European Perspectives – International Scientific Journal on European Perspectives
volume 9, number 1 (16), pp 65-84, October 2018

What Kant preaches to the UN: democratic peace theory and "preventing the scourge of war"

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ABSTRACT

This paper exploits academic parameters of the democratic peace theory to analyze the UN's principal mission of preserving the world peace. It inquires into the intellectual horizons of the democratic peace theory – which originated from the Kant's "perpetual peace" – with the aim of prescribing an ideological recipe for establishing solid foundation for peace among states. The paper argues that by promoting democracy and supporting democratization, the UN primarily works to achieve its fundamental mission of preventing the scourge of war. It explores practical activities that the UN undertakes to support democracy, as well as the political and normative aspects of such an enterprise, is beyond the reach of this analysis. Rather, the focus of the analysis is on the democratic peace theory. The confirmation of the scientific credibility of this theory is taken as a sufficient argument to claim that by supporting democracy the UN would advance one of its major purposes, namely the goal of peace.

KEY WORDS: democracy, peace, Kant, UN

POVZETEK

Prispevek na osnovi teorije demokratičnega miru analizira temeljno misijo OZN, to je ohranitev svetovnega miru. Poglablja se v intelektualna obzorja teorije demokratičnega miru – ki izhaja iz Kantovega "večnega miru" – s ciljem začrtati ideološki recept za vzpostavitev čvrstih temeljev za mir med državami. Prispevek zagovarja hipotezo, da OZN s promoviranjem demokracije in z njenim podpiranjem predvsem prispeva k izpolnitvi svojega temeljnega poslanstva, to je preprečevati izbruh vojn. Proučuje praktične aktivnosti, ki jih OZN izvaja v podporo demokraciji kakor tudi politične in normativne vidike takšnih projektov. Osrednja analitična pozornost je posvečena teoriji demokratičnega miru. Avtor meni, da je potrditev znanstvene relevantnosti te teorije zadosten argument, da bi OZN s podporo demokraciji lahko okrepili svoj glavni namen, to je zagotavljanje miru.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: demokracija, mir, Kant, OZN

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Introduction

When the drafters of the UN Charter mentioned "peace/peaceful" forty-seven times, they epitomized with one single word the memory as well as the aspiration of the organization. The UN Charter was intended to mark the breaking point between two eras; namely the horrors of the Second World War and the aspiration to put the final nail to the coffin of world wars. The scope of UN's work has expanded tremendously ever since. It stretches from economic sanctions of the Security Council, to illiteracy in Africa, from arts and science to non-proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction, from global warming to sustainable development. Notwithstanding this overstretch of the UN, preventing member states from fighting each other remains its essential *raison d'être.*

Around one-and-a-half century before the UN was created, the renowned German philosopher Immanuel Kant expressed his believe that the republican form of government was the path to peace, as it tamed the war-prone inclination of states. Thus, Kant laid down an ideological foundation of what later became to be known as democratic peace theory. The liberal thinkers of the democratic peace theory pretend that they have identified an ideological formula for reaching the fundamental goal of peace among states. In their explanation, democracy is the strong guarantee of peace among its ranks. This means that democratic states are predisposed to enjoy pacific relations with one another, but not with non-democratic ones. This theory continues to attract huge academic and political debate. Any confirmation of the credibility of this theory would appear as a self-fulfilling prophecy to the UN. By promoting democracy and assisting democratization of its members states the UN would do the strongest investment into the foundation of world peace.

This paper investigates into the explanatory gates of the democratic peace theory. In this endeavor, it explores the conceptual tenets of this theory, the major criticism it continues to encounter as well as the empirical testing that confirms its validity.

Democratic peace theory: between scientific ambition and political stigma

The democratic peace theory establishes an inherent causality between democracy and peace by claiming that democratic states do not

go to war with one another – while they do not manifest the same peaceful predisposition towards non-democracies. This theory owes its genesis to the liberal tradition in philosophy and political sciences. Michael Doyle (2004: 2) rightly observes that in the eighteen and nineteen century, liberal philosophers started to proclaim that republics were inclined towards peace. He further underlined that this new quality of the republics contradicted the earlier thinking of Thucydides or Machiavelli, who perceived republics as war-prone and imperialistic.

