
Globalization: A Threat to Territorial Democracy; Multilateralism; and the Way Forward

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Abstract. This paper examines the threat globalization poses on territorial democracy; multilateralism and the way forward. There is the need to rethink democracy beyond nation state level as global social relations encompass transactions and interdependencies that connect people on a global level. This paper also examines the reasons for this threat through the three structural mismatches of geography beyond countries, public beyond nations and governance beyond state. This paper made use of the explorative method to contribute to the understanding of the effects of globalization and its effects on territorial democracy. In order to illuminate this study, the authors of this paper made use of Global democratic theory where five strands of the theories were identified and argued for multilateralism as the way forward for a more democratized global system. Although multilateralism just like other strands of the theory has weakness which was identified, recommendations were made on how to further strengthen the normative assumptions in order to add to, promote and safeguard global democracy.

Keywords: Democracy, Globalization, Multilateralism, Territorial, Global Democratic Theory

Introduction

The current trend of the globality of the world has channelled new course for rethinking democracy beyond nation state and this has dominated scholarly articles and this scholarly articles focus is being stimulated by the widely shared recognition that emerging forms of globalization are posing threats to territorial forms of representation, participation, and accountability within states, as well as opening up new opportunities for political activity beyond the state (McGrew, 2002). It is almost impossible to call the democracy practiced within the territorial boundaries of nation state as akin to the democracy beyond the state. The state where the territorial democracy emanated from has a pivotal role to play to a more democratized global system.

However, globalization has made it easier for NGO's, corporations and terrorist groups to operate across territorial borders (Bray & Slaughter, 2015). Territorial democracy is institutionalized as a representative system that involves competitive elections and a publicly determined rule of law which came to be practiced in a territorial entity (polity) with definite borders wrapped around a people who constitute a nation (Bray & Slaughter, 2015). Democracy can be defined as giving or delivering on the peoples power that is democracy is generally maintained that all affected people (often dubbed the public) should have due participation and in control over the decisions that shape their collective lives which means that a democratic mindsets generally believe that peoples power can promote other key qualities of living well, such as justice, liberty, morality, peace, prosperity and solidarity (Scholte, 2018).

The definition of democracy provided by Scholte (2018) views the public beyond territorial boundaries that is viewing the public as people across the world that is affected by problems that comes with globalization.

Contemporary globalization amongst other things poses great threats to these core premises of territorial democracy, in terms of geography for example, increased global connectivity through formidable means of transportation means that the spaces of social relations frequently do not correspond fully to country's realms. With the current global social

relations which encompasses transactions and interdependencies that connect people beyond state territorial boundaries there is a need or course to rethink democracy beyond state level to ensure that peoples (world citizens) power is delivered and this is the main thrust of this paper and it will be explored by making use of the Global Peace Theory and the we will be arguing in favour of multilateralism as the way forward towards a more democratized global system. This will be done by first identifying the reason why we need to rethink territorial democracy and the authors of this paper will do this by identifying three structural mismatches between global connectivity and territorial democracy as identified by (Scholte, 2018), then we will proceed to the conceptual part by giving the theoretical framework which will help in answering my research question of how multilateralism is the most suitable way to go for a more democratized global system when compared to other strands of the Global Democratic Theory.

The aim of this paper is to contribute to the understanding of how globalization has provoked scholars in the field of Global studies to develop and test theories that will ensure a more democratized global system.

Scholte (2018) identified three structural mismatches between global connectivity and territorial democracy which includes;

1. Geography beyond boundaries
2. Public beyond nations
3. Governance beyond states

Geography beyond boundaries: with the advent of global social relations that encompasses transactions and interdependencies that connect people on a planetary scale (Scholte, 2018) it is impossible for the construction of territorial democracy to be sustainable in a global world. If one look critically at the problems confronting the global system ranging from the issue of climate change, global warming, offshore finance, exchange rate, LGBT pride, racial equality, human rights etc issues like this transcends beyond geographical boundaries thus, territorial democracy that is contained within country space cannot deliver adequate peoples power in a more global world like the one we live in today. If democracy is contained within country spaces but the forces that democracy is meant to control are not, then peoples power correspondingly falls short (Scholte, 2018).

It is important to mention that this is not eroding territorial based democracy as this is the first step towards global democracy but with globalization and the interconnectedness in the world we live in today, territorial based democracy is not enough to deliver peoples power in contemporary global societies that transcends beyond geography. If social topography includes more than one nation state, then it is necessary to move from territorial based democracy to a more global based democracy in order to deliver maximum people's power.

Public beyond Nation: Territorial based democracy assumes that the public is associated with a nation state, which is not always the case. With globalization all affected people by a problem do not always fall within a national grouping (Scholte, 2018) for example the recent outbreak of corona virus which originated from Wuhan in China has affected people beyond China making the public of the corona virus beyond nation and to be able to curb the spread of this deadly virus we need much more than territorial democracy (WHO, 2020). Other related examples include LGBT pride, disabled rights, gender, race, religion etc. in contemporary politics what we see is that groups affected with a common problem regardless of their nationality come together to fight a common course.

