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Table of Contents

Table des matières

1. Janice Leung, <i>Machiavelli and International Relations Theory</i>	3
2. Vanessa Lishingman, <i>Henry Kissinger's Contribution to the Conception of International Relations Legitimacy, Consensus and Order: the Foreign Policy of Moderation</i>	14
3. Guillaume Landry, <i>L'évolution conceptuelle de la géopolitique</i>	23
4. Julie Barkley, <i>Human Nature and Kant's Vision of International Society</i>	36
5. Sean Hutchman, <i>An historical examination of Kant's cosmopolitanism: from Roman precursors to modern successors</i>	50
6. Karine Mac Allister, <i>Islam et relations internationales</i>	57

The **Glendon Papers** is an annual bilingual publication of undergraduate research essays by the students of the International Studies Programme at Glendon College. In this first volume, we hope to show the value of research work at the undergraduate level, as well as to provide students in the Programme an added incentive for strong research effort in the future. We would like to thank the contributors for preparing their papers for publication and Professor Domenico Mazzeo for his commitment, vision and hard work in the pursuit of this project.

Glendon Papers est une publication annuelle bilingue de travaux de recherche des étudiants de premier cycle du Programme d'études internationales du Collège universitaire Glendon. Dans ce premier volume, nous espérons montrer l'importance de la recherche au niveau du premier cycle et encourager les étudiants du Programme à entreprendre des efforts de recherche encore plus soutenus à l'avenir. Nous tenons à remercier les étudiants qui ont préparé les travaux pour la présente publication et le Professeur Domenico Mazzeo pour son engagement et persistance dans la poursuite de ce projet.

Sharmila Shewprasad
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editors

Machiavelli and International Relations Theory

Janice Leung

As an academic field of study, international relations seeks to understand the social, political, economical, and cultural interaction between international actors, whether they are private or public. On the political level, often scholars seek to understand the behavior of states and their domestic affairs, alongside their relations with other foreign powers. There are many scholars from the past and the present who have contributed greatly to the development of the study of international relations, and one of the most relevant scholars is Niccolo Machiavelli. As a political analyst who was writing about “the actual politics and the popular ethos of his time”¹, as opposed to adhering to a utopian “ought to” optimism towards international relations, “the whole drift of his work is toward a political realism, unknown to the formal writing of his time.”² Therefore, Machiavelli’s “The Prince” and “The Discourses” have had a tremendous impact on international relations. Machiavelli is recognized as one of the forefathers of realism, one of the most respected and venerable schools of thought. Both “The Prince” and “The Discourses” expressed his views on the manner in which a state should be run and the manner in which interstate relations should be conducted to achieve the best results for the state. For Machiavelli, the impact that domestic politics have on international relations cannot be ignored; therefore he views the state of domestic affairs as being an integral force in shaping international affairs. Machiavelli believes that *states should act in the best interest of the masses, and as such should behave in a manner, which will benefit the state. Accordingly, he expressed his view that the sovereign of the state should not allow private interests to overrun public interest. He also viewed a strong state as an organic whole, with the utmost control over its own domestic affairs as well as its foreign affairs. For Machiavelli, domestic affairs dominated the priority of the state and without domestic stability; the state could not focus on international relations.* In addition, Machiavelli, a former diplomat himself, considered *the practice of diplomacy essential for the state to maintain power and build a reputation on an international level. This aspect of international relations is a fundamental part of the survival and aggrandizement of the state, both on the political level and in terms of territorial control.* Machiavelli wrote “The Prince” and “The Discourses” during the time of the Renaissance, in the early 16th century, yet these works still retain an uncanny level of perceptive political observations valid even in our modern day. His conception of international relations reflects the political climate of his time, but remains relevant to understanding current practices in international relations. This paper examines Machiavelli’s conceptions of the state and international relations, and highlights the relevance and applicability of these conceptions to the contemporary world.

Machiavelli’s conception of the state

According to Machiavelli, states should behave and form decisions with **public interest** as the first priority in mind, and as such should act in a manner, which will benefit the state. Machiavelli firmly believed that the state had a duty to appeal to civil society and to placate the masses, instead of choosing to behave in a manner, which would merely satisfy a minority of the population. According to Machiavelli, it is imperative to have a strong

centralized government. In his view, “a sagacious legislator of the republic... whose object is to promote the public good, and not his private interests, and who prefers his country to his own successors, should concentrate all authority in himself.”³ In his conception of domestic affairs, “certainly a country can never be united and happy, except when it obeys wholly one government.”⁴ Machiavelli viewed the state as an organized force, supreme in its control of its domestic and foreign affairs. On the domestic level, states are “supreme in (their) own territory and (pursue) a conscious policy of aggrandizement in its relations with other states”⁵. However, ruler must aim at achieving the goal of “conquering and maintaining the state...(by) means (that) will always be judged honorable and praised by everyone”⁶. As a rule, therefore, according to Machiavelli, “a free city is generally influenced by two principal objects, the one is to aggrandize herself, and the other is to preserve her liberties.”⁷ To that effect, the state must insure national security and defense together with social justice and the rule of law.

The preservation of the state in an anarchical international system is one of Machiavelli's dominant preoccupation. His vision of international politics revolves around the idea of anarchy, and the lack thereof of order on the international level. For Machiavelli, the state possessed the power to establish order domestically, however the possible threat from external forces (foreign states) is a fundamental aspect of the nature of international relations. The world is in strife and states are always in a state of competition with each other in an anarchical world. As Machiavelli says,

“it is impossible for a republic to remain long in her quiet enjoyment of her freedom within her limited confines; for even if she does not molest others, others will molest her, and from being thus molested will spring the desire and necessity of conquests, and even if she has no foreign foes, she will find domestic enemies amongst her own citizens.”⁸

The only way in which, a state can protect its sovereignty is through striving to achieve security for the masses while conserving liberty for its citizens. It is the fundamental will of the state to preserve its liberty, despite the threat of foreign domination, that creates “such a determined resistance (that) may also be caused by the natural hatred between neighboring princes and republics, which arises from rivalry and the thirst of domination... This spirit of rivalry and contention will ever make it difficult for republics to subjugate each other.”⁹ It is within the power of the state to create the conditions that enable countries to defend themselves from possible threats from foreign powers.

In discussing the importance of national security and defense, Machiavelli argues strongly for the superiority of a popular armies as opposed to the use of mercenary troops. In his conception of international relations, the aspect of nationalism within a country is of fundamental importance to maintaining the defense and survival capabilities of the state. He firmly believes that loyalty and love of the country should be connected to military matters within the state. By “ask(ing) a powerful neighbor to come aid and defend one with his forces, they are termed auxiliaries and are useless as mercenaries... These forces may be good in themselves, but they are always dangerous for those who borrow them, for if they lose you are defeated, and if they conquer you remain their prisoner.”¹⁰ His solution was for the state to have a popular army, therefore linking military service to devotion and loyalty to the state. For Machiavelli, the example of France nationalizing

their army during the Renaissance was absolutely brilliant and proved to be one of the factors that led to their greatness during that time period. He advises to sovereigns who wish to

“redeem their countries, it is before all things necessary, as the true foundation of every undertaking, to provide yourself with your own forces, for you cannot have more faithful, or truer and better soldiers. And although each one of them may be good, they will united become even better when they see themselves commanded by their prince, and honored and favored by him...And these are the things which, newly introduced, give reputation and grandeur.”¹¹, adding that there is a “great ...difference ... between an army that is well disposed, and which fights for its own glory, and one that is ill disposed, and has to fight only for the ambition of another; this explains the reasons for the uselessness of mercenary troops, who have nothing to make them fight but the small stipend they receive, which is not and cannot be sufficient to make them loyal, or so devoted as to be willing to die for you. For armies that have no such affection towards him for whom they fight as to make them partisans, will never have the bravery enough to resist....And as this love and devotion can only be found in your own subjects, it is necessary for the purpose of holding a kingdom, to have an army composed of your own subjects, as well be seen to have done by all those whose armies have achieved great success.”¹²

It is through the means of establishing strong defensive measures by linking national interest and the military, as well as creating a centralized government, that “provides for their (state) security and defense...thus (enabling) enjoy(ment) of their liberty for a long time”¹³. In his view, he felt that a well-disciplined and well-equipped national army was necessary, with the force to maintain the power of the state, as well as extend the limits of the state. During Machiavelli’s time, the practice of nationalizing the army was practiced, but not nearly to the same degree that they are used currently. During the renaissance, mercenaries were still commonly used by many princes, notably in Italy. France was the main example of a country developing a nationalized army. While nationalism, as a theoretical concept, certainly did not exist in Italy during Machiavelli’s time, he nonetheless firmly believed that a unified country is the key to preserving a state from suffering from foreign domination and is vital to the preservation of the state. In Machiavelli’s view, “duty to one’s country overrides all other duties”¹⁴ and for the state, the only question it should pose is: what course of action will save the life and liberty of the country? At the same time, national unity and the preservation of life and liberty shall rest not only on strong national defense, but on domestic stability predicated on social justice.

Machiavelli, in fact, emphasizes the centrality of **economic equality** within civil society as a precondition for domestic stability. As discussed earlier, Machiavelli’s vision of the ideal, strong state focuses on civil society and, more specifically, strives toward an equilibrium among the competing interests of individuals and groups within the state. This balance of interests, on the economic and social level, is important in maintaining internal peace and stability in a state. He states, that “nothing so certainly secures to a prince the public esteem as some such remarkable action of saying dictated by his regard for the public good, showing him to be magnanimous, liberal and just.”¹⁵ Regarding the aspect of economic equality, Machiavelli criticizes inequity of wealth between citizens of the state and says that the desire to preserve power and the need to acquire more is “the cause of great troubles...For the fear to lose stirs the same passions in men as the desire to gain, as men do not believe themselves sure of what they already possess except by acquiring still

more; and moreover, these new acquisitions are so many means of strength and power for abuses.”¹⁶ This is often the cause of social instability, creating hostile conditions that inevitably could lead to civil war. As such, the gap between the poor and the wealthy grows as “the haughty manners of the rich and insolence of the nobles and the rich excite in the breasts of those who have neither birth nor wealth, not only the desire to possess them, but also the wish to revenge themselves by depriving the former of the riches and honors which they see them employ so badly.”¹⁷ For him, the examples of “those republics which have...preserved their political existence uncorrupted do not permit any of their citizens to live in the manner of gentlemen, but rather maintain amongst them a perfect equality.”¹⁸ Therefore, for Machiavelli, the state should take measures to ensure that the state possesses wealth while the masses are on relatively equal economic footing to prevent envy and social instability. It is the duty of the state to ensure that “the chief promoters of corruption and troubles”¹⁹ and the “excessive ambition and corruption of the powerful”²⁰ are not allowed the chance to flourish, otherwise “great inequality prevails...(and) governments will lack the proper proportions and have but little durability.”²¹

Another component of Machiavelli’s recipe for the ideal, strong state is the recognition that the maintenance of **law and order** is necessary to ensure social equality within civil society and to allow the people of the state to seek justice within the legal system. As he states, “No more useful and necessary authority can be given to those who are...guardians of the liberty of a state, than the faculty of accusing the citizens to the people, or to any magistrate or council, for any attempt against public liberty.”²² For without access for the people within the state to seek recourse to a problem within the judiciary system, there can be no social stability. The subsequent consequences of such an erroneous system are that, “when these ferments cannot in some way exhaust themselves, their promoters are apt to resort to some extraordinary means, that may lead to the ruin of the republic.”²³ Therefore, it is necessary to preserve social equilibrium in the state; otherwise the consequences will be severely detrimental. The result for the state will be civil unrest, with citizens feeling frustration and resentment towards another party without any legitimate source for satisfactory recourse, while the powerful and prominent members of society are able to intimidate those who are less wealthy without any threat of punishment for their actions. It is very likely that the security of the state may be threatened in such a volatile situation, from foreign powers seeking to capitalize on the instability and weakness of the state, to frustrated citizens of the state seeking aid of foreigners in their desire for justice. “Whence we may conclude that, whenever the aid of foreign powers is called in by any party of the state”²⁴ the very survival and autonomy of the state is threatened and undermined.

Machiavelli’s conceptions of international relations

In Machiavelli’s view, on the international level of interaction between states, the volatility of the conditions under which states relate with one another, is anarchical. Accordingly, Machiavelli examines the nature of the international relations, whereby domestic affairs within states must be stable in order for the international system to create equality among states, as well as providing the conditions for democracy. Therefore, while Machiavelli does consider stable domestic affairs to be the precondition to the stability of international relations, the premises and arguments that he presents for the conditions under which a

state can be strong, do not differ greatly than those for the international system. Hence the importance he attaches to the **balance of power**, including in economic and social terms, and its stabilizing effect on the anarchical international system. The fundamental need for equilibrium of interests within the state, on the social and economical level, also applies to relations between states on the international level. For Machiavelli, on the international level, there should be an economic and social balance of power that keeps equilibrium among states, and provides the conditions for democracy. The state must, of its own volition, maintain the security of the state and at all times possess the means to defend themselves in case of foreign threats. As a result, if the preconditions are met and all states are virtuous, free of corruption, the people within the states are content in a society based on equality (both economically and socially); then there would be a positive effect on international relations, or more specifically, interstate relations. As Machiavelli describes, "in the period under the good Emperors he will see the prince secure amidst the people, who are also living in security; he will see peace and justice prevail in the world...and everywhere he will see tranquility and well-being. And on the other hand, he will behold all animosity, license, corruption and noble ambition extinct. During the period of the good Emperors he will see that golden age when everyone could hold and defend whatever opinion he pleased; in fine, he will see the triumph of the world."²⁵ While on the other hand, if these preconditions are not met within individual, free states, Machiavelli believes that the consequences for international relations are disastrous. When he refers to the "good" Emperors, he is referring to Ancient Rome, but he also uses examples from the same time period, whereby the sovereign had not led the state in a positive direction, and ultimately, achieving chaos instead of stability. As Machiavelli notes, "if now he will but glance at the times under the other Emperors, he will behold the atrocities of war, discords and sedition, cruelty in peace as in war, many princes massacred, many civil and foreign wars"²⁶, and generally, discord in domestic affairs as well as increased volatility at the international level. Machiavelli firmly believes that the international system is anarchical, with no supranational power that overrides sovereignty but he does, however, believe that there is a natural equilibrium of power among states. Accordingly, he believes that it is within the nature of the international system to prevent any state from becoming too powerful. Also, Machiavelli feels that it is fundamental in the behavior of states to oppose dominant powers that threaten equilibrium in the international system, for fear of losing power, for apprehension of being too weak to fend off sinister designs from a powerful state or from envy and jealousy. In his view, diplomacy should play a key role in the preservation of the equilibrium between states.

The practice of **diplomacy**, according to Machiavelli, is essential for the state to maintain power and build reputation on an international level. It is no surprise that he advocated diplomacy as an essential practice of the state; Machiavelli worked as a diplomat for the Florence Republic. "In an age of intrigue (that) depended on skillful diplomacy for its survival"²⁷, he understood very well the diplomatic realities of international relations. According to him, the sovereign represents the state; being the physical embodiment of the power, reputation and character of the state. Therefore, the sovereign must be aware that the ability to play dual roles, depending on the situation at hand, is important for the security and the reputation of the state. He states, "a prince being thus obliged to well know how to act as a beast must imitate the fox and the lion, for the lion cannot protect

himself from traps, and the fox cannot defend himself from the wolves. One must, therefore be a fox to recognize traps, and a lion to protect himself from wolves.”²⁸ The “wolves”, of course, that he refers to are foreign states that will take advantage of every opportunity to capitalize on weaknesses (in terms of security and perceived lack of military strength) within domestic affairs. So, he proposes that in order to alleviate this problem, or at least decrease the possibility of foreign threats, the state must build relations with other powers, and form beneficial alliances. “Further, the ruler...should make himself the leader and defender of his less powerful neighbors, and endeavor to weaken the stronger ones, and take care that they are not invaded by some foreigner no less powerful than himself.”²⁹ Otherwise, if the state does not behave in this manner and allows another state to assume this role, “the rule is that when a powerful foreigner enters the province, all the less powerful inhabitants become his adherents...so much so that with regard to these minor potentates he has no trouble whatever in winning them over, for they will willingly join forces.”³⁰ Therefore, it is important for the state to assume a leadership role for less powerful foreign states, since this will increase its reputation and prominence as well as its security and defense on the international level.

According to Machiavelli, the security of the state is increased as its reputation grows throughout the world. He states: “the prince who creates such an opinion of himself gets a great reputation, and it is very difficult to conspire against one who has great reputation, and he will not easily be attacked, so long that it is known that he is capable...For a prince must have...fear (from) external (sources) as regards to foreign powers...he can defend himself with good arms and good friends...and (therefore) internal matters will always remain quiet...and even if external powers sought to attack him, if he has ruled and lived as described, he will always stand firm, (and) be able to sustain every shock.”³¹ For him, “the true means of aggrandizing a republic”³² is through the practice of diplomacy on the part of the state, in order to gain allies and therefore, eliminate the possibility of threats from the allied state. As well, in keeping with the principle of loyalty and strong relations between countries, “it well may happen that the prince of the ally of some powerful potentate, who for the moment may not be able to assist him...may, having acted as his partisan, his powerful ally will make no treaties or alliances with his enemies.”³³ By the state pursuing a policy of diplomatic relations and forming treaties with other states, there is a certain “law of nations” whereby, on the international level, a state that unjustly breaks the agreement or turns on an ally, will be seen in a negative manner by foreign states. It is also the duty of the ambassadors to represent their state in an honorable and respectful manner. The ambassador, who represents the embodiment of the ethics, character and reputation of the state, must be careful not to “disregard...justice...and violate the laws of nations, republics and themselves.”³⁴ This erroneous behavior will cause the offended state or party to respond with “indignation and resentment”³⁵ and could possibly, consequently cause damage to interstate relations for a long period of time. As well, Machiavelli believes that as the reputation of the state increases, and its fame for possessing great power, this will result in keeping the state safe from neighboring powers as well as foreign powers whose geographical location is more distant. As Machiavelli says:

“for it is certain that when a prince or people attain that degree of reputation that all the neighboring princes and peoples fear to attack him, none of them will ever venture to do it except under the force of necessity; so that it will be...at the option of the potent prince or people to make war upon neighboring

powers as may seem advantageous, while adroitly keeping the others quiet...And other powers that are more distant and have no immediate intercourse with him, will look upon this as a matter too remote for them to be concerned about."³⁶

Therefore, the factors of enhanced security and defense that is achieved through effective diplomatic policy, combined with having a "friend in these new countries who could aid them by opening the way for them to enter,"³⁷ is proof enough that alliances have their beneficial qualities.

Machiavelli recognizes the role of **treaties and alliances** in international relations. Yet, he believes that the opportunities for the state to form positive relations with foreign states are limited to certain situations. While "it is of daily occurrence that princes or republics contract leagues or friendships with each other, or that in like manner treaties and alliances are formed between a republic or that of a prince"³⁸, Machiavelli warns that "a prince ought never to make common cause with one more powerful than himself to injure another, unless necessity forces him to...for if he wins you rest in his power and princes must avoid as much as possible being under the will and pleasure of others."³⁹ Even though he stresses alliances with other states, the potential for the ruin of the states' autonomy at the hands of a supposed ally is too great. As well, Machiavelli warns that between states, "alliances are broken from consideration of interests"⁴⁰, and that it is very difficult to be sure that the party with whom the state has formed an alliance with will honor and remain loyal to the conditions of the treaty. The reasoning behind alliances is clear; in some manner both parties benefit from the agreement. However, when "promises touching public affairs...have been given under the pressure of force...(and) the force no longer exists...frequently (states) disregard equally all other promises, when the motives that induced them no longer prevail."⁴¹ This is not considered dishonorable, however, because the circumstances under which treaties are formed must be of mutual consent and of free volition. So, in extenuating circumstances where the state does not willingly make promises to a foreign power, the party that executes a treaty by force will undoubtedly see the agreements dishonored in due time. Machiavelli also focuses on the aspect of geographical proximity, and its relevance to determining the choice of which state to court as a possible ally. While neighboring alliances are certainly and fervently endorsed, those made with distant foreign states are viewed critically. Machiavelli concludes that, "the alliances made with princes who on account of their remoteness cannot conveniently come to your assistance, or who lack the power to do so from internal dissensions or from any other cause, bring more reputation than substantial help to those who rely upon them."⁴² Therefore, while a state may be reputed to possess great military power, it is of no use to a distant state that seeks to join forces and create an alliance. For one, deployments would not be able to sent as quickly or effectively from such a distant state; secondly, the state cannot be entirely sure of the power of the foreigner based on reputation alone. While a state may have a strong image, it may simply be the result of intelligent diplomatic actions by the sovereign, and in reality the foreigner may not possess the military capabilities that are claimed. Overall, Machiavelli gives a balanced view is given of the positive and negative aspects of diplomacy and alliances. While he certainly advocates the benefits that result from alliances, he also presents the negative aspects and the repercussion that may result from unwise relations and promises. It is certain, however, that the importance of these practices in international relations is highly stressed. In his view, if used effectively

and shrewdly by the sovereign and representatives of the state, these practices will enhance the reputation, the influence, the power and the security and defensive parameters of the state.

Relevance and applicability of Machiavelli's thought

Machiavelli's thoughts on international relations anticipated the future developments that took place after his death. The **sovereignty** and autonomy of the state over its domestic and foreign affairs defines the behavior of nations in modern times. Ever since the Treaty of Westphalia, sovereignty has been recognized and utilized as a constitutive principle of statehood. Also, while he did not speak of using economic factors as a means towards state domination, his idea that states seek to maintain power and strive to expand territorial control has translated into a reality. During the Renaissance, domination and foreign invasions were established through military and fraudulent diplomatic means. Since then, not much has changed; now the practices have expanded to include economic domination and, in the past, colonization, to achieve territorial expansion, greater power and reputation. Also, balance of power as a theory was a major focus in the 16th, 17th and 18th century, and the subject of many scholars, who devised schemes ranging from the dynastic principle, to the practice of territorial compensation, and in fact was recognized as a guiding principle in the Treaty of Utrecht. Although it is not as commonly practiced in current international relations, the need to prevent abuses of power still exists and is prominent in paradigm of realism. Therefore, Machiavelli's analysis of the behavior of the state, and its action and reaction in relation to other is still as relevant as it was during the time that he was writing.

