque", according to the Syrian academic Hanane Kassab Hassan [2003].

Peace and Democracy

these "primary goods" to those who do not challenge his domination. The democratic hope, that justifies that one should fight for it, is the one that fuels the desire for liberation from despotism by having the function of social regulation be in the hands of not one individual, the omnipresent One with his police, but of all the associated citizens. This democratic hope cannot be reinforced unless it makes it possible to go beyond the stage of despotism by providing, *in addition* to security and material survival, individual and collective freedom. But if, in the name of democracy, this leads to the emergence of no freedom and we fall below what would be allowed by despotism, we jeopardize deeply the democratic idea itself, against which we will see more and more desperate men and women rise up.²⁶ But this is what the Allies seem to be doing, with their incapacity to ensure a water supply for the country, dismantling the police and the army overnight which led to general plundering, and dismissing the civil servants and the soldiers of the alleged "fourth army in the world" thus leaving 400 000 men without pay.²⁷ Further, all this was done without indicating any political perspective, as if they were suddenly stricken by mutism, at the risk of making people forget gradually that Saddam Hussein was not only a dictator but also an assassin, one of the last offshoots of the totalitarian aspiration. In fact, everything is happening as if, in an unbelievably naïve way, the Allies had imagined that it would be enough to kill the tyrant and display their strength for all the peoples of the region, captivated and overcome with admiration and gratitude, to rapidly decide to adopt and build democratic regimes

26. And even more when military or civil prisoners are treated in an inhumane manner to the detriment of human rights, the Geneva conventions and the immemorial laws of war.

27. This last measure was reported at the end of July 2003.

by taking Iraq as "an attractive example of freedom for the other countries of the region" according to a statement made by President Bush in his speech at the American Express Institute on the 27 February 2002. For the time being, however, the example is rather discouraging.

In order to temporarily conclude this subject, let us leave the last word to the great writer Mario Vargas Llosa, who cannot be suspected of being hostile towards liberal democracy. After twelve days spent in post-Saddam Iraq, he wrote: "Is it a possible and realistic ideal (democratization), or is it a wild dream, as this is a society that lacks minimal experience of freedom and is also fractured by many antagonisms and internal rivalries? Is it sane to imagine that Arabs, Kurds and Turkans, Shiite and Sunnite Muslims (with the internal tendencies that divide them), Christians: Chaldeans, Assyrians, Latins and Armenians, tribal clans, peasants, primitive people and large urban communities, will coexist in the open and pluralist, tolerant and flexible system of a secular State enjoying solid consensus and allowing the twenty-five million inhabitants of Mesopotamia – the place where writing first emerged and a fundamental reference for the great religions and modern cultures, cradle of the first big compilation of laws in history, the Hammurabi code – to finally accede to a dignified and free life? Or shall we witness a construction that will be as delirious as that of the mythical ancestors of these peoples who wanted to erect a tower in order to reach to the sky and ended up frustrated and lost in the terrifying confusion of Babel?" [Llosa 2003].

IV.4. The example of Germany and Japan cannot be generalized

One of the main arguments that supports the idea of imposing liberal democracy standards and institutions by force is provided by the example of Germany and Japan. Supporters

Peace and Democracy

of democratic security imposed through war pose the following question: If countries that were long submitted to a totalitarian or imperial dictatorship, if such authoritarian and anti-democratic societies could swing in the opposite direction after their defeat and achieve the success we know in the democracies camp, why couldn't what was true for them be true for all the countries of the world? The essential part of the answer is given by Norman Mailer: "The reasoning according to which we can build democracy wherever we want, since we have succeeded doing so in Japan and in Germany, is not necessarily pertinent. These two countries had a homogeneous population, a long national history behind them; they were both drowning in guilt after the barbaric acts committed by their soldiers on foreign territories; they were at the edge of destruction, but they had the qualified labour and the experience needed for rebuilding their cities. As for the Americans who helped them in their democratic endeavour, they were veterans of Roosevelt's New Deal, a category of people who belonged only to that epoch: pragmatic idealists" [Mailer, 2003, p.70]. The idea that the examples of Japan and Germany could not be transposable elsewhere was approved unanimously at the UNESCO conference in Byblos on the 2nd of June 2003. Professor Theodore Hanf insisted on the fact that, after all, Hitler's dictatorship only lasted twelve years and had not been able to erase either the memory or the people who had been devoted to democracy in Germany. Democracy had also been advancing for a long time in Japan. Moreover, these two countries were proud of their culture and very sure of their national unity (although in the case of Germany it was a post-war dismembered unity).

