

Global Democracy

Normative and Empirical Perspectives

Edited by

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Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>List of tables</i>	viii
<i>Notes on contributors</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiv
1 Introduction: mapping global democracy	1
DANIELE ARCHIBUGI, MATHIAS KOENIG-ARCHIBUGI AND RAFFAELE MARCHETTI	
2 Models of global democracy: in defence of cosmo-federalism	22
RAFFAELE MARCHETTI	
3 Citizens or stakeholders? Exclusion, equality and legitimacy in global stakeholder democracy	47
TERRY MACDONALD	
4 Is democratic legitimacy possible for international institutions?	69
THOMAS CHRISTIANO	
5 Cosmopolitan democracy: neither a category mistake nor a categorical imperative	96
ANDREAS FOLLESDAL	
6 Regional versus global democracy: advantages and limitations	115
CAROL C. GOULD	
7 Towards the metamorphosis of the United Nations: a proposal for establishing global democracy	132
TIM MURITHI	
8 Flexible government for a globalized world	150
BRUNO S. FREY	
9 Global democracy and domestic analogies	160
MATHIAS KOENIG-ARCHIBUGI	

10	Global democracy for a partially joined-up world: toward a multi-level system of public power and democratic governance? KATE MACDONALD	183
11	Civil society and global democracy: an assessment JONAS TALLBERG AND ANDERS UHLIN	210
12	Global capitalism and global democracy: subverting the other? B.S. CHIMNI	233
13	From peace between democracies to global democracy DANIELE ARCHIBUGI	254
14	The promise and perils of global democracy RICHARD A. FALK	274
	<i>Index</i>	285

6 Regional versus global democracy Advantages and limitations

Carol C. Gould

Introduction

Regionalism has come to the fore in recent economic and political developments and has been an important subject of attention in contemporary political science. Especially in view of the rise to prominence of the European Union (EU) over the past decades (despite the various setbacks), theorists have taken notice of the new forms of regional coordination and cooperation not only there but in other parts of the world (e.g., Latin America, southeast Asia etc.), where these particularly concern economic matters, though in some cases political organization as well. However, there has been considerably less attention to the normative implications of these developments, though some theorists (especially of international law) have pointed to the regional human rights agreements that are beginning to be taken seriously, while other theorists (especially of international relations) have commented on the democratic deficit in the EU. Further, while theorists of democracy and human rights have analysed the justifications and roles that these norms may play in *national* contexts and increasingly even in *global* contexts, scant attention has been given to their potential for guiding and constraining *regional* economic and political development. Instead, several cosmopolitan democratic theorists, as also cosmopolitan theorists of justice, seem to want to move the discussion directly from the level of the nation-state to that of the world as a whole, with little analysis of the emerging regionalism, increasingly recognized as important in practical affairs and in political science generally.

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Where more cosmopolitan forms of democracy have been discussed, what many thinkers have in mind is either full global democracy or else simply more democratic accountability in the institutions of global governance, again without attention to the normative requirements for democracy in the new regional associations. And where regionalism is considered in its implications for democracy, the discussions have tended to concern only the case of the EU, with considerations directed to strengthening its parliament, implementing European political parties etc. Equally striking and important, perhaps, where regionalism is projected elsewhere and evaluated for its potential contributions for new forms of cooperation, it tends to be thought of exclusively in terms of the model provided by the EU. Yet, one of the main advantages of regionalization would seem to be the retention or enabling of a certain level of cultural diversity around the world, rather than supposing that all regions should simply follow the model of the EU.

