

Giovanni Pampanini

*THE THEORY OF GLOBAL DEMOCRACY APPLIED. THE RESEARCH ABOUT THE YEAR 2020*

The Winter 2020 “Lê Thành Khôi” Atelier Seminar

Let us look at the most important plots of the year 2020 in the four world macro-regions, the Mediterranean, Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

Mediterranean: Russia and Turkey hold three places where they put in being their conflict: Syria, Libya, and Nagorno-Karabakh. In the same time, Turkey is putting aside the file of association with the European Union while adding the contentious focus of oil off Cyprus coasts. From this point of view, if Erdogan is willing to assume the posture of the Global South leader (as *The Economist* puts it down), multiplying the loci of conflict and using the migrants as blackmail, he is not proving to have a leadership based on wisdom and humanity, virtues essential to give voice to peace and global justice.

From his side, Putin has never hidden his power aspiration while always showing his cunning in the international chessboard; the last proves are his ambiguousness before Belarus and Kyrgyzstan leaders facing important movements of protest in their own countries.

As it regards Europe, it is to say that the Dialogue is not, at least for this year, its uniform: we think to how Nazi ideas re-appeared in the ranks of the German Police (and fortunately, it has been possible to identify and neutralize the police officers sympathizing for the extreme right!) and to the French magazine *Charlie Hebdo*. Its humourism at detriment of Islam leaves uncertainty as it regards a sincere willingness to dialogue, and not, rather, a frank push to insult (of course, condemning all violence in reaction to its cartoons).

Asia: the tension between China and the USA is not only related to the general, global trade, but also concretely linked to a geographic place in the world that is the South China Sea, the portion of Pacific Ocean going from South Japan down to Indonesia. They traditionally call it South China Sea, but the USA recently re-named it the *Indo-Pacific* in recognition to India's filo-USA politics. Inside this maritime space, China and the ASEAN countries are playing their games given that, even if the ASEAN countries are mostly on the side of the USA, including the ex-enemy Viet Nam, they are not deaf to the globalizing economic sound of China. Just in this year, China and the ASEAN countries signed the RCEP, *Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership* that is the biggest free trade agreement in the world. In addition, there are other two wildly symbolic issues in this zone that are the North Korea file and the Hong Kong “pro-democracy” protest, whose leaders expressly do reference to President Trump.

Modi's India and Widodo's Indonesia seem to take a step backward in the fields of citizenship and democracy. As it regards India, the controversial CAA, *Citizenship Amendment Act* clearly is in contradiction with the laic Constitution of India because it establishes a religious divide in the people. Indonesia under the second term Widodo's presidency is restricting the margins of liberty of expression and manifesting, the two biggest targets of government being the issues of the job and of Papua.

Pakistan and Iran: for the former, India represents a traditional antagonist, above all in Kashmir; on the opposite, China, thanks to its *Belt and Road Initiative*, is demonstrating to be a solid partner in the development matters, something that India tries to contrast. The USA seems to perceive Iran as a sort of ‘reserve enemy’ in case other enemies in the global chessboard should diminish, unveiling the groundlessness of its paramount geo-strategic and industrial-military apparatus of control, undoubtedly anti-democratic.

However, two democratic news of great interest are under the sun in Asia this year and are the feminist movements in Thailand and South Korea, not only for the issue of the right of abortion, but also for the return of democracy especially in Thailand.

The USA State Secretary Mike Pompeo successfully operated around the recognition of Israel by the Emirates and Bahrain (but not by Sudan). Unfortunately, that operation does not have a “Dialogue among Cultures” meaning, rather an importance under the military and economic, regional geo-strategy.

Americas: the peace wind that was blowing up Santos’ Colombia seems to be disappeared in Duque’s one, while the dense clouds up Maduro’s Venezuela are remaining well heavy, with short room for the dialogue. Luis Arce’s success at Bolivia’s presidential elections make hope in a re-taking of the democratic file of UNASUR (along with Mexico and Argentina) before the conservative Grupo de Lima. Such a hope might be reinforced after Joe Biden’s win in the USA (but in the USA, the major hope is now that the Police officers stop their racist approach to Black population).

Africa: there was no need that racism appeared even in Africa, as on the opposite the recent *Refugee Amendment Act* in South Africa against the migrants seem to show.

The “weak State” model continues to be a constant in Africa. Too many interests, national as well as international, cooperate in a sick way to maintain the African nations easy to be caught by military and economic agents. Start with the first: Mali’s *golpe* shed a long shadow through Russia where the military that realized the coup were trained. As a matter of fact, immediately after the coup the USA took off its military assistance, even if Mali is one of the countries most menaced by Jihadism. Other military, strong interests do exist in Congo and South Sudan, as the investigative journalism is demonstrating (see the reports by Sentry). From the economic point of view Africa represents a traditional point of interest for the world entire, and it is interesting to note that even today the powers winners of the Second World War, Russia, USA, China, France, and the UK, are the States that are the most leaning towards Africa, in concurrence one with another. The *Debt Service Suspension Initiative* is a good example in point: the G7 and Paris Club States declared they agree to suspend momentarily the African debt if China too agrees – but China does not agree, then ...

Another aspect of the “weak State” is the so-called “third term”. This issue indicates that there is a great ease for an authoritarian president currently in charge to modify the Constitution to introduce a comma that allows him to be a candidate for a third term as president (this year the winners of this kind of game have been Alpha Condé in Guinea and Alassane Ouattara in Ivory Coast).

A story of the past that still has a value today is that of the compensation from Germany towards those African nations (Namibia above all, but not only) that suffered a lot at the time of the first genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

“Small” wars have been activated this year in Africa, which are Sahrawi Republic *versus* Morocco and Ethiopia *versus* Tigray-Eritrea. Another important focus of tension is that between Ethiopia and Egypt related to the GERD, the dam under construction in the Blue Nile that, when completed, will ensure an enormous power to Ethiopia and big problems to both Egypt and Sudan.