One factor mentioned during the UNESCO Panel by Judge Owada deserves much thought. We stressed above the fact

that there can be no democratic community without a constitutive gesture that makes it possible to go beyond primary distrust. This gesture, which stems from strict calculating rationality to open up a space of the reasonable, is similar to the first gesture of the immemorial gift through which partners seal alliances by showing each other that they have made the choice to trust.

But this is not the whole story. If only it were just a matter of trust, of uncertainty about the calculations of others! No, in most cases – always, in fact – there is the weight of a past that does not pass, the memory of the dead, the wounded, the tortured, of the victims and the injustices of all kinds. In order to continue to live together, it is therefore not a question of giving but also and foremost of forgiving, of putting one's trust in the future and forgiving past crimes.

So there must be complex and painful arbitrations between the demands of justice and memory on one hand, and, on the other, of forgetting and forgiving, which are needed to go forward together. Maybe the primary condition for such a pacification to succeed through democracy lies in a clear understanding by everybody of the choices that will be made between revenge and pardon, memory and forgetting [Ricoeur, 2000].

Since conflicts, massacres and genocides are increasing everywhere in the world, it is getting more and more urgent to think of good means for putting an end to them. So the question here is, once again, and even more critically, whether the establishment of democracy, reduced to the elementary form of free elections, represents, always and necessarily, these good means.

**IV.5. The dangerous paradoxes of democratic pacification.
Democracy and democratization.**

It is now possible to bring together elements of a general answer to the question regarding the relationship between peace and democracy.

Yes, all men (and women) and all cultures are inclined to universalize democracy (even though opposite inclinations do exist). However, there is not one democracy only; it appears in many forms that are at the same time irreducible and interdependent. It is dangerous to exclusively favour the existence of one form of democracy over others or without the others.

Yes it is true, at least for the time being, that liberal democracies do not make war against each other. However, this does not at all mean that a democratic regime should be imposed on non-democratic regions by all means, including by war. This reasoning is based on the following absolutely essential paradox. If it is true that established democracies (at least for the time being) maintain peaceful relations among each other, it is also true that the majority of wars witnessed during the last two centuries have been aroused by the process of democratization. They were wars between democratic revolution and counter-revolution. If the established democracies are peaceful towards each other for now, the process of democratization is violent most of the time. On the other hand, there is a clear correlation between democratic wars and the increase in the number of victims. The dynamic of democratization has actually induced the rise of global wars, calling for the general mobilization of men and resources. This mobilization has been made possible by democracy, which allows not only a group of warriors but the whole population to participate in war [De Jouvenel, 1985].

There is indeed the potential risk of a perverse impact resulting from the logic of democratic peace imposed on populations and their cultures by external parties. While the imposition by the international community of a liberal democratic norm may settle or freeze certain local conflicts, it has the major disadvantage of adding to the central endogenous conflict between democracy, traditionalism, authoritarian dictatorship and totalitarianism caused by the push towards democracy, the dynamic of a specific and *internationalized* conflict which might lead to genocide. The duty to hold free elections in a country that is victim of inter-ethnic tensions and that has not yet succeeded in making the collective national interest rise over that of specific ethnic groups, may create mistrust of all against all and may force each one to side with his ethnic or religious community – even if this is an arbitrary choice. This is what happened in Rwanda where everyone had to choose between Hutu and Tutsi.²⁸ This is also what happened in the former Yugoslavia, where the injunction to multi-ethnicity finally fueled the general drive for ethnic purification.