There have been noteworthy exceptions to the lack of attention to regions among normative theorists. In particular, two political philosophers who have placed some weight on regionalism are Yael Tamir and Jürgen Habermas. While neither has especially emphasized regional human rights agreements, both have called attention to regions as important settings for increased transnational cooperation and regulation, particularly concerning economic and social justice matters. Expanding my own earlier account (Gould 2004), I will investigate whether the development of regional forms of democracy bounded by regional human rights agreements constitutes an important new focus for normative theory. But I also want to compare the arguments for such regional forms to those that have been given for more global institutions of democracy, presumably bounded by global human rights agreements and protections. In order to do so, I will attempt to lay out and assess some of the arguments that can be given for cosmopolitan democracy as well, and to briefly consider the relation between the regional and global arenas in this context, as well as to indicate some flaws that I believe have characterized the entire discussion of transnational democracy to date. These concern the validation that they continue to offer to old notions of sovereignty – by transposing them to the global level – and their omission of the numerous other domains in which democratic decision making is normatively required. These domains include new transnational communities and interactions that criss-cross these presumably orderly nested territorial frameworks, and also the quasi-public institutional contexts that make up corporations and other important social, economic and political non-state actors. I suggest that no forward-looking democratic theory can claim to be complete without considering these important new domains.

Moreover, the ways that have been proposed to increase democratic participation in the institutions of global governance also need to be taken into account and related to the regional and global spheres. While it will not be possible to lay out a complete and coherent picture of increased democratic participation at all these various levels in this chapter, I suggest that the omission of the consideration of regional and transnational forms of democratic participation, including how they pertain to the economy, render the global accounts of democracy incomplete if not wholly empty of content. Moreover, in all these interrelated inquiries concerning the scope of expanded democracy, we will need to evaluate again the relevance of the various criteria that have been promulgated – the ‘all-affected principle’, more communitarian ones, citizenship claims etc.

Extending regional democracy framed by human rights agreements

In this section, we may ask whether it is in fact desirable to prioritize new forms of regional democracy within human rights frameworks of regional scope. In the early 1990s, Yael Tamir offered a justification for an emphasis on regional cooperation that focuses on the need for economic, military and ecological coordination and planning beyond the level of nation-states. She argues that this sort of cooperation, as well as participation in decisions at that level, is required by what she calls *self-rule* rather than by considerations of *national self-determination*. The latter is best realized by autonomous national communities below the level of nation-states that are ‘sheltered under a regional umbrella’. On her account, ‘self-rule implies that individuals should affect all levels of the decision-making process’, while ‘national identity is best cultivated in a small, relatively closed, and homogeneous framework’ (Tamir 1993, 151). Moreover, she goes on to argue that ‘regional organizations will enable nations to cooperate as equal partners, rather than support one’s nation (sic) domination over others’ (153). Thus, in Tamir’s view, the regional focus meets the need for the larger-scale coordination in modern economies that goes beyond the capacities of existing nation-states and at the same time is ‘more likely to foster toleration and diversity than political arrangements based on oppression and domination’ (153).

It may be observed that Tamir (1993) here aligns herself with the ‘affected interests’ justification of democratic participation. ‘Self-rule’, she writes, ‘is meant to allow individuals to participate in the making of those decisions that have a major influence on their lives’ (150). More important for our purposes, her notion of a regional alliance among

nations suggests that the justification of a regional focus should not be framed directly in communitarian terms, where the region would simply be a larger or broader community. Rather, she suggests that regions support communal concerns, practices and traditions indirectly by potentially allowing nations more autonomy within them.

However, given that Tamir's understanding of a regional association is a revisionist and ideal one in its proposal for nations generally smaller than existing states, we should perhaps instead look at the *de facto* current regions of the world and consider whether democracy within them is a plausible and appropriate normative desideratum. Of course, one difficulty here is identifying what is to count as a region and, especially if it is geographically defined, whether it encompasses an entire continent or is better understood as having a smaller extent.