Another area in which Machiavelli was ahead of his time was the perception of the significance of **nationalism**. As time progressed after Machiavelli's death, notably since the French Revolution, nationalism certainly had become one of the most important "isms", reaching its height from 1850 to World War II. Not only did nationalism fuse with Liberalism (i.e. nationalized liberalism, nationalized socialism, political nationalism) as well as other ideologies, it has always been and remains a strong force that has the power for positive developments within a state, as well as creating the conditions for the degeneration and destruction of a state. In this respect, Machiavelli was ahead of his time by emphasizing the importance of creating a feeling of patriotism and nationalism within a state. It is certainly true and has been demonstrated in many cases, that "the love of the country (has) more power...than any other sentiment."⁴³ This is merely one of the aspects of international relations in which, Machiavelli had an enormous impact on the development of the academic field of study as well as a huge impact on the behavior of states and interstate relations.

Machiavelli also anticipated the growing importance of **diplomacy** as an institutionalized practice in modern international relations. During Machiavelli's lifetime, diplomacy was not only common within the Italian city-states; it was considered essential to the survival of the state. In the 21st century, diplomacy has become even more institutionalized and is no doubt a major component of current practices. Diplomacy has become the conventional means for the state to conduct talks relating to any issue area that requires negotiations; whether the issue is bio-genetically engineered food, trade, conflict resolution, nuclear

disarmament or many other topics of contention. In fact, many countries (democratic countries) conduct negotiations with diplomatic talks in an event of a conflict, as opposed to resorting to military means. Also, the “bandwagon” approach, which Machiavelli describes as the phenomenon of the stronger power acting as the ally and defender of weaker powers, describes the behavioral norm in current international relations. One only needs to look at the United States, whose status as the world’s most powerful country grants to create the expectation, on the rest of the world, that the United States should assume the responsibility of defending and supporting weaker countries. And finally, Machiavelli’s assessment that geographical proximity plays a large role in the formation of alliances is entirely correct. The perfect example of this practice in use in modern times is with the European Union. Due to the close proximity of the European countries, this alliance makes sense; the movement of goods and services, the deployment of troops in the event of a military attack on one of the European Union Members, and the free movement of the common currency can all effectively take place due to the fact that the member states are situated so closely together. As well, Canada and the United States are natural allies due to the close proximity of the two countries. Therefore, his belief that diplomacy plays a very important role in international relations, and directly aids in aggrandizing as well as maintaining the state, not only reflect the turbulent times of the Renaissance Italy but also current practices in international relations.

Machiavelli’s thoughts and observations concerning international relations truly are timeless; not only does it reflect the political climate of his lifetime but it also remains a true reflection of practices within international relations in the 21st century. In his view, the state should behave in a manner, which benefits the public and in turn, benefits the well being of the state. For Machiavelli, the structure of the world system is anarchical, so therefore states act in the name of self-interest in order achieve the goals of maintaining security and increasing power. In such an environment, the state must maintain domestic strength, through a united nation, a central government, a sense of love and loyalty towards the country from its citizens and finally, through a nationalized army. Only in this way, can the basis for a strong, united country exist. Also, Machiavelli’s conception of the state in its ideal form is that of an organic whole with complete sovereignty over its own territories, domestic affairs as well as foreign affairs. The nature of the state is that full autonomy is essential in order to survive, as well as expand internationally. As well, in an environment of competing social, economic, and political interests of states and individuals at the domestic and international level, there must be equilibrium between these conflicting areas. In the domestic sense, equal distribution of wealth between the citizens of the state as well as judicial and political equality for all, is necessary to achieve equilibrium of interests. On the international level, economic, social and political equilibrium must be achieved between competing states, or else the preconditions for a democratic world society will not exist. In addition, Machiavelli maintains that diplomatic means of communication and negotiation with foreign powers is important for states, in order to maintain power and acquire reputation on an international level. Essentially, he feels that the sovereign or the ambassadors are the physical embodiment of the state, and must take care to behave in a manner that will aid in the acquisition of more power and influence for the state. However, while he stresses the utility of forming alliances, which are the resulting greater defense and security capabilities of the state therefore reducing the threat

of foreign attacks, he also provides conditions when alliances are not as effective. In instances whereby promises are made by the state out of force or from extenuating circumstances, where alliances are made with countries that are located too distantly or from forming alliances with powers greater than yourself. The central point of Machiavelli's argument is that, no matter what, diplomacy will have a direct impact on the power and the reputation of the state.

His two works, *The Prince* and *The Discourses* have been described as political theory as well as diplomatic literature, and therefore, it is of no coincidence that he is recognized as one of the most important scholars to the paradigm of realism. Many of the concepts that he discusses are now part of the core values and ideas found within this school of thought. Certainly, the evolution of international relations, where the concepts that were actually happening within politics were theorized and official terms were coined, displays the insight that Machiavelli had for analyzing the mechanisms of power within the state, the nature of the international system and the fundamental nature of the state. While the world's material and technological conditions may have changed in many ways since Machiavelli's life, in Renaissance Italy, it would seem that human nature, and hence the manner in which states behave in relation to one another, has not changed very much with the passing of time.

Notes

- ¹ Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince and The Discourses*. New York: Modern Library, 1950, p. 7.
- ² *Ibid.*
- ³ Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Discourses*, *op. cit.*, p. 138.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 150.
- ⁵ Sabine, George H. *A History of political theory*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961, p. 351.
- ⁶ Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince*. *op. cit.*, p. 66.
- ⁷ Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Discourses*, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 345
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 451.
- ¹⁰ Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince*, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 97.
- ¹² Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Discourses*, *op. cit.*, p. 226.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 345.
- ¹⁴ Sabine, George H. *A History*, *op. cit.*, p. 349.
- ¹⁵ Machiavelli, Nicolo *The Discourses*, *op. cit.*, p. 511.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 138.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 123.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 254.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 130.
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 133.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 143.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*
- ²⁷ Lerner, Max. *The Prince and The Discourses*. New York: Modern Library, 1950, p. 7.

- ²⁸ Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince. op. cit.* , p. 66.
²⁹ *Ibid.* , p. 9.
³⁰ *Ibid.*
³¹ *Ibid.* , p. 67.
³² Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Discourses op. cit.*, p. 345.
³³ *Ibid.* , p. 266.
³⁴ *Ibid.* , p.378.
³⁵ *Ibid.*
³⁶ *Ibid.* , p. 279.
³⁷ *Ibid.*
³⁸ *Ibid.* , p. 266.
³⁹ Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince. op. cit.* , p. 83.
⁴⁰ Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Discourses op. cit.*, p. 254.
⁴¹ *Ibid.* , p. 529.
⁴² *Ibid.* , p. 312.
⁴² *Ibid.* , p. 439.

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Henry Kissinger's Contribution to the Conception of International Relations Legitimacy, Consensus and Order: the Foreign Policy of Moderation

Vanessa Lishingman

It is a rare opportunity for an individual to both philosophize about and participate in the changing course of international relations. Henry Kissinger had the unique experience of commenting on American foreign policy through his various published works and directly participating in its formation as both former Secretary of State and head of the National Security Council. His early life in Germany, his Army career and Harvard education were contributing factors to his successful political career serving three consecutive American presidents in a variety of ways. Henry Kissinger's adherence to the Realist tradition is evident through examination of his various works on American foreign policy. He greatly contributed to the field of International Relations through his writings but this essay seeks to emphasize the concepts of legitimacy, consensus and order as expressed in *American Foreign Policy* and *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*. Finally, this essay seeks to demonstrate the applicability of Kissinger's concepts of legitimacy, consensus and order to international relations with particular attention to the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

The context: Henry Kissinger's Life and Career

Heinz Alfred Kissinger was born on May 27, 1923 to Paula Stern and Louis Kissinger. The Kissingers were members of the small Orthodox Jewish community in Fürth, Germany¹. Louis Kissinger was a well-paid secondary school teacher, while Paula stayed at home, in charge of household duties. The Kissingers lived within this stable environment until Nazi rule made its impact in Fürth. Most Fürth Jews served in the German army (despite exposure to anti-Semitism) during World War I and the majority considered themselves as much German as Jewish. Some Fürth Jews considered themselves German nationalists, at least until 1936; six years after the Nazis came to power². Jews who worked for German companies were dismissed without explanation and were forced to find work elsewhere. Louis Kissinger never came into direct contact with the Nazis, but Hitler's rise to power had an immediate effect on his teaching career. When the Weimar Republic dissolved all private schools, Louis was laid off, but he quickly found another teaching position. When the Nazi party prohibited all Jews from public positions in 1933, Louis was forced to teach at a Jewish vocational school³. In 1935, when the Nuremberg Law were declared, the German citizenship of Jews was revoked, and Jewish children were expelled from public schools. Louis Kissinger was fired from his teaching position once again in 1936.

In 1938, Paula Kissinger realized that the family's fate was unsure if they stayed in Fürth while Germany was under Nazi rule. The Kissinger family fled to England in 1938 and obtained the necessary documents for immigration to the United States⁴. They settled in Fort Washington, New York amongst a close community of Jews who had also fled from Hitler's regime⁵. Henry Kissinger has been quoted as saying that the Nazis' rise to power in Germany made no significant or traumatizing impact on his childhood and character⁶. Although attempts at historiography must be avoided as much as possible, one must consider the negative impression left on Henry as he watched his father's secure teaching career crumble through no fault of his own, and the decline in family income as a result. In

Fort Washington, Louis Kissinger worked as a bookkeeper, while Paula contributed to the family income by catering. Henry was fifteen years old at this time and attended Fort Washington High School. He performed well, distinguishing himself in mathematics. The last two years of his high school, Henry enrolled in night school, in order to work at a shaving brush factory and help the family finances. After he had graduated in June 1941, Henry enrolled in City College of New York with the hopes of becoming an accountant⁷. A draft notice in January 1943 would shift Henry's aspirations in another direction.

Henry Kissinger was nineteen years old when he completed his basic training component at Camp Croft in South Carolina. The army's IQ and aptitude tests qualified Henry for the Army Specialized Training Program, an engineering program that sent selected soldiers to Lafayette College at the government's expense. However, the army cancelled the program and in April 1944, Henry Kissinger was reassigned to the 84th Infantry Division at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana as a foot soldier. In November, the company was sent to Aachen, Germany. Henry Kissinger was reassigned as a driver-interpreter for the commanding general of the Intelligence Division. Kissinger impressed many army officials with his intelligence, stamina and organizational skills⁸. In June 1945, he was promoted to sergeant and when the 84th moved eastward across Germany, Kissinger was promoted as a Counter-Intelligence agent. When demobilization occurred in 1946, he remained in Germany as a civilian instructor at the European Command Intelligence School in Oberammergau. He taught Germany history to army personnel who outranked him in age, position and expertise. Kissinger was respected among his army comrades as a soldier, and now he also garnered admiration for his instructional capabilities⁹.

In the spring of 1947, Henry Kissinger returned to the United States to enroll in college once more. He was twenty-four years old when he was accepted at Harvard University. His impact as undergraduate student, a graduate student and a faculty member of Harvard would last twenty years. Henry Kissinger majored in Government and graduated *Summa Cum Laude* in 1950. Endowed with scholarships, Henry Kissinger received his Master's degree in Government in 1952 and received his Ph.D. in 1954. During his graduate studies, Kissinger directed the Harvard International Seminar. The seminar report described its purpose as being "for persons between the ages of 26 and 45 who are on the verge of reaching positions of leadership in their own countries."¹⁰ It was here that Henry Kissinger established numerous contacts with foreign officials, with whom he would interact in the future. When Harvard University did not grant Henry Kissinger a tenure-line assistant professor promotion (from instructor), he left for New York and the Council of Foreign Relations. The purpose of the Council was to discuss nuclear weapons and foreign policy. In March 1955, the Council appointed Henry Kissinger as the rapporteur. In 1957, from the various reports he made while being a part of the Council, Kissinger wrote his bestseller *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*, and was awarded the Woodrow Wilson Prize for his work¹¹. During the summer of the same year, Henry Kissinger returned to Harvard and was appointed as a lecturer in the government department. He was promoted to associate professor in 1959 and then to full professor, with tenure in 1962. He was the director of the Defense Studies Programme from 1959 to 1969. Between 1955 and 1968, Henry Kissinger served as a consultant on security issues to various U.S. agencies under the administrations of Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson¹².

In December 1968, President Nixon appointed Henry Kissinger assistant for national security affairs. Kissinger was also head of the National Security Council from 1969 to

1975 and acted as Secretary of State from September 1973 to January 1977. Amongst his major diplomatic achievements were negotiations with the Soviet Union, Vietnam, China and the Middle East¹³. His policy of détente with the Soviet Union led to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) in 1969. In 1972, he became the first U.S. official to make contact with the People's Republic of China since Chairman Mao Tse-Tung came to power¹⁴. Henry Kissinger played a prominent role concerning the relations between Vietnam and the United States. He was involved in the formulation of President Nixon's Vietnamization policy, which outlined the disengagement of U.S. troops from South Vietnam and their replacement by South Vietnamese forces. On January 23, 1973, he initialed the Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam. For their parts in resolving conflict in Vietnam, Henry Kissinger and Le Duc Tho, the North Vietnamese negotiator, were both awarded the 1973 Nobel Peace Prize¹⁵. Henry Kissinger also developed the practice of "shuttle diplomacy" during the Arab-Israeli war of 1973 to disengage the opposing armies and propose a truce amongst warring factions¹⁶. He was also responsible for the resumption of diplomatic relations between the United States and Egypt, which had been severed since 1967. When President Nixon resigned in 1974, he remained in office and continued to conduct foreign affairs under President Ford. Henry Kissinger left the White House staff in 1977 to become an international consultant, writer and lecturer. His numerous publications include *A World Restored; Metternich, Castlereagh, and the Problems of Peace* (1957), *The Necessity for Choice: prospects of American Foreign Policy* (1961), *The troubled partnership: a re-appraisal of the Atlantic Alliance* (1965), *American Foreign Policy* (1969), *The White House Years* (1979) and *For the Record* (1981).

Henry Kissinger: Carrying on the Realist Tradition

Through the analysis of his various publications, one can conclude that Henry Kissinger adheres to the Realist paradigm. Before demonstrating how Kissinger follows the Realist tradition, this essay considers it necessary first to define Realism. The Realist paradigm seeks to answer some pertinent questions with respect to international relations: What are the causes of conflict and war among nations, and what are the conditions for cooperation and peace among them?¹⁷ An answer to this question may be found through analysis of how actors within a system go about securing or allocating available resources. Realism explores this concept through its analysis of the types of actors, the structure of the system and the mode of interaction between actors in international relations. The Realist perspective considers the nation-state to be the main political actor of international relations. With this idea in mind, Realism considers the collective effort of a group to be pertinent with respect to the allocation of resources. The state is a rational actor, meaning it is goal-oriented and establishes a hierarchy of goals. The state is flexible; it takes into account its own mistakes and the mistakes of others when devising strategy. The state is an autonomous actor relative to domestic pressures from lobby groups and special organizations. It has the ability to consider its collective objectives, or in political terms, its national interest. Finally, Realism considers the state to be a unitary actor. It coordinates all aspects of government and administration so that the end product is a coherent, harmonious policy. The type of system within which nation-states coexist determines their mode of interaction. For Realists, states coexist in anarchy, which is defined as the absence of a legitimate, reliable central authority that can offer protection and compensation for grievances¹⁸. The anarchical system of international relations carries three consequences; states' preference for freedom, suspicion and fear of other states and the states' nature as

self-help agents. Also, states want to possess power relative to the power of other states, making them positional actors. Therefore, nation-states place emphasis on security maximization as opposed to power maximization in their defensive approach. Most importantly, Realism contributes the concept of the balance of powers. Realists will argue that states engage in balancing behavior, which means that if one state threatens other states with its growth in power, the other states will seek methods to offset the growth of power of this one state. States will not usually engage in “band-wagoning” behavior, more precisely, weaker states will not rush to join more powerful states because they prefer freedom and autonomy from a hegemonic power¹⁹.

Comparing these tenets of Realism with Henry Kissinger’s thought, we will realize that Henry Kissinger was a Realist because of his views concerning international relations, as documented in his various works. Kissinger understood that nation-states were the primary actors that influenced the course of international relations. Perhaps the term ‘state’ can be further defined in order to clarify its usage within the context of this essay. ‘State’ can be defined as a specific territory with a population that is governed by a sovereign and his administration. The term ‘state’ also includes the resources that the sovereign controls, including military capacity and other forms of coercive power. In his works, Kissinger frequently referred to the relations between states, not the specific relations between two governments. In the case of the Soviet Union during the Cold War, when Kissinger spoke of this state entity, he was referring to the collective efforts of the Kremlin’s political unit and the military forces it controlled. By extension, the United States was more than the presidential administration or the geographical territory itself. Inherent within the encompassing term of the U.S., Kissinger also included the Army, the Navy, the Airforce and other U.S. special agencies and academia. Therefore, when Henry Kissinger underlines the relations amongst states, he is following the Realist tradition in that he recognizes the unitary quality of the state and that this collective entity exerts the greatest impact on international relations. As a Realist, Kissinger placed great emphasis on national security. He explored the national security of the United States through his various publications, such as *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*, in which he discusses the limitation of all-out nuclear war as the only American foreign policy option during the Cold War. His various positions with U.S. special agencies all concerned the topic of national security and the fact that he was an outside consultant to various presidential administrations demonstrates that he was considered one of the most highly educated persons on national defense issues. What must be underlined concerning Kissinger and his views on national security is that he has always had a defensive approach concerning the use of coercive power. He did not advise using force offensively, particularly during the Cold War era when ‘mutually assured destruction’ loomed over the relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. He took the position of exploring several options for easing tensions between states, including diplomacy, but also stated that in the anarchical system of international relations, a state must be willing to follow through with its threat of using coercive power²⁰. Finally, Kissinger adhered to the Realist concept of balance of powers. He did not want the U.S. to be a hegemonic power that imposed its “American” solutions to international problems. He stated that the U.S. could no longer act as a paternalistic state that felt it had to intervene in all international issues²¹. To assert itself as the ultimate power threatened the security of other states, and such behavior would incite hostility. Hostility in the era of “mutually assured destruction” was a lethal affair. Kissinger implied through his various works that the USA faced a major problem, which could endanger its very existence: the reluctance to acknowledge the legitimacy of other states, particularly the

Soviet Union and China, two formidable powers in their own right. In a system where states are competing for the same resources, conflict is inevitable and is a more common form of interaction than peace. Kissinger understood this concept, and embarked upon proposing strategies that presented the USA as a formidable power that would use force only if explicitly provoked. At the same time, the USA needed to respect the legitimacy of other states and therefore not inciting other states into using aggression because they feared a threat to their national security.

Henry Kissinger's Main Concepts and their Applicability to International Relations

Henry Kissinger shared numerous important concepts of the realist tradition of International Relations, but this essay has chosen to outline three of his ideas that are particularly pervasive in their scope. The concepts of legitimacy, consensus and order are, for Henry Kissinger, the basis for progressive international relations amongst states. He expressed his thoughts that one of the reasons why relations between states were often strained was because these three concepts were not being respected or given precedence. He does not pretend that paying closer attention to the concepts of legitimacy, consensus and order will always result in peaceful international relations; rather he believes that understanding and following these concepts lead to more productive modes of interaction. As former Secretary of State and Head of the National Security Council, Henry Kissinger directly experienced the impact of U.S. foreign policies on relations between the USA and other nations, and as a result, he had the opportunity to comment and propose changes. Above all, however, Kissinger stressed that moderation and flexibility should guide all international relations because a state's foreign policy that remained static with respect to the changing course of history would be ineffective and could even cause unnecessary antagonism between states. Flexibility was an extremely important concept when applied to the recognition of the legitimacy of a state; for more productive modes of international relations, nations had to respect, and therefore legitimize each other's different concerns and goals.

Legitimacy is defined as the implication of the existence of right²². In the context of international relations, a legitimate state is regarded by other states within the system as being a contender for resources, and that grievances this state has with other states are to be taken seriously and resolved through the use of diplomacy. Legitimacy implies that other foreign state officials recognize a sovereign's authority within the state in question. Legitimacy is the basis of productive relations between states. Legitimacy as an important concept can be demonstrated through an analysis of Henry Kissinger's thoughts concerning revolutionary leadership. He states that the revolutionary leader (as an archetype) is more interested in constructing the future of a new nation than manipulating the existing environment²³. A revolutionary leader is rarely motivated by material considerations, contrary to the illusion the West still has about the reasons for a new nation to revolt against its current government. According to Kissinger, this difference in perspective concerning the definition of revolution makes difficult the dialogue between the West and the leaders of new countries. The West adheres to the notion that increased attention to economics, in other words finding methods of increasing gross national product, is the most fruitful way of establishing a new nation as a legitimate state. However, economics is too narrow a scope for a leader's ambitions²⁴. Many historical revolutions that have made an impact have operated through the introduction of a new doctrine that seeks to change the mode of thinking of a people, and an increase in economic activity is the result of such a

change. The use of Communism in China and Cuba is an example of doctrinal revolution. So, for revolutionary leaders, the emphasis is placed on unifying a people behind a new type of doctrine, which serves as a basis for all modes of interaction and activity. Legitimacy is important for a successful revolution because a new country must be viewed by other legitimate states as a veritable contender in international relations. The new revolutionary government must be considered an established authority, requests and grievances have to be taken seriously by other states.

The relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States demonstrates that the concept of legitimacy is pertinent to international relations. The Soviet Union was viewed as a formidable threat to the world system that existed after World War II because it possessed nuclear arsenal equal to and sometimes exceeding that of the United States. Therefore, her actions were watched very closely and taken seriously by the United States. Adhering to Realism's concept of balance of power, the United States sought ways of offsetting Soviet power, notably in the field of nuclear weapons production, an action amongst many that provoked the nuclear arms race between these two states. However, to define the Cold War as primarily an arms race is to diminish its historical significance. According to the thoughts of Kissinger, as expressed in *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*, the Cold War was as much about U.S. fear of the Soviet Union's nuclear arms stockpile as it was about the bitter rivalry of doctrine. The U.S. had a limited concept of legitimacy as applied to the Soviet Union, which caused antagonism between the two countries. The actions of the U.S. demonstrated that it considered the Soviet Union legitimate because of the threat it possessed with its nuclear weapons, but it did not respect the communist doctrine the Soviet Union adhered to. Therefore, the United States concept of Soviet legitimacy was limited and its derision for the Soviet communist doctrine was, at times, more a bone of contention between the two states than nuclear arms possession. The relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union during this time in history demonstrates that the concept of legitimacy ultimately rested on consensus. The ability of nations to agree on what constituted legitimacy was a primary step, and from that point, agreement could be made towards negotiations, in which the requests and goals of each nation involved were explicitly outlined, understood and agreed to by the other respective nations.