*Balance and prospects:* to Global Democracy, the 2020 balance is quite meagre. The ‘legal’ traffics of arms (letting apart those ones that are “illegal”) are remaining a constant in the international panorama. The cases the most clamorous for 2020 are the not admissible France’s ‘military assistance’ to Haftar in Libya, the morally disputable military aid from Israel to Azerbaijan, and finally the attempt by Trump to sell arms to the Emirates who, on their side, had passed them in Libya to fight against ... the international forces made also by the USA! This makes us think to the historical case of the Baring Bank of London that got the permission to lend money to Russia during the Crimea war in 1856 to keep to fight ... against Great Britain!

On the other side, check investigations by military authorities showed and sanctioned illegal manners, in truth crimes against humanity, used by USA and Australian troops respectively in Yemen and Afghanistan. The fights by Edward Snowden and Julian Assange on behalf of the transparency in the relationships between the power and the citizen keep fundamental to make democracy progress, while Pope Francis’ voice in favour of the people, minded not ethnically or nationalistically, is pivotal to open minds to Global Democracy.

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The Spring 2021 “Lê Thành Khôi” Atelier Seminar

At a bird's eye view, it seems that old and new foci of conflict in the world are **now** overwhelmed by the growing conflict between USA and China that is enriched by new dimensions. Among these, in fact, the military dimension, even if by now only on a far horizon, is observable since the first months of 2021. Let us see more nearby.

Nagorno-Karabakh and Libya conflicts are, in truth, less present in the international press, the former one is even quasi-over. Azerbaijan seems to be the winner (already at the end of 2020 December) along with its external supporter, Turkey. Libya, by the 14 December 2021 election, is hopefully sizing a new democratic course. On the opposite, Syria is always a source of concern, first of all because of the ISIL threaten that still is present on the territory, in spite of the blows delivered by the coalition led by the USA at the end of November 2020, then because of the “Kurdistan question”, always an important issue. In addition, the new story of oil, off Cyprus' coasts, is another new concern, notwithstanding the (clumsy) attempt of peace making made by Greece on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021, in which Turkey has not been involved (how can you hope to do peace without listening to the other part?). In the ex-Soviet galaxy, starting from Russia, Alexei Navalny's imprisonment, in January, extend tensions in Moscow as well as in other Russian towns, without making us forget the opposition fronts against the post-Communist “longstanding” regimes in the other CIS Republics. It is important here to recall that by Navalny the number of imprisonments by a highly anti-democratic meaning is growing. Without presuming to be exhaustive here, I just quote the names of those people who now are among the most mentioned in the international press; people who are quite different in stature but that have in common the file rouge of the fight for democracy. Julian Assange in Great Britain (since 11<sup>th</sup> April 2019 – in January 2021 UK refused his extradition to the USA), Fariba Adelkhah in Iran (since June 2019), Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar (since 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021, following the golpe), Patrick Zaki in Egypt (since 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020). Unfortunately, the list is very long, covering the entire world. It is nice to note that Lula, the ex-President of Brazil, is no longer in such a list (he was released from prison at the beginning of November 2019, while Brazilian Supreme Court has restored his political rights on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021). Edward Snowden, who avoided prison in the USA just because exiled in Russia, received the recognition on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2020 by the Court of Appeal in the USA that the espionage made by the NSA, National Security Agency that he denounced in 2013 was actually illegal.

Inside Europe, beyond the skirmish between Brussels and London for Brexit, tension on migrants' matter keeps to rise. In a sense, this is the true testing bench of the democratic capacity of the current political and administrative leadership of the UE as well as the litmus paper of the relationships between the Old Continent and the new incomes. (Letting apart the other, big democracy's testing bench that is the question of corruption, a chapter that thanks to the Spanish ex-premier Rajoy, the French ex-President Sarkozy, and the current Dutch premier Mark Rutte is always enriched by new dossiers). Last but not least, it is worth to mention the case of Turkey that in December 2020 denounced the Dutch conservative leader Geert Wilders because he asked to expel Turkey from NATO *due to its being a Muslim country*.

In Africa, the conflict between Ethiopia central government and the Tigray region prolongs in the first months of 2021, even if it seemed finished, by the definitive victory of Addis Ababa, at the end of 2020. Another source of tension in the same region is due to the Blue Nil on which just Ethiopia is constructing the huge Renaissance Dam that once completed will draw crucial water to both Sudan and Egypt. This is why Sudan asked to the UN to mediate on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Clearly, the very interested USA and Russia did not succeed, up to now, to solve the puzzle. We still need to mention the Polisario Front in Western Sahara that accuses the European countries to stay on the side of Morocco in the fight that it has against this Arab State.

In Ghana and in Uganda the outgoing presidents have been re-elected (respectively, Nana Akufo-Addo on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and Yoweri Museveni on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021). The fact keeps alive a specific form of preoccupation for democracy in Africa, given that, for instance, Museveni's competitor, Bobi Wine, finds himself in prison. Finally, on December 2020 Senegal has been invited to participate as observer to the G5 meeting (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mauritania, and Chad) organized by France to reinforce the anti-terrorism front (signals of an ISIL resumption are evident on this corner of the Continent). On the other side it is remarkable that China cancelled Congo's debt in front of the adhesion of this country to its *Belt and Road* initiative, according to the customary style of China to deal with this kind of matters (at least, China does not kill the weaker). It is highly symbolic that such a transaction occurs in January right when the World Economic Forum is on. In it, China President Xi, as usual in the last years, made strong by the very fact that his country GDP is running at a speed of 6.5%, spent reasonable words on behalf of the notion that no state can presume to overcome one single of its problems since they already are all global ones. This means that we all should encourage the trend towards global cooperation, rather than global competition – words that were welcome by Klaus Schwab, the founder of the same World Economic Forum, as well as by ILO, International Labor Organization Guy Ryder.