Far from bringing peace and democracy, the imposition by external parties of a democratic peace norm leads to massacres and renders democracy even more inaccessible. Martin Shaw [2000] writes: “Indeed Kaldor explains how democratic forms have become part of the genocidal process of the ‘new wars’ of the global era. Whether waged by recognized states or by breakaway centres of power, electoral legitimation is actually part of the process of genocide. Knowing that in the global era ‘democratic’ legitimation is the path to interna-

28. This depends on whether, to start with, we measure more or less than 1.70 m and whether we own less or more than two cows... The Belgian administration has shown here a beautiful bureaucratic imagination.

tional recognition, power-mobilizers seek to create ethnically homogeneous territories in which they use identity politics and intimidation to ensure electoral majorities for their rule. Minorities or even majorities who do not fit with the rule which they seek to impose are expelled from their houses and land, villages and towns. While intimidation and low-grade violence often account for much of the process, physical abuse and even large-scale killing are also essential ingredients. After the expulsions – so called ‘ethnic-cleansing’ – elections or referenda confirm the new majority’s exclusive right to the territory.”²⁹

In the best case, as UN experts know very well, and namely in Africa, electoral democracy is purely *de façade*, as B. Boutros-Ghali writes, local inventiveness in terms of electoral fraud being infinitely superior to the distracted attention of the international observers, who are most generally confined in the only comfortable hotel of the country.

These various considerations, linked to what we said above about the problem of democratic unity, lead to the conclusion that democracy can only emerge, with some luck, in political and cultural groupings that have been constituted and unified for long enough and, in all likelihood, by adopting not perfectly democratic paths and only after complex processes of democratization. Wanting to constitute political unity directly in the field of democracy, by democracy, and wanting to impose democracy by short-changing democratization even before having achieved unity of the whole, is like squaring the circle [Zakaria, 2003].

Finally, by claiming the right to decide by themselves – and against the will of the international community – of starting fair or unfair wars, without respecting the minimum rules of

29. See Mary Kaldor, *Organised Warfare in a Global Era* [1998].

international democracy, liberal democracies undermine, through a kind of principle of self-refutation, the democratic ideal that they pretend to claim. By making it less credible in the eyes of most nations, and soon in the eyes of their own populations, these liberal democracies are making the perspective of establishing peace by multiplying democratic regimes more difficult and less probable each day. It is not surprising under these conditions that, contrary to the triumphant forecast of yesterday, the share of democracies in the world is no longer increasing, but regressing.

CONCLUSION

TOWARDS NEW WORLD REGULATIONS

"Unable to make what is just strong, we made what is strong just". This famous reflection by Pascal perfectly summarizes the dilemma into which the international community has currently been thrown. For about fifty years, the United Nations, the most legitimate worldwide body, incarnated the ideals of democratic humanism and human rights, even if these remained subject to very diverse interpretations. It seems today that it does not have the means for upholding these ideals. This is what the current US government is trying to demonstrate by using an approach of self-fulfilling prophecy, by going its own way regardless of world opinion and that of the UN. American military and economic power makes this choice seem not so absurd *a priori*. The American hawks seem to be saying: let us do our best so that our strength defines the new norm of justice, a liberal democratic norm that will win since we will make it as indisputable as Hobbes' despotic sovereign. We will force everybody's consensus in favour of democracy. Since the force used by the UN until now in support of democracy seems to have been impotent, let us mobilize an extremely superior force to finish once and for all with the rogue States that have definitively been disqualified in the name of democracy and let us impose democratic peace by force.

For all the reasons mentioned above, this wager is more than perilous. There are many reasons for us to think that the project of an imposed world democratic peace will have less eco-

nomic and military means to achieve its goals than the UN. By regionalizing conflicts, it might ignite new conflicts everywhere while putting out others, and it will destroy the democratic ideal by making it appear not as a universal potential of the human condition but as an ideology, a simple mask for power. As was noted by the former US diplomat John Brady Kiesling, who resigned from his post in Greece by addressing an open letter to the Secretary of State: "The more we use our power aggressively to intimidate our enemies, the more enemies we will have and the more we will validate terrorism as the only effective weapon for the impotent against the powerful" [Kielsing, quoted by Hoffman, 2003, p. 51]. However, no democracy can be founded and even less continue without a strong belief in the intrinsic virtue of democracy. Boutros Boutros-Ghali justly denounces the economic sanctions imposed on populations who are unlucky enough to be living under a dictatorial order being fought by the West. These sanctions, as he shows, penalize the populations and by no means the guilty leaders. He writes that [2002, p.19] sanctions "constitute violations of human rights carried out in the name of human rights". *A fortiori*, military interventions decided without the approval of the international community and with the proclaimed objective to impose, by force, a free democracy, might very well constitute violations of democracy in the name of democracy.³⁰

30. Jürgen Habermas also writes: "The universalism that lies at the core of democracy and human rights is precisely what prevents democracy from being imposed unilaterally. The universalist requirement of validity must not be mixed with the imperialist claim to make a certain culture and a specific way of life – even if they are those of the oldest democracy of the world – an example for all societies." And he adds: "When in Nassiriya thousands of Shiites demonstrate against Saddam and against the American occupation at the same time, they are also saying that non-Western civilizations must get the universalist content of human rights from their own resources" [Habermas, 2003].