Immanuel Kant is considered as the intellectual forefather of democratic peace theory. In his seminal essay *The Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, written in 1795, Kant argued that the path towards eternal peace passed through the gates of the republican form of government. Kantian republic was characterized by separation of powers, representative government and individual freedom and equality (Maoz and Russet, 1993: 4). In the ideological map of today, all these attributes find prominent place in liberal democracies. As to the " democratic zone of peace" imagined by Kant, it was to be constituted on three pillars, namely the republican form of government, free trade and international law and organizations (Oneal, 2003: 371-393). Kant did not believe that peace was a natural condition, but rather a contractual one. Only republics were capable of forging such a contractual order, by agreeing to abide by the rule of public law in their mutual relations (Covell, 1994: 28).

The proposition that democracy has pacifying effects on relations among states that embrace it as a model of governance is hailed as one of the most trustworthy scientific outcomes of the international relations discipline. For some authors, such as John Owen (1994: 87), democratic peace theory is the "closest thing to an empirical law" in international relations discipline. Along these lines of argument, Rasler and Thompson (2005: 3) underlined that the "finding that democracies do not fight other democracies has come to be regarded as a law-like cornerstone of knowledge about international politics." Even Samuel Huntington – who is known for putting culture, rather than ideology, at the epicenter of theorizing about world politics – noticed the significance of democratic peace theory. He opined that "the democratic peace thesis is one of the most significant propositions to come out of social science in recent decades. If true, it has essential implications for both, theory and policy" (cited in Brown et al, 1996: 63).

More than one century passed since Kant's "Perpetual Peace," when democratic peace theory started to get scientific scrutiny. Since the 1960s, scholars such as: Melvin Small, David Singer, Michael Doyle, John Owen, Bruce Russet, Rudolph Rummel, Zeev Maoz, engaged in theorizing about the correlation between democracy and peace.

Theoretical analysis

The general proposition that democratic states do not fight with one another is very widely accepted because of its confirmation by international political reality. However, this theory continues to face staunch intellectual roadblocks in its quest to establish itself as a scientific knowledge whose validity is beyond doubt. Even more, if this theory is broadly endorsed, this does not mean that it is easily elucidated. Obviously, it is much easier to argue that something works than to explain why and how it does so.

The proponents of the democratic peace theory put forward two general explanations to depict the causality between democracy and peace. The first explanation pertains to institutional design of democratic systems. The second argument has to do with the normative elements of political life in democratic countries.

The institutional constrains are of structural nature and they have to do with the decision-making process in democratic countries. Namely, diffusion of political power among different institutions – with the check and balances – as well as the leverage of citizens over the political decision-making complicates the decision-making process in democratic system. Consequently, the government in democratic state would need institutional as well as popular support, for any decision to wage a war against another country. This decision become much more difficult if no big national interest is at stake or if the outcome of war is not clear. A number of scholars have referred to the argument that structural factors make war less likely.[2] Thus, Sitliski (2009: 32) thinks that "the institutional structure of liberal democracies makes it hard to garner support for militarized actions, as opposed to authoritarian regimes, where decision to go to war depends, ultimately, upon the personality and the resolve of the rules." The same argument is repeated by other authors, such as Farnham (2003: 369), who claim that the complex process of decision-making in democratic states, and the

2 See for this argument, B. Farnham (2003:397); Ch. Layne (1993: 6).

leverage of public opinion over it, makes leaders of these countries inclined to seek a peaceful settlement of mutual disputes. Consequently, this creates permissive environment for diplomatic solution.

The institutional/structural explanation is sound but insufficient for establishing unequivocal causality between democracy and peace. It cannot explain why the institutional constrains make democratic states peaceful in relations only with each other, not with non-democracies? Democratic peace theory holds that democracies are inherently peaceful only in relations with other fellow democratic countries – not with non-democracies. Indeed, many authors have argued that democratic states show high propensity for conflict in dealing with non-democratic states (Gochman, 1997: 177-187). Furthermore, the argument that public opinion in democratic countries nurture peaceful perceptions toward each other has also been questioned by the opponents of the democratic peace theory.