Asia: here democracy actually is at odds. Already in January 2021, Hong Kong parliamentary pro-democracy members have been arrested. In Iran many are the imprisonments of men and women who are in different ways engaged with democracy, both Iranian and foreigners (the Nobel for peace Shirin Ebadi is courageously fighting to free them); the democratic opposition in Thailand is engaging the government to re-write the Constitution and to end the Emergency phase. However, on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 Myanmar Army made a golpe against the current government, putting the democratic leader Aung San Suu Kyi at the domiciliary arrest. The opposition fronts in Hong Kong, Thailand, and Myanmar (news on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021) are uniting in a common fight for democracy under the motto “Milk Tea Alliance” (hashtag #MilkTeaAlliance: the reason of this symbol is that it is *a very popular beverage*).

Americas: in the central zone of the Continent, democracy condition is ameliorating thanks to the success of Luis Arce at the presidential elections in Bolivia. The current presidential elections in Ecuador are another reason for optimism (at the first turn, on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021, Andrés Arauz, centre-left, is at the top; second turn is scheduled for April). We have got also the publication of the “terror map” in Argentina and Uruguay on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2020 (that is the reconstruction of the ways in which airplanes used to accomplish the “vuelos de la muerte” to eliminate the opposition members during the dictatorship years), together with the legal recognition of abort in Argentina. Finally, the Natives started to express non-satisfaction towards the hyper-conservative Guatemala president Alejandro Giammattei (who holds a double nationality, Italian and Guatemale) (and not only they). Always highly problematic remains the situation in Venezuela: the parliamentary elections on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020, won by Maduro's party, saw a low percentage of voters and an even lower international appreciation. However, of course, the main drama of democracy in America has been that of the assault to the Parliament in Washington by Trump's supporters on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021 – something that suspended the breath to the whole world (Trump, in addition, has been formally accused by the justice court of Iraq for the assassination of General Suleimani on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2020). Even if the accident has been rapidly closed, the wound to the “USA democracy” has been quite serious and wildly symbolic. Joe Biden, who took his office at the White House *in the absence* of the past president Trump (another Trump's irregularity), has a lot to do in order to respect his full agenda. This is made with the anti-Covid vaccine campaign, the supporting of the vast front of democracy all over the world (from Navalny to Aung San Suu Kyi), the re-enter of the USA in the Paris agreement for the climate, the distension with Iran, and the stopping of the support to the war in Yemen beside Saudi Arab king.

On the other side, it is to say that “USA democracy” remains ambiguous, as the Global Democracy Theory helps us to understand. More than inciting NATO countries to buy new arms (news of 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021), Biden could use the enormous USA *soft power* to ridicule the joint military exercises of Russia-China-Iran-India of January 2021 in the Indian Ocean. And promote overtly and aloud the “dialogue among civilizations” – Pope Francis, who met the Ayatollah al Sistani in Mosul (on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021), would be enough to serve as an illustrious historic precedent.

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The Summer 2021 “Lê Thành Khôi” Atelier Seminar

The retrospective observation of the 2021 spring in the world, made on the first day of summer when the Delta Variant seems to be so strong to make the lockdown's end in Great Britain slide at least of a month, gives reason to optimism as well as to pessimism from the point of view of Global Democracy. They go together hand in hand; so that it will be easier observe them *together* during this summer, a season likely to pass under the sign of the lasting anti-Covid fight.

On the first day of spring, the Italian government, led now by Mario Draghi, finalizes furnishing Egypt with military ships and, even if the government says this has nothing to do with the policy observed up to now about Giulio Regeni's case, the suspect that the industrial-military business could cover truth's desire remains strong. – In fact, a couple of months later, the same government had to make a significant action putting under trial four Egyptian secret agents alleged to be involved in the murder of the young Italian researcher (25<sup>th</sup> May). In addition, the Italian parliament passed a motion on behalf of the recognition of Patrick Zaki, a young colleague of his and a student at the Bologna University, but detained in the Egyptian prison, as an Italian citizen (6<sup>th</sup> April). As it regards Egypt, it is important to note that in April the new novel by Alaa al-Answary *The Republic of False Truths* (London: Faber), has been published. To be read.

Speaking about the international traffic of arms, two bad-good news interest Italy again, but this time in tandem with Saudi Arabia (Italia Amnesty International announces that Italy will no longer sell missiles to Saudi Arabia). The second one regards the couple Canada-Turkey (the former interrupts the furnishing with drone technology given that the latter would use it to military ends – *but, before, the furnishing did last* (news in April).

Thanks to a “self-criticism” operation (a kind of operations that democracies should do much more than they use to do, and not only *in retrospective*, but also *in prospective*), an inquiry commission wanted by President Macron about France's responsibilities in the Rwanda genocide in 1994 assessed the involvement of the French political leadership of that time (30<sup>th</sup> March). Too late, but better than nothing ...

In Latin America, right and left are in equilibrium: in April the rightist wins, at surprise, the presidential elections in Ecuador (Guillermo Lasso President, on 13<sup>th</sup> April), while Pedro Castillo, leftist, is the new President of Peru (on 16<sup>th</sup> June).

The release (on 2<sup>nd</sup> April) of the ex-Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo by the International Criminal Court has been seen as a good act of justice, while others saw it as the clearest proof of the need of reform of this Institution.

The number of killed political opponents to the Myanmar golpe is growing – on 12<sup>th</sup> April they are 700 – while the multiple condemnns, from those of the ASEAN to the USA President Biden's ones, seem to be incapable to make the authoritarian grip softer.