Governance beyond State: In contemporary global politics, the neat picture of political life contained within nation state is complicated by a complex web of governance networks that stretch across territorial borders, which are often highly technocratic and blur traditional lines of representation and account ability (Bray & Slaughter, 2015). In the same vain (Scholte, 2018) asserted that compounding that complexities of geography and publics are complexities

of governance in global politics. Territorial democracy is primarily concerned with the delivering of people's power within the jurisdiction of a nation state, through free and fair elections that reflects the choice or power of the power, popularly elected members in the parliament etc that is ensuring participation and control of a nation to bear on its state (Scholte, 2018). As a matter of fact, democratization of global affairs is in part of a matter of democratization of states because the importance of states in global politics cannot be overemphasized as no other type of regulatory organization has as many resources to hand as the state (Scholte, 2018).

However, looking at the networks involved in governance beyond state through which states contemporarily governs transplanetary circumstances not by itself but collectively through global and regional intergovernmental organizations (IGO) (Scholte, 2018), such networks often place power in the hands of political actors that are unelected and do not reside in the societies in which their decisions are implemented, sometimes this decisions run against or overrides domestic regulations for example IMF loan conditionality, SAP (Structural Adjustment Programme) as it affected sub-Sahara Africa, World Trade Organizations (WTO), United Nations Organisation (UNO), Trans-governmental Networks (TGNs) like the G7, G20 and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) (Bray & Slaughter, 2015; Scholte, 2018).

Looking at the above, it is clearly seen that the contemporary trend in global politics has created a new course to rethink the concept of territorial democracy in a more globalized world like the one we live in. thus, globalization has undermined democracy within the nation states, driving calls for new avenues of participation and accountability that will deliver world peoples power (McGrew, 2002).

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

In order to portray a better understanding of this study, the authors of this paper will be making use of the Global Democratic Theory (GDT). Global democratic theory is a theory that examines the challenges and possibilities of public rule and more recently the ways in which the democratic practices of nation state are being undermined by contemporary global forces. Many scholars are exploring how democracy can adapt to the globalizing world by examining prospects for democratic institutions beyond the state, as well as developing the democratic potential of transnational activism, civil society and global public spheres (Dryzek, 2011; Archibugi & Held, 2011; Scholte, 2018). At the thrust of the scholarly literatures, the scholars posited various normative ideas for rethinking democracy in response to the impact of globalization these ideas lucidly examine if the states needs to be transformed in order to be democratic in a more globalized world and challenge long held arguments for democracy at the global or transnational level.

The concept of democracy is highly contested thus, the concept has always contained within it the seeds of its own transformation. Contemporarily, the concept of democracy is rapidly in the process of becoming more diverse, less symmetrical, more malleable and more complex (Bray & Slaughter, 2015). Global Democratic theory tries to remind territorial citizens of the value of democracy beyond nation state and the reasons for embracing, protecting and reforming it when the need arises. Democracy requires a constant evaluation of how this system of public rule can effectively attain these ends in light of changing political, economic, social, global and technological contexts (Bray & Slaughter, 2015).

There are 5 prominent strands of Global Democratic Theory which includes multilateralism or liberal internationalism, communitarianism, world federalism, transnational deliberative democracy and resistance democracy (Scholte, 2018; Bray & Slaughter, 2015). In order to answer the question that is the main thrust of this paper, I will try to explain a bit of the 5 strands of Global Democratic Theory and argue for the multilateralism or liberal internationalism as the way forward towards a more democratized global system.

Communitarianism strand of the Global Democratic theory has the likes of John Rawls, Michael Sandel, Antonio Negri and Charles Taylor as its major proponents. This strand of Global democratic theory still holds the virtue of territorial democracy that is promoting self-sustaining local communities as the optimal site of democracy in the contemporary global world (Scholte, 2018). In communitarianism peoples power is best realised through smaller populations rooted in bounded territories. Thus, this strand does not identify with the three structural mismatches mentioned earlier. According to its proponents when bounded territories that makes up the global system can deliver adequate peoples power for citizens in each territorial than it will mean that we have a global democracy to that extent and in recent times we have seen this trend from recent activities for example the Brexit and the election of trump who is most likely to win a re-election.

Communitarian democracy, however, views all regional and global institutions with scepticism both private and public in preference for handling global issues through local and national government. Thus, making the communitarian democratic constructs fall short of what can actually address the threat globalization is posing on territorial democracy, because it is almost impossible for even the strongest national or local government to exercise absolute sovereignty that is being 100% self-sufficient and have control over global flows into the territory (Scholte, 2018).

World Federalism this is another strands of the GDT that basically holds a world federal system of government where all the ministries and government parastatals at the national and local level are duplicated at the world level with a federal world parliament and political parties being able to contest and win elections to reflect the worlds peoples power that is there is a formal direct citizen participation in suprastate governance (Archibugi & Held, 2011). The major proponents of this strand of GDT otherwise called cosmopolitan democracy that includes David Held, Daniele Archibugi and Richard Falk (McGrew, 2002). These scholars argued in contrast of communitarianism for a democratic practice of humanity which involves the creation of a democratic constitutional order of global governance based on social democratic values, human rights and cosmopolitan law (McGrew, 2002). Central to the long-term vision of world federalism is the development of new overarching institutions like the global parliament and a major transformation of the global system that would undermine traditional practices of national sovereignty.