The explanatory gap that is left by the structural argument is bridged by bringing up the normative factors, which entails the political culture that prevails in democratic countries. This political culture is construed through common norms embraced by the political actors in democratic countries. Within this ambit, peaceful expression of political divergences and competing interests is one of the fundamental norms of democratic polity. The conclusion that the advocates of democratic peace derive from this normative attribute of democratic countries is that political decision-makers in democratic countries are predisposed to rely on dialogue and peaceful accommodation to solve disputes with the fellow democratic leaders, in the same way as they do with the domestic political rivals. Conflict is one the underlying feature of democracy, and so are the rules and mechanisms for its peaceful expression and accommodation. Lipset (1960: 403) succinctly observed that "democracy requires institutions which support conflict and disagreement, as well as those which sustain legitimacy and consensus." With this claim, he echoed Alexis de Tocqueville, for whom democracy entailed a balance between the forces of conflict and consensus (Ibid). It is only within the context of democratic system that different political orientations and conflicting social interests can be expressed. This means that political rivalry and competition is the major political feature of democratic countries, but so are the norms and procedures for their peaceful expression.

This wisdom is thought to prevail among political decision-makers in democratic countries, in their encounter with political opponents within and outside. This positive perception towards other democratic countries is shared also by public opinion. At least this is what democratic peace theorists believe. In this interpretation, democratic leaders are predisposed to rely on the norms of compromise and peaceful accommodation in their mutual relations. By default, this means that democratic decision-makers expect their counterparts in fellow democracies to apply the norms of peaceful resolution of conflicts (Layne 1994: 9). Wagner (2003: 697) observes that democratic countries forge a "common democratic identity [...], which are expected to externalize their internal decision-making norms and rules in their foreign policy behavior." The belief that democratic countries create a feeling of common democratic identity – one they do not share with non-democracies – is shared by many advocates of democratic peace theory (such as Zeev Maoz, Bruce Russet, Wei He). Thus, Maoz and Russet, for example, opined that "in conflict with non-democratic states, democracies behave much more in the accord with the dictates of realism since they do not have the same expectations about how these states behave" (cited in Siverson, 1995: 482). Ronald Regan might have been disinterested in the theoretical enterprises of liberal thinkers. Yet, in his address to the UN General Assembly he stated that "governments that break faith with its own people cannot be trusted to keep faith with foreign powers" (The American Presidency Project, 1986). Dispersed political decision-making as well the culture of peaceful accommodation of political competition, represent the two pillars of the explanatory framework coined by the liberal scholars of democratic peace theory. Yet they derive their strength from the empirical confirmation of their hypothesis. Before analyzing the empirical survey, it is necessary to expose the counter-arguments of the opponents of democratic peace theory.

Opposing arguments against the democratic peace theory

It is very common among its opponents to portray the democratic peace proposition as a political vehicle of the US and reflection of the Western ideological hegemony. The Indian author Atul Bharadwaj (2005: 33) stigmatizes the democratic peace theory as a tool of American foreign policy by which the world is divided in two parts – friends and foes – and through which the sovereignty of the other countries is jeopardized. Indeed, democratic peace faces most of the intellectual

challenge in the Western academic battlefield. Robert Cox (1999: 137) had once asked a rhetorical question: "for whom and for what purpose has the democratic peace theory been constructed?"

The fixation of subsequent US administrations with the idea that international liberalism and American interest are intertwined – at least since Wilson's "fourteen points" – have constantly kept democratic peace theory with one leg on political and another on academic terrain. The prominent scholar of international relations, John Ikenberry (1999), observed that in the American perception spreading of democracy serves the national interests, particularly security. From another angle, Kissinger (1994: 33) noted that American foreign policy paradigm is constantly permeated by the "Wilsonian impulse." Kissinger, for whom necessity of *realpolitik* should prevail over any ideological loyalty, observed that "majority of the American leaders were convinced then as they are now that America has a special responsibility to spread its values as it contributes to the world peace."

For healthy academic debate, it is much more important whether proposition that democracies are peaceful with each other is scientifically credible, than who supports spreading of democracy. On academic terrain, the democratic peace proposition is challenged on several grounds. At the methodological level, many scholars posit that correlation does not necessarily confirm the existence of any causality. Along these lines, Keneth Waltz (2000: 9) has underlined that – notwithstanding the data supporting democratic peace thesis – it is known to everyone, at least since David Hume, that association of events does not imply the existence of causal relation. Hence, even if war among democracies is uncommon this is coincidence, which cannot be portrayed as a law-like generalization. Mathew White (2005) put it ironically that democratic peace thesis "is not nearly as strong as the statement that not two countries with a McDonald's restaurant have ever gone to war with one another."

