GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON DEMOCRATISATION: COMPARATIVE VERSUS INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

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Over the past few decades, the transnational dissemination of globalisation has given a major impetus to the further spread and reinforcement of democratic trends across the globe. By advancing the notion of democracy and building on the corresponding institutions, most developed states have got firmly committed to the co-development of normative standards aimed at the effective promotion and implementation of anti-authoritarian values into democratising societies. Simultaneously, the process of democratisation remains closely bound up with a broader spectrum of the global governance challenges and disputes, which in turn leads policymakers and academic scholars to identify its contemporary concept as a complex blend “of core normative values that are more or less satisfied” [1]. However, because each sub-discipline of political science is based upon distinct principles, there exist multiple approaches to the interpretation of the major surge of democracy worldwide. By comparing and contrasting two different stances on the same topic of democratisation by Kuyper [1] and Dryzek [2], this paper seeks to examine and draw parallels in their conceptualisation manners of the same issue that is peculiar both to the field of international relations and the branch of comparative politics respectively.

The first remark to be made is that both and Kuyper’s [1] and Dryzek’s [2] reasoning identify democracy rather as an efficient governmental system in contrast to more autocratic ones. Distinctively, neither expert expresses that kind of stance directly, instead, this idea flows all through the articles, making it easier for readers to gradually immerse themselves wholly in the aspects of global democratisation, which both authors see as positive. This can be proven simply by the fact that both Kuyper [1] Dryzek [2] and put great a deal of emphasis on the idea of the further deliberative democratic expansion. For instance, Kuyper [1] in the very first sentence of his writing’s abstract poses a thought-provoking question “How can democracy best be pursued and promoted in the existing global system?”. This gives a person reading the paper an initial generalised directive, the article is going to be developed toward. Meanwhile, Dryzek [2] begins with a narrower assertion, stating that effectual deliberation is crucial for on-mass democratisation facilitation. By suggesting that, Dryzek [2] as well implicitly advocates the democratic peace argument and opens the discussion on how that kind of worthwhile political regime can be achieved. This again reflects the author’s position and attitudes his paper is likely to cover later on.

The basic argument in both of the articles concerns a strategic need for joint action and a consistent multilateral dialogue. Given that modern international
relations science and comparative politics both closely concentrate on the study of transnational cooperation in the postcolonial world, it is clear why both Dryzek [2] and Kuyper [1] support the view that democratisation should take place “at the level of international regime complexity” [2]. Dryzek [2, pp. 1381-1382] stresses that current political schemes in their essence are “highly undemocratic”, which significantly complicates the liberalisation of consequential deliberation. Accordingly, in bringing about democratisation in sovereign states, deliberate capacity should be seen as the central indicator of potency. According to Dryzek [2, p. 1382], “without inclusiveness, there may be deliberation but not deliberate democracy”, which basically means that public deliberation represents one of the causal drivers in the shaping of democratic political regimes. Similarly, in international relations, the proponents of the pro-democratisation stance and liberal theory recognise inclusive engagement and supranational networking as integral elements of the successful onset of democratisation. Additionally, Kuyper [1, p. 625] highlights the importance of “allowing the contestation over both institutions and the meaning of democracy of itself”, which again fulfills the set of deliberation’s values enumerated by Dryzek [2] throughout his comparative analysis. As such, both of the papers acknowledge that deliberative democratisation does not prevail in a domestic political vacuum, instead, the perspective for global democracy comes in a form of inclusive transnational discussion and deliberation beyond the regional institutions. This approach to democratisation can be reasonably described as a comprehensive response to the still existing lack of sustainability and inequality both in the developed and developing world regions.

If to consider the insights of these two articles, it becomes apparent that international relations paper covers more aspects of the historical background aimed to provide a more in-depth explanation of the recent trends in “the post-World War 2 era” [1, p. 622]. Notably, much attention in Kuyper’s [1] intermediate inferences is devoted to globalisation’s factor and methodological grounds first proposed by Bexell et al [3]. Kuyper [1, p. 625] himself supports the view that concentrating “on values and not the models of democratisation” validates “more systematic and rigorous comparison of different prescriptions”. This should be seen as a fundamental discrepancy to the central sentiment adopted by Dryzek’s [2] in his comparative thoughts. In fact, Dryzek’s [2] entire argument rests on political systems’ theory, in which the author applies traditional models of democratisation to systematically evaluate the prospects of multipolar democracy spread in the matter of deliberative capacity building.