Henry Kissinger stressed that **consensus** was needed for progressive international relations. Consensus can be defined as a general agreement, unanimity of opinion, the judgement arrived at by most of those concerned, group solidarity in sentiment and belief ("consensus"). Consensus of ideas and concepts needs to be established before interaction amongst states can result in anything concrete such as an agreement in the form of a treaty. Consensus also relates to the concept of legitimacy; there must be agreement amongst states concerning what are the elements that deem a state legitimate and what components must be satisfied for the recognition of established authority. Henry Kissinger states that during stable international relations, state actors recognize the "rules of the game". Adding to that statement, he goes on to say that when states have similar notions of what is just, an agreement follows concerning permissible aims and methods of foreign policy²⁵. This consensus concerning the structure of interaction opens up the opportunity for meaningful dialogue. However, when states disagree about the fundamental concept of what is just, international relations becomes more complex. When one or more states claims universal applicability of their particular structure, the structures themselves become the problem. Disagreeing about the system leads to the inability to even defining what the source of

conflict is. Hence, state officials can meet, discuss and negotiate but without a consensus of what the conflict is, these meetings are futile. Concrete and progressive relations between states cannot arise unless both states are in agreement about the legitimacy of the system and the conflict in question.

The need for consensus in international relations can be demonstrated again through the relations between the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War. This antagonistic relationship deadlocked because, amongst many factors, of the inability of both states to agree on critical issues, such as what constituted an unambiguous threat, legitimate actions that were to be taken against this threat and most crucially, the objective of negotiations. For Henry Kissinger the inability of the United States to accurately read the intent of the Soviet Union hindered an even basic understanding of the motives behind its actions. The United States itself was unsure of what it considered an unambiguous threat, so it could not even begin to understand what element of the Soviet Union's foreign policy constituted an unambiguous threat. By extension, because there was no consensus between these two states concerning what was an unambiguous threat, they could not therefore agree what were legitimate actions that could be taken against this threat. Motions towards negotiation to end the Cold War were fruitless, because both sides had different interpretations of what the purpose of negotiation was. According to Kissinger, the United States viewed the agreement to negotiate as a success in itself, the actual process of negotiation was considered a separate endeavor. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, used negotiation as a tool to advance their version of Communism. The strained relationship between the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the Cold War is a prime example for Kissinger to assert that consensus is a critical component of productive international relations. Consensus, combined with the concept of legitimacy can lead to a world system in which nations can interact with the reassurance that stability and order exists to regulate state behavior.

Order is the third important concept emphasized by Kissinger in the conduct of international relations. Order, in the context of international relations is defined as a regular or harmonious arrangement, the state of peace, freedom from confused or unruly behaviour, and respect for law or proper authority. Kissinger as a Realist sought strategies for conditions of peace and co-operation amongst states. Order, peaceful world order, is the ideal that international relations should pursue. Legitimacy and consensus are two important elements required if order is to occur. For order to exist within the anarchical system of international relations, Kissinger believes that domestic and foreign policies of states must change in accordance with history. Modes of interaction that remain static are ineffective and even potentially dangerous for states. Kissinger cites that the way the United States conducts itself in international relations must change if it wishes to continue being a powerful entity. He believes that the U.S. can no longer adopt its paternalistic attitude of intervening in every international issue; its resources (capital, military and manpower, etc.) will be exhausted as a result. Henry Kissinger stressed that the advent of nuclear weapons required states to change their foreign policy. Conventional warfare was no longer an effective defense strategy, especially when other states possessed and were willing to use nuclear weapons. In the case of the United States, however, Kissinger argued that a foreign policy of using the all-out nuclear war strategy as the only option was far too limited and did not comply with the tradition of striving for peaceful order as much as possible. Kissinger argued for an American foreign policy that provided the U.S. president with as many options as possible to combat threats to national security. His overhaul of the

National Security Council by hiring international relations academics, former and current military officials to research and collaborate, in order to create as many feasible strategies as possible, is a concrete example of his concern for a more expansive foreign policy²⁶.

Henry Kissinger's emphasis on order is also demonstrated by his views on diplomatic negotiations between states. He has stressed that the opportunity for negotiation must always be kept open, especially in the event of war. The purpose of diplomacy was to further peaceful and progressive international relations amongst states. His advice concerning diplomacy is especially pertinent considering the numerous diplomatic missions he undertook on behalf of the United States, notably to the People's Republic of China, the Middle East and Egypt. His own personal style of diplomacy has been the subject of many texts and he has also commented on it in his own publications. Kissinger commented that in negotiations, if every statement became a matter of survival, the important issue of resolving conflict would never be penetrated²⁷. His own style of diplomacy was to create an affable environment in which foreign officials, who were often at odds with each other, could sit down and begin to make progressive motions to meet each other half-way, with respect to their individual demands. He advised against using diplomacy as a tool to either punish or reward an opponent, rather he continually stressed that one of the most important purposes of foreign policy was to aid in creating world order, which could only be done through continual, productive diplomacy.

This essay has sought to demonstrate the contribution of Henry Kissinger to international relations, through both his writing and his direct involvement in American foreign policy. His early life, army career and association with Harvard University as both student and professor lend insight to the beginning of his prolific and provocative political career. Kissinger's adherence to Realism has allowed him to develop critical insights and make recommendations concerning American foreign policy and the role of the United States as a world actor. His involvement both directly and indirectly with various U.S. agencies and three consecutive presidential administrations has allowed him to participate in the making of history during a time when the threat of nuclear destruction constantly loomed overhead. This essay has concentrated primarily on relations between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War as an example of Kissinger's emphasis on the concepts of legitimacy, consensus and order in international relations. The full impact of Henry Kissinger in the field of international relations is beyond the scope and length of this particular essay, but he may well have contributed much more to history than just his participation during the Cold War. International relations has greatly benefited from his insights and experience both as a scholar and political figure. It is evident, as many nations continue to strive towards peaceful and progressive mutual relations, that the concepts he emphasized, legitimacy, consensus, order, and moderation, are still relevant and basic to the international relations of today.

Notes

¹ Mazlish, Bruce. *Kissinger: The European Mind in American Policy*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1976. page 22.

² Ibid.

³ Starr, Harvey. *Henry Kissinger: Perceptions of International Politics*. Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1984. page 18.

- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Mazlish. *Kissinger: The European Mind* op. cit. page 28.
- ⁶ Ibid. page 19.
- ⁷ Starr. *Henry Kissinger* op. cit. page 19.
- ⁸ Ibid.. page 21.
- ⁹ Ibid. page 22.
- ¹⁰ Ibidt. page 23.
- ¹¹ Ibid. page 25.
- ¹² "Kissinger, Henry A." *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 15th ed. 1987.
- ¹³ ibid
- ¹⁴ ibid
- ¹⁵ ibid
- ¹⁶ ibid
- ¹⁷ Doyle, Michael W., and G. John Ikenberry. *New Thinking in International Relations Theory*. Colorado: Westview Press, 1997. page 163.
- ¹⁸ Ibid. page 166.
- ¹⁹ Ibid. page 170.
- ²⁰ Kissinger, Henry A. *American Foreign Policy*. Toronto: George J. McLeod Limited, 1974. page 59.
- ²¹ Ibid. page 66.
- ²² Viotti, Paul R., and Mark V. Kauppi. *International Relations Theory: Realism, Pluralism, Globalism, and Beyond*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999. page 484.
- ²³ Kissinger. *American Foreign Policy* op. cit. page 39.
- ²⁴ Ibid. page 40.
- ²⁵ Ibid. page 11.
- ²⁶ Kalb, Marvin and Bernard Kalb. *Kissinger*. Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, Ltd., 1974. page 81.
- ²⁷ Kissinger. *American Foreign Policy* op. cit. page 57.

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L'évolution conceptuelle de la géopolitique

Guillaume Landry

La plupart des gens ont déjà eu un cours de géographie à un moment ou un autre dans leur cheminement scolaire. Des petits ateliers des années du primaire jusqu'au cours de géographie canadienne du niveau secondaire, la jeunesse d'ici et d'ailleurs «subit» avec un enthousiasme discret ces sessions de coloriage de carte et de description froide des phénomènes naturels disjoints. Plusieurs en viennent d'ailleurs à se demander à quoi sert la géographie. Ainsi, ce domaine d'étude semble souvent porter cette forte réputation d'une science vide, inintéressante et inutile. Il importe donc de se questionner à savoir si cette discipline mérite véritablement un tel statut. Sur ce, il semble clair que l'on méprise à tort ce domaine de connaissance et que la géographie a en fait une portée souvent insoupçonnée. Cette portée peut se mesurer dans la géopolitique, cette science établie il y a tout juste un siècle et qui restitue la notion de pouvoir essentielle à la géographie. Afin de mieux saisir cette discipline, il est important d'étudier à priori ses concepts et les différences dans ses définitions. La géopolitique a toujours eu un impact considérable sur les relations internationales. Ce siècle a toutefois modifié la manière de concevoir la géopolitique ; ce travail tente ainsi de présenter l'évolution de la géopolitique à travers les paramètres historiques, pratiques et théoriques. Il sera donc question à travers cette recherche de la géographie, de la géopolitique et de ses rapports avec cette discipline, puis du débat conceptuel géopolitique de ce début de siècle, des conséquences de la Deuxième Guerre, du renouveau géopolitique, des écoles en présence et des débats d'actualité qui concernent ce savoir. De toujours, le territoire et le politique ont été étroitement liés. Napoléon a affirmé que la politique des États est dans leur géographie. Ce texte tentera de vérifier si cette affirmation s'avère exacte.

La géographie et le champ géopolitique

Avant d'aller plus loin en terme de géopolitique, il importe de définir et de comprendre les fondements de la géographie elle-même. Le terme «géographie» a pour origine les termes grecques «géo» pour Terre et «graphie» pour décrire. Étymologiquement, la géographie est donc une science qui repose sur la description de la Terre. Le Dictionnaire Larousse définit la géographie comme étant une «science qui a pour objet la description et l'explication de l'aspect actuel, naturel et humain, de la surface de la Terre». Il s'agit d'une définition somme toute assez simplifiée qui permet de voir toute la facette traitant de la compréhension du milieu. Ainsi, la géographie, c'est savoir penser l'espace, ce qui regroupe la géo-physiographie, le géo-tourisme, la géo-mass-média, la géo-humaine, la géo-économie et ainsi de suite. Il s'agit d'un cumul de compétences qui permet une description précise des indices qui rendent le milieu unique. L'objet géographique repose donc sur cet inventaire des composantes du territoire. D'un autre côté, une deuxième définition, celle du Dictionnaire de géopolitique, définit la géographie comme une science qui «étudie les relations entre l'espace et la société attendu que l'espace est le produit d'un rapport social que les systèmes de relations transforment en un territoire organisé». Territoire organisé : c'est la base de la *géopolitique*. L'espace n'existe pour l'homme qu'à travers la société et la culture qui l'habite. Donc, selon cette définition, le territoire devient possédé, où chaque pays organise son territoire en espaces privilégiés. C'est pourquoi Yves Lacoste affirme que la géographie, ça sert d'abord à faire la guerre. Selon lui, la

géographie des états-majors fait appel à un savoir dirigé vers la pratique stratégique et les connaissances du milieu physique comme outils précieux de pouvoir. On y vise l'utilisation des connaissances pour comprendre et envisager des plans d'actions qui mènent vers la stratégie militaire et politique autant qu'économique et sociale¹.

Le territoire n'est pas que politique. En effet, il suffit entre autre de penser à l'économie qui prend une place déterminante dans chaque État - et cette réalité est de plus en plus palpable de nos jours. Or, l'économie se base toujours en partie dans ses fondements sur le territoire, malgré l'avancement des technologies. En ce sens, les ressources naturelles d'un pays sont incontournables dans ses stratégies nationales et internationales. La survie d'un peuple passe donc par le contrôle de son territoire et de son potentiel, le milieu devenant alors garant du bien-être de ses habitants. Il suffit d'observer la stratégie impérialiste étasunienne. Que ce soit le pétrole du Moyen-Orient, les minerais d'Afrique, l'eau douce du Canada ou les plantations d'Amérique latine, les matières premières sont d'abord et avant tout situées sur un territoire. Un pays est fait de ressources qui déterminent une partie importante de la teneur des relations entre les pays et la viabilité de sa nation². L'impérialisme est avant tout économiquement relié au milieu et au désir de posséder ce que l'autre contrôle. En ce sens, la géographie touche à tous les domaines d'étude en sciences sociales. Il est donc clair que la géographie recèle une multitude de facettes qui ont un impact essentiel dans la configuration de l'ordre mondial. Ainsi, l'espace constitue une base majeure du pouvoir, de la politique et de l'économie d'un État. De ce fait, il serait déjà possible de conclure que la géographie est sous-estimée par rapport à sa position dans les sciences sociales³. Bien qu'il ne s'agisse pas là du thème de ce travail, les questions du pouvoir potentiel de la géographie et avantages pour certaines sphères supérieures à ce qu'elle soit méprisée se posent tout de même, comme le souligne M. Lacoste. En somme, l'État est fondé sur un territoire ; cette relation entre le pouvoir et l'espace fait de la géographie une science déterminante dans la stratégie spatiale et les plans militaires des pays. Il en résulte une proximité considérable des membres de cette discipline avec les sphères supérieures de la société et du pouvoir. À preuve, plusieurs géographes se sont converti en ministres influents. Après tout, comme l'affirme Sautter, « l'État se définit [...] d'abord par ses limites⁴ » et donc par son espace. De cette manière, la réalité physique exprime inévitablement cette complicité entre la géographie et le politique, une complicité qui est d'ailleurs l'objet précis de la géopolitique.

Le terme «géopolitique» est une combinaison des compétences géographiques auxquelles est ajouté le mot grec «polis», signifiant ville ou organisation. Ainsi, la géopolitique se caractérise par l'élément politique intrinsèque plutôt que parallèle par rapport au champ d'étude géographique. D'Alexandre le Grand à Napoléon en passant par César ou Cortès, la géopolitique a toujours été reliée à des bases militaires. En effet, depuis l'époque où les chefs d'État étaient d'abord et avant tout des chefs d'armées et des géographes hors pair, la connaissance du territoire constitue la base pour les stratégies militaires. Encore aujourd'hui, cette relation est palpable. Il suffit de penser aux deux Grandes Guerres de ce siècle, où les Allemands se sont fait prendre à chaque fois par la rigueur de l'hiver russe ou encore aux chars anglais qui se sont enlisés dans le sable fin de la Libye. Une montagne enneigée, un climat aride, un sous-sol riche en fer, une rivière profonde, un plateau en altitude ou encore une forêt dense sont autant d'éléments qui peuvent s'avérer des outils extrêmement précieux au cours de manœuvres guerrières. On ne peut occulter la dimension du pouvoir dans l'analyse géographique du territoire et c'est sur cette dualité que la géopolitique établit ses préceptes.

Les débats conceptuels

En dépit des siècles de guerres et de stratégies basées sur la géographie, le terme «géopolitique» est très récent. Évidemment, la pratique de la géopolitique remonte aux premiers temps de l'organisation des hommes en sociétés, mais c'est réellement au cours du XX^e siècle que la géopolitique a pris son envol conceptuel. Or, cette émergence s'est faite dans le courant idéologique de l'époque. Plusieurs intellectuels ont développé des théories dominantes en géopolitique au début de ce siècle. C'est en 1897 avec *Politische Geographie* que l'Allemand Friedrich Ratzel développe ses principes de *géographie politique*. Dans son ouvrage intitulé *Au sujet des lois de l'expansion spatiale des États*, il développe l'idée de «*lebensraum*», cet espace nécessaire à la survie d'un État. Il développe avec ses principes les fondements de ce que sera la Geopolitik allemande. Il est donc le premier à s'attarder sur les liens entre ces deux domaines et leur potentiel de puissance. Or, c'est vraiment le Suédois germanophone Rudolf K. Jellen qui invente le néologisme et fonde la géopolitique. Il développe plus clairement ses idées sur le sujet en 1916 dans son ouvrage *L'État, comme forme de vie*. Il définit la géopolitique comme étant les données naturelles d'un pays, sa géographie, qui *déterminent* la politique des États. L'ensemble de ses théories est fortement teinté par le déterminisme très dix-neuvième siècle de son époque. Elles reflètent l'idée que les individus d'une géographie différente sont différents, mais aussi inférieurs, un genre de Darwinisme social que Jellen a alimenté à cette époque. Encore aujourd'hui, cette pernicieuse notion de déterminisme se fait sentir lorsque certains pensent par exemple que le fait d'être Africain implique une intelligence relativement inférieure, que les gens qui viennent des pays au climat aride sont moins intelligents, que les Noirs sont plus forts, etc. Le 3^e Reich sera d'ailleurs fortement imprégné de ce déterminisme avec la notion de race arienne et d'espace vital. À cela s'ajoute le fait que la promotion des vertus géographiques dans les écrits de ces deux auteurs ait indubitablement eu un écho substantiel dans l'ensemble des sphères de pouvoir dans le monde européen. Il s'ensuivit d'abord une accélération de la course à la cartographie, amenant les pays en puissance à financer de nombreuses expéditions pour posséder la connaissance la plus précise possible de l'espace mondial. Mais plus important encore, cela amena une réévaluation des nationalismes dans leur lien avec l'espace. C'est dans ce contexte que, dans la première partie du XX^e siècle, trois importants penseurs que sont le Britannique Harold Mackinder et les Allemands Karl Haushofer et Nicholas John Spykman ont poussé plus loin les idées de Ratzel et de Jellen. Ils ont tous trois travaillé à élaborer une théorie qui permettrait de contenir la politique mondiale des puissances. On avait à l'époque la conviction qu'il était possible de proposer une théorie qui permettrait la domination de l'espace terrestre. En d'autres mots, on croyait pouvoir prendre des mesures dans la politique étrangère qui s'assoieraient sur l'exactitude d'une science dite infaillible que serait la géopolitique. La discipline était jeune, l'engouement était passionné et les dirigeants – particulièrement allemands – s'attendaient à recevoir des directives claires de la part des géopolitologues pour diriger – ou surtout justifier – leur politique étrangère. Les espoirs étaient grands et les théories qui s'en suivirent furent garantes de cet élan.

Mackinder a d'abord introduit avec son ouvrage *Democratic Ideals and Reality* la notion de zone pivot. Dans le contexte de l'époque, le Royaume-Uni était bien sûr la puissance dans le monde et cherchait à le demeurer. De son côté, l'Allemagne mettait de la pression sur cet empire, autant au niveau maritime que continental, en remettant en question l'ordre établi et en exigeant la reconnaissance de sa force aussi jeune qu'agressive. C'est dans ce

contexte que Mackinder s'employa à ce que l'empire britannique perpétue son hégémonie autour de ce qu'il appela la zone pivot. Il établit que la Sibérie était cette zone majeure qu'il fallait contrôler en priorité, un point d'encrage à partir duquel des cercles concentriques de plus en plus grands amenaient des zones qu'il devenait possible de contrôler. Mackinder explique la position centrale de la Sibérie :

«As we consider [a] rapid review of the broader currents of history, does not a certain persistence of geographical relationship become evident ? Is not the pivot region of the world's politics that vast area of Euro-Asia which is inaccessible to ships [...] There have been and are here the conditions of a mobility of military and economic power of a far-reaching and yet limited character. [...] In the world at large [Russia] occupies the central strategical position held by Germany in Europe. She can strike on all sides and be struck from all sides, save the north.⁵»

Or, comme ni le Royaume-Uni ni l'Allemagne n'étaient en mesure de dominer cette zone, Londres devait s'assurer de contenir le pivot par les mers et les zones de passage. Ce sont les points essentiels de la théorie de Mackinder qui dictèrent la politique étrangère britannique de l'époque.

Karl Haushofer a pour sa part repris et développé les thèses de Jellen. D'abord, cet éditeur du journal *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* de Munich fonda l'Institut allemand de géopolitique, le premier spécialisé à ce sujet. Ensuite, il développa une théorie bien connue de l'Allemagne d'alors, soit celle de l'espace vital et du rapport sang/sol. Il importe de se remémorer que Haushofer était l'une des figures de proue du Nazisme. Il déclare dans son ouvrage intitulé *Frontières et leur signification*, il déclare : « L'objet [de la Geopolitik] est l'étude des grandes connexions vitales de l'homme d'aujourd'hui dans l'espace d'aujourd'hui [...] et sa finalité est l'insertion de l'individu dans son milieu *naturel*.⁶» De plus, en dépit de son admiration pour Mackinder, il réfuta ses théories en ce qui concerne la zone pivot en s'attardant plus spécifiquement sur les rapports Nord-Sud dans une théorie dite européocentriste ou *Geopolitik der Panideen* (en régions). Le monde était selon-lui divisé en diverses strates où se retrouvaient d'abord l'Eurafrique, puis l'Asie centrale, l'Asie océanique et finalement l'Amérique. Il a compris que, pour briser le Royaume-Uni, il fallait s'attaquer aux points d'appui anglais les plus près géographiquement au lieu de s'étendre sur le monde, là où les Anglais étaient déjà solidement installés. Il fallait donc selon Haushofer se concentrer sur l'Europe, puis ultérieurement sur l'Afrique, avant de se lancer sur le reste du monde. Soulignons que l'une des erreurs majeures des géopoliticiens du début du siècle, - autant Haushofer que les autres - réside dans leur sous-estimation du potentiel de l'Amérique, un oubli que les États-Unis ne tarderont pas à leur faire regretter⁷.