Another antithesis of democratic peace proposition is put by authors, such as Errol Henderson (1999: 203-231), who claim that Cold War geopolitical and security parameters yielded pacification effects among the Western democracies. In this depiction, democratic peace can explain the lack of war between democratic states after WWII, only in conjunction with political alliances, bipolarity and nuclear deterrence.

Another criticism has to do with the vague confines of the concepts of war and democracy. This fact permits liberal theorists of democratic peace to construe their arbitrary empirical surveys. Subsequently, the opponents of this theory have put forward their empirical surveys with the aim of arguing that democratic peace is unhistorical. Farber and Gowa (1996: 177-178) posit that democratic peace applies only to the post-WWII Euro-Atlantic setting. The argument that liberal democracy pacified relations between the US and its Western allies during the Cold War era is also noted by Maoz (1997), Thompson and Tucker (1997).

Some critics of democratic peace proposition have gone further by arguing that peace produced democracy, not the other way around. Moreover, democratization, as a political process, stimulates conflict and war. In this reversal logic of causality adopted by some authors (e.g., Rasler and Thompson, 2005: 28-37), peace produces democracy, and, in turn, democratization encourages more pacific behavior within its ranks. The implication of this approach is that democracy is a dependent variable, as it can have positive effect on peace only in conjunction with other factors.

Some authors have argued that, while it is debatable whether democracy buttresses peace, it is certain that the process of democratic transition is characterized by polarization, turbulences and conflict. This is true particularly in the transitional countries that suffer from economic fragility and weak institutional structures (Mansfield and Snyder 2002: 205; Bates 2008: 9).

Democratic peace theory strikes back: additional conceptual clarifications and empirical corroboration

The democratic peace theory would be a slogan, not a scientific claim, if democracy would accommodate any political model that calls itself democratic. This has prompted liberal scholars of democratic peace to sharpen the conceptual boundaries of democracy. They have clarified that by democracy is not meant every country that proclaims itself to be as such. Moreover, even countries that have embarked on democratic transition but still struggle to consolidate their democracies, do not qualify to be endorsed by the democratic peace theory. It transpires, therefore, that not democracies but liberal democracies do not fight with each other. In other words, only liberal democracies are eligible

for membership in the "democratic zone of peace." Some authors, such as Michael Doyle, have applied quantitative calculation to argue that to count a war as one conducted between democracies their governments need to be in office for at least three uninterrupted years (cited in Maoz and Russet, 1993:16).

Quantifications of this nature remain poorly suited to disqualify Hitler and Milosevic from the democratic club. They both came into power through elections and remained in power for many years. Democracy is much more than holding periodic competitive elections and every person with basic understanding of political systems recognizes this difference. The distinction between liberal as opposed to non-liberal democracies is more than statistical. Doyle distinguished the following features of liberal democracies: external sovereignty, judicial rights of its citizenry, the right to vote for at least 30 percent of the adult population, and generally representative government (cited in Tarzi, 2007: 41). Many authors (such as Larry Diamond 1995) have emphasized the fundamental difference between electoral versus liberal democracies.

In a seminal article published in 1997, Fareed Zakaria (1997: 22-42) rang the alarming bell about the rise of illiberal democracies in some parts of the world. The illiberal democracies, in his depiction, are characterized by the omnipotent role of cliques or individual leaders, which assume the political power through the democratic means – namely competitive elections. Yet they subsequently undermine the fundamental pillars of democracy, such as separation of powers, checks and balances, free media and competitive market economy. In Kant's imagination, democratic zone of peace is demarcated by liberal lines. It cannot thrive in absence of separation of powers, check and balances and civil liberties. This is what advocates of democratic peace have put forward as an argument to pursue their empirical corroboration.

Empiricism is the major scientific muscle of democratic peace theory. The empirical support for democratic peace theory prompted Levy (1988: 622) to claim that democratic peace theory is the closest thing to an empirical law found in the study of international relations. The validity of the proposition that consolidated democratic countries rarely, if ever, engage in war with one another is generally confirmed in the practical realm. Pugh (2005:7) noted that "the strength of the liberal peace lies in the empirical record that supports the proposi-

tion." Gieseler (2004: 1) went further to underline that:
"regardless of how attractive one might find the theoretical propositions that democracies do not fight one another and are not aggressors in wars with non-democratic states, were they not supported empirically they would occupy a position somewhere between interesting fantasy and waste-of-time."