According to (Slaughter, 2004), the diversity of peoples to be governed makes it impossible to conceive a world federalism that is, the proposals to create a global parliament elected by the entire world population is destined to fail (Keohane & Nye, 2001).

Transnational Deliberative Democracy in this stand of GDT peoples power is sought through engagement with a surrounding “global public sphere” of discussion and debate and not through direct decision-taking process (Scholte, 2018), this approach promotes an agenda that seeks to further democratized the global system by enhancing the role of transnational deliberation and public reasoning in political life beyond nation state. This strand has its major proponents as John Dryzek, James Bohman and Philip Pettit.

Transnational deliberation is possible through a range of non-electoral mechanisms like the citizens assemblies, deliberative polls and deliberation within specific public spheres that can contest formal authority and incorporate affected people into decision making process (McGrew, 2002). For example, the World Social Forum (WSF), World Economic Forum (WEF), Internet Governance Forum (IGF), Trans-governmental Networks (TGNs) etc.

Resilience Democracy this strand of GDT is very different from all other strands of GDT in the sense that the other strands of GDT tends to achieve the democratization of the global system through the reform of existing institutions rather than through the transformation of underlying societal structures (Scholte, 2018). This strand sees conflicts as a good thing and it

holds that any reigning governance arrangement is liable to be captured by repressive forces through street demonstrations, mass protest etc.

Having explained the major ideas embedded in the various strands of the GDT it is pertinent to move to answer the question which is the main thrust of this paper and I will be doing that is the following subheadings.

Multilateralism: the Way Forward to a More Democratized Global System

Prior to 1914, scholars which includes Robert Keohane, Anne-Maria Slaughter, Joseph Nye amongst others who are at the vanguard of multilateralism have sought the creation of a democratized global system that is hinged on multilateral cooperation, economic interdependence, rule of law and not resulting to war to end conflicts between states. Multilateralism builds on the principle of joint and pooled sovereignty of democratic territorial regimes (McGrew, 2002; Scholte, 2018). Thus, emphasizing that there is a need for democratic territorial regimes to come together and cooperate as there is no one nation state that is independence in the strict sense of the word.

The rationale behind multilateralism is that nation state through cross-border collaborations will add up, promote and safeguard global democracy. With globalization, it is pertinent to apply democratic norms to multilateral institutions in order to promote and safeguard global democracy because it will ensure that government officials are held accountable for their activities both at the territorial and global level (Keohane & Nye, 2001).

Looking at other strands of the GDT, multilateralism or liberal internationalist has a great ability to ensure global democracy that will deliver adequate people's power to world citizens. The first attempt to multilateralism was with the establishment of a collective security mechanism of the league of nations in 1914, which was primarily established with the support of President Wilson and Prime minister Churchill (although the USA was not part of the league of nation because US membership of the league was not granted the approval of the US congress), to prevent the outbreak of a 2nd world war. Although it failed as there was a 2nd world war. After the 2nd world war the United Nations was created to primarily prevent another world war from occurring which the UN has being able to achieve so far. Thus, from the multilateralist perspective, global democracy is available through IGO's and TGN's composed of territorial democratic states for example the UN, G20, IMF, EU, AU etc and this when compared to other strands of GDT has the ability to ensure global democracy because it involves state actors from territorial democracies that supposedly have legitimacy of the territorial citizens which makes the state actors accountable to the both the local and global citizens, thus will be adding up in no small measures to global democracy. multilateralism is to create global rules without centralized power but with state actors who can be held to account through a variety of political mechanisms and with responsibility to multiple constituencies rather than private pressure groups (Slaughter, 2004).

Conclusion

It is pertinent to note that even with the great potentials of multilateralism; it has some weakness that can be strengthen through reforms of IGO's and TGN's in order to continue to deliver maximally on people's power beyond territorial boundaries. For example, in the UN one of the reform agenda is the call for the democratization of the security council by removing the veto of the permanent 5 and expending the membership to better represent the world in order to deliver adequate world peoples power.

One of the challenges of multilateralism is to democratize all states, without this achieving the goals of global democracy through multilateralism will be difficult that is it is highly state centric and a western approach to GDT. It also relies on the agency of elites in

leading democratic states rather than the political activity of their respective publics (Bray & Slaughter, 2015).

Although the failure of the league of nation still haunts multilateralist (especially by classical realist), it advocates like me continue to be at the vanguard of the idea that representative, accountable and transparent international governance is the way towards achieving a democratized global system. Thus, is the reason why many international organizations controlled by rich western states have expanded their membership to include states from developing nations. Countries like China and India are now pivotal players in the global trade regime and have exerted increasing influence on negotiations in WTO.

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