The issue of the role of the United States

It is thus vital for the American people to be convinced as soon as possible that the criticism addressed by almost all the peoples of the world against the British-US intervention in Iraq was not against the American people themselves and even not against the democratic ideal that they could incarnate more than any other people in the world, but against the denial of such an ideal. Beyond its concrete immediate dimensions, the current situation has a dramatic aspect that is related to the fact that, by making those who seemed to be the champions *par excellence* of international democracy into its adversary, they have created a feeling of absurdity and general lack of meaning which makes way for devastating nihilism.³¹

Some influential American commentators have become perfectly aware of the problem. After a visit of many weeks in Europe, journalist William Pfaff reports in the *New York Times* on 21 July 2003 that he found in Europe almost no defender of the US policy. According to him, an important leader in eastern Europe perfectly summarizes the prevailing feeling: "The Bush government changed the friends of America into anti-Americans. During all my political life, I have been an admirer and a defender of the US against left-wing criticism, but I have now become a 'neo-anti-American'. The 'neo-anti-Americans' are former 'anti-anti-Americans' who find themselves obliged to become anti-Americans in their turn." W. Pfaff deplors the arrogance with which Americans summon the "old Europe" to act in order to regain US trust. Because it is completely the contrary, he concludes: "It is the Americans who have lost the Europeans' trust, and if the Americans do

31. As was well presented by Alixei Vassiliev during the Beirut panel.

not regain it, the (Atlantic) Alliance is dead." And let us not even talk about the other countries of the world...

Of course, these comments may seem somewhat naïve or hypocritical to the analysts in Washington today, since – even if I just hid behind a well known US commentator – I am a European (and French, which does not help). In other words, according to the interesting and well argued comments made by Paul Kagan [2003] in the much talked about book *Power and Weakness*, I am one of those who, during World War II, lived in the shadow of the American shield in a kind of "post-modern paradise" where it was possible to forget the constraints of power because others were doing this instead of you. It is easy in such conditions to be moralistic, Kantian, well-intentioned. "This is what the Europeans think they can offer to the world," writes P. Kagan, "not power itself, but sublimation" [p. 96]. But this is because they forget that they followed exactly the same policy and had the same discourse as that of the US until the 1914-1918 war – i.e. when they were really still powerful. Their moral discourse is, for P. Kagan, just a rationalization of their weakness.

This tempting analysis is partly founded. For the European part at least. It becomes deceptive when it turns to praise a policy of unilateral power on the part of the USA. This policy did not start with the present administration, as is well shown by P. Kagan [see also Joxe, 2002]. But the present administration has decided to apply in all its aspects, and with unshakable determination (and blindness...) a policy that was already well explained in 1992 in the "Project for a new American century" drawn up by the Under Secretary of State of Defense at that time, Paul Wolfowitz (the Secretary was Dick Cheney), who has become the most influential advisor of Donald Rumsfeld.

The US, according to Wolfowitz, has to take control of the planet and become like "a colossus straddling the world, imposing his will and guaranteeing general peace thanks to his military and economic power" [quoted by Mailer, 2003, p. 63].

This project forgets one thing: what constituted the basis of American power were its ethical and democratic values, tolerance, love of freedom and equal rights for men. It is contradictory to have the intention of installing America's power by denying the values that made it. As David C. Hendrickson reminds us, "the respect of the basic principles of the right of people combined with actions undertaken and authorized by an international consensus are the two essential methods through which the USA have acquired the legitimacy that they enjoyed in the international system" [Hensrickson, quoted by Hoffman, p. 51]. Or even: the biggest part of US power comes from the seduction it practices; it consists of a *soft power* that is closely linked to the seduction of democratic values. The hawks are extremely wrong to hope to gain power by exchanging the powers of democratic seduction for the delights of a domination freed from the obligation to respect international law.³²