In their empirical battlefield, the proponents of democratic peace theory strive for generalization while the opponents search for exemptions. The supporters of this theory have constantly put forward empirical data, to establish the causal link between democracy and peace. Thus, Bruce Russet (1993) has claimed that it is impossible to identify unambiguously any war between democratic states in the period since 1815. Russet analyzed the America-British War of 1812, American Civil War of 1861, the Second Philippine War of 1899, the two world wars, and the wars in Middle East between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Russet does not find any war between two democratic states throughout this long historical trajectory. These empirical finding are reiterated by many other authors, such as Rummel (1998), Gleditsch and Hegre (1997). They maintain that not only wars but even smaller military conflicts are very unusual among democracies. Rummel (2002), for example, scrutinized all major wars of the period between 1816 and 1991, which statistically involved 350 dyads of states engaged in conflict. He came to the conclusion that none of these pairings included two democracies fighting each other. John Norton Moore (2003: 282-284) stretches his empirical telescope to the UN era, to conclude that only the Suez War of 1956 – in which Britain and France went to war against Egypt as a reaction to the nationalization of the Suez Canal – could be qualified as aggression on the part of democratic states, in this case against a non-democracy (Egypt was not democracy in 1956). It follows that, while democracies manifest disinclination to engage in military conflict with one another, this does not apply to their interaction with non-democracies. Maoz and Russet (1993: 635) posit that "the more democratic are both members of a pair of states, the less likely it is that a militarized dispute break out between them, and the less likely it is that any dispute that do break out will escalate." Tom and Weeks (2013) have conducted an experiment-type of investigation with the American and British citizens, in a scenario whereby a country is developing a nuclear weapon. Participants in the experiment showed significantly less support for military strikes against a democracy, than against identical autocracies. The positive perception

and respect that democratic societies nurture reciprocally was the major reason given by the respondents.

Second World War, the war between Turks and Greeks in Cyprus in 1974, and the wars in the Former Yugoslavia in the1990s, are the most typical cases mentioned by the authors who reject the empirical claims of democratic peace theory. In the case of WWII, the most interesting case is the decision of the Finish government to side with the Axis powers. However, as Russet (1993: 18) has rightly argued, Finland was actively on war only with the Soviet Union, a non-democratic state which had annexed parts of its territory in the "Winter War" of 1939-1940. As to the argument that Hitler came to power through the electoral process, the fact is that the Weimar Republic was not a consolidated democracy but an aborted attempt to become so. Hitler put the nail in the democratic coffin of the Weimer Republic.

As a side note, the argument that geopolitical and ideological underpinnings of the Cold War created exceptionally peaceful relations between Western democracies is flawed. The bipolar divide, *per se*, did not impose peaceful relations within the two camps. The Eastern communist bloc did not enjoy the same peaceful atmosphere within its ranks, during this period. Soviet Union invaded forcefully Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968). The Soviet Union also engaged in series of armed clashes with communist China in 1969, over a border dispute. China also fought against Vietnam in 1979, in response to the latter's invasion of Cambodia and the overthrow of the China-backed Khmer Rouge regime. All of these countries were communist.

On another historical page, the case of military conflict between Turks and Greeks in Cyprus in 1974 does not discredit the democratic peace theory but quite the opposite. These two countries have several contentious issues with the constant potential for generating tensions and conflicting situations – Cyprus being one of them. In the 1970s, both countries were struggling with the consolidation of democracy. The open war erupted in 1974, whereby the Turkish military invasion of the island was response to disruption triggered by the Greek military junta-backed coup in Cyprus. Therefore, this was an armed conflict between a military dictatorship and an unconsolidated democracy.

The wars of dissolution of former Yugoslavia are an interesting empirical testing for the interaction between democracy and peace. They

testify that the processes of democratization may trigger conflict, when it coalesces with other factor – such as dormant historical animosities, structural problems of the political system and economic hardships. Political pluralism in former Yugoslavia, in the beginning of 1990s, commenced with armed militias and ballot boxes. The causes of bloody wars that plagued former Yugoslavia are complex, with Serbian nationalism and Milosevic being the driving force. However, in no episode of the Yugoslavia's dissolution drama can be said that two stable democracies engaged in military conflict with each other. Wolf and Weed observe that:

"None of the nine Central and Eastern European countries which, according to the Freedom House ratings, have become "free" between 1988 and 1993 (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia) became embroiled in an interstate war (i.e. hostility with more than 1000 battle-related deaths), and only one of them (Slovenia) has been engaged in a small military conflict. By contrast, 8 of the remaining13 less-democratic states have taken up arms since the Soviet empire collapsed (Wolf et al 1996: 177).