Nicholas John Spykman a de son côté repris l'idée de la zone pivot de Mackinder. Absorbé par les questions de sécurité, il y ajouta l'idée d'endiguement, définit comme le Rimland (entourant le pivot) et le Heartland (entourant le Rimland), qu'il définit comme une volonté de dominer les pays qui enclavent cette zone pivot et non juste les mers tout autour. C'est pourquoi l'Indochine, la Turquie, l'Égypte ou encore le Maroc et l'Espagne deviennent si importants puisqu'ils se trouvent à même les zones de passage maritime si décisives. Ainsi, dominer les mers n'était plus suffisant; il fallait aussi contrôler les accès continentaux pour véritablement maîtriser le reste du monde. Dans son ouvrage *The geography of the Peace*, Spykman affirme, «the primary characteristic of any geopolitical analysis, as distinguished from a purely geographic one, is that it is dealing with a dynamic rather than a static situation.⁸» La dynamique, la notion de changement, est pour lui centrale dans les relations

internationales, et c'est sur cette préoccupation que repose les zones de défense de la zone pivot.

Il s'agit sans aucun doute d'une présentation on ne peut plus rapide d'une littérature et de plusieurs écoles historiques qui ont certainement été très importantes dans ce siècle. L'objet de ce travail n'est pas d'en faire une analyse spécifique ni approfondie, mais bien de les situer dans l'évolution générale de la géopolitique. Néanmoins, il est bon de souligner que chacun de ces théoriciens a influencé l'évolution de la géopolitique tout autant que celui de l'histoire. Leur questionnement quant à la compétence de l'État à représenter le territoire et la population, les discours sur les luttes de pouvoir et les rapports entre les grandes zones régionales du monde sont encore bien contemporaines. Simplement en étudiant ces auteurs fondamentaux, on peut comprendre bien des événements autant dans les manœuvres physiques des deux Grandes Guerres que dans les courants de pensée de l'époque.

L'école allemande et les contrecoups de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale

La fin de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale a entraîné un désaveu presque total de la géopolitique. Comme mentionné plus haut, le début du vingtième siècle a incontestablement été celui du potentiel allemand et de ses pressions pour remettre en question l'équilibre du pouvoir mondial. Bismarck avait débuté ce mouvement au siècle auparavant en consolidant les différents territoires de la Prusse et en gagnant la guerre d'Alsace-Lorraine. Les décennies qui suivirent ne firent que corroborer cette quête de puissance, de Guillaume II à Hitler. La géopolitique au début du vingtième siècle fut ainsi dirigée par la puissante et productive école allemande. Comme il fut mentionné auparavant, les grands théoriciens du début du siècle étaient pour la plupart Allemands, de même que les premiers instituts géopolitiques⁹. C'est dans ce contexte que la politique raciste, impérialiste et agressive de l'Allemagne a – entre autres facteurs – envenimer les belligérants vers les deux Grandes Guerres. Les discours déterministes et racistes des géopoliticiens tels que Jellen et Haushofer, la défaite allemande de 1945 ainsi que la découverte des camps nazis ont en quelques années précipité la géopolitique vers un désaveu intégral. Les concepts de la géopolitique allaient ainsi subir une remise en question fondamentale. D'abord, les atrocités d'Auschwitz-Birkenau et des autres camps de concentration ont été directement associées aux théories de Haushofer quant à l'espace vital et à la notion de sang/sol. Pour longtemps, la géopolitique allait se conjuguer à l'image de l'holocauste et de l'Allemagne qui avait tenté de justifier objectivement ses opérations par cette science. Ainsi, le déterminisme allait être battu en brèche. Ensuite, on se rendait compte que les théories géopolitiques développées jusqu'alors n'étaient apparemment pas infaillibles et qui plus est, elles avaient alimenté les idéologies de guerre. L'engouement pour la science exacte novatrice qu'était la géopolitique au début du siècle s'est alors transformé en rétractation tout aussi passionnée. De même, le territoire n'avait plus le même rôle dans les nouvelles relations internationales. Des petits États allaient se tailler une puissance qui contredisait le rapport entre la quantité de ressources naturelles et le pouvoir – Taiwan était plus riche que la Chine entière, le Japon que l'Inde. L'ONU, l'accroissement des moyens de communication, la décolonisation, la fin des empires, la démocratisation des sociétés civiles ou encore la bipolarité ont été autant d'éléments qui changèrent dramatiquement les conceptions des rapports de force et de la place du territoire dans le politique¹⁰. La géopolitique, outre sa perte de crédibilité, ne pouvait plus de toute manière reposer sur les concepts d'auparavant. Le contexte mondial était maintenant autre, ce qui amenait les théories d'auparavant à perdre leur signification. C'est ainsi que les

jeunes instituts de géopolitique ont fermé leurs portes et que la science était maintenant devenue un mauvais souvenir. Bien que les relations entre États n'aient certes jamais arrêté d'exister, les sphères géopolitiques n'étaient dès lors plus celles d'une science à part entière. Philippe Moreau Defarges écrit : «La géopolitique, ses conceptions, ses vicissitudes sont indissociables des turbulences et des tragédies du XX^e siècle. Avec l'épanouissement de l'âge de la science, à partir du XVII^e siècle, l'homme occidental ne peut que rêver de bâtir une science de pouvoir et de la puissance. La géopolitique est l'un des enfants de ce rêve.¹¹» Seul le temps pouvait pardonner et faire resurgir les principes qui devaient, finalement, motiver la géopolitique.

Renaissance de la géopolitique

Avec le temps, la géopolitique s'est restructuré et on peut dire qu'elle est aujourd'hui redevenue à la mode. Les événements de la Deuxième Guerre et de ce qui l'a précédé ont entraîné une réévaluation complète des bases conceptuelles de la géopolitique. Dans les années 70, suivant les conflits interposés de la Guerre Froide, les sphères supérieures de la société qui n'ont jamais délaissé leur intérêt pour la géographie et ses liens avec le pouvoir, ont peu à peu recommencé à nommer leur domaine de recherche «géopolitique». C'est ce qui permet aux deux spécialistes Français de géopolitique que sont Pascal Lorot et François Thuau d'affirmer : «Bannie pendant de longues années, [...] la géopolitique est de retour sous un registre plus modeste, celui de l'investigation des intentions et des comportements des acteurs de la scène internationale. La géopolitique n'a jamais cessé d'être, puisque dès qu'il y a État et relations entre les États, il y a géopolitique.¹² » Cependant, cela ne s'est pas fait sans heurt ; à titre d'exemple, au Québec, le cours de géopolitique offert au collégial se nomme «géographie politique et culturelle», un nom différent qui n'est pas sans rappeler le désir de se distinguer de l'image nazie de la géopolitique. C'est d'ailleurs sous l'appellation de géographie politique que les écoles britanniques poursuivront leurs travaux, un retour masqué aux termes utilisés par ce domaine de recherche du temps de Ratzel. Un autre exemple vient du dictionnaire Larousse qui définit la géopolitique comme «une science où les données naturelles d'un pays, sa géographie, déterminent la politique des États». Encore aujourd'hui, on considère l'espace comme un environnement déterminant. C'est d'ailleurs ce que tente de démolir la géopolitique moderne. En effet, le monde entier a établi un lien encore puissant entre les atrocités nazies et la place prépondérante qu'occupait la géopolitique dans le régime allemand d'alors. C'est d'ailleurs sur ce point que plusieurs géopolitologues ont tenté de tracer une ligne et de différencier leur science de celle des Allemands. À ce sujet, Colin S. Gray écrit :

«La géopolitique doit être différenciée de la *Geopolitik*. La première relève de la science politique, c'est-à-dire de l'exploration des structures de la politique sans nécessairement prescrire une action politique particulière. La seconde, la *Geopolitik* au contraire, [...] s'inspirait des recherches et des idées des géopolitologues les plus respectés vivant hors d'Allemagne, mais son objectif était la propagande. Bien que la géopolitique ne réussisse pas à se libérer des excès de Haushofer et de ses confrères, il n'en demeure pas moins que, partout dans le monde, on ne peut concevoir de politique étrangère et de politique de défense qui ne s'inscrive dans le cadre de la géopolitique.¹³»

Nouveau cadre conceptuel

Geoffrey Parker, dans son ouvrage *Gepolitics : Past, present and future*, définit simplement la géopolitique comme étant l'étude des relations internationales dans une perspective spatiale ou géographique. Selon lui, la géopolitique est d'abord l'analyse des

caractéristiques du milieu, puis vient ensuite l'analyse des interactions entre ces caractères spécifiques, pour enfin en faire la comparaison et les analyser dans un cadre régional, voir mondial. Cette définition s'avère être plus technique que philosophique, un attribut propre à l'école anglo-saxonne dont Parker est l'un des plus éminents. Cependant, elle a le mérite d'attirer l'attention sur les interactions, sur la complexité des rapports, une notion centrale dans ce domaine de savoir¹⁴. Le *Dictionnaire de Géopolitique* affirme de son côté que la géopolitique «est d'abord et avant tout une étude systématique, rigoureuse et constamment renouvelée de tous les éléments constitutifs de la puissance de l'État, le tout conduisant à une évaluation de puissance ou de faiblesse, de précarité ou d'abondance». Ainsi, le lien entre le géographique, soit l'inventaire de notions cartographiables constitutives, avec l'analyse que l'on peut en faire, les conclusions que l'on peut en tirer, est clairement défini. C'est en fait une démarche qui vise à enlever l'élément statique de l'inventaire pour le faire passer à l'action, le comprendre, ce qui est loin d'être facile, d'où l'échec de plusieurs.

Il a fallu attendre le Français Michel Foucher pour qu'un regard plus vaste vienne s'imposer dans le milieu. Auteur de l'ouvrage *Fronts et frontières*, une référence dans le domaine, Monsieur Foucher propose une définition des plus intéressante ; selon lui, «la géopolitique est une méthode d'analyse géographique de situations socio-politiques concrètes envisagées en tant qu'elles sont localisées, et des représentations habituelles qui les décrivent. Elle procède à la détermination des coordonnées géographiques d'une situation et d'un processus socio-politique et un *décryptage* des discours et des images cartographiques qui les accompagnent¹⁵». Cette définition a le mérite de souligner plusieurs éléments intrinsèques pour la géopolitique que sont l'espace, la conflictualité, la localisation, la représentation, l'inventaire et l'analyse. Ainsi, ce qui entre en relation avec l'État et sa représentation fait partie de la discipline. Il s'agit donc d'une combinaison de l'analyse micro et macro en terme de géographie et de politique ; la géopolitique pénètre dans le pays pour en comprendre les structures, puis amène ensuite ces éléments au niveau international pour en relativiser l'impact. La géopolitique est en ce sens devenue depuis un domaine pluridisciplinaire, combinant les domaines d'études pour en tirer un profil général et voir le monde dans un ensemble. Ainsi, Karoline Postel-Vinay explique cette pluralité :

«L'objet géographique se démultiplie ; la géographie se met elle-même au pluriel, à l'instar des «nouvelles géographies» françaises ou des «géographies post-modernes» californiennes d'Edward Soja. D'autre part, l'évolution (ou la révolution) de la géographie correspond à un repositionnement au sein des sciences sociales, débouchant sur un nouveau dialogue avec les autres disciplines. Cette double transformation a des conséquences directes et indirectes pour l'analyse des relations internationales et, plus spécifiquement, pour l'observation des recompositions spatiales en cours. Elle confirme, par d'autres voies, la nécessité d'envisager un au-delà de la territorialité. [Ainsi], Gérard O'Tuathail propose pour sa part l'élaboration d'une «géopolitique critique». Celle-ci, précise O'Tuathail, constitue une approche plutôt qu'une théorie, permettant de soumettre à un examen rigoureux la «problématique confuse qui lie géographie et politique globale»¹⁶».

Selon Foucher, la géopolitique s'intéresse à l'articulation du spatial et du politique selon trois registres, soit la représentation, la pratique et la méthode. Cela permet donc de voir encore les relations État à État, mais aussi de les comprendre avec ce qui se passe à l'intérieur de chacun d'eux. Cela revient donc à ce que Béatrice Giblin affirme lorsqu'elle déclare que la touche politique dans la géographie : « sait reconnaître la complexité des facteurs physiques et humains, dont l'étude combinée est indispensable à l'unité de la géographie, laquelle doit par surcroît s'approcher de la mêlée¹⁷ ». Des drapeaux aux traités en passant par la monnaie, les ethnies en puissance, la genèse de la formation territoriale,

les héros nationaux, la toponymie, les guerres, les ressources nationales ou encore les religions en présence, - pour ne nommer que ceux-ci - le territoire regorge de facteurs qui le définissent et relativisent toute sa relation avec le vecteur politique. Tous les symboles et les événements prennent ainsi une saveur toute distincte qui s'imbrique dans un processus de compréhension.

La géopolitique devient intéressante dans le cumul des savoirs amenant l'analyse. Dans le remaniement conceptuel de la discipline, la géopolitique a depuis délaissé aux études stratégiques les tactiques de guerre et les notions de contrôle, mais continue à penser l'espace. Le pouvoir n'est plus une fin : voilà un changement substantiel dans la méthode et les dessins mêmes de la géopolitique. La dimension tragique de vérité provoquant une lutte de pouvoir a terminé de hanter les géopolitologues. Le conflit est le domaine de prédilection de la géopolitique, mais la nuance vient du fait qu'elle n'a pas à intervenir dans le déroulement des phénomènes qu'elle étudie. Monsieur François Thual exprime bien ce changement de perspective :

«La géopolitique ne saurait être une science, elle est bien plus un savoir. [...] La géopolitique est réellement un savoir, car elle est fondée sur une méthode d'investigation ; elle n'a pas à dicter aux dirigeants ce qu'ils doivent faire, mais son rôle consiste à repérer dans la durée, les causes, les postures, et les mouvements de sociétés constituées, dans le monde moderne, sous forme d'État. [...] La méthode géopolitique cherche sa matière dans l'Histoire et la Géographie. Il ne peut y avoir de discours absolu en matière de géopolitique, car il n'y a pas de clef universelle des conflits. L'horizon immédiat de la géopolitique est la conflictualité. Dans cette perspective, la réflexion sur les notions de «territoire» et «d'identité» va être fondamentale. [...] Le deuxième aspect de l'investigation géopolitique concerne les constructions politiques. Là où il y a pouvoir en effet, il y a stratégie de positionnement de ce pouvoir. [La] nomenclature des différentes postures d'identité collective amène plus loin que la simple réflexion géopolitique. Il faut alors absorber les problèmes fondamentaux tenant aux rapports l'homme et la société, et à l'appartenance d'une nation à un territoire, tout en s'acharnant à définir ces appartenances. Le territoire est l'objet du désir d'identité.¹⁸ »

La géopolitique va donc chercher l'élément identitaire dans la définition même d'un peuple, puisqu'un territoire existe à travers les gens qui l'habitent. Le nationalisme et tous les débats sur l'identité sont donc au cœur de la géopolitique ; les démêlés encore contemporains de nation, d'État et d'État-nation, souvent passionnés, s'agitent inévitablement dans les gironnets géopolitiques. Cette discipline ne se limite plus à la juxtaposition des domaines géographiques et politiques ; elle absorbe les inventaires de notion qui constituent le territoire, la population et son organisation pour se concentrer sur la richesse des liens qui lient ces éléments entre eux et amènent des rapports. Observer, faire des liens, analyser, rassembler les conclusions, questionner et tenter de comprendre : voilà en somme les défis géopolitiques. Le concept géopolitique est bien différent de la science du début du siècle qui cherchait à trouver plus spécifiquement dans le territoire des fondements qui justifieraient une politique précise. La géopolitique n'est plus là selon Foucher pour fournir des réponses, mais bien pour soulever des questions, des corrélations. À ce titre, les questions sont souvent plus intéressantes que les réponses.

Les nouvelles Écoles

L'engouement est donc retrouvé pour la géopolitique, et ce, particulièrement en France. De nos jours, il est possible d'identifier trois écoles à partir desquelles la géopolitique s'enrichit : il y a l'école germanophone, l'école anglo-saxonne et l'école francophone.

L'école allemande a repris confiance bien tard, devant surmonter des craintes quant aux dessins de ses écrits. Plus modeste que les deux autres écoles, elle demeure notable de par la qualité de ses ouvrages, mais elle n'a plus le lustre ni les ambitions d'auparavant. Paul Claval écrit que l'école allemande «fuit les problèmes d'actualité : en choisissant d'être politiquement neutre, elle renonce à proposer des réponses aux grandes questions de l'heure.¹⁹»

L'école anglo-saxonne sous l'égide des États-Unis, a pour sa part été la première à tenter de réaffirmer la géopolitique dans les cadres universitaires, particulièrement avec les guerres d'Indochine. En ce sens, la cartographie du monde vu des États-Unis durant la guerre froide est explicite. Gérard Chaliand, un Français qui s'est spécialisé sur la géopolitique, en a obtenu copie et on peut y déceler bien des éléments qui rappellent les théories de Mackinder, Spykman ou Haushofer. La Russie y est encore une fois la zone pivot, la région autour est celle qui est disputée et les régions sont définies en cercles concentriques d'importance relative de par leur proximité par rapport au pivot. Notons que le nom de la politique étrangère étasunienne est «l'endiguement», nom qui a pour origine les théories de Spykman et qui vise à contenir le communisme autour du pivot. Ainsi, sans parler directement de «géopolitique», la pratique et les théories ont continué de se faire sentir. La Guerre Froide a particulièrement fourni l'occasion de briguer différentes approches géopolitiques plus ou moins définies. Il n'en demeure pas moins que nombreux sont les écrits et les innovations de cette école, qui s'attarde moins sur le questionnement philosophique de la géopolitique que sur son usage. Henry Kissinger et Geoffrey Parker en sont sans doute les grands noms.

L'école française est sans doute la plus dynamique des écoles quant au questionnement conceptuel. C'est sous le Marocain d'origine Yves Lacoste que le mouvement de renaissance débuta à la fin des années soixante-dix avec son ouvrage *Géographie du sous-développement* qui amena la création de la revue «géopolitique» *Hérodote*, plus tard rebaptisée *Revue de géographie et de géopolitique*. Plusieurs autres ouvrages et auteurs viendront s'ajouter à cette initiative, tel que le *Dictionnaire de Géopolitique* et *La géographie, ça sert d'abord à faire la guerre* de ce même auteur, *Fronts et frontières* de Michel Foucher ou encore des recherches indépendantes ou conjointes de François Thuat et de Pascal Lorot. Peu présente sur la scène internationale dans les débats géopolitiques de ce début de siècle – mentionnons tout de même les travaux de Vidal de La Blanche et de Élisée Reclus - la France a solidement repris le flambeau et a développé sa propre *Geopolitik*, souvent aussi nommée géopolitique engagée, de par les prises de positions ouvertement de gauche de la plupart des ténors de l'école française. C'est en 1982 qu'est aussi fondé en France par Marie-France Garaud l'Institut international de Géopolitique. Aux succès modestes, il demeure qu'il soulève des questions importantes quant à la place de la géopolitique dans les sphères intellectuelles. Toutefois, selon certains, l'engouement serait devenu une mode dans la dernière décennie; Philippe Moreau Defarges explique ce phénomène : «Le terme «géopolitique» fait aujourd'hui partie de ces mots magiques qui expliquent – ou plutôt paraissent expliquer – l'inexplicable : serait géopolitique toute question se situant au-delà de la rationalité claire et mettant en jeu des intérêts immenses, donc indéfinissables.²⁰» En effet, il suffit de lire *Le Monde diplomatique*, *le Monde*, où d'observer la sortie des essais politiques pour voir que le terme est à la mode, surtout en France. La question est de savoir si toute situation nationale et internationale est géopolitique ou si, au lieu d'être un adjectif, il s'agit plutôt d'une discipline comme une autre.

Etat actuel du débat

La géopolitique ne fait toujours pas l'unanimité. Plusieurs se demandent si cette science a raison d'être, si elle ne devrait pas s'en remettre aux relations internationales ou encore à la géographie elle-même dépendant des enjeux. Pierre de Senarclens critique la géopolitique en ces termes :

«L'unification de l'Allemagne ou le processus d'intégration européenne sont des événements politiques affectant l'espace géographique. Mais en qualifiant ces processus de changement «géopolitique», on adopte implicitement un cadre de référence fondant la puissance de l'État sur la population, l'espace, les ressources économiques, ce qui est une vision partielle et désuète de la puissance. L'espace ne commande pas l'histoire. En politique, les structures géographiques permettent en certaines circonstances d'anticiper le comportement rationnel des acteurs, non de le prévoir. Aucune structure n'est absolument contraignante, les individus, les mouvements politiques ou les gouvernements pouvant toujours prendre le parti de contester l'ordre en vigueur pour le modifier. [...] Et si l'environnement de la planète devient une source de préoccupation politique majeure, si l'épuisement des ressources naturelles et les ravages de la pollution sont un enjeu pour tous les États, ce n'est pas une raison pour enfermer l'analyse de cette problématique dans le cadre de la «géopolitique».²¹ »

Cet extrait soulève des éléments importants quant à la limitation des champs d'étude, mais il s'avère que bien des différents se construisent sur la base du manque de clarté dans les concepts. Il est évident que Monsieur de Senarclens conçoit les limites de la géopolitique dans l'optique où cette dernière serait une science limitée à la jonction de la géographie dans la politique. Or, si l'on prend la définition de Monsieur Foucher, le débat est tout autre.

Des précisions s'imposent. Certains milieux intellectuels cherchent constamment des réponses claires et définies ; évidemment le cadre des *sciences* humaines encourage cette quête, bien que tout et chacun sait que l'humain, tout comme la politique, ne peut offrir de réponses définitives. La géopolitique est une méthode d'étude au même titre qu'une autre. Ses avantages et ses inconvénients sont inhérents, comme pour n'importe quelle méthode. Cependant, le problème vient souvent du manque de nuance, du fait que les hommes n'ont pas pardonné à la géopolitique ses faiblesses et son incompetence à fournir des vérités inébranlables ; il suffit de se remémorer les ambitions des géopolitologues du début du siècle. Sans doute les hommes ont voulu à travers elle définir des principes incontestables même si la géopolitique n'a jamais eu les compétences ni les outils pour relever un tel défi. Le balancier se promène souvent entre les extrêmes, comme le disent Lorot et Thual, où, après l'engouement de la nouvelle science dite exacte du début du siècle et le désaveu total qui s'en est suivi, on semble aujourd'hui, timidement, lui refaire confiance. L'exemple de certaines sphères françaises qui utilisent systématiquement la géopolitique dans tous les domaines de politique nationale comme internationale est un autre exemple de manque de perspective dans les expériences passées. La géopolitique est probablement située quelque part entre ces désirs enchanteurs et démesurés.