An unusual vitality has been shown by the new diplomacy of the new Libyan government that is looking for legitimation – more among its people rather than internationally. In fact, high representatives of the Italian government, including Draghi, have had several political meetings in Tripoli, while new agreements have been signed with Turkey, from one side, and with Greece, from the other. In the meantime, people protest because of the rise of bread's price.

The police in the USA keeps to be excessively severe with the Afro-descendent population and the *Latinos* (more two cases in April), but the new governments finally shows a harder approach to the police officers who are responsible of unjustified deaths (in May the responsible of George Floyd's death has been heavily

condemned). However, other polices around the world are too severe, and the populations are needed to manifest against them – see the case of Tunisia with people's manifestations in June).

Malcontent and tensions brood over, but sometimes get the surface. The blackout of the Iranian base of Natanz has been seen by the Iranian government as a sabotage by Israel. In the same period, mid-April, new fights have been experienced in the Donbass region, making the tension between Russia and Ukraine re-emerge. New fights are again over Belfast. Popular protest manifestations contest the Japanese government's decision to authorize the release of contaminated substances in the sea – China and North Korea protest as well –, manifestations that follow the other ones against the Olympic games, strongly wanted by the government. Complaints and accuses of corruption regard Tanzania and Uganda related to the new contracts with the corporation Total due to the passage of oil in the two African countries. When the European Council President Charles Michel and the European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen visit Erdogan in Turkey in April, a diplomatic case occurred, the so-called *Sofagate* (in practice, when Erdogan was receiving the hosts, Von der Leyen had to stand *since no seat was prepared to her*, under the world eyes – a “normal case of gender disparity”). In Moscow, we have seen many protests in favour of Alexej Navalny. Russian spies have been intercepted and sent away from the USA, Italy, and the Czech Republic for their illegal activities. On 20<sup>th</sup> April the Chad President Idriss Déby died, an obstacle to ISIL in Africa. In Colombia the opposition against privatization policies led by the President Ivan Duque grows, the similar happens in Chile against the conservative government of this South American country. End of April, Biden recognizes the 1915 Armenia's genocide, and Erdogan immediately answers that the USA are doing “anti-Turkey manoeuvres”. Mid-May, numbered groups of migrants try to pass the gates of Ceuta and Melilla, the two Spanish enclaves in Morocco, blocked by the police. However, the two episodes that overcome all the other ones in seriousness and importance are those of the escalation of violence in Israel-Gaza and in the Tigray region. The first episode occurred in mid-April, just when Netanyahu had to face the criminal trials for corruption, sex crimes and other (what a case!). The second one presented all May along: despite the protests and the sanctions combined by the USA, the Ethiopic government is bringing the Tigray people to the famine. – All that, while masses of migrants happen to die in the Mediterranean Sea and off the Canaries shores.

The date of 22<sup>nd</sup> April, day of the Earth, is the occasion for a rhetoric of collaboration among Biden, Xi, and Putin (the USA and Russia Presidents were *much more sincere* some weeks before between themselves ...). After the mid-June summit of NATO and G7, the leaders of USA and Russia met again, hopefully a sign of more real collaboration. As it regards India, strongly bit by the Covid, Biden showed generosity gifting an important quantitative of vaccine doses (end of April).

The rightist strengthens all Continents over: in Spain, the leftist loses Madrid in the election of mid-May (the leader of *Podemos*, Pablo Iglesias, even abandons the political arena). In the USA Trump is still very active behind the scenes. Finally, an inquiry led by the Argentinian newspaper *Pagina 12* highlighted the conservative international relations that mind to sabotage the rights that the leftist governments are entitling to their peoples.

Mali, Somalia, and Nigeria offer a *usual* scenario: Mali with golpe (on 25<sup>th</sup> May, the second golpe in nine months; the African Union suspends the country from all its institutions); Somalia with suicide attacks (in Mogadishu on 15<sup>th</sup> June); Nigeria with kidnappings (in north Nigeria, close to Chibok, mid-June). On the other side, Syria re-elects Assad President (on 28<sup>th</sup> May) in an election process by the abundantly anticipated result.

To be sure, a file to follow with care, even with concern, will be during this summer the curse of events after the win of the conservative Ebrahim Raisi at the presidential elections of June in Iran. In fact, this country, like Turkey, is interested in taking the post that the USA has had in Afghanistan. In the same time, however, a reason for hope is represented by the recent international book fair of Baghdad, where the attention of the public went all to the books of the ex-enemy, Iran. Global Democracy has a desperate need of intercultural dialogue.

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The Autumn 2021 “Lê Thành Khôi” Atelier Seminar

The summer just passed is full of single events that are notable per se. Here follows a list of them: the international political spy story of *Pegasus* (June-July 2021), the US Treasury secretary Janet Yellen’s proposal to realize a tax of 15% for the corporations (at the beginning of July) and that of the same period from the International Monetary Fund to establish a fund to help poor countries at odds because of the Covid-19, the murder of Haiti President Jovenel Moïse on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021, the trials against corruption inside Vatican, the decision of Iran, led by the new President Ebrahim Raisi, to go ahead with the enrichment of uranium, the attempt against the new Madagascar President Andry Rajoelina on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021, the *golpe* by the Tunisian President Kais Saïed on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2021 (with the praise of Egypt), the request by Colombia President Ivan Duque on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021 that the US declares Venezuela a terrorist State, the taken of Kabul by the Taliban on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021, the end of the activities of the Front for Human Rights in Hong Kong on the same day, the announcement, on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2021, from the Qatar premier al Thani of the legislative elections on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021, the first ones in the country’s history, the *golpe* against Guinea President Alpha Condé on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2021, the success of the enterprise of Hezbollah, on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021, just two days after the new Lebanese government has been put in place, to import oil from Iran to Beirut bypassing the US embargo, the controversial victory of Putin’s party at the recent Russian election on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021, etc. Nevertheless, a comprehension of the structural links among the different events and the trends of the International Relations that are running helps us to appreciate the utility, both theoretical and practical, of the idea of Global Democracy according to the Theory of it that the “Le Thanh Khoi” Atelier is elaborating.