Habermas advances a view that gives an important place to regionalism conceived along continental lines – for example, in the EU – which he regards as *transnational* in distinction from *supranational*, where the latter applies to fully global institutions and, in particular, the United Nations (UN). In his discussion in *The Divided West* (2006), and as further developed in his more recent piece 'A Political Constitution for the Pluralist World Society?' (in Habermas 2008), he argues (like Tamir) for the enhanced role of regions in coordinating economic and ecological issues as required by globalization, instead of arguing for new forms of cosmopolitan democracy or world government to address these issues. Indeed, even the institutions of global governance seem to play a secondary role in Habermas's account, inasmuch as he regards them as not strong enough to address the financial, monetary, regulatory and redistributive requirements thrown up by economic globalization. Only strong continental regions can address these, and perhaps such regions can develop new democratic legitimacy over time. Nonetheless, Habermas seems to allow that a lot of the work of these regions can proceed by judicial and legal processes rather than strictly political means. This is even more strikingly the case for what he calls the supranational domain of the UN, which is to concern itself primarily with the maintenance of security and the protection of people against human rights abuses. Crucially, he limits the relevant human rights to the traditional civil and political ones, rather than economic and social ones. Moreover, he seems to think the former set of human rights can be protected through courts (especially a more effective International Criminal Court) as well as through a strengthened Security Council in the UN. In his view, less democracy and less politics are needed at this supranational level; thereby he thinks the criticism that democratic legitimacy is missing at this level is defused. Presumably, the situation

is further aided by opening up the functioning of these institutions to deliberative input in a global public sphere.

Along these lines, in *The Divided West* Habermas (2006) explains:

On this conception, a suitably reformed world organization could perform the vital but clearly circumscribed functions of securing peace and promoting human rights at the supranational level in an effective and non-selective fashion without having to assume the state-like character of a world republic. At the intermediate, transnational level, the major powers would address the difficult problems of a global domestic politics which are no longer restricted to mere coordination but extend to promoting actively a rebalanced world order. They would have to cope with global economic and ecological problems within the framework of permanent conferences and negotiating forums. (138)

In his more recent piece 'A Political Constitution for the Pluralist World Society?' Habermas (2008) speaks more directly of a 'constitutionalized world society', but explains it as 'a multilevel system that can make possible a global domestic politics that has hitherto been lacking, especially in the fields of global economic and environmental policies, even without a world government' (322). As in the earlier account, its structure is held to consist in three levels or 'arenas'. The first, the supranational, is dominated by the UN and limited to the functions of 'securing peace and human rights on a global scale'. It remains composed of nation-states rather than world citizens. In order to deal with issues of global justice and even the less demanding Millennium Development Goals, Habermas calls for the elaboration, in what he terms the transnational arena, of 'regional or continental regimes equipped with a sufficiently representative mandate to negotiate for whole continents and to wield the necessary powers of implementation for large territories' (322). What he calls 'a manageable number of global players' (325) would be needed to negotiate effective economic and environmental regulations. He believes that conflict among them could be avoided by the enhanced UN security regime he envisions. The third level in this account remains that of nation-states, which, however, require supplementation by regional alliances, to better deal with the 'growing interdependencies of the global economy' that overtax 'the chains of legitimation' within nation-states. As Habermas notes (in an appeal to the affectedness principle), 'globalized networks in all dimensions have long since made nonsense of the normative assumption in democratic theory of a congruence between those responsible for political decision-making and those affected by political decisions' (325).

Habermas (2008) views current regional groupings (e.g., Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN], North American Free Trade

Agreement [NAFTA], Organization of American States [OAS] etc.) as weak and he calls for strengthened alliances that could 'assume the role of collective pillars of a global domestic politics at the transnational level . . . and confer the necessary democratic legitimacy on the outcomes of transnational political accords' (326). He regards the EU as the only current example of this sort of major player. He calls for greater political integration in the EU, with democratic legitimation, which would also enable it to serve as a model for other regions. Yet the extent of democratic decision making within these regions is not clearly addressed here, and states (rather than the region's citizens) seem to retain many of their traditional prerogatives. Certainly, as far as interactions among the regions are concerned, Habermas primarily envisions forms of negotiation and compromise.

One of the advantages of the emphasis on regions that Habermas points to is that their development is probably a relatively realistic expectation in contemporary world affairs. While their precise borders and scope remain an open question, it is nonetheless evident that some degree of regionalization is taking place with regard to economic and even political matters. Thus, I agree that it is plausible to argue for enhanced regional scope for democratic decision making on the grounds that it can be envisaged, as opposed to the more visionary introduction of full global democracy.