Conclusion

Napoléon avait cerné l'importance de la géographie dans ses liens avec le politique lorsqu'il a affirmé que la politique des États est dans leur géographie, mais il demeure qu'il faut éviter les extrêmes et il n'y a pas de solution miracle nul part. La géopolitique étudie l'espace. Or, les deux principales qualités de cet espace sont sa complexité et sa variété. La

géopolitique perd tout son sens si on lui enlève les interactions qu'elle contient, si on la dissèque de sa vitalité résidant dans la complexité même. Robert Walter affirmait que la géopolitique a pour but de déferer un sens réaliste à une simple carte du monde en lui donnant une perception. Or, la discipline connaît des limites. Dans les concepts élaborés par certains géopolitologues, il est possible de voir l'émergence d'une volonté de créer à travers la géopolitique une science qui va rechercher la valeur pluridisciplinaire qui est tant absente du milieu «surspécialisé» d'aujourd'hui. La scolastique est devenue habitude, bien que les réponses dans les sciences humaines résident plus souvent dans les interactions plus que dans la réduction au plus simple. La nouvelle géopolitique offre justement cette concertation entre les sciences sociales, pour mieux saisir la complexité des réalités. Elle ne peut avoir que les prétentions que nous voudrions bien lui donner.

«La géopolitique n'est ni une mode ni une illusion ni une paraphrase. Elle a acquis sa place comme méthode d'investigation du champ des relations internationales, mais comme aucune autre forme de savoir ne saurait se suffire à elle-même, il lui appartient de pratiquer un certain œcuménisme avec des savoirs voisins (histoire, géographie, anthropologie, etc.)»²²

Tant de débats inutiles pourraient être évités s'il y avait une clarification des termes utilisés, de ce que l'on entend par géopolitique. Le problème vient bien plus des individus qui pensent découvrir, révolutionner ou dénigrer la géopolitique que la discipline elle-même, qui n'est qu'un outil à la mesure de nos dessins. Dit autrement, le problème vient de ceux qui pensent trouver de l'objectivité dans les domaines humains. La géopolitique a été sacrifiée sur cet autel, et le débat, pour certains, continue.

Notes

- ¹ Lacoste, Yves Du rideau de fumée de la géographie des professeurs aux écrans de la géographie-spectacle. *La géographie, ça sert d'abord à faire la Guerre*. 1976, 176 p..
- ² Colson, Bruno ; *Le Tiers Monde dans la pensée stratégique américaine* ; Centre d'analyse politique comparée, Institut de stratégie comparée, École pratique des Hautes Études, 1994, 83 p.
- ³ Lire à ce sujet Lacoste, Yves *La géographie, ça sert d'abord à faire la Guerre*. Paris: Éditions Maspéro. 1976, 123 p.
- ⁴ Sautter, Gilles la géographie comme idéologie ? Québec: *Cahier de géographie du Québec*, Université Laval, 1985, p. 198
- ⁵ Mackinder, Harold J *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, The Norton Library, 1942, p. 261
- ⁶ Lorot Pascal et Thual François *La géopolitique*, éditions Clefs politique, p. 19.
- ⁷ Mentionnons que John Spykman a corrigé cet élément plus tard dans son ouvrage *American State*
- ⁸ Spykman, John *The geography of the peace* : New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1944, p. 6
- ⁹ Korinman, Michel *Quand l'Allemagne pensait le monde*, Paris,; Editions Fayard. 412 p.
- ¹⁰ Lorot Pascal et Thual François *La géopolitique op. cit.* , pp. 37-47
- ¹¹ Moreau Defarges, Philippe *Introduction à la géopolitique*. Paris: Ed Le Seuil, 1994, p. 215
- ¹² Lorot Pascal et Thual François *La géopolitique op. cit.* , p. 7
- ¹³ Moreau Defarges, Philippe *Introduction à op. cit.* , p. 29
- ¹⁴ Parker, Geoffrey *Geopolitics : past, present and future*. Londres: Pinter editions, p. 5
- ¹⁵ Foucher, Michel *Fronts et frontières* . Paris: Eéditions Fayard , 1991 , p. 35
- ¹⁶ Postel-Vinay, Karoline *Les nouvelles relations internationales*, Editions Presses de sciences po, pp. 168 – 171.
- ¹⁷ Voir Giblin, Béatrice Géographie politique et géopolitique. Québec.: *Cahier de géographie du Québec Université Laval*, 1985, p. 180.
- ¹⁸ Lire Thual, François *Repères internationaux, l'événement au crible de la géopolitique* éditions Ellipses, pp. 7-13.
- ¹⁹ Claval, Paul *Histoire de la géographie*. Paris: PUF, collection «Que sais-je ? », 1995, p. 76
- ²⁰ Moreau Defarges, Philippe *Introduction* , op. cit., p. 9

²¹ De Senarclens, Pierre *Le politique internationale*, collection Cursus. Paris: Armand Colin, 1997, p. 40.

²² Lorot Pascal et Thual François *La géopolitique*, *op. cit.*, p.149

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Human Nature and Kant's Vision of International Society

Julie Barkley

International relations theory cannot ignore the fact that all political actions in the world are carried out individually and collectively by human beings. Because of this, human nature must always be incorporated into international relations theory. Kant theorized about the state, international relations, and war and peace, but he constantly took human nature into account in his theories and molded these theories to accord with his view of human nature. Kant's vision of human nature, and how it influenced his theories of the state, international relations, and war and peace will be explained below.

Kant's conception of human nature

Kant highlights the **dual** or **animal/rational** character of human nature. In his view, man has two competing natures: the animal side and the rational side.¹ This conception of human nature forms the base on which he builds his other theories. The animal nature is the side which people possess because they are living beings.² It is the mechanical, impulse-oriented side of human nature. It seeks the preservation of the self, reproduction, and community with other humans with the goal of maximizing personal pleasure and minimizing pain. In other words, the animal nature is based on sensuous impulses.³ Because animal nature urges personal pleasure and avoids personal pain, it is inherently self-interested, ignoring the effects of one's actions on other people.⁴ This side of human nature can never be eliminated, but it should be tamed so that natural inclinations will not clash with each other. This can only be done through reason.⁵ Rational nature is possessed only by human beings; they are the only rational animals.⁶ This side of human nature involves the exercise of reason rather than impulse.⁷ It is the exercise of reason and moral law which distinguishes people from animals.⁸ The rational side of human nature does not take its examples from experience (which would make its principles subjective), but rather uses reason to derive its principles, which are called the laws of nature, or moral law, making its principles objective and universally true.⁹ The basis of moral law is that one should never behave in such a way that his action could not be made into universal law. From this base, all moral principles can be deduced.¹⁰ It is these principles which the rational side of human nature urges people to obey, compelling them to act in a moral way. All people are endowed with reason, and all can understand correct morality.¹¹ It is this ability which gives all people dignity and value, regardless of whether or not they choose to obey rational, moral law or to obey sensuous impulses, and they must therefore never be treated simply as the means to an end.¹² People are not motivated uniquely by either their animal or by their rational side. Each person has freedom of choice, and can decide for themselves whether to obey their impulses and ignore moral law, or to suppress their inclinations and allow reason to dictate their actions.¹³ However, neither side of the individual can be completely eradicated, so while people recognize the obligatory nature of moral laws, they are affected by sensuous desires and may be tempted to act contrary to them.¹⁴ Indeed, Kant believes that everyone initially chooses to obey the animal side of themselves instead of the rational side, because the temptation to seek pleasure is so strong. Therefore, every effort to become moral meets with resistance, hence the tendency of men to evil (ignoring moral law).¹⁵ However, this temptation can be overcome. By developing their reason, people can find the strength to oppose their impulses and act morally. It takes effort, but it can be done.¹⁶

Social asociability is another key component of Kant's conception of human nature. It is based primarily on the animal side of people and how it affects their behaviour. People have a tendency to want to be a part of a society so that they can develop themselves and find companionship. They want the approval and recognition of others as well as the chance to develop themselves that society offers them.¹⁷ At the same time, people resist uniting in a society because they have a natural tendency to be antagonistic toward one another. They see themselves as isolated and in competition with others for the satisfaction of their desires. They see others either as obstacles to the fulfillment of their desires or as a means to their fulfillment. They do not want to limit their own freedom to do as they please by being forced to respect the rights of others. They may disagree with the laws or with some aspects of society and want to change them to suit their own ideas, so they look for ways to get around the laws and avoid moral duties. They expect others to resist as well, because they themselves were inclined to resist.¹⁸

Kant believes, nevertheless, that human beings were given their rational nature for a reason, and that **nature has a plan** for them.¹⁹ Reason develops through the antagonism of individuals. Hostility of one person for another pushes people to find new solutions to their problems. Without this antagonism, reason would cease to develop, simply because it would no longer be needed. Since people naturally have this antagonism (asocial sociability), Kant believes that the purpose of man is not to achieve happiness, but to achieve a peaceful society. If man's ultimate purpose was to be happy, nature would not have given him reason, since his natural inclinations would have served much better than reason to achieve this end.²⁰ He believes that, by looking at history, it is evident that all natural faculties are destined to unfold completely to their natural end, and that this will happen with reason, too. However, this cannot happen with the individual, but only with the species as a whole. This is so because reason, unlike natural impulses, requires information and experience to develop. This development is a very long process, far too long to be completed in the lifetime of a single person. However, human beings can pass on the enlightenment and understanding that they have reached in their lifetime to the next generation, allowing them to start the development of their reason at a higher level than the previous generation. Over time, reason will fully develop. This will allow us to finally control our animal impulses and be motivated solely by reason. Since it is uncontrolled animal impulses which keep people from living in harmony with one another, this development will bring peace.²¹ It should, however, be emphasized that only general trends, not exact instances, can be predicted. This is because each person can choose their own actions. Yet, while pursuing their own ends, individuals unknowingly fit into larger patterns, which can be observed and from which general predictions can be made.²²

Kant's conception of the state

To understand Kant's theory of international relations, it is necessary to understand his theory of the state. This is because states are considered moral "persons" in international society, just like individuals within the state. States follow the same rules of human nature as individuals. Also, international society must respect the sovereignty of individual states, which continue to provide the base of law and of order in international society. As a result, there are many similarities (though there are also many differences) between the relations of the individual to the state and the relation of the state to international society.

Much like Hobbes and other liberal thinkers, Kant attributes the **formation of the state** to men's desire to escape fear and insecurity. He believed that in the state of nature, men were ruled almost solely by their animal natures. Without a government to control them, they were free to pursue their own desires, but so was everyone else, consequently they had no security for themselves or their property. Everyone was at war with everyone else, and all people lived in fear. It was the fear of war and worse evils which motivated them to leave the state of nature and impose laws and a government on themselves to protect themselves from others. Therefore, it was self-interest which motivated people to enter into a lawful society which could peacefully resolve their disputes, rather than a reasoned, rational argument that laws should be imposed.²³ Reason justifying the state would develop later, within the state, motivating people to perfect their constitution and laws. It is a good state which leads to the moral improvement of people. In fact, reason and morality cannot flourish outside of civil society.²⁴

The state is based on a **civic constitution**, which lays out the basic rights and restrictions of citizens within the state. The constitution protects the rights of citizens against infringement by others, allowing them to live together in peace. The basis for a just civic constitution must be natural law, as known through reason.²⁵ The goal of society is to develop a perfectly just civic constitution which allows all citizens as much freedom as possible while protecting the rights of all. This allows people to pursue their own ends with as little restriction as possible. It also allows for peaceful solution of conflict in society.²⁶ By allowing for the venting of antagonism, people are allowed to continue to develop their reason (which is impossible without conflict) to fulfill the purpose of nature. This reason will help them to identify and solve injustices in society, ensuring the preservation of a just state and maintaining its vitality. The civic constitution must also recognize the absolute equality of all citizens as possessors of reason and rationality and give no exceptions or special rights to anyone.²⁷ A civic constitution which guarantees the freedom and equality of citizen, on the basis of common law, is a republican constitution. A perfectly just civic constitution cannot be achieved until states achieve lawful external relations. What would be the point of working hard to develop a perfectly just civic constitution for the purpose of ensuring domestic peace and tranquility, if the state is constantly being forced into war? The motivation to perfect the civic constitution simply will not exist until war ceases to be a constant threat on the international front.²⁸

With respect to the **structure of government**, it can take, in Kant's view, one of three forms: monarchy (rule by one), aristocracy (rule by a few), or democracy (rule by all).²⁹ Any of these forms can be either republican or despotic, depending on how they rule.³⁰ Republican governments rule according to the "general will" of the people, namely they rule according to natural law, which all people understand and know to be true through their reason. Despotic governments ignore the law of nature and rule according to their own individual will. Republican government must be representative.³¹ This ensures against the tyranny of the majority. If it were not representative, most of the citizens of a state could turn against a single person or a smaller number of people, and decisions could not really be said to be made by all of the people.³² Therefore, representative government guards against the tendency of people to put themselves above the law and try to change it to suit their own needs. It ensures that reason and rationality, not animal nature, will determine the laws. However, the problem of who is to rule the state is a very difficult one. People need a master (or masters) because, though as rational beings they want law, as animal beings they want to put themselves above the law. However, this master must be a

human being himself, with the same animal nature as everyone else, and therefore needing a master as well. Kant does not see an immediate solution to this problem, which he thinks will be one of the last political problems to be solved.³³ For the time being, he advocates for the **separation of powers** within the state, namely the separation of legislative, executive, and judicial powers. Ensuring that these powers are controlled by different people keeps the government from becoming despotic. Kant believes that the legislative power should be with all the people, since it is from their will that the law should emanate. Executive power should reside with the sovereign, whether this is one person or a group. Judicial power should reside with the courts.³⁴ This arrangement keeps people from executive and judicial power, which, if they were controlled by everyone, would allow everyone to act as ruler at the same time, and their animal nature would tempt them to put themselves above the law and be hostile to those who did not agree with their interpretation of law, making the government a despotic anarchy. Popular pressure could also result in privileges for the majority or injustices for specific minorities, which is not permissible because of the absolute equality of all people by virtue of their possession of reason.³⁵ If all government institutions were in the control of the sovereign, his will would be law, and no one would be able to challenge his absolute despotic power.

Kant stressed, therefore, the importance of **law in the state**. He believed that all people have the right to live under public coercive laws to protect their rights and their property.³⁶ This is the purpose of the law: to constrain the animal natures of individuals with the aim of protecting the rights of every individual. These laws must be based on natural law as determined by reason and expressed as the will of the people. In this way, the law requires the consent of the people (at least, their theoretical consent, as the people do not actually have to be asked about every law). The law of the state must never be contrary to natural law. This law identifies the rights of men, but also their duties to other people.³⁷ The law should allow citizens as much room as possible to make their own decisions about how they wish to live their lives. Under no circumstances should the state become paternalistic, telling its citizens how to be happy. Instead, it must recognize that everyone has different priorities and will find happiness in a different way. Because everyone has different goals in life, the state must not impose equality of material conditions on its people, because some people may choose the accumulation of wealth as an end, while others believe it to be of lesser importance. Instead, the state must ensure equality of opportunity, so that any position can be achieved by any person in the state, regardless of the condition of their birth. This eliminates the aristocracy of the wealthy and powerful and acknowledges the equality of all people as rational beings.³⁸ The law of the state must recognize the equality of all citizens as people. Equality entails a right of coercion over others, to express one's opinion and to try to convince others of it. This right is lost only through crime.³⁹ Equality also requires that all men be equal before the law, with none having more or fewer rights than others. No exceptions can be made to the law, for everyone is subject to it equally. Even the sovereign must be subject to the same law as his subjects.⁴⁰ Laws which do not find their immediate base in the law of reason are also necessarily present in the state. These laws are present to ensure the smooth functioning of the state, and cover very specific matters, such as on which side of the street people should drive. These laws vary from place to place, because local culture, customs, etc. may be different. However, these laws must never be contrary to natural law.⁴¹

Law, though it leads people to a more moral existence, cannot force them to use their reason and become moral. The law can impose only the external form of morality, but

cannot force people to have certain motives when obeying the law; that is, they cannot force people to obey the law simply because it is right to do so. This is why it is allowed to enforce the law. People have freedom of choice, and a person who prefers to listen to their animal desires because of self-interest may transgress the law of nature and do something which infringes on the rights of another person. For these people, the pain, material or otherwise, which is inflicted as punishment for the crime may be enough to deter the person from offending again, or may deter them from breaking the law in the first place.⁴² Punishment in no way infringes on a person's rights, according to Kant. While punishment may take away a person's civil liberties, it does not affect the person's autonomous personality.⁴³ Punishment must be for the purpose of expiating a crime, not to reform the person. To force the criminal to reform against his will would be to treat him as a means in someone else's plan, not an end in himself, as his human nature requires him to be treated.⁴⁴ Enforcement of the law is the only situation in which it is legitimate for the state to use force against its citizens.⁴⁵ In a state, law must come before freedom. If this was not so, a person could exempt themselves from the law by declaring that they are not citizens, and the state would have no power of coercion over them. The ultimate end of this would be the exemption of everyone from the coercive power of the law, ending in the voiding of the state itself.⁴⁶ To guard against despotism, however, the citizens of the state have the right (and duty) to express their grievances over unfair laws to the sovereign, so that he can see that a law is unjust and change it.⁴⁷ If those laws which are contrary to natural law are not changed, people may disobey them, but they cannot revolt against the sovereign. Revolution is the ultimate breach of law to Kant, and the act of revolution puts the populace above the law, effectively returning them to the lawless state of nature. Instead of revolt, people can choose to emigrate from the state instead of remaining subject to its unjust laws.⁴⁸ People must be given the right to emigrate, for to deny them this right would be to treat them as the property of the state, denying their human value as possessors of reason and autonomous beings with the right to decide their own future.⁴⁹

Kant's Conception of International Society

Kant thought that the international society of his time was still in the state of nature and that this was far from an ideal situation. He laid out, therefore, his own vision of a future international society. This society would consist of a **league of states**, allied in their commitment of peace, which would eventually encompass all of the states in the world. The ultimate end of this union would be the union of states in perpetual peace, allowing reason to develop and giving states the opportunity to perfect their constitutions. The development of international society is very similar in method and motives to that of the development of the state. Before an international society can develop, people must unite into states, which are then moral persons. These states are the actors in the formation of an international society. Like people in the state of nature, states in the state of nature exist in a state of war and preparation for war. Most states will be despotic, for the development of a just civic constitution within a state requires some measure of security. As a result, the animal nature will rule on the international field, and war will result as states try to defend their interests at the expense of other states. No law will exist to restrict the action of states. The result of this chaos will be fear, hostility, and distrust, just as was the result for the individuals in the state of nature. To protect their interests, or out of sheer exhaustion from constant war, states will form unions to give themselves security. These unions will need to have a constitution to protect the interests of all participants from the others, with the basic rights and duties of member states well defined.⁵⁰ This is similar to the

constitution formed after the union of people in a state. The unions and constitution initially formed by states, fleeing from the state of nature, may not be the best ones for international society. War will continue to break up these unions until stable ones, which effectively balance each other and protect everyone's rights, are formed. The achievement of this balance could take a very long time, since it is due mostly to accident and luck. Only nature can and will arrange the best possible balance of states, according to nature's plan for the eventual emerging of perpetual peace necessary for man to develop his faculties to their full capacity.⁵¹ Therefore, nature forces states who have not yet developed a just, rational constitution to form a peaceful international order in spite of their hostile inclinations.⁵² While states will eventually form a union encompassing the entire world, they must not form a single world state. Such a state would have no outside authority to monitor it and keep it under control, and the larger a state gets, the less force its laws have, because the state becomes more difficult to police. This arrangement would leave both the sovereign and the subject ample opportunity to exercise their animal desires to the expense of the rights of other people. The result of a world state would, therefore, be despotism and anarchy.⁵³

Kant favours instead the development of an **international constitution and international law**. International law may be seen in many ways as the ultimate extension of all other forms of public law.⁵⁴ The principles of natural law as understood by reason must remain the base for all laws in the international realm, but the beings constrained by the law are now states, not individuals. Many of the laws that apply to the relations of individuals within a state can therefore be applied to the relations of states on the international level, but there are also important rules unique to the international field. States have the same duties as any other moral beings. Their duty is to obey natural law and to respect the freedom, autonomy, and other rights of other states.⁵⁵ The international constitution must recognize the autonomy of all states, powerful or not. As moral beings, each state has the right to pursue its own ends, and no other state has the right to interfere with this unless international law or right is being violated. State sovereignty is inviolable. No state may interfere by force in the domestic affairs of another state, even if it is committing offenses against its own people. To do so would be to trample on the rights of an independent people who are struggling against the inner weakness of their animal natures to develop their rational side and manifest it in a constitution. They must be allowed the opportunity to develop on their own, just as all other states before them had done.⁵⁶ The offending state should instead be isolated by other states, since morally they cannot associate with it, so that the state will serve as an example to other states of the consequences of seeking to rule with animal desires instead of rational ones.⁵⁷ States are the possessions of those who live under their authority. The international constitution must recognize this, and deny governments the ability to sell, inherit, exchange, or give their state away. Only the people as a whole can make this sort of decision. To allow governments to dispose of their states in this way, against the will of their people, would be to treat the people as mere possessions of the state, as animals with no reason who can be owned and given away without a second thought. This is against natural law, and it must be prohibited.⁵⁸ All states are equal, because they are all moral beings with the potential to become rational beings with just civic constitutions. No state has the right to attempt to control another, no matter how powerful it is or how weak the other state is.⁵⁹ A framework of law must be constructed to deal with states who resort to war against international law. States have the right to go to war only if they feel threatened by or are attacked by another state, or if they are not part of the league of nations and therefore have no common higher authority to

peacefully resolve their disputes. Wars of punishment, subjugation, or extermination must not be allowed, even against those states which are not part of the union. Punishment cannot exist without law, and states outside of unions are in a lawless state of nature.⁶⁰ Any state who breaks external treaties must be punished, but the method of punishing offenders must comply with the law of reason. Loss of civil liberties or punitive damages are the best ways to punish wayward states.⁶¹ Plunder cannot be allowed, since plunder would be the robbery of individuals, and it was the state which was at war, not specific individuals. Plunder does not harm the state in any way, for the state has little plunderable property. Slavery, because it treats rational men as mere property and because it was the state and not the individuals who were warring, must also be forbidden.⁶²