32. A moderate analyst, Pierre Hassner, writes: "By extending to thousands of suspects, Americans and especially non-Americans, the category of "enemy fighters" deprived of any legal defense, of any judgement, of any right, by applying it equally to all States that are suspected of supporting terrorism, and, finally, by defining the struggle against terrorism as a war that justifies the suspension of rights linked to the state of exception, the USA and those who follow it are moving towards what Walter Benjamin had foreseen: the permanent state of exception that becomes the rule, the abolition of the difference between war and peace, inside and outside, the rule and the exception. And more precisely, we reach exception as a rule and permanent suspension of rights, which defines with precision totalitarianism" [Hassner, 2003].

The problem of the UN and international organizations

Hence it is necessary and urgent to redefine the rapport between strength and justice. In the current state of affairs, international organizations cannot envisage doing much more to regain the international moral legitimacy that they have largely lost than try to deeply redefine its content. If international civil servants today feel discouraged, it is not only because of the brutal contempt the dominating power has shown them. It is also because they are having difficulty setting out a plausible body of doctrine that is opposable to unilateral strength, and drawing the contours of an effectively multilateral and democratic world. "We are witnessing a crisis of the international system", stated Kofi Annan in a press conference held on 31 July 2003, a crisis that it is not sure to overcome without a "radical reform" of the UN.

But how? And in which direction? The UN should undoubtedly be able to continue to decide to rapidly dispatch intervention forces in case of risk of imminent massacres.³³ Also, even if much fault can be found with the UN machinery and it is not adapted to the current realities of globalization, nothing would be worse than undermining its legitimacy before having rebuilt a more satisfying institutional architecture. This simple idea is in perfect congruence with the other simple conclusion to which

33. But we should not forget the perverse effects resulting from many interventions. A researcher of the EHESS in Paris, specialized in African affairs, writes: "International bodies, the UN and the great powers involved in Western Africa have deliberately limited their interventions to a well calculated confinement policy that is however very risky for the populations. This policy subjects the humanitarian and/or military deployment to a restrictive political agenda and thus undoubtedly bears a share of responsibility in the cycle of sufferings. By subjecting the country to a series of constraints and deadlock situations, victims are prevented from escaping from their executioners" [Jézéquel, 2003].

the current study leads us: if all energies of the international community must be mobilized in order to make the democratic ideal win, it would be suicidal for these to try to impose democracy by force. It would be suicidal to try to overthrow by means of war – rather than by an internal evolution supported by international public opinion – regimes that are considered to be dictatorial without the reasonable certitude that true democracies (and not a travesty of democracy) will be established on the ruins of the defeated dictatorship and not on general chaos. Let us compare the perspectives that are currently respectively open to Iraq and Iran. For one, what appears on the horizon is, as observed by Mario Vargas Llosa, the threat of chaos which followed the collapse of the Tower of Babel – an appropriate metaphor for designating the attempt to erect by force and from outside a democracy without democrats. For the other, it is the complete uncertainty which surrounds the outcome of the latent confrontation between theocratic reactionaries and reformists rallied to President Khatemi. But at least we are sure that if those reformists win, they will find social forces that are strongly mobilized to build a democracy in this land of Islam. That is what is very clearly explained by Zarir Merat, member and co-founder of the Iranian magazine *Goftegu* (Dialogue): "Democracy and democratic values become day after day the most prized terms of reference, the political regime that is most appreciated and considered to be the most appropriate to the needs of society. From now on we will find democracies inside almost all political families: secular, religious, nationalist, Marxist, leftist and rightist. Of course in Iran, people do not live in democracy; however, this democracy is already present in the Iranian conscienceness, and its enemies – mainly the con-

servatives of the Islamic Republic – find themselves in a defensive position and are offended by its presence in all the debates and in all the circles, including those of power" [Merat, 2003, p. 139-140].