Before considering some other possible advantages of a regional focus, we can add an emphasis that is somewhat underplayed in Habermas's account. This is the importance of regional human rights agreements to frame increased regional democratization processes. Importantly, a broader adoption of such human rights agreements would protect individuals operating in the new cross-border communities and provide a basis for appeal in connection with cross-border democratic decisions about their collective activities. Moreover, such agreements can serve not only to protect human rights but to establish them as goals around which social and economic development can be mobilized. Although Habermas at various points recognizes the significance of the European human rights courts, his focus on guaranteeing human rights at the supranational level of the UN perhaps leads him to underplay this emerging regional level of human rights agreements and jurisprudence.

Beyond its relative practicability, regional democracy has some other possible advantages that can be noted here, which have to do with notions of communities and with cultural issues and interpretations. In distinction from Tamir, who thought that regions could primarily provide a home for diverse nations – generally smaller than present nation-states and relatively more homogeneous – it could also be said

that regionalization can itself permit greater expression of diversity in global mores and even human rights interpretations. Of course, this would be the case only to the degree that the regions themselves, though not homogeneous, represent forums for traditions that overlap with each other. Needless to say, this can only be strictly the case in an idealized representation because, like culture generally, the existing strands of traditions within regions are themselves very diverse. Yet, to the degree that there are overlapping shared histories and traditions, respecting these can enable some diversity not only in the forms of democratic decision making but in the human rights interpretations that may be offered or emphasized by these various regions.

The communitarian considerations have a similar bearing. Although quite disparate, some of the traditions and local mores are perhaps more similar to each other than they are to those in other regions. Instead of seeing the region as a single community, however, we can spell it out more sensibly in a way that is consonant with what I have called common activities (along with social networks), rather than community generically. That is, like the social connections model, such an approach looks to actually-existing interrelations that develop over time as serving to bring people together, not only in new collectives, but as sharing new sorts of goals and projects in relation to the economic, ecological and political problems that they face. Further, in my view, such spheres of common activity serve to justify new arenas for democratic decision making, without involving an appeal to inherently vague notions of affected interests.

Finally, we can note another point in favour of the regional emphasis and that is that it preserves a connection to localities and hence to territory. Despite the virtual character of much activity under globalization, a connection to place remains significant. Of course, this territorial interpretation of regions can also be a negative, inasmuch as many contemporary activities and interconnected communities are truly transnational in a way that transcends regions. Also, localities themselves can in this way be transnational, as I have argued elsewhere (Gould 2007). Indeed, a general drawback to a region-centred approach to democracy is that it can fail to deal with the many problems that are truly global, especially perhaps ecological ones such as climate change.

Other drawbacks of the regional emphasis are normative as well as practical. In particular, we can mention the potential that these new forms of association might have for engendering conflicts between or among regions (thereby replicating and perhaps intensifying the conflicts among nation-states at this new level). In addition, it is possible that an established regionalism could reify and perhaps intensify cultural

differences in the interpretation of basic international norms, including possibly weakening the force of some human rights.

As for the regional human rights agreements themselves, we can cite several problems. Only the European ones are really effective, and even there the implementation of them varies considerably and is less consistent and more difficult in parts of the continent – for example, Turkey and Russia. The Inter-American agreement is even less efficacious, and the African one almost not at all. As James Cavallaro and Stephanie Brewer (2008) point out in their article ‘Reevaluating Regional Human Rights Litigation in the Twenty-First Century: The Case of the Inter-American Court’, in situations where deference to the rule of law is lacking, such agreements are not respected. Thus, there are two major problems with these agreements – they are lacking in most world regions and, where they exist, they are implemented in a rather spotty fashion.

Extending democracy globally (within global human rights agreements)

We can now turn to the alternative approach that emphasizes moving directly to global forms of democracy. Those who have recently advocated such an approach include Torbjörn Tännsjö (2008), Raffaele Marchetti (2006, 2008 and this volume) and Eric Cavallero (2009) (see also Murithi, this volume). I will briefly consider the approaches of Marchetti and Cavallero here. Although these global democrats may recognize principles of subsidiarity, those who call themselves cosmopolitan democrats tend to explicitly argue for views that incorporate both regional and global perspectives (e.g., Held 1995). I will briefly touch on the role of subsidiarity in a final section in which I summarize the core elements of my own constructive view.