The defense of human rights and the related concept of **world citizenship** are, in fact, key components of Kant's vision of a future international society. When a league of nations is formed, another international constitution should be drawn up. This constitution would not regulate the relations of nations, however, but would instead outline the rights of individuals when visiting or trading in nations of which they are not citizens.⁶³ Every person visiting a foreign country has the right not to be mistreated.⁶⁴ He is a person of value as a rational being, and to harm him would be an affront to natural law. As a citizen of a common planet, every person has the right to visit and to conduct commerce in all parts of the world without fear. Peaceful contact of people of different cultures promotes common understanding and international peace.⁶⁵ However, foreigners are guests. The territory in which they are travelling is not their own land, and apart from safety and protection under law, they do not have the right to demand anything else of the country. As the owners of the state, the citizens may choose to give foreigners additional rights, but they are not required to do so. Therefore, the traveller does not have the right to settle in a land which is not his, if the citizens of the land do not wish for him to settle there. The people in possession of the land have their own ends, and these may for some reason preclude certain foreigners from settling in their land. It is their right as an autonomous people to control their own domestic affairs, including who may settle in their land. On both the national and international level, human nature will lead to the progress of the world. People, who live in a state, feel attached to their state, since it belongs to them. As a result of their asocial sociability and their egotism, they feel hostile to other neighbouring states, who are more prosperous or advanced than their state is. They will try to make their state superior to all others and more competitive, by educating their population. Residents of other states will then do the same in their own state. In this way, nature uses the antisocial nature of people to bring about progress.⁶⁶

The issue of **war and peace**, notably how to end war, is a critical topic in Kant's discussion of international relations. In particular, the quest for perpetual peace is frequently discussed in his works. Like other facets of international relations, the role of human nature in the processes of war and its ending can be clearly seen. In Kant's view, the ultimate goal of nature for the human species is eternal peace. This is the reason why human beings have been given reason. People's animal natures cause them to act selfishly and with hostility toward one another. People develop the state to protect themselves so that they can live in relative safety. However, conflict cannot be suppressed, even in the state. It is this conflict that causes reason to progress, for reason must be utilized to solve each conflict, leaving reason a little more developed than before. War between nations will follow the same course, with states banding together for protection and reason developing through the solving of conflict. When reason on both the domestic and international level

has reached perfection, the world will have conquered war and will achieve perpetual peace. However, conflict will persist, for the animal side of man cannot be eliminated, and conflict is necessary to keep reason in its perfect form.⁶⁷ Therefore, it is war and conflict which drive all progress. Although the time before the achieving of perpetual peace is difficult, the gift of reason gives the human species the opportunity to reach a state of harmony, even against its will.⁶⁸

Kant's long-term vision of international society is that of **perpetual peace**. In fact, though war, as a means to an end, can be a constructive thing, it is also a dreadful thing. It is a threat to justice, because it makes military concerns more important than freedom, equality, and justice, values upheld by reason.⁶⁹ Therefore, it should be eliminated as soon as possible. However, hostility and fear make states unwilling to give up the state of war, which is the natural state.⁷⁰ Even the absence of war is not a state of peace in Kant's opinion. The state of peace must be founded on a treaty.⁷¹ This treaty will eventually include all states, just as the league of nations will eventually include all states.

In "*Eternal Peace*", Kant laid out the six basic requirements for a treaty of perpetual peace. The first requirement is that no party must have secret reservations, planning to resort again to war, when the situation is in their favour to do so. The signing of a peace treaty of this nature requires that states have reached a sufficiently advanced level of reason that they wish to eliminate the possibility of future war. A state who is not truly prepared to give up war has not gained sufficient control over its selfish animal nature, and perpetual peace will not be possible, as this state will continue to be a threat to other states. This condition would produce a truce, not a peace.⁷² The second condition for peace is that states must recognize each other as moral personalities with full internal and external sovereignty. This protects the state from being given away or bought by another against the will of its citizens, requiring them to go to war to defend it. Only when citizens are unafraid of having another force his will on them, will they be more willing to give up their weapons.⁷³ The third condition of perpetual peace is that states must give up their standing armies. Standing armies threaten other states by their mere presence, suggesting that the state is willing to go to war. Other states will then build up their own military, both out of fear and out of asocial sociability, which presses them to seek military superiority over other states. Only if states commit to the elimination of these threats will all states be willing to reduce their armaments instead of increasing them.⁷⁴ The fourth condition is that debts must not be contracted in connection with foreign affairs. This reduces the amount of money available for war, and reduces the temptation of states to use this money for war if the opportunity should arise. If all money must come from within the state, it is the people themselves that will have to pay through heavier taxes, and their selfish nature will lead them to prefer peace.⁷⁵ The fifth condition is that military intervention into the domestic affairs of another state must be forbidden. This rule eliminates the risk of another country invading a state, because they disagree with its internal policy. Citizens will feel more secure in expressing their will in their own state, though other states may disagree with them, and will be willing to make changes which are in accordance with the laws of reason. They will also be more willing to give up their weapons, because a potential excuse for war will have been eliminated.⁷⁶ The last condition for perpetual peace is that war, when conducted, must be conducted in such a way as to make future peace treaties possible. The use of spies, assassins, and other practices which would undermine the trust of the other party are not allowed. The undermining of this trust would produce the animal desire for revenge, and the war could never truly end.⁷⁷

Kant also lists three "definitive articles" for perpetual peace. These are the actual structure that will be put in place, when peace is founded, while the previous articles were conditions that must be present before peace can be founded.⁷⁸ The first definitive article is that the civil constitutions of every state must be republican. Under a republican government, it is the people themselves who must consent to war. Because only they will be hurt by the war, their self-interest as well as their reason will prevent them from voting to go to war. If this requirement was not in place and state were allowed to have despotic governments, the risk of war would be ever-present. War would still harm the citizens, but it would not harm the sovereign, so he would have no difficulty arbitrarily deciding to send his citizens to war, if it was in his own interest to do so.⁷⁹ The second definitive article is that the law of nations must be founded on a federation of free states, as opposed to a world government in the image of that of the state. A world government would have no external monitor, and could easily become despotic and warlike, if it saw war to achieve its own interests. A union of states, however, would not pose this risk. If any one state demonstrated a move toward despotism, the other states would provide a check and guide it back to republicanism. Also, in a union of states, citizens would be able to express their opinions in a small group, while still being a member of the larger group. This solves the problem of asocial sociability, allowing the individual to continue to be a member of his own group or state, thus retaining his own identity even within the larger international union of states. Since the animal and rational desires of men are best fulfilled in a union of free states, it is this arrangement which is most conducive to peace.⁸⁰ The third definitive article is that the conditions of world citizenship should be limited to hospitality. This dictates that every person should be able to visit any part of the world without fear of hostility, but does not have the right to settle unless the people who live in that state allow him to. This permits people to come into contact with each other and promotes harmony of interests through trade and mutual understanding among peoples, who may thus become less prone to go to war. Economic ties will make it undesirable for the state to go to war with its economic partners, because it will suffer greatly in doing so. Therefore, on account of both the rational and animal character of human nature and on the basis of self-interest, world citizenship promotes world peace.⁸¹

Conclusion

The analysis of Kant's theories of the state and international relations clearly shows that his conception of human nature played an important role in their formulation. Kant never assumes that people will always act in a selfish way, or that they will be completely altruistic. He judges their actions based on the level of development of their reason. On the one hand, he takes into account the permanent character of the animal sides of human nature and its pursuit of self-interest, which tends to lead to conflictual relationships. On the other hand, it is the quest for the solution of conflicts, that stimulates the development of reason, hence the ability to tame man's animal side. Kant's conception of human nature permeates his theories of the state and international relations. To fully understand Kant's reasoning behind these theories, one must grasp his perception of the dynamics and delicate balancing of the animal and rational forces within man.

Notes

- 1 Immanuel Kant, "Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone", in *The Philosophy of Kant: Moral and Political Writings*, ed. Carl J. Friedrich. New York: The Modern Library, 1949, p. 373
- 2 *ibid.*
- 3 Immanuel Kant, *The Doctrine of Virtue*, trans. Mary J. Gregor. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964, p. 10
- 4 Roger J. Sullivan, *An Introduction to Kant's Ethics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 10
- 5 *ibid.*
- 6 "Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone", 394
- 7 Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History with Cosmopolitan Intent", in *The Philosophy of Kant: Moral and Political Writings*, ed. Carl J. Friedrich. New York: The Modern Library, 1949, p. 118
- 8 Allen Wood, *Self and Nature in Kant's Philosophy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984, p. 33
- 9 William James Booth, *Interpreting the World: Kant's philosophy of history and politics*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986, p. 92
- 10 Gregor, p. 13
- 11 Roger J. Sullivan, *An Introduction to Kant's Ethics*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 29
- 12 *Ibid.*, p. 13
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 15
- 14 Gregor, p. 10
- 15 Roger J. Sullivan, *An Introduction to Kant's Ethics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994, p. 35
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 134
- 17 Roger J. Sullivan, *Immanuel Kant's Moral Theory*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 45
- 18 "Idea for a Universal History with Cosmopolitan Intent", p. 120
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 125
- 20 Booth, William *Interpreting the World*, *op. cit.*, p. 78
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 103
- 22 "Idea for a Universal History with Cosmopolitan Intent", p. 118
- 23 *Ibid.*, p. 117
- 24 Friedrich Paulsen, *Immanuel Kant: His Life and Doctrine*. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1963, p. 348
- 25 Hans Saner, *Kant's Political Thought*, trans. E. B. Ashton. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973, p. 40
- 26 Immanuel Kant, "Metaphysics of Morals", in *The Philosophy of Kant: Moral and Political Writings*, ed. Carl J. Friedrich. New York: The Modern Library, 1949, p. 148
- 27 "Idea for a Universal History with Cosmopolitan Intent", p. 121
- 28 Immanuel Kant, "Concerning the Common Saying: This may be true in theory but does not apply in practice", in *The Philosophy of Kant: Moral and Political Writings*, ed. Carl J. Friedrich. (New York: The Modern Library, 1949, p. 416
- 29 Booth, William *Interpreting the World*, *op. cit.*, p. 106
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 143
- 31 Charles W. Hendel, *The Philosophy of Kant and Our Modern World*. New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1957, p. 117
- 32 Immanuel Kant, "Eternal Peace", in *The Philosophy of Kant: Moral and Political Writings*, ed. Carl J. Friedrich. New York: The Modern Library, 1949, p. 440
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- 38 "Metaphysics of Morals", p. 148
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- 77 *Ibid.*
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- 79 Howard Williams and Ken Booth, "Kant: Theorist beyond Limits", in *Classical Theories of International Relations*, eds. Ian Clark and I. B. Newman. New York: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1996, p. 87
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An historical examination of Kant's cosmopolitanism: from Roman precursors to modern successors

Sean Hutchman

The political writings of Immanuel Kant are among the best known examples of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, an intellectual movement that has profoundly influenced the conception of international relations in the twentieth-century. As Charles Covell observes, Kant broke with the natural law tradition of such predecessors as Hobbes, Grotius and Pufendorf in affirming that “the law of nations had its foundations not in the order of nature, but in the will and agreement of states.”¹ Informing such key documents as the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, Kant’s moral philosophy continues to inspire a debate over the nature of the international system, particularly in relation to conceptions of national sovereignty, international co-operation and human rights. *Toward Perpetual Peace*, perhaps his most well-known work, is a concise exposition of Kant’s cosmopolitan principles, whose eponymous aspiration has inspired unrelenting debate. Indeed, the means of ordering the international system to eradicate conflict and ensure the respect of human rights and freedoms is a contentious issue. The goals of this essay are manifold. To begin, the philosophical and historical origins of cosmopolitanism shall be explored, revealing the profound influence that the Roman Stoics had on Kant’s cosmopolitan theory, with particular emphasis on *Toward Perpetual Peace*. Secondly, the political philosophy of Hegel will serve as a useful counterpoint to Kant’s cosmopolitanism, specifically as an introduction to the issue of “anthropological principles.” Thirdly, this paper shall examine the link between Hegel’s argument against cosmopolitanism and John Rawls’ analysis of pluralism in *The Law of Peoples*. A final analysis of whether Kantian cosmopolitanism is a viable normative theory of international relations or whether there exists any tenable theoretical alternative shall serve as conclusion.

In order to understand Kant’s conception of cosmopolitanism, particularly as embodied in his treatise *Toward Perpetual Peace*, it is necessary to look to those who first conceived of it and to those in whom he found his inspiration. As Martha Nussbaum elaborates in her essay entitled *Kant and Cosmopolitanism*, the political philosophy of the Roman Stoics is central to the concept of cosmopolitanism. The Stoics inherited from their Greek Cynic forbears the belief that one’s humanity was a function of reason and that this universal human attribute granted each person the equal status of rational moral agent. The Stoics further elucidated this idea by coining the term *kosmopolitês*, meaning “world citizen.” The world citizen represented the individual as inhabiting both a local and universal community. The Stoics regarded the latter, referred to by Nussbaum as the “community of human argument and aspiration,” as the prime source of moral and social obligations.² The concept of cosmopolitanism unfolds as Marcus declares (IV, 4): “If reason is common, so too is law; and if this is common, then we are fellow citizens. If this is so, we share in a kind of organised polity. And if that is so, the world is as it were a city state.” The implications of this, as Martha Nussbaum explains, are that “[W]e should give our first moral allegiance to *no* mere form of government, no temporal power. We should give it, instead, to the moral community made up by the humanity of all human beings.”³

The principal cosmopolitan tenet of *Toward Perpetual Peace* is that of universal hospitality, whose roots reach back to Cicero, himself a Stoic. This article of *Toward Perpetual Peace* forms the crux of Kantian cosmopolitanism for it entails a condemnation of colonialism, thereby enshrining the respect among peoples for the *universal* right to occupy the earth's surface.⁴ As Martha Nussbaum points out, the similarities between Kant and Cicero are numerous, taking for example their common emphasis on maintaining just moral conduct during wartime.⁵ Moreover, Kant reflects the Stoic sensibility as he states: "The peoples of the earth have thus entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it has developed to the point where a violation of rights in *one* part of the world is felt *everywhere*."

Despite such shared features, Martha Nussbaum indicates that Stoic and Kantian cosmopolitanism diverge in certain significant respects. For example, Nussbaum highlights the fact that Stoics such as Seneca did not object to colonialism as a moral abuse in the manner that Kant did. She nonetheless incorrectly affirms that Kant's grounds for disagreeing with colonialism were based on the potential oppression of the subject natives, implying that his concern was simply for their well-being, just as the Stoics felt concern for just colonial administration.⁶ On the contrary, one ought to mention that the second preliminary article of *Toward Perpetual Peace* states that "No independently existing state, whether it be large or small, may be acquired by another state by inheritance, exchange, purchase or gift." Indeed, Kant compares the state to a tree, the integrity of which does not permit grafting onto another, for such action would "terminate its existence as a moral personality and make it into a commodity."⁷ * It is apparent that Kant views the sovereignty of nations as an inviolable right, one which forms an integral part of his cosmopolitanism.

According to Kant, the republican form of government is that which allows for the propagation of a cosmopolitan political order. Such a government would be representative of its constituent citizens (though Kant did not in fact advocate democracy, as he believed it would lead to despotism) and liberal insofar as it would permit the free movement of trade between states. Kant envisioned such government propitious for the development of peaceful international relations thanks to a prudent public political sphere and the mutual realisation between states of the benefits of peace for the maintenance and expansion of economic interdependence. Kant went so far as to declare that "The spirit of commerce... cannot exist side by side with war."⁸ Moreover, Kant imagined such states forming a *federation of peoples*, a covenant assuring them of mutual non-aggression much as the social contract assures individuals exiting the state of nature of a means of securing a modicum of security. Kant describes such a federation as a "permanent congress of states," whose individual members would abide by the laws of the collectivity out of enlightened self-interest.

The political philosophy of G.W.F. Hegel provides for a succinct and penetrating examination of the shortcomings of both Kant's view of cosmopolitanism as well as subsequent cosmopolitan thought more absolute in its provision for an actual world republic (advocated by such philosophers as Bertrand Russell), whose basis is nonetheless

* As Kimberly Hutchings observes, it is questionable whether one can qualify a state as either a unitary or moral actor, however that discussion lies outside the scope of this essay. (Hutchings, p. 115)

Kantian in outlook. Hegel's critique of cosmopolitanism in both its Kantian and "absolute" varieties consists of a dual analysis involving a normative evaluation and an evaluation based on practicability. The common point of departure for both Hegel and Kant is the belief that history is a unilinear process driven by progress. Indeed, both conceive of there being an end of history (i.e. the culminating point of a dialectical process). In addition, both philosophers imagined the historical development of humankind as the evolution toward a legally ordered society in which each individual is granted the right of freedom. Furthermore, they share the common understanding that the constitutional state best accommodated such requirements, though Kant declared an even more particular allegiance to *republican* constitutional states.⁹ At this juncture the political ideologies of Kant and Hegel diverge. As Charles Covell states: "[Though] Hegel affirmed the inherent legitimacy of the form of government to be found in the modern constitutional state, he did not follow Kant in claiming that the states that adopted it would be led to refrain from waging war in the defense of their rights.¹⁰" Covell further develops this point, declaring that Hegel did not in fact view interstate conflict as intrinsically bad. In stark contrast to Kant, to whom war was unequivocally anathema, Hegel sees such conflict as an important outlet through which citizens have the opportunity to do the duty of safeguarding the sovereignty of their nation.¹¹

Hegel's criticism of Kant's ideal of cosmopolitan law [Weltbürgerrecht] superseding classical international law [Völkerrecht] hinges on the issue of whether a world republic or federation of nations would in any authentic sense constitute a community. The presence of such a community is central to Hegel's understanding of the legitimacy of rule. As Steven Hicks explains:

"A community is defined by its 'ethical life' – its activities, projects, aspirations, ends, institutions and achievements. These are unified by a definite set of values, which in turn define the community's character and purpose, giving it a sense of identity."¹²

According to Hegel the nation state alone satisfies such a role and is therefore the sole authority capable of ruling in accordance with the "anthropological principles" (i.e. cultural and social values particular to a given nation). In this sense, one might argue that Hegel's abhorrence of the potentially homogenising effects of cosmopolitan rule is an argument in favour of pluralism. Yet another theoretical schism between Kant and Hegel consists of their opposing perspectives on the moral role of institutions (e.g. legal, governmental). As Steven Hicks remarks, Kant ultimately perceived such institutions as occupying a moral role only insofar as they ought to be developed such that they impede in as minimal a manner as possible the ability of citizens to carry out their moral duties. This view, whose thrust is primarily negative in nature, in no way resembles Hegel's positive understanding of the moral role of institutions, which according to Ludwig Siep, "can lie, not just in implementing moral commitments that we... already have, but also in encouraging and refining patterns of moral belief and action that might otherwise not exist."¹³ Hegel proceeds to question the parallel that Kant established between his "categorical imperative" and certain "natural rights" (e.g. of property, of universal hospitality), whereby he argues that such rights are justifiable through "purely formal deduction," when in fact, as Hegel indicates, Kant's universalistic ethics relies on empirical evidence, a subjective method Kant claims to eschew. In brief, Hicks states, "Through an intellectual 'sleight of hand' Kant simply assumes the legitimacy of modern bourgeois, liberal institutions."¹⁴ The final normative criticism that Hegel makes of Kant's cosmopolitanism, is what he refers to as its "ahistorical character"¹⁵. He opposes Kant's view that morality is self-evident, universal,

and therefore ahistorical. As Hicks states, "Hegel endeavours to show that concrete moral rights and duties are not the product of an autonomous individual reflection but of social and institutional development."¹⁶ In other words, rather than conceiving of rights as universal values come upon much as a scientist discovers certain laws of nature, whose operation is unexceptionable and eternal, Hegel perceives political structures and the conceptions of justice found therein to be systems which evolve over time.

On more pragmatic grounds "Hegel contends that... cosmopolitanism... does not provide a viable political and institutional framework for the expression of modern freedom and individualism."¹⁷ Hegel's argument is simple: in the international arena, the ultimate authority governing human freedom and security rests with the state, whose actions are determined by self-interest. This zero-sum approach precludes any conception of a constant harmony of interests, thereby implying the inevitability of interstate conflict as a direct result of *raison d'état*. Hegel states that "[R]elations between states ought to be right in principle; but in worldly affairs a principle ought to have power."¹⁸ Thus, Hegel does not deny the importance of justice, however he does question the utility of Kant's cosmopolitan federation, in which "[T]he agreement would always be dependent on particular sovereign wills, and would therefore continue to be afflicted with contingency."¹⁹

Reiterating this point, Habermas points out the textual contradictions found in *Toward Perpetual Peace*, in which Kant defines the "federation of peoples" as both "an enduring and voluntary association" as well as a "permanent congress of states." The idea of constancy is portrayed as a *sine qua non* for the success of cosmopolitanism, yet Kant simultaneously claims that any congress is "[A] voluntary gathering of various states that can be dissolved at any time."²⁰ It is therefore apparent that the very idea of a "permanent congress" is self-contradictory. Even if this federation were to endure, Avineri raises the important question of how to render such a federation truly effective in promulgating the tenets of peace without itself preparing for war, a course of action which would violate the very basis of *Toward Perpetual Peace*.²¹ Moreover, Hegel contends that within the federation of nations those members wielding disproportionate wealth and power would inevitably "determine 'what right should be cancelled and what right should be upheld."²² Endowed with greater historical hindsight on the behaviour of (liberal) constitutional states than Hegel, Jürgen Habermas is capable of challenging Kant's affirmation that the international relations maintained by republican constitutional (or in contemporary interpretation, liberal democratic) régimes are necessarily pacific. Indeed, Habermas does concede that liberal governments are less likely to wage war amongst themselves. He also alleges that these same nations pursue belligerent policies in orientation to illiberal governments, with the *ostensible* goal of enforcing human rights.²³ This crusading spirit of liberalism illustrates the need for a normative international relations dialogue which is capable of capturing in some sense the universal perspective of Kant while at the same time capturing the communitarian understanding of culture espoused by Hegel. The latter, though not strictly pluralist, does nonetheless acknowledge that values concerning justice and government are to some extent relative to a particular culture without being absolutely morally relativistic.