Reform projects of the UN

For the time being, the two major axes of reflection concern: 1) the necessity to create a force of intervention that is proper to the UN, an idea recently supported by the Russians (and long supported by the Lebanese diplomat and journalist Ghassan Tuéni [Tuéni, 2003]), and violently challenged by Westerners; and 2) the reform of the Security Council which is considered to be insufficiently representative. The number of permanent members could be raised to 24, but without a veto right for the new members (British proposal). The Americans, without facing strong opposition, are examining the idea that access to the Security Council be subject to the respect of a minimal level of democracy (see *Le Monde* of 2 August 2003). An interesting proposal made by Stanley Hoffman concerns the creation of an additional body with which one could appeal decisions (or indecisions...) taken by the Security Council. This body would be "an association of democratic nations, which would include NATO members and the liberal democracies of Asia, Africa and Latin America [...] as well as Australia and New-Zealand" [Hoffman, 2003, p. 57]. Another suggestion concerns the creation of a world economic and social council (French proposal). In more general terms, one of the main reforms would be the networking of the various international organisms (WTO, WHO, ILO, UNESCO, etc.) whose decisions should be enforced as law for the others [Cohen, 2002]. This can only be possible if these organizations learn to integrate into their institutional machine NGOs and representatives of the growing world of civil society.

But the international community will no longer be satisfied with rhetoric, with an ironic and superficial vision of democracy and human rights whereby all goes well as long as apparently free elections are organized here and there and in principle each State counts as much as any other State in international organizations, whether it rep-

resents one hundred thousand people or ten thousand times more.³⁴

To sum up, the whole edifice of international organizations has been built on the belief that the nation-State was the unique and ultimate stage of democratic legitimacy. However, while we should by no means bury States which today are still the strongest concentrations of strength and legitimacy, it is also true that we have clearly entered a post-national era or, to say it better, an era that is both infra- and supra-national. The democratic ideal is therefore fragmented into three modalities that are connectable but distinct from each other. If States continue to base their structure on the principle of representative parliamentary democracy, at the local level there is an aspiration towards participatory democracy, and at the global level, we are witnessing the powerful growth of opinion democracy of which international civil society and NGOs are the primary vectors. We cannot really imagine that the big international organizations can survive without integrating in their debates, in one way or another, this civil society which today is the most active vector of hope for peace and democracy [Laville, Caillé, 2000].

34. Of the 191 countries represented at the UN, 49 are micro-states (less than 1.5 million inhabitants). Altogether, Tuvalu, Nauru, Palao Islands, San Marino, Monaco, Liechtenstein, Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Marshall Islands, Andorra, Antigua-and-Barbuda total less than 330 000 inhabitants but represent ten votes at the UN. These are votes that of course one would be very tempted to buy. The UN has already listed Pitcairn Island (44 inhabitants...) among countries to be decolonized and given, maybe, membership [professor Anatra: "The micro-states are ruling the world", *Canard enchaîné*, 13 August 2003]. We find similar absurdities in the European Union where, for some votes, Malta carries the same weight as Germany, the UK or France.

Deterritorialization of power

Among many analyses, let us mention the one undertaken by the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman: "Power is no longer territorial and no longer respects territorial defense. Borders are eminently easy to cross. Power that is fluid does not respect obstacles; it seeps through walls however thick they are, it passes easily through thousands of cracks, slits and fissures, however thin they are. There is no filler that can fill the holes and stop the leakages. It is in such unfavourable conditions that State forces, cut off from the global flow, and fixed and immobilized by their sovereignty and territorial responsibilities, must look for local solutions to problems that are produced at the global level. These problems are generated in "the space of flows" but must be tackled and treated in the "space of places" [...]. After about two centuries of marriage, power and politics, happily settled in the framework of the modern nation-State, seem to be heading towards divorce" [Bauman, 2003]. Inversely, however, it should be noted that no matter how artificial the borders of some modern States may seem, and despite all of their ethnic, religious or political cleavages, there may nonetheless be a strong attachment to the ideal of national unity, strongly defended against foreigners – even those with whom the States maintain strong connivances. This is for instance the case of the Kurds and the Iraqi Shiites, or of the Democratic Republic of the Congo which is fighting hard against bi-partition projects that were once supported by the USA [Lefort, 2003]. Therefore, the main problem that the international system faces today, which goes far beyond the poorly defined and unstable borders of many States (although this adds greatly to the problem), is the considerable rise in power of organized crime and multiple mafias, which very often work together and feed various liberation movements. There is a gigantic nebula that by nature is difficult to identify and recognize. One can safely assume, however, that 10% or 15% (low hypothesis) to 25% or 30% (high hypothesis) of the commercial wealth produced in the world today is generated directly or indirectly by these networks.