The debate about the relation between democratization and conflict is inconclusive. Democratic transition is smoother in the countries with social cohesion, solid political emancipation, middle class, industrialized economy and so one. Likewise, transition to democracy could be particularly instable if it takes place in the absence of the above prerequisites. Hence, it is not possible to draw any generalization about the causality between democratization and conflict. Nor does this issue discredit the explanatory potential of the democratic peace theory.

The UN and the aspiration of perpetual peace

If spreading of democracy advances world peace, the UN should be at the forefront of the global democratic crusade. There are other global benefits from democracy – in addition to peace – such as its interdependency with human rights and good governance. However, these aspects are beyond the purview of this analysis.

The question is whether and how the UN should engage in supporting democracy. There are three facts that need to be emphasized at the ousted of any debate about the UN's work towards supporting democracy in the world. First, many of the UN member states are

non-democratic. One can find among them from fragile states and illiberal democracies to cruel dictatorships. Second, the UN itself lacks democratic credentials, with the Security Council standing as an icon of legal inequality among member states. Third, the UN does not have an independent decision-making capacity. Notwithstanding these constraining circumstances, the UN does not face any impermeable barrier to boost its support for democracy and democratization processes across the world.

First, the UN has quite a long history of activities in support of democratization processes. Kofi Annan (2015) has correctly observed that the UN does more than any other single organization to promote and strengthen democracy. Interestingly, this aspect of UN activities has been largely overlooked by academia and ignored by politics. The truth of the matter is that the UN has been involved with democratization processes since its engagement in the decolonization context, whereby it facilitated the transition of political power from colonial to indigenous institutions (Sejdiu and Onsoy, 2014: 41). Tom Farer observes that UN's role in assisting the self-determination was as important as deciding "which indigenous political parties should be deemed legitimate representatives of the subjugated people and whether the conditions existed for the exercise for an authentic popular choice of post-colonial political status" (cited in Newman and Rich, 2004: 33). Since the beginning of 1990s, and with the fading away of the iron curtain, UN rapidly increased and diversified its support for democracy around the world. The routine activities that the UN undertakes to support democracy range from electoral assistance and technical support for parliaments and election bodies,[3] to exporting of democracy through peacebuilding missions or adoption of the "soft law" (i.e., resolutions and declarations), which promote democratic model of governance. As we have argued elsewhere, the peacebuilding operations of the post-Cold War era have become a vehicle through which the UN has implanted the seeds of democracy in the war-torn countries (Paris, 2001: 36). Furthermore, democracy has been propagated as the only desirable form of governance in most of the landmark documents adopted by the UN in the aftermath of the Cold War, such as the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, Millennium Development Goal, An Agenda for Peace, In Larger Freedom, and so one (Sejdiu and

3 More than one hundred countries have requested and received election assistance from the UN (Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs, 2017). On the other hand, UNDP spends annually US$1.5 billion in supporting democratic governance (UN Official page, http://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/democracy/).

Onsoy, 2014). UN has been cautious in not crossing the sovereignty line. It has done so by repeating that the UN does not advocate any particular model of democracy, because countries will inevitably be "differently democratic," as UNDP emphasizes (2002:4). Yet beyond this slogan, the type of democracy that the UN supports, in its daily work, thrives on the Western-origin concepts of constitutional democracy – based on free and fair elections, civil liberties, separations of power and checks and balances.

Second, for most of the time, the discussion about the UN and democracy is related to the non-democratic nature of organization itself. The Human Rights Council resembles the "table for tyrants," lamented Vaclav Havel (2009: 1). Kofi Annan (2005: 45) addressed the same criticism towards Human Rights Commission (the predecessor of Human Rights Council), where, in his view, "states have sought membership not to strengthen human rights but to protect themselves against criticisms, or to criticize others." The Security Council is the paragon of the UN's non-democratic credentials. However, obsession with the veto power of the "permanent five," should not be intertwined with the support of UN for the democratization of its member states. If the veto power in the Security Council would be erased, Nor Korean citizens would not acquire the freedom of speech nor would Belarus and Eritrea have free elections. This would make states more equal in international system but not more democratic at home. Equality of states at the international realm and the leverage of citizens over the political decision-making within their own states, are not the same thing.