Raffaele Marchetti in a 2006 article and in his 2008 book *Global Democracy: For and Against*, and Eric Cavallero, especially in a recent article ‘Federative Global Democracy’ in the journal *Metaphilosophy*, have proposed robust conceptions of global democracy, understood in terms of a strong federation at the global level, which takes charge of decision making about world affairs and operates through new global representative institutions or parliaments.

Without reviewing their positions in detail here, I want to focus on a few philosophical issues in their accounts and to defend and contrast the alternative view that I have presented on these matters. My own approach has stressed the relevance of two criteria, both of which justify extending democracy beyond (and beneath) nation-states, though each criterion has a distinctive application. The first is the ‘common activities’

criterion noted above. While this necessarily remains quite general, it proposes that democracy is called for in all institutional contexts where people are related in joint activities oriented to common goals. These may also be called ‘systems of cooperation’. But that phrase may over-estimate the orderly, intentional and systematic character of these enterprises, rather than seeing them as institutional contexts that have arisen historically or emerge in ongoing practical activities of production, social association and governance. I argue that in all these institutional frameworks, increasingly of a transnational sort, members of these associations have equal rights to participate in their direction. The argument for this, in short, is that inasmuch as participation in such shared activities is a condition for people’s freedom or agency and since they are equally free in this positive sense of freedom, they have rights to co-determine these common or joint activities, which thus take the form of rights of democratic participation in deciding about their course or direction (Gould 1988, 80–8).

The second criterion recognizes that, especially with intensive globalization, the decisions of many institutions in economic, social and political life impact on people at a distance, which gives rise in turn to rights of input into the decisions in question rather than full and equal participation. I further specify the nature of the impact or effect on others here that leads it to rise to the level of a normative requirement in terms of people being *importantly affected* by the decision in question, understood as *affected in their possibilities of fulfilling basic human rights* (Gould 2004, 210–12; 2009b).

What lies behind the distinction between these criteria and also between the notions of input and full participation is in part the critique I and others have offered of the ‘all-affected’ principle as a general justification of democracy (Saward 2000, 37; Gould 2004, 175–8). That principle asserts that all affected by a decision should be able to participate in making it. In fact, in his 2008 book, Marchetti relies on just such a principle to justify global democracy, which he claims follows from the idea that the choice-bearers and the choice-makers (as he puts it) should be one and the same. This therefore constitutes one interpretation of the principle of self-rule at the heart of many conceptions of democracy (cf. Tamir above). Marchetti adds the idea that this coincidence of choice-bearers and choice-makers applies to what he calls the public domain, or ‘public constituencies’. Thus, he proposes that ‘a political principle has to be adopted that grants to all choice-bearing citizens as members of the public constituency in each level of political action, including the global and trans-border, a political voice and the power to make the choice-makers accountable’ (Marchetti 2006, 294).

However, two problems can be discerned with this sort of view. The first is the inherent vagueness involved in determining all affected by a given decision. Because of the widespread consequences of decisions and policies, particularly in the economic domain, it is difficult to contain the number of choice-bearers or affected people. This could well lead nearly all decisions to be moved up to the global level, contrary to the intention of such theories to maintain some account of levels of decision making. And if decisions all become truly global, clearly people's degree of input or influence on these decisions would become extraordinarily dilute. I suggest that some notion of *important effects* needs to be added. Even so, we may wonder whether that will work to ground democratic decision making, particularly if we want to retain some notion of equal rights of participation, which would be violated by people's being *differentially* affected by decisions as in fact they are (cf. Saward 2000).