But beyond necessary institutional reform, upward and downward, it is all the thinking about democratization, about "democratic transitions", that needs to be reviewed completely by a clarification of geo-strategic implications, and with no fear of facing head on its paradoxes, ambiguities, deadlocks or contradictions. One of the main conclusions to retain from the

line of arguments that we have just presented is that, while not avoiding the use of force to stop the intolerable, the only way to make democracy progress effectively in the world is to convince local and international opinion by a concrete demonstration of democracy's moral, political and economic superiority. This demonstration cannot be made through moralizing rhetoric – especially if it comes exclusively from the Western world – limited to denouncing the big powers while forgetting to understand the political logic that made them strong. Between accepting what exists to the point of making compromises with confirmed criminals on one hand, and impotent and vain moralism on the other, the road is narrow but it does exist. It passes primarily through the development of an international opinion democracy linked to a flourishing global civil society.

In conclusion, we would like UNESCO to realize that discovering the "middle path" between criminal compromises and incantatory moralism constitutes its main task. It is no longer possible to consider that there might be a predefined democratic and humanistic norm that is well and definitely established by philosophers and representatives of social sciences, and that it might be enough – in order for peace and democracy to spread all over the world – to know how to present this democratic and humanistic norm to the largest number of people through an effective information campaign. No, the truth is that our world no longer knows how to imagine itself and no existing doctrine is up to this task. It is time for UNESCO to take this to heart and endeavour to put the world's intellectual (and religious) community to work in order to redefine the ethical, political and economic norms that can be shared by all of humanity in this era of globalization. Finally, we would like to present you with a brief proposal that is in line with the task at hand.

A PROPOSAL FOR UNESCO

Notes for the creation by UNESCO of

An International College of Moral, Social and Philosophical Sciences

The mission that was assigned to UNESCO when it was created seems difficult to execute but simple to understand: to contribute to a better understanding between individuals and peoples, and to promote ideals of peace, progress and democracy by developing education in the world and by promoting knowledge and appropriation by everyone of scientific discoveries. In this task, philosophy and social sciences were called upon to play a central role since it was up to them to translate the requirements of science into ethical and universally intelligible formulations and to give concrete shape to the ideals of progress, humanism and democracy. This mission was, on the whole, successfully accomplished by UNESCO. But we should not hide the fact that this is getting more and more problematic and less and less obvious for at least three series of reasons which will undoubtedly compel the UN and UNESCO to envisage somewhat different means of action while not losing sight of their primary objectives.

DIAGNOSIS

1. The first reason is related to the existence of a certain crisis in social sciences and philosophy. In brief: over the last thirty years, we have become more and more intelligent and precise in these areas at the analytical level. However, the ever stronger specialization of subjects and sub-subjects, the proliferation of schools and jargons, the growing split within social sciences and philosophy, as well as the growing propensity of scholars not to care about the ethical and political implications of their research, all this makes the popularization and dissemination of produced knowledge difficult. Nobody knows anymore where trends in social sciences and philosophy intersect, or how they relate exactly to the humanist, progressive and democratic ideal. Knowledge no longer nourishes normative debate.

2. Second, it appears in retrospect that the progressive ideal that UNESCO has held was (too) Western-centred. In a caricatural way: since it is in the Western world that science, technology and education are by far the most developed; and since there is a close link between this advance and the strength of democratic

Peace and Democracy

and progressive ideals, UNESCO's mission should have been mainly to spread the Western-type democratic model (even if, from the beginning, it has called for the respect of diversity of cultures). This way of considering things keeps all its pertinence when it allows tyrannical and murderous regimes to be pushed towards democracy and the respect of human rights. But it is also important to note that there are more and more voices in the West raised in concern about the drifts witnessed in their regions of the democratic model. And, furthermore, it should be noted that trying to impose the democratic model as is on countries that remain partly foreign to the concept is often more counter-productive than anything else. Therefore, we must rethink – starting from scratch and going in depth – the ideal of progress and of democracy itself, and shape our reflection in such a way that it does not appear made by Westerners alone, but is the fruit of a true work of in-depth dialogue and without intellectual concessions from the part of all the cultures.