The political philosophy of John Rawls satisfies these conditions in his exposition of how international society can seek peaceful relations between its members without prescribing "comprehensive doctrines."²⁴ Similar to Kant, Rawls concerns himself with the relations between states and how a "particular political conception of right and justice that applies to

the principles and norms of international law and practice" can be determined.²⁵ Rawls' "Law of Peoples" is a response to this question which differs from the articles found in Kant's *Toward Perpetual Peace*, insofar as the coexistence of liberal and non-liberal régimes is not regarded as a preclusion from peaceful and respectful international relations. Nonetheless, both philosophers maintain the importance of the universality of certain mores and judicial codes above and beyond the nation state, though Rawls' "realistic utopia" introduces a pluralist current which is entirely absent from his predecessor's work.²⁶ Despite the fact that Hegel is not in any sense a pluralist in terms of his understanding of civil society, his political writings do substantiate the idea that states possessing unique cultural patrimonies distinct from each other will consequently have varying, though nonetheless legitimate moral codes. His conclusion is nevertheless troubling, as a normative examination of international relations founders if one adheres to his view of moral and judicial codes of justice as nothing more than the products of the cultural evolution of a given society, which thereby contradicts the Kantian view that the rights of citizens are inherently universal.

John Rawls attempts to resolve this conundrum by proposing that liberal states may interact and coexist with non-liberal states in a peaceful and law-abiding manner so long as the latter observe certain fundamental moral obligations to their constituent members. In fact, in *The Law of Peoples*, he addresses the issue of how liberal societies are to deal with illiberal societies in a manner conducive to the respect of illiberal societies which are nonetheless *decent*. In defining *decent* illiberal societies, Rawls establishes two basic requirements. The first criterion is that the society in question does not resort to "aggressive aims" and that it makes use of such channels as diplomacy and trade to permit peaceful coexistence with other nations, thereby recognising and respecting the "political and social order of other societies."²⁷ Secondly, "decent hierarchical peoples" must observe human rights (e.g. the rights to life, liberty, property etc.) and they must possess established "duties and obligations" consistent with their respective "common good idea of justice." Moreover, Rawls insists that those who administer the legal system (i.e. judges) must demonstrate their belief that the system is "guided by" a common good idea of justice.²⁸ Thus having established the decency of an illiberal society, Rawls asserts that one is obligated to tolerate it. By this, he means

"Not only to refrain from exercising political sanctions – military, economic, or diplomatic - to make a people change its ways. To tolerate also means to recognise these nonliberal societies as equal participating members in good standing of the Society of Peoples."²⁹

Despite the fact that Rawls implores the reader to respect and tolerate *decent* (though not liberal) societies, he nevertheless believes in the superiority of liberalism. He suggests that:

"Liberal societies should not suppose that decent societies are unable to reform themselves in their own way. By recognising these societies as *bona fide* members of the Society of Peoples, liberal peoples encourage this change."³⁰

The "Law of Peoples" as elaborated by Rawls, consists of many of the articles contained within *Toward Perpetual Peace*, most notably the sovereignty and equality of peoples, the observance of non-intervention, the limiting of war by certain moral parameters, peoples' respect of human rights and peoples' "duty to assist other peoples living under unfavourable conditions that prevent their having a just or decent political and social régime."³¹ For Rawls, the use of the term "peoples" as opposed to that of states is crucial. According to

him, the state-system, whose functioning (he alleges) has not fundamentally changed since the time of Thucydides, exists such that states each pursue their own *raison d'état* to the exclusion of the interests of other powers. He describes such behaviour as lacking in rationality because such a "state is moved by the aims it has and ignores the criterion of reciprocity in dealing with other societies."³² Rawls makes the assumption that *realpolitik* is not to the benefit of individual states' interests, though this claim is far from uncontroversial. In fact, it is arguable that the structure of international relations is indeed *rational*, but that it is not *moral*. Though reason is, as the Roman Stoics affirmed, required for moral action, states can nonetheless act rationally to benefit from a situation in which their conduct is immoral. Rawls uses this argument to state that "peoples" are capable of being rational and therefore (in his view) respect rights not only amongst themselves but also universally. He implies that because "peoples lack traditional sovereignty," that they are "distinct from states, as traditionally conceived, [possessing] reasonably just, or decent...régimes." It appears that the author is playing a game of semantics, as it is impossible to imagine a people's régime to be anything other than its state.

John Rawls' argument for a pluralistic tolerance of non-liberal régimes, in some sense attempts to bridge the political philosophies of Kant and Hegel. On the one hand advocating the universalism espoused by Kant, and on the other, modified to permit the plurality of political institutions in existence as envisioned by Hegel in the communitarian current, Rawls demonstrates how the most effective and respectful means of ensuring *decent* governance among peoples, is to adopt a tolerant attitude to régimes whose illiberal nature does not preclude the respect of fundamental, inviolable rights. Hegel makes an important commentary on the nature of the political system by underlining the fact that the nation-state is the ultimate arbiter in the affairs of its citizens, and the only power actually capable of ensuring the protection of their rights. One might suggest that as the "ethical lives" of different nations converge through the development of a widespread international culture (such as in regional blocs such as North America and Europe), the legitimacy of cosmopolitan rule in some form will transform from hope to fact. Thus, Hegel's philosophy may be particularistic, but it presents a strong argument for the need for some sort of common identity in order to rationalise cosmopolitanism. Hierocles imagined human identity as consisting of a series of concentric circles whose innermost circle represented the family and the outermost humanity.³³ It is arguable that as nations evolve into regional blocs (e.g. the EU), human identity will become increasingly weighted toward the outer circles, perhaps someday encompassing all of humanity.

Notes

¹ Covell, Charles. *Kant and the Law of Peace: a study in the philosophy of international law and international relations*. St. Martin's Press, 1998., page 162

² Nussbaum, Martha. Kant and Cosmopolitanism. *Perpetual Peace: Essays on Kant's Cosmopolitan Ideal*, Eds. James Bohman and Matthias Lutz-Bachmann. Massachusetts's Institute of Technology Press, 1997, p. 29)

³ Ibid, p. 31

⁴ Kant, Immanuel. *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*. *Kant's Political Writings*. Ed. Hans Reiss. Cambridge University Press, 1991 p. 105-106

⁵ Nussbaum, Martha. Kant and Cosmopolitanism. *Perpetual Peace*, op. cit p. 37

^o Defining the difference between "peoples" and "states" is an important issue of cosmopolitanism, in Kant and Hegel's political philosophies as well. It is however a question too demanding and too vast to be dealt with herein.

- ⁶ Ibid, p. 38
- ⁷ Kant, Immanuel. *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch. Kant's Political.* op. cit. p. 94
- ⁸ Ibid p.114
- ⁹ Covell, Charles. *Kant and*, op. cit. p. 163
- ¹⁰ Ibid, p. 164
- ¹¹ Ibid, p. 164
- ¹² Hicks, Steven V. *International Law and the Possibility of a Just World Order.* Editions Rodopi B.V., 1999., p. 101
- ¹³ Ibid, p. 105
- ¹⁴ Ibid, p. 107
- ¹⁵ Ibid, p. 110
- ¹⁶ Ibid p. 110
- ¹⁷ Ibid, p. 99
- ¹⁸ Ibid, p. 100
- ¹⁹ Ibid, p. 102
- ²⁰ Habermas, Jürgen. *Kant's Idea of Perpetual Peace, with the Benefit of Two Hundred Year's Hindsight. Perpetual Peace: Essays on Kant's Cosmopolitan Ideal.* Eds. James Bohman and Matthias Lutz-Bachmann. Massachusetts's Institute of Technology Press, 1997, p.117
- ²¹ Hicks, Steven V. *International Law*, op. cit. p. 103)
- ²² Ibid, p. 104
- ²³ Habermas, Jürgen. *Kant's Idea of Perpetual Peace, with the Benefit of Two Hundred Year's Hindsight. Perpetual Peace*, op. cit. p. 121
- ²⁴ McCarthy, Thomas. *On the Idea of a Reasonable Law of Peoples. Perpetual Peace: Essays on Kant's Cosmopolitan Ideal.* Eds. James Bohman and Matthias Lutz-Bachmann. Massachusetts's Institute of Technology Press, 1997, p. 202
- ²⁵ Rawls, John. *The Law of Peoples.* Harvard University Press, 1999, p. 3
- ²⁶ Ibid, p. 4
- ²⁷ Ibid p. 64
- ²⁸ Ibid, pp. 65-66
- ²⁹ Ibid p. 59
- ³⁰ Ibid, p. 61
- ³¹ Ibid, p. 37
- ³² Ibid, p. 28
- ³³ Nussbaum, Martha. *Kant and Cosmopolitanism. Perpetual Peace*, op. cit p. 32

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Islam et relations internationales

Karine Mac Allister

«...depuis l'avènement de la troisième religion révélée, au VII^e siècle, les rapports entre la chrétienté et l'islam au Moyen Âge, entre l'Europe et les Ottomans dans les temps modernes, entre le Nord et le Sud depuis la Seconde Guerre mondiale et les indépendances, ont été des rapports dialectiques conflictuels et passionnels.¹»

Les événements conflictuels des dernières années tels que la révolution iranienne, la guerre Iran-Irak, la guerre du Koweït et, plus récemment, la montée de la vague islamiste et les désordres algériens, ont contribué à intensifier l'image d'un Islam moyenâgeux, statique et rigide. De plus, la conjoncture est telle depuis la chute du communisme, que les puissances au modèle homogénéisant et impérialiste s'empressent à dénoncer la différence et ce, en alimentant un « imaginaire sociétale islamophobique ». En effet, la compréhension de la réalité islamiste est biaisée en Occident par la désinformation qu'entretiennent les médias, ceux-ci contribuant à favoriser une hypnose à l'encontre de l'Islam et des musulmans. En réalité, « le discours occidental sur l'Islam reflète le plus souvent une méconnaissance profonde non seulement de la religion, mais surtout des sociétés qui ont connu, au cours de l'histoire, des transformations profondes et se sont adaptées à toutes sortes de régimes, du califat à la république, de la dictature militaire à la monarchie plus ou moins absolue² ».

Pourtant, l'Islam est la deuxième religion après le Christianisme et représente un peu plus d'un milliard d'êtres. D'ailleurs, à l'heure actuelle, c'est la religion qui connaît la plus forte expansion dans le monde. En cela, les musulmans méritent d'être écoutés, puisque leur rôle et la force sociale qu'ils représentent, dans un système où le monde est intrinsèquement interdépendant, sont essentiels à la stabilité de l'ordre mondial. Il est donc impératif que les musulmans participent au processus de transformation dans lequel la sphère planétaire s'est engagée. Or, il s'avère évidemment nécessaire qu'il y ait en soi une volonté de mieux connaître les différences et les similitudes civilisationnelles pouvant mener à une compréhension de l'autre. Les échanges culturels sont en ce sens le meilleur moyen pour assurer la paix à l'échelle mondiale. Ainsi, il importe de faire éclater la bulle qu'engendrent les stéréotypes et l'ignorance. Dans cette optique, il est indispensable, voire vital, de démystifier la désinformation qui mine la réputation de tous les musulmans du monde. Ce cheminement, qui s'avère être en fait une quête de sens véritable du message islamique, consiste à retourner aux sources coraniques, principalement à la période classique. Ainsi, la question, qui doit être posée, est de savoir s'il est possible pour l'Islam d'aujourd'hui de recréer la modernité. Néanmoins, *a priori*, il importe de se demander quel est le véritable message coranique ?

Tout d'abord, qu'est-ce que c'est l' Islam ? L'Islam est tout d'abord une religion, une morale, un style de vie. En d'autres termes, c'est le croyant qui choisit de devenir esclave de Dieu, d'un Dieu unique, immanent de toute chose. Cette relation spirituelle peut se définir par les termes de Iman (foi), Islam (religion) et Ihsam (réalisation de la relation entre l'homme et Allah)³. Le Coran, quant à lui, est le livre sacré de tous les musulmans ; il s'agit de la parole de Dieu, un objet sacré dont tout musulman est intimement imprégné.

Le Coran indique ce en quoi il faut croire (dogmes) et ce qu'il est tenu de faire (la loi sacrée). Autrement formulé, c'est le guide qui forme la base immuable de l'Islam. Il expose les dogmes ou principes fondamentaux de l'Islam: croire en un seul Dieu (tawhîd), et croire aux prophètes et aux livres révélés. L'Islam promet, en échange de la foi du croyant, le paradis. Mais l'Islam représente aussi «...la mosaïque de peuples et de sociétés qui la composent, elle se veut le cheminement historique des civilisations qui la constituent...⁴» Dans ce sens, l'Islam a la faculté de s'adapter, d'être malléable et, plus important encore, d'être interprété face aux nouvelles préoccupations politiques ou socio-économiques des cultures qui composent cette mosaïque et ce, même si le Coran et la Sunna (tradition basée sur la vie du prophète) demeurent la source constitutive de tous les échelons sociétaux.

Naissance de l'Islam

L'Islam naît au VII^e siècle, dans l'Arabie des déserts qui est présentement l'Arabie Saoudite. Cette société était composée principalement d'agriculteurs, de marchands et de Bédouins nomades, organisés en clans ou en tribus, à majorité polythéistes. L'Islam émerge dans un contexte social en déséquilibre, en grande partie attribuable à l'accroissement du commerce. En effet, à l'époque, la Mecque était devenue un lieu de pèlerinage et un centre commercial importants, avec un flot de richesses inconnu auparavant. En réalité, entre l'an 550 et 600, la région est passée d'une économie pastorale à une économie de marché. Ces brusques transformations socio-économiques ont engendré des inégalités, des injustices et un malaise social sans précédent. C'est dans cette période incertaine, qu'un Arabe du désert se lève et prêche une nouvelle religion. D'ailleurs, «[...] les religions nouvelles appellent fondamentalement les croyants à se désolidariser de l'ordre injuste et, bien plus, à affranchir la religion de la tutelle de l'État et du pouvoir temporel [...].⁵» C'est Mahomet, à l'âge de quarante ans, qui reçoit en 610 de l'ange Gabriel, sur le mont Hirâ, le message lui indiquant qu'il a été choisi pour être le prophète d'Allâh : «Dès le début, le prophète de l'Islam se présente, comme l'avait fait le Christ, en continuateur et non en négateur des anciens messages divins. Il appelle à croire en un Dieu unique, maître des cieux et de la Terre, créateur, vivant, omniprésent et ordonnateur de l'univers. Il proclame l'imminence de la résurrection et invite les croyants au retour à Dieu.⁶»

Face au nouveau message de Mahomet, son peuple est d'abord réticent, demeure incrédule. Même sa tribu refuse de se convertir. Mahomet peut continuer de prêcher sa nouvelle religion tant que son oncle, Abû Tâlib, le protège, mais, lorsque celui-ci décède, il doit fuir avec ses disciples. Cet exil prendra le nom d'hégire, d'où provient le calendrier hégirien. C'est à ce moment qu'il rencontre les habitants du Yathrib, un oasis situé à 350 kilomètres au nord-ouest de la Mecque. Ces derniers lui offrent de devenir arbitre pour régler les litiges entre les Juifs et les Arabes de la communauté. Mahomet s'installe donc définitivement en 622 à Yathrib, un endroit qui portera par la suite le nom de Médine. C'est à ce moment qu'il « [...] affirme que les liens d'alliances remplacent les liens du sang, et que seule compte la communauté d'idéal⁷ » À Médine, Mahomet devient un chef politique et les Révélations qu'il reçoit sont influencées par la vie politique. C'est de là que naissent deux principes importants de l'ordre social, soit l'*Ijmâ*, qui signifie consensus entre les membres et *Shûrâ*, qui implique leur consultation. En 630, Mahomet retourne à la Mecque et détruit l'adoration des idoles. C'est ainsi que la *Ka'ba* devient le lieu de l'adoration d'un Dieu unique, Allâh. Cependant, Mahomet meurt peu après, soit en 632. Sa vie et son comportement sont relatés par ses compagnons, c'est ce que l'on nomme la tradition ou

haddith. Ce livre, la *Sunna*, sert de guide du savoir-vivre dans toutes les institutions, tant privées que sociales ou religieuses. En fait, jusqu'à ce jour, il représente l'idéal sociétal de toute nation musulmane, car il s'inspire de la vie politique de Médine. Ce guide fondamental est le deuxième en importance après le Coran.

Les quatre premiers califes suivant le décès de Mahomet sont Abû Bakr (632-634), Umar (634-644), Uthmân (644-656) et finalement Alî (656-661). Sous ce dernier, les luttes de successions se font si vives que la communauté se retrouve divisée. En effet, Alî tente de faire un pacte qui apaiserait les revendications des mécontents, mais certains de ses fidèles, mécontents, se séparent d'Alî. Ce sont les *Khârijites*, nom qui signifie littéralement « sortant ». Cependant, malgré le traité, Alî est assassiné et c'est Mu'awiyya qui prend le pouvoir et perpétue le califat. Par contre, certains s'insurgent contre cette situation : c'est le schisme. Une vaste majorité des musulmans accepte de suivre Mu'awiyya et porteront dorénavant le nom de *sunnites*. Une minorité s'y refuse et décide de continuer de reconnaître Alî ; ce sont les *shî'ites* ou *shî'ates*. Pour les *Khârijites*, le calife doit être choisi par le peuple ; c'est une forme démocratique qui se réfère à la tradition tribale anté-islamique. Selon les principes *shî'ites*, par contre, le pouvoir devrait être transmis de façon héréditaire, ce qui suppose que le calife doit être de la descendance de Mohamet. Finalement, pour les *sunnites*, la communauté doit désigner son chef, qui doit promouvoir l'ordre social, la paix civile et la science théologique.

Conception islamique de la loi et de l'état

Quant à elle, la loi islamique (*shari'a*), ce principe fondamental de l'Islam, constitue un regroupement de règles, qui ont conservé leur propriété intégrale et normative, malgré le fait que, pendant le premier siècle de l'hégire, l'Islam a été en contact avec de nombreuses institutions légales, telles que le droit romain, byzantin, canon, juif et sassanide. La *shari'a* préconise la paix, l'équité et la justice sociale comme valeurs supérieures à la défense de la propriété. Ses préceptes se veulent tolérants quant à la diversité culturelle et religieuse. De plus, la loi se veut compréhensive ; c'est ce que l'on nomme « l'effort d'interprétation » (*Ijtihâd*). Cette pratique consiste à situer les lois dans un contexte historique et à suivre le sens et non la lettre des lois, ce qui permet ainsi aux croyants de vivre avec leur temps. Il y a quatre écoles de pensées dans l'Islam sunnite au sujet de l'interprétation de la loi. La première est l'école hanafite, fondée au VIII^e siècle. Elle professe la rigueur du choix des dires du prophète et le jugement personnel. La seconde est l'école malékite, fondée aussi au VIII^e siècle. Elle établit sa doctrine d'organisation sociale sur la pratique de Médine, soit la tradition la plus authentique. La troisième école, la shâfi'ite, fondée au IX^e siècle, est la plus ouverte. Elle prêche le raisonnement analogique, qui consiste à prendre un principe légal et à l'étendre comme principe général ou base de droit. Finalement, la quatrième école est la hanbalite d'Ibn Handal. C'est la plus rigoriste, car elle s'oppose à toute forme d'innovation et souhaite revenir essentiellement aux principes du Coran et de la *Sunna*.

Après la mort de Mahomet, tout chef politique ou califat se propose comme «... le successeur, ou le lieutenant, ou le vicaire, c'est-à-dire le dépositaire d'une mission religieuse qui consiste à prolonger l'état de la bonne guidance. L'essence de cette mission est la *djihâd*⁸ ». Le pouvoir offre donc une relation entre le discours politique et le religieux, car, dans l'Islam, la notion moderne de chef politique ou d'État n'existe pas. En fait, « l'État, en tant que principe d'organisation, de producteur du droit, de jurisprudence,

d'action collective et d'orientation morale, n'a été autre en Islam que la religion elle-même.⁹ » En réalité, les fins du pouvoir prophétiques visent à assurer la vie éternelle de tous les croyants et non les intérêts temporels. Dans la même optique, tant le chef politique que l'ensemble des citoyens doivent respecter l'Islam, car un acte contre la morale islamique est interprété comme un acte contre Dieu. Le dirigeant est donc perçu comme un représentant du peuple et de la volonté divine. C'est pour cela que son mandat consiste à concrétiser les objectifs sociétaux de l'Islam, soit la paix, la sécurité, l'équité et la justice. Le gouvernement doit être choisi par la voie démocratique du peuple (*Ijmâ*) ou par un conseil de membres autorisés. La sélection du meilleur candidat possible doit être fondée sur ses compétences et non sur sa fortune, sa lignée ou son origine ethnique. D'autre part, il est impossible qu'un gouvernement soit non-islamique, donc contrôlé par une puissance extérieure. Bref, l'État islamique doit être indépendant et souverain pour pouvoir n'obéir qu'à une seule et véritable autorité : celle de Dieu.