The second problem is that the demarcation of a *public constituency* remains somewhat obscure in Marchetti's account, and would have a question-begging air if it were to be used as a criterion for determining who is to participate, since it is precisely how a public is to be constituted – that is, who is to be included in which 'public' decision-making process – that is in question. We cannot assume that we know what the relevant public constituency is in advance, and it would be circular to define it in terms of those affected by a decision. Clearly, people are affected by private and interpersonal decisions as well,¹ so it is natural that Marchetti would want to appeal to some notion of public issues or constituencies. But he would need an independent definition of these, which he does not seem yet to have provided.²

¹ An extreme example is offered by Pogge (1992) in which someone might claim 'I should be allowed a vote on the permissibility of homosexuality, in all parts of the world, because the knowledge that homosexual acts are performed anywhere causes me great distress' (64n28).

² Marchetti's most recent reformulation of his view in terms of an 'all-inclusive principle' (this volume) raises additional concerns. The idea that 'before any frame-setting decision is taken, every single individual has to be consulted or, alternatively and more feasibly, has to be granted the right to appeal' (38) seems deeply impractical or even impossible, especially since framework setting would be an endlessly evolving process (even leaving aside the cross-cultural barriers involved). It would also appear to be insufficiently protective of privacy, understood not only in terms of a sphere of individual autonomy, but also as a domain of our significant social relations. The proposed priority to decisions by a global public in the first instance seems to land us on a slippery slope in which it would be difficult to demarcate the private from the public sphere in any principled way and in which nearly all decisions could become subject to the global polity (with its coercive power).

It can be added that a notion of affected interests shares the problem of interest views generally, inasmuch as the notion of interest is highly individual and not altogether clear in any case. Indeed, we can ask whether an individual can be adequately construed as a bundle of interests; and also whether simple impact on individuals, without an account of their social relatedness, provides a sufficient basis for justifying democracy. The common activities view has the advantage here in being futural (defined by shared goals) and socially based, recognizing the diversity of arenas for collective actions and decision making. It shares with Marchetti's view an emphasis on people's equal freedom, but in my view this requires not only bare freedom of choice (which Marchetti highlights) but also a positive notion of the development of people over time, which presupposes their having access to material and social conditions for their activity, which moreover can take the form of both collective and individual agency. I suggest that a view of this sort can provide a better account of when co-determination of decisions – that is, democratic participation – is required. I will later consider the implications of this notion for decision making at the regional and global levels.

On the notion of impact on individuals which is central to 'affected interests' approaches to justifying democracy, I agree, then, that such impacts are important, particularly with regard to the exogenous effects of decisions on those not part of any given collectivity. But my suggestion is that this gives rise to the somewhat less demanding requirement of significant *input* into the decision in question, and to a notion of equal consideration of interests rather than strictly equal rights to participate. The latter remains a notion of equal rights to co-determine all spheres of common activities that are conditions for members' free activity, where these spheres characterize existing institutional contexts as well as historically arising communities. Such institutions and communities are intentionally understood to be the institutions and communities that they are. These contexts for decision making therefore do not have to be constituted each time anew by considering who is affected by a given decision, and this is indeed one of the strengths of this account, I suggest. Yet, the notion of being importantly affected with regard to human rights fulfilment remains relevant in innovating new institutional ways for people to have input into decisions, including distant ones, that significantly affect them, and this has consequences for enabling democratic input into the institutions of global governance (Gould 2009b). It is again an advantage of this account that the required input into a given decision can be gathered independently of a master plan that in advance would group everyone affected into established constituencies.

(The proposed account would, however, call for the introduction of new forms of deliberation across borders.)

In a way somewhat related to Marchetti, Eric Cavallero (2009) uses the all-affected principle to argue for a federative account of global democracy. He specifies the all-affected principle in terms of ‘an analysis of relevant effects such that those relevantly affected by an activity should have a say in the democratic processes that ultimately regulate (or fail to regulate) it’. He explains: ‘According to this interpretation, an individual is relevantly affected by the exercise of a sovereign competence if (1) its exercise imposes governance norms on her, or (2) its exercise could otherwise reasonably be expected to impose external costs on her’ (56). He explains the first case by drawing on Andrew Kuper’s *Democracy Beyond Borders* (2004) and on my *Globalizing Democracy and Human Rights* (2004), pointing to the importance of the decisions and policies of the institutions of global governance that have important impacts on people’s lives but in which they have no say. It is in this context that I have proposed devising new forms of democratic deliberation that permit input into the epistemic communities of these institutions, as well as new forms of transnational representation into their working, initially through international non-governmental organizations (Gould 2004, 2009b).