Let us start with Asia. The Chinese Communist Party celebrates its centenary this year, 1921-2021. For the occasion, Pakistan premier Imran Khan declares that he will adopt towards the Uyghurs the same negative attitude of Pekin, even if that population is Muslim like him (*Washington Post*, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2021). In fact, China is enlarging the international consensus to its *One Belt One Road* project by the means of its “cooperative” approach to International Relations (giving free vaccines to Congo, Central African Republic, etc.). The same China recognised the Taliban before 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021 as a valid interlocutor on condition that they will not interfere with its political approach of ostracism towards the Uyghurs. Turkey, on its turn, along with Russia, reacted to the taken of Kabul by the Taliban by asking them for stability around the frontiers of common interest such as those with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. As far as it concerns Turkey and Russia, on their own turn, the two countries have still the not-yet resolved problem of the pacification of the rapports between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and in particular the situation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region. When the Taliban took the power over Kabul, the only concern expressed by the European Union, from its side, has been that the thousands of refugees expected to flee from Afghanistan do not enter its territory – so declared its High Representative for Foreign Affairs Josep Borrell on 18<sup>th</sup> August. In addition, he asked to Turkey to play a strict role of filter (for the sake of truth, it is to be said that the Italian President Sergio Mattarella manifested indignation for that absolutely amoral, say immoral, approach of Europe in front of the Afghan problem, above all of Austria and Poland). On the other side, it is to remember that in its meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> August 2021 the G-7, echoing similar concerns expressed by the UN, reasoned upon the problem of *how* to recognize the new government in Afghanistan. In fact, at this point that is the only problem: there is no longer discussion about the very fact that it *must* be recognized, and then the G-7 argued that representatives from the African Union and India should be involved *before* the decision be taken.

From the other side of the Globe, in Latin America, news about the repression season in Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Cuba keep to arrive in abundance. However, while the July 2021 number of the *Journal of Democracy* accuses all the leftist governments in Latin America to be populist and authoritarian, the *Pravda* on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021 guesses that before the end of 2022 the Left will be happily at the guide of the entire sub-continent, starting from the recent victory of Pedro Castillo in Peru. News of another kind of struggles against the

repression, very interesting indeed, are those that arrive from Honduras. Here, the government still represses the Native populations (the Garifunas, in particular). – Also from Mexico where, we learned on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2021, the movement for the indigenous and Afro-Mexicana Reform asks for modifying fifteen articles of the constitution in order to recognize the *collective rights* of the Natives.

Let us examine the Mediterranean and the African regions at some extent, at the centre of our scheme of the Globe. We already saw the egoistic approach of the EU in front of the Afghanistan situation. Now, as far as it concerns Ukraine, Turkey offers to serve as a mediator between Russia and Europe (on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021). The stake are the foreign direct investments over Ukraine. Not only that, but also a stricter cooperation between Ukraine and NATO (*inside* the Ukraine's file there is that of Crimea, where the Tatars, considered a Native population, live. Russia usually represses that population, while Turkey protects it in an anti-Russia function. At the end of July 2021, Turkey proposes to Russia to recognize Crimea in exchange of the recognition from the side of Russia of the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus). As it regards the southern coast of the *mare nostrum*, one should note that the Muslim Brotherhood is losing force. First, came the defeat in Egypt on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2013, then the *golpe* of the Tunisian President Kais Saied on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2021, now even in the normal elections, on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021, the Justice and Development Party loses in Morocco after a ten-year long government. Unfortunately, as it concerns the Mediterranean region as a whole, the constant datum that does not change is the high number of migrants who die, before the coasts of Libya, of Tunisia, and who knows where else.

Africa, finally: in general, the presence of UK is diminishing on the Black Continent (the NEPAD project seems to be just history); the presence of USA, France, and China is constant, while Russia and UAE try to implement their presence (the UAE, above all, in Angola, Djibouti, and Libya). Egypt, looking at Libya from one side and to Gaza from the other one, tries to rise its grip on the region, discussing the different dossiers with USA, Russia, EU and UN (in the same time President al-Sisi looks for consensus internally launching 2022 as the “year of civil society” in Egypt: *Al Ahram* on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021). In the meanwhile, ISIS is stronger around the Chad Lake: Chad, Niger, Nigeria, Central African Republic. Here the mercenary troops of the Russian private company Wagner are operative side by side the official troops against the rebels sympathizer of ISIS challenging the ONU embargo. Moreover, Cameroon, where the struggle of the Anglophone separatists of the North increases the instability of the region. On 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021, President Emmanuel Macron announces that the French Army will regress from the North of Mali in order to follow the relocation of ISIS rebels in the South, in Ivory Coast and Benin. In addition, ISIS is also present in the northern region of Mozambique, wherefrom oil flows toward Kenya through Tanzania, and above all Uganda, the biggest buyer (but also South Sudan, Burundi, and Congo are interested in it). It is here, in fact, in the North of Mozambique, in the Capo Delgado region, that ISIS, in July and August, tries to catch the extractive basis of oil, fought by Mozambique army and a coalition of military forces from Botswana and Rwanda, supported by the USA. On 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021, the French ministry of Defence Florence Parly *should* travel to Mali to recommend to the current *junta* in power (suspected to be filo-Russian) *not* to call for protection from the mercenary Russian Wagner company. By this way, France hopes to be recognized as the only, real bulwark against the ISIS in Africa.