L'État islamique se présente comme une entité compréhensive et respectueuse de la diversité et des autres religions. En effet, celui-ci a pour but d'administrer la justice et de s'assurer de la sécurité de ses citoyens et ce, sans discrimination à l'égard des minorités et des autres religions, à partir du moment où nul citoyen ne contrevient à la loi islamique. Autrement dit, l'Islam promulgue le respect des valeurs mutuelles entre les cultures et civilisations. L'État islamique se veut flexible ; par exemple, un étranger ou un citoyen d'une autre religion a le droit de choisir de payer la taxe religieuse (*zakah*) à une institution islamique ou non. De plus, ce dernier peut choisir d'être jugé selon la loi islamique ou selon celle de sa propre religion. De même, tout voyageur a le droit à la protection de l'État islamique jusqu'à la fin de son visa ou de son droit de séjour, et ce, même si cet État islamique entre en guerre contre la nation de cet étranger. Bref, l'État islamique promulgue la tolérance et l'harmonie dans les relations entre ses citoyens, quelle que soit leur origine ou religion, et se veut hospitalier à l'endroit des étrangers. D'autre part, l'Islam, même s'il laisse place à une liberté d'expression proche de la démocratie, n'accorde pas une totale liberté à ses citoyens. Hammudah Abdlati décrit bien cette relation particulière : « Under the political system of Islam, every citizen is entitled to enjoy freedom of belief and conscience, and freedom of thought and expression. He is free to develop his potentialities and improve his lot, to work and compete, to earn and possess, to approve or disapprove of things, according to his honest judgement. But his freedom is not and cannot be absolute; or else it amounts to chaos and anarchy. It is guaranteed by the Law of God and governed by the very same Law¹⁰ » Par contre, l'Islam encourage les musulmans à gérer leurs conflits par la consultation (*shûrâ*) et le dialogue. Ce principe de gestion des mésententes implique la création d'organes législatifs et consultatifs tant au niveau local, national qu'international.

Conception islamique des relations internationales

Le Coran régit non seulement les relations entre les musulmans, mais aussi celles avec les non-musulmans. Elles sont fondées sur la croyance que tout Homme provient d'une origine commune (Dieu), qu'il a le même statut sur la Terre (égalité) et le même but (paradis). Bref, le Coran prêche la fraternité humaine, parce que, pour Dieu, « social status, national supermanship, and racial origin are insignificant. Before Him, all men are equal and brothers of one another¹¹ » Le Coran commande le respect de l'autre et la tolérance de la différence. Dans cette perspective, l'Islam est détenteur d'un message de paix et de

liberté, et cela, tant à l'égard des musulmans que des non-musulmans. En effet, comme l'explique Hammudah Abdalati, la liberté est un droit universel, inné à la nature humaine : « it is a natural right of man, a spiritual privilege, a moral prerogative, and, above all, a religious duty. Within the framework of this Islamic concept of freedom, there is no room for religious persecutions, class conflict, or racial prejudice. The individual's right of freedom is as sacred as his right of Life; freedom is the equivalent of Life itself¹². »

Pour tout musulman, ce qui importe, c'est que les valeurs fondamentales, qui le motivent, soient réalisées à tous les niveaux. Ces valeurs qui symbolisent l'idéal de toute relation entre musulmans devraient en définitive englober la totalité des relations humaines. Il s'agit plus spécifiquement d'aimer Dieu et les Hommes en étant sincère dans sa foi, en faisant preuve de gentillesse et de charité à l'égard des hommes, en étant un citoyen fidèle, en supportant les institutions sociales et caritatives, et finalement, en restant loyal et inébranlable en toute circonstance. Bref, il suffit de contribuer activement à améliorer la justice en ce monde tout en respectant la transcendance de Dieu et son immuabilité pour assumer pleinement les valeurs de l'Islam. D'autre part, cette religion insiste sur le respect de la vie, de l'honneur et de la propriété de l'autre, à partir du moment où cette attitude est réciproque. Il est donc interdit pour un État islamique de transgresser ces principes et d'attaquer une nation qui agit en corrélation avec ces principes. En fait, la paix devrait être la norme dans les relations internationales. En ce sens, les États sont encouragés à établir des relations amicales et des missions d'échanges de tout genre. Ces dernières, qu'elles soient du domaine économique, politique, scientifique, éducatif ou autre, ont pour but d'enrichir la vie des musulmans et celle de l'humanité. Pour les musulmans, il importe de préserver un esprit de confrérie et non de domination, car l'Islam ne prêche pas la soumission des uns aux autres, mais la soumission face à Dieu.

L'Islam ne va justifier l'acte de guerre que lorsque la sécurité, les droits ou la paix intérieure sont menacés. Dans de tel cas, l'État islamique a le droit de se défendre contre toute atteinte à sa souveraineté. Cependant, la guerre a elle aussi ces principes moraux et ses directives. En effet, il est strictement défendu de tuer des civils, de torturer des prisonniers de guerres ou même de tenter de leur imposer l'Islam. En ce sens, il est aussi interdit de détruire à outrance en brûlant les récoltes, les maisons ou en tuant le bétail, par exemple. La guerre, selon les principes de l'Islam ne doit pas être agressive, mais bien défensive. Ainsi, le but n'est non pas d'anéantir l'ennemi, mais de garantir la sécurité de sa population. De plus, le Coran décrit comment doivent être les relations entre alliés et ennemis, réaffirmant jusqu'à quel point il est important de tenir à sa parole une fois une entente scellée avec quelqu'un, que ce soit un individu, un groupe ou un État. Cependant, ce contrat se voit immédiatement annulé lorsque l'autre partenaire trahit ses engagements. Mais si cela n'est pas le cas, ce traité persiste, même s'il est signé avec une nation non-musulmane et que celle-ci entre en guerre avec une nation musulmane. Dans ce cas, il serait donc impossible pour l'État islamique, ayant des obligations à l'égard d'un État non-islamique, d'aider son allié islamique. En définitive, il est impératif pour toute nation islamique de tenir à sa parole, car il y va de son honneur. Les relations entre états, même entre états islamiques ne paraient pas être au centre des préoccupations de l'Islam :

« La révélation monothéiste, en inventant une nouvelle conception du sacré, la divinité unique et toute-puissante, désacralise le pouvoir politique [...] la religion de la Révélation n'a pas fondé d'État, parce qu'elle a émergé contre l'État. Sa véritable invention est la communauté, c'est-à-dire un groupe humain soudé par des liens de fraternité, eux-mêmes

fondés sur l'adhésion collective à des valeurs communes et non à un pouvoir ou à un État.¹³ »

L'*Umma* est l'idéal de la communauté et le lien qui unit tous les musulmans du monde. Autrement dit, pour le musulman, le mal absolu est la divergence. Le terme *Umma*, comme l'a écrit Slimane Zéghidour, dérive de *oum*, un terme dont la racine sémantique signifie: « source », « principe », « matrice ». C'est un principe universel basé sur la solidarité, la fraternité et l'appartenance. Il implique que tous les musulmans forment une entité ayant le désir de vivre ensemble en plus de reconnaître, de façon plus large, Allâh comme l'Être suprême et unificateur. En d'autres termes : « the community in Islam is not founded on race, nationality, locality, occupation, kinship, or special interests. It does not take it after the name of a leader or a founder or an event. It transcends national borders and political boundaries. The foundation of the community in Islam is the principle which designates submission to the will of Allah, obedience to His law and commitment to His cause¹⁴ Cette entité a pour mission de donner l'exemple. Ainsi, dans un contexte contemporain : « It must avoid excesses and extravagances, static rigidity and instant evaporation. To strike a middle course of action, to be steadfast and consistent, to know what to accept and what to reject, to have principles and at the same time remain adaptable is probably the hardest test of the human character and social viability. But this is the role of the Islamic community and the historic mission of Muslims.¹⁵ »

Dans l'Islam, cinq piliers contribuent à renforcer l'esprit de collectivité qui caractérise l'ensemble des communautés musulmanes. Chaque musulman a le devoir personnel, lorsqu'il professe sa foi (*shahada*), c'est-à-dire lorsqu'il reconnaît croire en un seul Dieu et aux prophètes, de s'assurer que les valeurs fondamentales préconisées par le Coran soient respectées et pratiquées à l'intérieur de l'*Umma*. Cela implique tout particulièrement le respect des grandes valeurs de solidarité, de justice et de charité. D'abord, la prière (*salat*), cinq fois par jour, en direction de la Mecque, se fait dans l'humilité et la simplicité. Ce geste représente la solidarité et la cohésion d'un groupe de croyants lié spirituellement. La Mosquée, lieu de prière, est elle-même un symbole de cette unité, car les gens les plus démunis peuvent y trouver confort et refuge. Deuxièmement, l'aumône légale, (*al-Zakât*) commande aux croyants de contribuer économiquement à l'éradication de la pauvreté. En d'autres mots, c'est le principe de la charité qui vient créer un esprit de responsabilité envers l'ensemble de la communauté musulmane. Ensuite, le jeûne (*sawm*) vient lui aussi réaffirmer ce principe d'égalité. En effet, tant le riche que le pauvre doivent traverser cette épreuve qui commande au corps de se priver pour se purifier et se libérer de ses passions. Bref, le jeûne est un autre moyen de symboliser et de solidifier cette appartenance à un groupe universel, qui impose à tous les mêmes efforts. Finalement, le pèlerinage (*al-Hajj*) à la Mecque, que chaque musulman doit effectuer si ses moyens lui permettent, accentue la manifestation de l'*Umma*. La célébration d'Allâh et de son prophète, se fait dans toute sa simplicité, puisque tous les hommes réunis se veulent au-dessus de toute notion de classe, de race, d'ethnie ou de culture. De plus, le pèlerinage est aussi «le lieu d'un intense brassage d'idées entre penseurs, théologiens et gens simples venus de tous les horizons du monde islamique. Grâce à lui, enfin, les représentants des minorités musulmanes les plus isolées prennent conscience d'appartenir à une grande communauté qui se veut fraternelle et solidaire.¹⁶ »

Évolution historique de l'Islam en sept temps

La première phase de l'Islam débute au moment où le prophète Mahomet meurt. Un siècle plus tard, en 732, les musulmans ont édifié le plus grand empire depuis Alexandre le Grand: il s'étend des Pyrénées aux rives de l'Indus. L'âge d'or de la civilisation arabe durera cinq siècles et son apport à l'Europe sera considérable dans nombre de domaines tels que la médecine, l'astronomie et les sciences. La deuxième phase est celle de l'expansion de l'Occident chrétien avec la reconquista en Espagne, la reconquête normande en Sicile et les Croisades. Ces événements amorcent le reflux arabe qui s'achèvera avec la chute de Grenade en 1492. C'est ce qui permet à Monsieur Ghalioun d'affirmer que : « [...] Jusqu'à cette date, les échanges sont demeurés intenses et l'on peut affirmer que sans l'apport de la civilisation arabe, la renaissance n'aurait peut-être pas vu le jour et, en tout cas, n'aurait pas été ce qu'elle a été.¹⁷ » D'autre part, l'Islam perd du terrain en Méditerranée, mais se développe en Asie et en Afrique. Cette seconde expansion, tant guerrière que pacifique, s'est poursuivie tout au long des Temps Modernes. La troisième phase est caractérisée par la montée en puissance des Turcs ottomans, qui viennent ainsi compenser le reflux arabe en Méditerranée. Cette période culmine avec la Prise de Constantinople en 1453. À la même époque, le déclin des sciences arabes est confirmé dans l'ensemble du monde musulman, mais l'essor des arts et des littératures se poursuit. La quatrième phase est celle du siècle des Lumières et de la Révolution française au XVIII^e siècle. C'est le déploiement de la puissance européenne et de la décadence des empires ottoman et perse. « Le choc des idées et le progrès de la technologie européenne provoquent un réveil au sein du monde arabe¹⁸ ». Un réveil semblable à celui connu en Occident éclot au début du XIX^e siècle ; il s'agit de la *nadha*, ce qui signifie littéralement « renaissance ». Ce mouvement voit le jour en Égypte, au Liban et en Syrie. La cinquième période est celle de la colonisation de la fin du XIX^e siècle, où les Européens ont assis leur domination sur l'ensemble des continents, imposant du même coup les principes de leur civilisation qu'ils jugeaient supérieure. De plus, le colon instaure des institutions, des infrastructures et des élites en vue d'asseoir son pouvoir et d'assouvir ses intérêts économiques. Bref, les peuples islamiques ont vu leur souveraineté brimée, parce qu'ils n'ont pu se gouverner selon le principe constitutif qu'est le Coran, puisqu'ils étaient forcés d'adopter la gouvernance de modèles qui bafouent ce livre identitaire au centre de cette civilisation. La sixième phase est celle de la chute en 1924 de l'Empire ottoman, et donc du califat. L'abolition du califat a engendré une montée du nationalisme, puisque chaque nation musulmane a commencé à défendre son territoire et son histoire. De plus, peu après la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, les revendications des peuples opprimés sous la colonisation se font de plus en plus pressantes. À cela s'ajoute la période des indépendances qui accroît les revendications nationalistes. En effet, durant les années 1950 et 1960, les nationalistes réclament le contrôle de leurs richesses. Cependant, cela crée un conflit entre les intérêts européens et le désir des peuples de récupérer leur patrimoine national. Le but principal de la mission coloniale des Européens n'est point une entreprise philanthropique ; il est plutôt d'ordre économique, ce qui ne peut qu'entraîner à long terme une confrontation entre le colon et le colonisé. Finalement, la septième phase est celle de la montée de la vague islamique, plus récemment étiquetée sous l'expression sensationnaliste d'intégrisme religieux. Ce phénomène « [...] a pris son essor avec la création de l'organisation des Frères musulmans en Égypte, en 1927-1928¹⁹ ». L'intégrisme a souvent été réprimé par les mouvements modernistes, mais, depuis 1979, lors de la proclamation de la République islamique d'Iran, le mouvement prend de l'importance sur

la scène internationale. L'islamisme est mal compris par l'Occident. Pourtant, comme l'explique Monsieur Lamchichi:

«... les luttes au nom de l'orthodoxie ont commencé dès la mort du Prophète et elles n'ont cessé de jaloner l'histoire des sociétés musulmanes. Ces luttes ont certes des motivations religieuses, mais elles sont aussi, selon les époques, le reflet des rivalités tribales, ethniques, dynastiques et idéologiques qui permettent aux vainqueurs d'établir de nouveaux rapports de force géopolitiques [...] cette histoire connaît périodiquement deux phénomènes qui s'alternent, mais sont parfois simultanés : le premier, rigoriste ou radical, met l'accent sur l'unité de l'*Umma*, le second privilégie l'héritage *anté-islamique*, les spécificités régionales et, dans la période moderne, le nationalisme.²⁰ »

Morale politique dans le monde arabe contemporain

L'Islam et l'État islamique font face à une crise identitaire et cela est imputable aux différentes interprétations que permet le Coran et au manque de consensus au sein de la communauté musulmane. En effet, comme il est possible de le réaliser dans tous les domaines (droit, foi, valeurs...) qu'il englobe, l'Islam est bien plus qu'une religion . Il affecte tous les domaines de la vie et, par conséquent, tous les enjeux de la rénovation de l'Islam peuvent être perçus et analysés sous un angle moderniste et réformateur ou traditionaliste et islamiste. Il est important de comprendre les différentes attitudes face à la modernisation.

L'idéologie la plus perceptible est certainement celle de l'islamisme, qui réagit avec force contre une modernisation imposée de l'extérieur. Elle se veut le mouvement des laissés pour compte, victimes de la crise économique, et des nouvelles générations urbaines, sans espoir pour l'avenir. Bref, l'islamisme porte tout haut les revendications des victimes de la modernisation. Cependant, l'islamisme se veut aussi le reflet du malaise sociétal, qui accable présentement le monde arabe face à la mondialisation. En effet, la vitesse des transformations bouleverse les traditions et l'esprit de solidarité communautaire, qui constituent l'équilibre même de la société musulmane. Les islamistes se sentent envahis, menacés et pervertis par une société occidentale, qui promulgue à outrance des valeurs capitalistes opposées aux leurs :

« ils s'indignent vivement du fait que l'Islam contemporain est allé loin dans la direction de la privatisation, de la personnalisation et même, de l'individualisation de la religion, au point de permettre que ses principes fondamentaux deviennent des croyances et des pratiques rituelles et culturelles facultatives.²¹ »

De plus, «... le nationalisme arabe a échoué dans son ambition originelle consistant à substituer à la communauté religieuse des traditionalistes une conception moderne de la Nation.²² » D'ailleurs, les islamistes refusent pour la plupart de continuer ainsi ; ils réclament l'abolition du *«statu quo»* dans le monde musulman contemporain : au lieu du bon gouvernement règnent l'autoritarisme, la répression, la corruption, l'incompétence et la misère sociale.²³» C'est pour cette raison que les islamistes revendiquent un changement dans l'ordre des choses mondiales. La solution que soutiennent les islamistes face à cette situation, qui leur est intolérable, est celle du retour au Coran, à la pratique religieuse et à l'ordre moral islamique. Cet ordre moral implique un retour au spirituel et à l'esprit de l'*Umma*, tout en s'adaptant à la vie contemporaine. La pensée traditionaliste se veut dans

la même optique que celle de l'Islam, par le fait qu'elle prêche un retour aux valeurs fondamentales, qui prévalaient durant les quatre premiers siècles. Les radicaux rejettent toute notion d'État-nation moderne pour n'observer que l'esprit unificateur de l'*Umma* et de la *sharī'a*, où les hommes sont égaux devant Dieu. « Pour eux, la religion est le seul principe structurant de l'identité culturelle, le pivot central de l'organisation politique et de l'édifice social, le fondement exclusif du gouvernement de la cité et la base ultime de l'autorité²⁴ »

D'autre part, les modernistes et les réformistes s'opposent à cette interprétation de l'Islam et de l'ordre politique. « Les docteurs de la foi ont, depuis le douzième siècle, progressivement imposé une pensée dogmatique, essentiellement juridique, et une orthodoxie sans prise avec le réel - rompant ainsi avec la créativité qui s'était exprimée pendant les premiers siècles de l'*Hégire*²⁵ » Les modernistes souhaitent voir une séparation entre le pouvoir religieux et celui politique et cela, depuis la *nadha* au XIX^e siècle. Leurs recommandations visent à instaurer un système juridique et politique moderne. Selon eux, la religion musulmane n'a prescrit aucun type particulier de gouvernement et il faut que l'Islam évolue et s'adapte aux changements, car vivre dans le passé ne permettra pas de résoudre les préoccupations présentes. D'après les réformistes, il ne faut retenir de la religion que «... sa spiritualité et ses valeurs éthiques et [...] renoncer à la volonté d'imposition de ses normes dans l'espace public²⁶ ».

Conclusion

L'Islam se remet en question. Pour que les peuples arabes recréent leur identité et prennent finalement la place qu'ils méritent dans la mondialisation, je crois que la solution la plus appropriée consiste à faire une synthèse entre le point de vue islamiste et moderniste. Cela implique de conserver l'*Umma* et l'esprit de la loi islamique tout en y incorporant des éléments de la modernité, tel que l'esprit démocratique, un peu comme le souhaitait Ibn Khaldun au quatorzième siècle. Ibn Khaldun, l'un des plus grands penseurs du monde arabe, croyait que l'un des meilleurs types de gouvernement doit être basé sur la *sharī'a* et le système politique du *califat*. Cependant, il ajoutait que mettre le pouvoir entre les mains d'un seul homme pouvait mener à l'absolutisme. De ce fait, le moyen le plus réaliste consiste à marier la *sharī'a* et le *mulk*. Le *mulk* est la souveraineté non pas raciale ou religieuse, mais plutôt inspirée du désir de vivre ensemble, en se fondant sur les lois et leur pouvoir de résolution pacifique. Bref, l'objet de la théorie d'Ibn Khaldun est de promouvoir la loi divine combinée à des limitations d'ordre économique pour le chef - le *calife* - ce qui prévient le totalitarisme et la dictature d'un seul homme, en donnant un certain pouvoir au peuple. Finalement, ce qui importe de reconnaître, c'est que la modernité doit venir d'eux-mêmes. Elle ne peut pas être imposée par une entité extérieure. En effet, pour qu'un développement soit durable et profond, il est nécessaire qu'il vienne des gens concernés et que ceux-ci désirent vraiment procéder à des changements. En définitive, le futur des musulmans doit manier tradition et modernité, et cela pour créer une identité forte et pleine de sens. De ce fait, il faudra espérer que la communauté internationale puisse saisir la position des musulmans et l'importance de les insérer dans le cheminement du nouvel ordre mondial.

Notes

- ¹ Balta, Paul *Islam civilisation et sociétés*, Éditions du Rocher, 1991, p.15
- ² Jalal Al-Azm, Sadik. *Au miroir de l'Occident*, dans *Manière de Voir*. Paris, novembre-décembre 1999, p. 34.
- ³ Al-Tantawi, Shaikh Ali. *The Faith*, Qatar, Publié par le département des Affaires islamiques et en collaboration avec le département d'Awqaf, 1994, p.23.
- ⁴ Fuller, Graham L'offensive des Religions, dans *Manière de Voir*. Paris, novembre-décembre 1999, p.37
- ⁵ Ghalioun, Burhan. *Islam et politique*. Paris: Éditions La découverte, 1997, p. 26.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 34
- ⁷ Balta, Paul. *Islam : civilisation, op. cit.*, p. 17.
- ⁸ Ghalioun, Burhan *Islam et politique, op. cit.*, p : 32-34.
- ⁹ *Ibid*, p. 42
- ¹⁰ Abdalati, Hammudah. *Islam in Focus*, publié par le département des Affaires islamiques du ministère de Awqaf de l'État de Qatar, 1994, p. 36.
- ¹¹ *Ibid* , p. 38
- ¹² *Ibid* , p. 34
- ¹³ Lamichichi, Abderrahim *Islam, islamisme et modernité*. Paris: Éditions La découverte, 1997, p. 88.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid* , p. 38
- ¹⁵ *Ibid* , p. 39
- ¹⁶ Mèrad, Ali *L'islam contemporain*. Paris: P.U.F. , 1984, pp. 121-122.
- ¹⁷ Ghalioun, Burhan *Islam et politique, op. cit.*, p. 16
- ¹⁸ Balta, Paul. *Islam : civilisation, op. cit.*, p. 45
- ¹⁹ Lamichichi, Abderrahim. *Islam, islamisme, op. cit.*, p. 83
- ²⁰ *Ibid* , p. 13
- ²¹ Fuller, Graham L'offensive des religions, *op. cit.*, p. 37
- ²² Lamichichi, Abderrahim *Islam, islamisme, op. cit.*, pp. 124 et 127
- ²³ Fuller, Graham L'offensive des religions, *op. cit.*, p.37
- ²⁴ *Ibid* , p. 38
- ²⁵ *Ibid* , p. 131
- ²⁶ *Ibid* , p. 135

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