The second part of Cavallero’s (2009) interpretation of this principle, the one that emphasizes external costs, is somewhat more problematic. A strength of his analysis is the detailed breakdown he gives of the types of external costs that may be relevant. With this analysis, Cavallero opposes my own proposal to specify ‘affectedness’ in terms of importantly affected interests, in which the latter are explained by reference to impact on people’s human rights, especially their basic human rights. He argues that my proposal is underinclusive. Cavallero gives the example of a river that two countries share, where, he argues, ‘it seems reasonable that citizens of the country downstream should have some say in determining what kinds and levels of pollutants are permitted to be discharged into the river upstream – even if unregulated discharges will not actually impact anyone’s basic needs or human rights’ (56). But in response to this objection, we can offer a few comments. First, many pollutants will in fact impact health, an important human right. This impact would support input by the affected second country into the decisions of the first regarding pollutants. Second, it can be noted that the criterion of impact on basic human rights gives rise to the requirement for input by people at a distance, and is not designed to rule out the emergence of new transnational communities that share economic and ecological interests

organized in the mode of 'common activities'. Instead, the principle of distant impact is supposed to supplement those communities, whether old or newly emerging (as may happen in this case of the shared river), national or transnational. Third, the required input for which I advocate is also designed to supplement the sorts of considerations that are provided by stakeholder theory, where even impacts on relevant stakeholders (e.g., the community) that do not rise to the level of affecting their human rights are normatively required to be considered in decision making, even if the requirement does not rise to the level of mandating direct input in the decisions or shared democratic participation. Consideration of the impact on stakeholders can take the form, for example, of environmental impact assessments, which the decision makers should be expected to take seriously as a guide to their policies. While it is nearly always desirable to hear from the relevant stakeholders (Gould 2002), a consideration of their interests can sometimes occur without this.

In Cavallero's view, where policy decisions foreseeably impose external costs on others outside the polity in question, what he calls the 'internalization condition' kicks in, which 'requires that certain otherwise external costs be internalized through the constitution of composite polities comprising all who bear those costs' (Cavallero 2009, 58). Again, my problem with this is that the external costs, especially of economic policies, are extremely wide-ranging and so might well drive us to fully global levels of 'composite polities' too readily. Cavallero discusses this briefly by ruling out the adverse effects of macroeconomic policies that are designed to produce public goods (61). But this exception is not adequately explained or fully justified in his account.

We can mention a few other difficulties with such global democracy views. One, present especially in Cavallero's (2009) account, concerns the generalization that it entails of the notion of sovereignty now raised to the global level. We can object that this would likely simply exacerbate the problems with sovereignty that were pointed out long ago by Harold Laski among others. As Jeanne Morefield (2005) points out, Laski argued that the notion of state sovereignty serves to obscure and maintain the underlying conflicts in society between capital and labour, and the role played by the state in upholding the power of large corporations by coercively maintaining institutions that protect unlimited private property. In addition, state sovereignty in its internal dimension often involves the exercise of excessive coercion. It is not clear that simply expanding sovereignty to the global level will counter these problematic features. (Of course, Cavallero and other global democrats do usually propose some constraints on sovereignty in terms of human rights

regimes. But the way these would work to constrain sovereignty and protect individuals is not adequately elaborated.)

Further, global democrats like Marchetti and Tännsjö tend to give what I take to be an insufficiently developed response to the standard challenge posed by the problem of possible tyranny, if all means of coercion come under the control of a global government. This is what I refer to as the *Weimar problem*. To put it in crude terms, human error and other social factors can conceivably lead to electing dictators, particularly if democracy is understood to consist entirely of voting and majority rule. The response that these theorists give is that tyranny is less likely with a democratic global government than without it. But this isn't yet much of an argument, insofar as it simply posits that the global government will continue to function democratically indefinitely. Indeed, according to an alternative line of argument, while the concentration of the means of coercion that such a system entails may indeed work out well, it could also function to exacerbate any anti-democratic or authoritarian tendencies that may arise and could thus contribute to eliminating freedom from a substantial portion of the populace. It is not necessarily that such global democratic views are incorrect, then, but rather that they tend to be a bit too rosy in disregarding these system defects that can arise both from institutional design and human error (or from more malicious causes as well).