3. Finally, it is obvious that the UN is facing more and more difficulties in playing its role in conflict resolution at the global level. It is in fact weakened by a double criticism: that of the least rich and least powerful countries which blame it for not being sufficiently democratic, and that of a certain number of the richest and most powerful countries, led by the USA, which blame it for not being sufficiently efficient. Caught between these two kinds of criticism, the UN can no longer assume the role of world moral and political conscience with which it seems to have been entrusted. Reforming it will not be easy. However, UNESCO can, if it really wishes to, assume this role, thus also contributing to a solution to the first two problems we mentioned.

PROPOSALS

The initiatives that UNESCO might be called upon to take stem from the brief diagnosis we have just presented.

If moral, social and philosophical sciences are no longer producing the normative knowledge that humanity so greatly needs, then UNESCO can no longer restrict its actions to the popularization of those sciences. It has to be directly involved in the production of the required type of knowledge by establishing and incarnating an active place of debate between scientific, philosophical and ethical disciplines

and traditions. If the progressive, humanist and democratic ideal seems to be blurred, then there should first be an international dialogue for discussing and newly elaborating this ideal.

If the UN cannot incarnate the role of an international indisputable moral authority and if it is necessary that there be such a role, it should be taken on by an International College of Social, Moral and Philosophical Sciences that is clearly representative of the diversity of the fields of knowledge, culture and ethical traditions.

So we are suggesting that UNESCO consider and work towards the creation of such an international College of Social, Moral and Philosophical Sciences which would have the following tasks:

- help overcome the existing disciplinary cleavages by supporting (for instance through labelling) teaching and research centres around the world that are truly interdisciplinary;
- encourage and contribute to a large-scale debate at the global level on the current situation of the humanist, progressive and democratic ideal 1) by developing such a debate among College members, and 2) by ensuring coordination of university Chairs that are devoted to the study of democracy; and
- give an opinion about ethical and political problems that the UN and/or UNESCO might submit to it for examination.

PRACTICAL DETAILS

While we are convinced that this project is well-founded, we are aware that the constraints it will have to overcome make its realization delicate. The College members will have to be in sufficient numbers to be representative of the different countries, disciplines, cultures and ethical and religious traditions, but at the same time, if there are too many participants, a real debate will not be possible and everything will sink into an academic morass.

The best solution might consist of creating two entities:

- a General Assembly of the College, constituting the College itself, with 150 to 200 people, and formally meeting once or twice a year; and
- a Council of the College, which would be smaller, with 25 to 50 people, and meeting 4 times a year for targeted, intense and in-depth debates.

Variant: the General Assembly could designate internal commissions (10 to 15 persons) for limited subjects.

Peace and Democracy

These perspectives are in no way unrealistic, but it may take some time for them to be carried out.

I suggest that, from now on, the UNESCO Panel on Democracy and Development, chaired by Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, consider itself to be the embryo, or the constituting core, of this College, be its "Council" by anticipation (or one of its commissions, specialized in democracy) and then be enlarged and its recruitment modified accordingly.

Alain Caillé

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Who would not support the establishment of peace and democracy everywhere in the world? This is the ideal that rightfully guides international organizations; and after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 it seemed destined to triumph quickly. Fifteen years later, it appears that we are far from this goal. Why? Is it not because the relationship between peace and democracy is more complex and less certain than what was generally thought? Today conflicts are multiplying, and the temptation to impose democracy by force is increasing. But doesn't imposing democracy increase the risk of compromising this ideal and thereby placing peace even further in danger?

In a period when the world is unstable and the humanistic ideals of yesterday are increasingly contested, it is high time to directly face the problems of democracy in all their complexity. There is, in fact, no other ideal than the democratic ideal; no ideal can replace it. This is one more reason to take democracy seriously and to stop treating it in an idealistic manner. This publication identifies some of the problems that the world currently faces in this effort.

Alain Caillé, Professor of Sociology at the University of Paris X-Nanterre, where he also directs GEODE (Groupe d'Etude et d'Observation de la Démocratie, CNRS), is founding director of La Revue du MAUSS (www.revedumauss.com), an interdisciplinary review of social science and political philosophy (La Découverte, Paris). His latest publications are: Anthropologie du don (Desclée de Brouwer, 2000) and Histoire raisonnée de la philosophie morale et politique, ed. with C. Lazzeri and M. Senellart (La Découverte, 2001).