Right now, between summer and autumn, 14<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021, the 76<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly of the UN is running, focused on the many aspects, national as well as international, of the anti-Covid-19 fight. In the same moment, USA and China look each other in a hostile fashion. From one side, the two respective leaders, Joe Biden and Xi Jinping, try to dialogue frankly and directly (as in a direct call on the phone on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2021). On the other side, the military alliance between USA and Australia, just one week after that phone call, contested the demanded supremacy of China in the Southern Chinese Sea (France protests over the subsequent Australian renounce of its already promised submarines: the USA is ready to sell to Australia nuclear submarines less expensive than those ones from France). Immediately China denounces the attempt of encirclement – and the dialogue, again, goes away.

A global look at the situation of this summer makes us conclude, therefore, that security has been the common denominator of the many and different events occurred in all the continents. Nevertheless (and *there* is the utility of the idea of Global Democracy), it is also evident that, *without a global vision of democracy*, even the



very theme of *security* paradoxically risks to become one of the most unsafe and dangerous one for the *whole* humanity.

Giovanni Pampanini

*THE THEORY OF GLOBAL DEMOCRACY APPLIED. THE RESEARCH ABOUT THE YEAR 2021*

The Winter 2021 “Lê Thành Khôi” Atelier Seminar

The autumn just passed presented to us some good news, like the candidature of a woman, Fawzia Adam, to the presidency of Somalia (mid-September), the nomination of Najla Bouden as the Tunisia premier, the first time for a woman in an Arab country (end of September), the sentence, by a Canadian court, of the government to pay for Native children who did not receive the due cares (beginning of October), Patrick Zaki’s release in Egypt (same period), the Nobel for Literature given to Abdulrazak Gurnah (October), the decision to put a tax of 15% to the corporation (beginning of November), the joint commitment of China and USA on behalf of environment (as declared at the end of the COP-26 conference), the direct call and talk between the two presidents Biden and Putin (end of December). It is worthy to note that the South Africa’s chapter of Shell Corporation has been convicted in December, as it happened in Nigeria in August, by a South African court to refund the local peoples because of its polluting activities. In the same vein, we are happy to hear from the new, leftist Swedish government about political programmes on behalf of health, environment, and job (mid-September). Finally, we learn with pleasure about the reactions of peoples as different as those of Indonesia, Salvador, Iraq, India, Myanmar, Sudan, and Papua New Guinea to the unfair policies of their governments. Some of these struggles win, like that for a better agricultural system in India; others lose, like that of the blogger Abdulrahman al-Sadhan in Saudi Arabia, with a sentence of twenty years in prison. Some others, like that of Alexei Navalny, Julian Assange, or of the democratic front in Hong Kong or that one in Myanmar, are likely to last for a long time since that they become “international cases”.

However, before examining the international connections, let us give a glance to the most important news at the domestic level. In Germany, Angela Merkel leaves the political scene – and, because of the European stature of the woman, it is correct to affirm that that is a continental matter. In Brazil, a Senate commission expressed the idea that the president Jair Bolsonare should be processed for crimes against humanity – but the question is still under examination (October). At the beginning of November, Daniel Ortega has been re-elected as president of Nicaragua for the fourth time – among national and international protests (US President Joe Biden has declared that he now is a ‘persona non grata’ in the USA). In Afghanistan, ISIS attacked the Kabul hospital in November sending a message to the Taliban government. In Peru, Keiko Fujimori, the daughter of the ex-President Alberto, now a candidate to the presidency of the country, has been sentenced to 30 years of prison for corruption (that is the Peruvian line of the Brazilian case of Odebrecht). In France, the ex-President Nikolas Sarkozy too has been sentenced for corruption – and maybe he will go to prison. The corruption basket is always full and coloured. Then, we could add the case of the Botswana President Ian Khama, accused to bring his money “apart” in a South African bank (end of November). The case is the same for the billionaire Isabel Dos Santos, the daughter of the ex-autocrat President of Angola, another time sentenced for a corruption by a US court (the first time she was sentenced by a Nederland’s court some month ago); and unfortunately, we could continue for a long time. In the meanwhile, the US ex-President Trump launched his owned social, named *Truth* (second half of October), an initiative that deserves no comment. The prison crisis is an “international” matter in the sense that it is common to quasi all the countries – in this autumn we heard the fatal incidents happening in Ecuador and Indonesia. Finally, we must remember the conclusion of the 2021 Rapport of *Reporters without frontiers* stressing that this past year reached the peak of reporters put in prison or “neutralized”.

Said all that, it is from the dimension of the International Relations that we learn the more as it refers to the theory and praxis of the (struggle for) Global Democracy, as usual. Let us start from inside Europe. At the

beginning of October, there is tension between Belgium and Poland because of the different approach to abortion, so that the former government helps the women of the latter country that meet difficulties to abort in their own State. More complex and embarrassing is the file of arms (end of November): Spain sells arms to Turkey, while France to Greece, just when the two buying countries are in tension between them. Finally, following the Brexit, the contrast between France and the UK, even if this was to be expected, exploded because of the fishing matter in the English Channel.

Outside Europe, we note China's success of first magnitude in its unstoppable march pro-globalization: the ratification by Australia of RCEP, Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, the biggest trade agreement in the world (beginning of November). – On the other side, Australia does not disappoint its (ex?) biggest world partners, that is the US and the UK, signing with them an agreement to construct the AUKUS submarines (for that both China and Indonesia expressed their vivid concern). In Afghanistan, the suspension of the Western aids provokes a mass flee of refugees to Iran and Pakistan – that too was an event easy to expect. If *hot war* is still alive in Yemen, with the battle of Marib of 18 October, the rumours about other, new wars are even more disturbing than the war in itself. The US President Biden has to intervene to defend Taiwan from the expansionistic willingness of China President Xu. In the same time, Russia President Putin *presses* upon Ukraine *to press*, in truth, upon Europe and NATO. Nevertheless, at least in this case one could say (and John Mearsheimer says that, in his recent book *The Great Delusion*) that also the opposite is true, that is, that it is Europe and NATO that are provoking Russia waving the will to expand themselves over Ukraine.