A multi-dimensional conception of transnational democracy

In closing, we can propose that an adequate conception of globalizing democracy should be attuned to the historical possibilities of the present situation and should accommodate a diversity of existing forms of social organization and a variety of transnational relationships while still advancing more cosmopolitan conceptions of democracy and human rights. The emphasis on beginning with the current situation suggests the desirability of focusing on democratizing the functioning of global governance institutions (e.g., by enabling public input and deliberation, including by distantly situated representatives, as contributions to the functioning of their 'epistemic communities'). An emphasis on what is foreseeable also supports a focus on regional forms of democracy as a possible eventual development of the contemporary trends towards (limited) regionalism, within new or strengthened human rights agreements. The forms of such regional democracy remain in large part to be constructed. Viewed from the present, forms of global democracy seem more far-fetched, though there is a significant current movement to

introduce a People's Assembly in the UN. The human rights framework for the new forms of global democracy will also need considerable expansion, in ways that can nonetheless preserve some openness for local diversity in interpretation, compatible with an overall commitment to the equality and universality of human rights norms.

Yet, it can be observed that neither regional nor global democracy, nor even the democratization of the institutions of global governance, would be sufficient for transnational democracy. Two additional features of an adequate approach to such new modes of democracy would be needed. One involves addressing the emerging cross-border or transnational and transregional communities that cross national or even regional boundaries but that fall short of full globality. Most emerging communities, whether economic, ecological or communicative (e.g., through the Internet) are in fact transnational in this way and not fully global, where the term transnational connotes a more partial notion than does the global. If we emphasize, as I have proposed, the way that common activities come to be organized as part of ongoing practices, we can see the need for introducing democratic participation into each of these emerging institutions or communities (see T. Macdonald and K. Macdonald, both this volume), for additional normative and empirical argument on this). This, in turn, resonates well with what I regard as a second requirement for an adequate account of enhanced democracy in a more globalized society. This is that democracy at the level of government and governance cannot be adequately realized without a complementary intensification of democratic participation in the range of smaller-scale institutions in economic, social and cultural life and in more local political forms as well (Gould 2007). As Pateman (1970) (following Mill) has argued, the practice of participation is educative. And in addition, as I have proposed, opportunities for democratic participation are normatively required for all members active in these various institutions.

In short, then, the criteria of common activities and impact on human rights fulfilment for distant people support the need for a distinctively *multidimensional* approach to transnational democracy. Such an approach advocates increasing democratic input into global governance institutions, participation in economic and social institutions generally, new forms of regional democracy, and the creation of new cross-border and transnational communities, themselves organized democratically. In addition, robust forms of global democracy have a place in this picture to the degree that people recognize that they share important goals with all others worldwide. It is also plausible to suppose that principles of subsidiarity will be relevant in determining how decisions

should be allocated among many of these levels of institutions and communities, at least to the extent that notions of locality and territoriality continue to play a role. But it would be a mistake to limit our account of transnational democracy to nested territories (cf. Pogge, 1992, Held 1995), inasmuch as many communities cross territories while not being fully global. I have proposed dealing with that problem by advocating democratic participation in all those contexts. Of course, a necessary condition for successfully implementing such forms of transnational democracy is the existence of regional and global protections of human rights. However difficult, it seems to me that such frameworks are needed both to protect individual and minority rights in cross-border and transnational communities, and to frame a more egalitarian fulfilment of basic human rights worldwide (including economic rights to means of subsistence), which will hopefully be carried out by the newly democratized institutions at regional, transnational and global levels. But the difficult consideration of the relation of regional and global democracy to this requirement of global justice would require an extended treatment of its own.

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