Third, while it is true that the UN is primarily what states make of it, it is also undeniable that the world organization is much more than an administrative service of its members. Inis Claude (1996) has portrayed the image of "two UN's," namely the UN of the member states and the UN of the Secretariat and international civil service. Thomas Weiss (2010) added the third profile, namely the UN of NGOs, academics, commissions. The UN is defined, primarily, by the struggle to accommodate national interests and translate them into collective action for common good. However, "the second" and "the third" UN give to it considerable autonomous political identity. International organizations, observe Weiss and Thakur (2010: xvii), "remain anchored in the state system [...] but they have become (independent) vehicles for setting global agendas and framing global issues, creating and diffusing norms, and collective legitimization."

Furthermore, the fundamental principles of sovereignty and non-intervention in internal affairs of independent states are not as Westphalian as they may sound. They did not prevent the UN to engage in promoting and supporting democratization in the de-colonization context, nor in erecting, under its umbrella, of the international human rights regime. As Boutros-Ghali (1996: 13) aptly emphasized, the word democracy does not find place in the UN Charter, yet it is embodied in its spirit, starting from the Preamble. The norm of democracy is enshrined in some of the most fundamental UN legal instruments that followed the Charter, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and in almost all major post-Cold War declarations and reports of the Secretary General (Sejdiu and Onsoy, 2014).

UN is a system more than a mere intergovernmental organization with a universal membership. It is an expression of political emancipation of mankind, which is manifested through collective attempt to find cure for the world's most acute problems. The UN's agenda has overstretched to cover wide range of issues that permeate every strata of social life. Fortunately, the UN era has not witnessed a major war of the world scale. This fact notwithstanding, the principal mission of the UN, reflected firmly in the Charter, remains "preventing the scourges of war."

The democratic peace theory indicates an ideological path for boosting peace among states. Perhaps the conceptual tools of this theory are not appropriate to tackle the phenomena of wars involving non-state actors (i.e., intra-state conflicts). Yet, the nation states remain the only political actors that can project military force at a large scale, in a systematic way and over a longer period of time. Hence, the objective of preserving the world peace has to do primarily with preventing states from fighting with one another. Within the liberal paradigm of international relations discipline – and their positivist methodology which strives for identifying broadly applicable generalizations in the social life – democratic peace theory offers a formula for ameliorating the confrontational instincts of states. No better explanation than democratic peace has come out as yet from the social sciences, to indicate a clear ideological gateway towards a peaceful coexistence between states.

Conclusion

The least thing one would expect from the UN is to be influenced by the academic products of university cathedras. UN is here to deal with the nuclear tests of North Korea or illiteracy in Africa, not to bother with how Kant and Hobbes theorized about states and war. UN's task is to deal with concrete problems of the world and war is among the most acute ones.

Preventing "scourges of war" is the fundamental task and democratic peace theory purports to have found the political formula for reaching that goal. The recipe for reaching a durable peace among states through making them democratic has been sketched by philosophical writings of Immanuel Kant, in the eighteenth century. Almost two centuries latter this proposition was put into a scientific methodological frame by the endeavors of liberal scholars of political sciences. They managed to establish a sound causal link between (stable) democracy and peace, and to provide solid empirical evidence in support of their proposition. This causality is explained by emphasizing two fundamental attributes of democratic governments that largely influence their mutual interaction. The first element has to do with institutional setup of the democratic countries, which is based on the separation of powers and checks and balances. The second element has to do with the normative features of democratic polity, which is underpinned by the culture of peaceful accommodation of differences and competition. These two features are thought to put considerable constraining effect on democratic countries, if it comes to conflicting situations between them.

The label "stable democracy" – which in common discourse is related to liberal democracy – warranted two additional explanations by the advocates of democratic peace theory. First, not every country that holds periodic multiparty elections is qualified as such by the conceptual parameters of democratic peace theory. Second, the process of democratic transitions might be polarizing and, even, conflicting. However, none of these facts refutes the assumption that, as a general experience, consolidated democracies are disinclined to fight with one another.

The UN is not an intellectual clique but an intergovernmental organization. Yet, as the above analyzes has highlighted, the UN does have

the experience the capacity and the possibility to support spreading of democracy in the world. By supporting democracy at a global realm, the UN does not contribute only to human liberty but foremost to international peace.

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