But war, in a sense, is fought each day *on* each migrant – each migrant, be he or she a migrant because of war, poverty, or an environmental crisis, is like a civil victim of a huge, world war. – Perhaps, a not declared war, but not for that reason a less real war: the great, and lasting, war of the rich against the poor. From my point of view, keeping in mind the Theory of Global Democracy, such a truth seems to me evident. Already in August, we saw the European Union, through its representative for the Foreign Affairs Borrell, expressing his appreciation for the role of Turkey in stopping the Afghan refugees. Then, we noted the same refugees try a second time through the Croatian route, equally stopped over there. Finally, we see them once again in Belarus where the authoritarian President Lukashenko, he too, does not miss the chance to get more European “appreciation” to stop the migratory flow. We did not hear protests, from this side, worthy of note, unless a scornful comment by the Italian premier Draghi and a vibrant accuse by Pope Francis. The other European “leaders” wait in religious silence for a happy end, as for the end of a simple nightmare.

However, always Africa is the best source of learning as it regards Global Democracy. Letting apart the constant quantity of migrants that it sends *via* Libya, another country that enjoys in abundance the European “appreciation” to block them – as Matteo De Bellis has well documented in his very recent book *Lontano dagli occhi. Storia di politiche migratorie e persone alla deriva tra Italia e Libia* –, Africa is the very place in the Planet where one can better observe the world trends, above all at the end of the year. In fact, by tradition, it is in that period of the year that the great “leaders” of the Earth use to go around in the Black Continent to assess *their* grip on *its* resources. Therefore, in October Erdogan visited Africa, and the same did Blinken in November, while the Chinese ministry for Foreign Affairs is preparing his trip to Africa for January 2022. France is interested, above all, to the G-5 group that is Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, and Niger, misused by the recent ISIS's initiative. Here, the ‘game’ is with Russia, present on the ground *via* Wagner, the private company of mercenaries linked to Kremlin. The nearby Central African Republic, suffering an arms embargo by the UN, is already enjoying a Wagner support, and now Mali too, where the 2020 *golpe* imposed a military junta, shows interest in the same sense. To complicate the puzzle, at the beginning of September a new *golpe* in the closed Guinea ousted the President Alpha Condé. France President Macron leaves Mali for, he says, moving to south, Ivory Coast and Benin, for ISIS's threat is more consistent now over there; but, in Mali this move is seen, more or less, as the US move in Afghanistan. There is, then, the vast region of Sudan (where there was a new *golpe* in October), South Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Kenya, East Congo (Kivu), Uganda, and Rwanda. Here too, there is an important alleged case for corruption that begins from the far USA and arrives in South Sudan (it is the case of the South-Sudanese businessman Benjamin Bol Mel). Finally, we should pay attention to the north region of Mozambique, Capo Delgado: here, ISIS appeared in summer but, ousted, reappears now in the close region of Niassa.

At the end of the year, the world mourns the disappearance of Desmond Tutu, but cannot but see with joy the initiative of Pope Francis to adopt 50 migrants, taking them with him when coming back from Cyprus (beginning of December). – Another political move from Francis by which he indicates the meanings that really matter to the world “leaders” who are poor in vision, but rich in cynicism.

Giovanni Pampanini

*THE THEORY OF GLOBAL DEMOCRACY APPLIED. THE RESEARCH ABOUT THE YEAR 2022*

The Spring 2022 “Lê Thành Khôi” Atelier Seminar

The newspaper *Pravda* on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2021 reported an interview made by Inna Novikova, editor-in-chief of the same newspaper, to the Russian Politics scientist Sergej Mikheyev, where appears the idea of a war between the West, from one side, and a coalition of Russia-India-China, on the other side – rather than that between Russia and the NATO. At that moment, NATO was progressing in the project to enlarge itself to Ukraine, and Russia asked to stop it. The eventual disconnection of Russia from the SWIFT system was an option of *threat* to Russia, while the recognition of Donbass was a move *on behalf* of Russia. In any way, NATO and the USA above all seem not to be inclined to welcome the concerns of Russia. On the other way, Biden assured Putin that NATO was not to fight in order to save Ukraine in case of emergency (an emergency that, in truth, removed that of the COVID, anyway). In fact, USA keeps supporting Zelensky’s government because of its anti-Russia attitude – and that will be a major problem for Russia in the future to Mikheyev. He continued in the interview so highlighting that an important strategic alliance is there among Russia, India and China inside the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, SCO. Such alliance is useful to Russia because, given the embargo against the international trade of Russia weapons, it violates that embargo, and then, it is an immediate anti-USA tool. On the other way round, the eventual disconnection of Russia from the SWIFT system is less important of the international embargo against Russia, because, given the strong planetary financial system in being, such a disconnection would damage not only the rouble, but also the euro and the dollar. Russia, moreover, could interact with other international currencies all around the world very well. Therefore, would Russia not suffer that much therefrom, all that would show that the same SWIFT system is not so needy as it is supposed being. It is not to forget, finally, that Europe and the USA are the biggest buyers of Russia’s public debt, as well as Russia, by the Nord Stream 2 system, is the biggest seller of gas to Europe.

I am here summarising *Pravda*’s interview since it seems to me telling the entire essential that there is to say, at the very first day of 2022 spring, about the most terrific experience of the past winter. Even if, I would add, that experience is not just the only one of great significance around the world. In fact, beyond the analogy between Russia-Ukraine and China-Taiwan, I believe it is a good idea to go around the world with watchful eyes not to forget (that is, to see how struggles are alive about) the two main agendas of the today world: the financial and economic globalization and the fight against terrorism.

As it regards the first agenda, we should remind that on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 the *Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership*, RCEP, has become active. It concerns the biggest area of free trade in the world, with China, Japan, Australia, and South Korea as members of it. By alone, the RCEP sums up a third of the whole world GDP, as it affects the life of a third of the whole population on the Earth. China President Xi, as usual, opened the Davos World Economic Forum in January reminding that, in fact, globalization *is not reversible*. However, in Zimbabwe a Chinese company took a coalmine, despite the protests of the inhabitants who fear to lose their territory, then, their source of life. Nevertheless, on the other side, China is the same country that successfully cooperates to complete the Ethiopia-Djibouti railway and gives free five hundred thousand of anti-Covid vaccines to Egypt and Palestine ... Argentina, on her side, negotiates a new loan from the IMF to

fight against the excessive public debt, under the USA supervision. From its side, the European Union invests on Africa in the initiative *Global Gateway* a sum of 150 billion of euros for infrastructures. An interesting proof of how the puzzle of globalization works, and in the same time how the today mechanism of international competition works as well, is in the chronicle article in *The Guardian* on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022 (by Larry Elliott). The news is that of the talks between Piyush Goyal, Indian ministry of Trade and Industry, and Anne-Marie Trevelyan, British ministry of Foreign Trade. Here is the point: Germany successfully concluded trade agreements to export its products to China, so the UK, abandoned the EU but not still so close to the USA, would like to duplicate the same agreement with India. Unfortunately, India is since ever the worst market for the Western products, even if it is supposed to become the best importer in the world by 2050. On the other hand, Indian workers are cheaper than the British ones; therefore, there is a serious risk that the British farmers involved in the coming agreement will suffer for cut of their labour – exactly as it happened to the USA farmers because of the Chinese concurrence. Letting apart all that, the UK is going to be a member of the *Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership*, CPTPP, a group of states which includes Japan, Chile, Australia, Canada, and Singapore.

The European Union shines for its many discords, in many fields. To remain in that of globalization, France founds in Indonesia the buyer of its RAFALE war airplanes, a counterweight for the failure of the submarines business with Australia because of the USA's and UK's AUKUS imposed to the Pacific buyer. EU splits also in the social and cultural matter. Poland and Hungary, for instance, dissent from Brussels regarding the rights of the LGBT community, risking sanctions and reacting menacing to abandon the EU (February 2022). Not to tell about France that, even after the Crimea facts in 2014, kept selling weapons to Russia ... And finishing with Germany that, despite the veto, because of the Second World War, to hold strong weapons, bought – “because” of the Ukrainian emergency – the mighty F-35 airplanes ... by the USA!

As it regards terrorism, it seems that its focus moved to Africa. Here, in fact, many golpe happen because – so sustain their movers – the current governments are not enough effective against terrorism. That is true for Mali, Sudan, and Burkina Faso – while the golpe against Guinea Bissau's government did not succeed – *exception*. On the other side, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria seems to resurge from its own ashes in the end of January by an attack that caused the death to 120 people, even if on 4<sup>th</sup> February the USA, by killing the leader Abu Ibrahim as-Hashimi al-Quraysh (and other thirteen people), gave it a hard blow.

Latin America: in Mexico, a *sui generis* terrorism perpetuates against the reporters. Between February and March Heber Lopez Vazquez, Juan Carlos Muñiz, and Roberto Toledo fell, in spite of the “0 tolerance” threatened by the President Obrador. In this winter, the struggle of the Mapuche population in Chile emerged, and in January, the leader Jones Huala of the *Resistencia Ancestral Mapuche*, RAM, got out of jail because of a decision taken by the court and despite the protests by the government. Xiomara Castro – Cristina Kirchner and Kamala Harris being present – took the presidency of Honduras. In Nicaragua, Hugo Torres, a general once friend to Ortega, but now his concurrent in the presidential elections, passed away in jail in circumstances still to be checked. In Colombia, FARC and ELN dissidents fight among themselves, leaving 24 people died on the terrain from the beginning of the year to February in the Northeast region of the country, the Arauca. In March, Bolsonaro tries with all his political allied to pass a new law to implement the de-forestation of Amazonia and intensify the exploitation of natural resources.

The analysis investigation should work both on the *evident* surface of the facts and the *non-evident* level of them. For instance, the Kazakhstan pro-democracy protests at the beginning of January 2022 (when the deaths soon arrived at two hundred) are to be seen in relationship with the rich Kazaks' properties in the city of London, as a recent public report in the UK emphasized – a critical connection that explains a part of the discontent. Other critical connections are those linking Saudi Arabia with the West, allowing the patriarchal government of the former to put in jail those who promote democracy and human rights without too much pain, like Princess Basmah, a critical of the Prince Mohammed bin Salman at the power. Against such a sad landscape, it is still gloomier the apartheid situation suffered by the Palestinians in Israel, as denounced, another time more, by *Human Rights Watch* on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022, or the recurrence of the first year of the reborn dictatorship in Myanmar (1<sup>st</sup> February 2021-1<sup>st</sup> February 2022). A reason for hope, on the other hand, comes from the candidates to the next presidential elections in Latin America (Gustavo Petro in Columbia,

Lula in Brazil). Another reason for help comes from the Algerian people that, since three years, protests each Friday on behalf of a true democratic government (*Hirak*, movement), and from the Sri Lankan people's protest because of the economic crisis (March 2022).

I believe that one cannot risk to be accused to be pro-Church if notes that, in a so morally and politically poor world scene, the only voice in defence of workers, migrants, refugees, and children is just that of Pope Francis. Maybe another exception would have been the late European Parliament President David Sassoli, but a bad illness took him away on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022. We were already not that much ...