On another account, Dryzek’s [2] paper does not simply revisit the complex concept of democracy from a hypothetically confined perspective, it provides a well-balanced thorough analysis of multiple facets of former academic propositions and research papers. As such, Dryzek [2] avoids being categorical both in his intermediate judgments and the conclusion. Even in the introductory part, he highlights that his piece of work does not seek to refute liberal electoral definition of democracy, instead, it attempts to prove the importance of deliberation component, which, according to Dryzek [2, p. 1380] remains widely disregarded. Such idea development through an open monologue discussion is entirely different from Kuyper’s [1] manner of classical research writing in the form of a “novel strategy which builds upon and goes beyond, previous proposals” [1, p. 621]. What Kuyper does is that after providing a concise foundational insight and introducing the central argument, he splits up his reasoning into four interconnected sections, each of which implies its own questioning, key points, rationale and, importantly, a transition conclusion which in turn links that particular fragment to the sequent point. According to Kuyper [1], this sort of structuring helps to illustrate the ultimate connection between the commonplace normative constraints related to
democratisation and “the complex nature of global democracy” in a more accessible and persuasive way, which, as a result, advances the core stance that supports democratisation as a transnational phenomenon which requires ‘democracy-enhancing’ support and the further “strengthening of democratic chains”. Meanwhile, such consistency in both subject-matter and method represents one of the basic features of academic papers pertaining to international relations branch. Given all the listed points, it is safe enough to assert that in terms of ideas sequence, Kuyper’s article belonging to the discipline of international relations addresses the central issue in a more successive way, which helps the author to condense the main arguments into a congruous system and convey them in a more accessible manner.

In contrast, Dryzek’s [2] article follows value-neutral comparative and integrative approaches, particularly concentrating on analytical empirical evidence. Dryzek [2] does not seek to confront any particular position or phenomena; essentially, Dryzek rejects normative-prescriptive approach and rather aims to dig deeper into the valid triggers and implications of global democratisation with respect to the current political climate in which its process manifests.

Further revealing articles’ features, significant attention in Kuyper’s [1] paper is paid to the role of NGOs, especially the World Trade Organization, as independent political participants in broader global democratisation efforts. In Kuyper’s view, “as the number and density of transnational actors have increased, so has their authoritative and regulatory capacity” [1, p. 622]. As such, normative and institutional prescriptions require further theoretical and empirical work in place, with the involvement of both centralised and cross-border political institutions, states the author. This again reflects the predominance of international relations attributes in Kuyper’s discourse. Similarly, Dryzek touches on the aspect of establishing “transnational regulatory networks” for “deliberative legitimation in public policy” [2, p. 1387-1388]. As one of the examples he mentions “the open method of coordination” adopted across the European Union, which serves as a “unique deliberative form in empowered space that is decisive in producing collective outcomes” [2, p. 1387]. Accordingly, all that alludes to the fact that while Kuyper ultimately focuses on traditional “tracks of the international relations discipline” [1], Dryzek’s [2] paper obliquely accepts the worth of inter-disciplinary values by attempting to embrace the topic of democratisation with reference to international relations’ approach.

To conclude, Kuyper’s [1] and Dryzek’s [2] papers show that both comparative and international politics define democratisation rather as a positive fast-spreading political phenomenon that represents a complex combination of sociopolitical factors. Analysts from both of these sub-disciplines agree on the importance of consistent multilateral dialogue along with the favorable international environment, for the further spread and reinforcement of democratic trends worldwide. Distinctively, Dryzek [2] avoids categorical conclusions and substantiates judgments with substantial empirical justifications and reflectivism, whereas Kuyper [1] prefers rationalist framework of positivist international relations articles, concentrating on values and not the models of democratisation.

References: