Original Paper

Is Democracy A Cause of Peace?

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Abstract

The West has been discussing the relationship between democracy and peace for a long time. The "Democratic Peace Theory" was put forward as early as Kant's period, furthermore, this theory flourished again after the Second World War. After the end of the Cold War, Fukuyama and other scholars reinterpreted the "Democratic Peace Theory" and had a profound impact on the foreign policies of today's Europe and the United States. The purpose of this article is to analyze the theoretical logic of the "Democratic Peace Theory" and its application in reality, as a consequence to examine how this theory provides an ideological excuse for the intervention and expansion of the world war situation.

Keywords

Democracy, Peace, War

1. Introduction

The liberal view holds that a democratic political structure is a prerequisite for maintaining peace and stability in international relations. This has been the traditional consensus of Western policymakers. In the book Perpetual Peace, Kant's idea that a constitutional republic can help promote the realization of international peace is recognized as the origin of the contemporary democratic peace concept (Kant, 1795). Dean Babst is the first scholar to study "Democracy-Peace" from an academic perspective. In 1963, through an analysis of 116 wars between 1789 and 1941, he pointed out that "no war has been fought between independent nations with elective governments" (Babst, 1964). Until the middle 1970s that two scholars, Melvin Small and David Singe, responded. However, they found that the nature of the country is not necessarily related to the frequency of involvement in wars, by a quantitative analysis of the war tendency of democratic countries from 1816 to 1865. The lack of war between democratic countries is not statistically significant (Small & Singe, 1976). American scholar Michael Doyle first studied from an academic perspective and formally put forward the "Democratic Peace Theory" in 1983 (Doyle, 1983). Subsequently, the theory aroused widespread concern and fierce debate among

Western scholars, and the focus was on whether democracy or democratic systems can bring peace. After the Cold War, "democratic peace theory" has once again become a hot topic in international politics, it has also become the theoretical cornerstone of foreign policies in some developed countries. This theory mainly discusses the relationship between domestic political systems and international peace. Its basic point of view is: in view of the open decision-making mechanism and similar political and cultural backgrounds, countries that adopt democratic systems never or rarely war; when conflicts of interest exist, they often choose to resolve them peacefully.

This paper believes that the "democratic peace theory" provides an ideological excuse for intervention and expansion that exacerbates the situation of world war, instead of solving the "state of war" that is the key to world peace. The essay is divided into three parts to demonstrate this. The first part introduces and evaluates the basic ideas of democratic peace theory and the background of its rise; the second part verifies the lack of this theory from reality; the third part mainly investigates and analyzes the elements that promote peace in the international structure under anarchy.

2. The Demonstration Genealogy of Democracy and Peace

German classical philosopher Immanuel Kant first connected democracy as a political system with world peace and put forward the famous "permanent peace theory". In the discussion of Kant's works, the "permanent peace theory" is structured in a unique style: it consists of prerequisite clauses, formal clauses and secret clauses (Doyle, 1983). His demonstration of the possibility and feasibility of the theory of perpetual peace is conducted through the relationship between the national civil rights system, the international rights of the mutual relations between countries, and the world civil rights system (Kant, 1795).

Kant is regarded as the earliest proponent of democratic peace. In contemporary academia, Michael Doyle, the scholar who presented the "Democratic Peace Theory" in the form of academic achievements and formally proposed that democratic countries should not fight. In 1983, he first formally proposed the "Democratic Peace Theory" in the article Kant, Liberal Legacies and Foreign Affairs, systematically answering the reasons why democratic countries can coexist peacefully from the perspective of liberalism. He supposed that freedom, democracy and peace are linked by three elements: The first element was that democratic countries have a political culture of peaceful resolution of conflicts. In democracies, diplomatic decisions about war were transparent. Both the public and policymakers were very sensitive to the cost of war, so they would not easily advocate or approve of war against other democracies. The next element was that democratic countries have common moral values and this kind of moral consensus would eventually produce a pacific union. In democracies, peaceful resolution of internal conflicts was considered morally superior to violent behavior. The third element was that peace among democracies was strengthened by economic cooperation and interdependence.

According to statistics from Hermann and Kegley (1995), there are 29 interpretations of "democratic

peace" in foreign academic circles, among which the more influential are structural, normative, economic, and reverse causality. The structural explanation holds that the complex political process of democratic politics imposes institutional constraints on wars and conflicts. Citizens would oppose easy involvement in war because of the many costs of war. At the same time, it is horizontal. Checks and balances and accountability mechanisms have also imposed substantial restrictions on leaders' launching of war. The systematic study of this interpretation is Maoz and Russet (1993). Scholars such as John Macmillan hold a normative interpretation. When facing conflicts, people will habitually expect to solve the problem through negotiation and debate in a regular manner, rather than through violence. For this reason, democratic countries will resolve international affairs through consultation and rational debate in a democratic way (Macmillan, 1997). The economic explanation believes that the contract culture spawned by economic development is helpful to the cultivation of democratic political culture and values, which can effectively avoid wars between the two sides, but this is unique to developed market economies. The representative scholar of this explanation is Mousseau (2009). Scholars such as Patrick James hold a reverse causal explanation. They assumed that while democracy has a negative effect on war, peace also exerts a positive effect on democracy, and even the promotion of democracy by peace is more significant than the effect of democracy on peace (James, 1999).

Generally speaking, although the different interpretation paths within the "democratic peace theory" pedigree are different from each other, the "democratic peace theory" generally agree that the phenomenon of democratic peace is real, but it needs a better explanation. Some scholars held that the existing studies that prove the "democratic peace theory" often use rough substitute variables, and there are insurmountable ambiguities in the standards for defining and measuring some core concepts such as democracy and conflict; the public in democratic countries has a peaceful tendency and Their theoretical assumptions that they can effectively restrain leaders from launching wars often run counter to reality. There are also scholars who have criticized the "democratic peace theory" more thoroughly. They totally rejected the research program of the "democratic peace theory" and put forward a number of alternative theories on the basis of abandoning the theory. Among the more influential are the three explanations: political similarity, "capitalist peace theory" and realism.

3. The "Democracy-peace" Road cannot be Fully Confirmed

In the theory of democracy and peace, the most important thing should be the definition of the concept of "democracy", which is directly related to what kind of country can be included in the analysis category. However, until now, the concept of democracy is still controversial. There has never been a concept that can be recognized by everyone, nor a category that can accommodate all the elements of democracy currently appearing, and various theories and concepts in reality that understand democracy seem to have their own reasons. Although contemporary "democratic peace theory" mostly use Ted Gurr's (1989) analysis of democracy data, when using this theory to determine whether a country is a democratic country, the first step is to determine the specific numerical boundaries. But the democratic

138

peaceists are too casual on this point and there is no uniform standard. This directly affects their determination of whether the war occurred in a democratic country. Regarding the Spanish-American War of 1898, according to Doyle's (1986) definition, Spain did not become a democratic country until 1978, while Lake (1992) held that Spain was already a democratic country in 1898. Judging from the actions of the United States, the definition of a democratic system has no objective standards, but just a gorgeous package of power politics. This makes the inference that peace can be maintained between democratic countries lacking empirical significance and has been questioned. Due to the difficulty in defining the concept of democracy, some scholars have suggested that countries that are in the process of democratization are prone to war, while mature democracies tend to be peaceful. They presumed that many countries in transition usually experience painful transition periods. In the meantime, popular politics and autocratic elite politics often alternate. This can easily lead to the weakening of the central authority, the expansion of conflicts between interest groups, and the political differences and confrontations between the public. As a result, nationalism is out of control, and the country's aggressive and aggressive tendencies are strengthened (Mansfield & Snyder, 1995).

But in fact, among the many researchers of democratic peace theory, "democracy countries" do not have a clear definition. Also the proposition that there should be no war between democratic countries is arbitrary. With the rise of empiricism, in the research of democratic peace theory, the understanding of democracy has obviously shifted. Voting and multi-party rotation in power have become the measurement standards of democratic countries. Russet believed that the conditions for public competition and participation (voting and voting rights), the law enforcement agency elected by the election and the responsibility of the elected legislature, as well as the overwhelming majority respect for minority interests (Maoz & Russet, 1993). However, in Dixon's (1994) research, elections and so on cannot be used as a measure of democracy. The most reasonable measure should be restricted competition. In the study of democratic peace theory, there is no unified definition of what a democratic country is, and even conflicts with each other. But surprisingly, there is still no research to make a systematic response to this problem. Of course, based on the controversial nature of the concept of democracy, this response is also impossible. Thus, even if all the conclusions about democracy promote peace are correct, they are not the same thing.

The same is true for the definition of war. Doyle excluded political interference from the scope of the war by using the example of the United States intervening in the Chilean coup to overthrow the Allende regime in 1973. Even if this intervention led to a coup in Chile, the democratic country fell into 15 years of authoritarian rule. He deemed that all kinds of interventions and indirect military invasions should not be counted as wars in the true sense, moreover such interventions were not regarded as publicly pursued policies in the United States, so this was not an example of wars between democratic countries (Doyle, 1983). Russett (1994) defined the war as the scale of the death toll of more than 1,000 people. Thence, the cold war between Britain and Iceland in 1975 due to the dispute over fishing rights, and the war between Britain and Argentina for the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands in 1982, were

139

excluded because of the insufficient scale of the war. Even though both sides of the war were democratic countries at the time. At the same time, the damage caused by the war and its scale reflect not only the deaths, but also the injuries and property losses. It is obviously biased to measure only the death toll. Taking a step back, even if the standard of 1,000 people is reasonable, how to accurately count is still a big problem. Because on this issue, the numbers of the two countries in the war are very different. Likewise the death of civilians caused directly or indirectly is even more difficult to confirm. Some scholars have narrowed the scope of democratic countries, thinking that only democratic countries with highly developed economies will not start wars with each other (Mousseau, 2009).

Even if it is admitted that there are indeed few wars between democratic countries, it is doubtful whether this phenomenon can be used as evidence for the "democratic peace theory". Those who support this theory also admit that until the World War II, there were very few democracies in the world (Mearsheimer, 1990). Moreover, due to differences in power and geographic relations, the possibility of war in democratic countries is extremely slim. For example, although the United States and Iceland are both democracies, the possibility of war between them is almost zero. Hence, it is obviously not convincing to consider them as two sides of a possible war between democracies. And according to the theory of randomness, within a certain period of time, the possibility of war between a relatively small number of democratic countries is even rarer (Spiro, 1994).

Logically, there are many omissions in the reasoning of the "democratic peace theory", which makes its persuasive power even more limited. For example, with regard to "institutional constraints," as many critics have pointed out, if universal suffrage, checks and balances, and public opinion can prevent wars between democratic countries, then it can also prevent wars between democratic countries and any country, because regardless of war The price of the opponent is the same (Layne, 1994). But public opinion does not always stand on the opposite side of the war. In 1898, it was the belligerent public opinion of the United States that prompted the government to carry out the Western United States. The war. The U.S. air raid on Libya in 1981, the public knew nothing in advance, let alone the impact. In fact, in Kant's theory of permanent peace, it is hoped that when a country enters the anarchy of the international society, it can give up its natural rights and freedom (war). Also obtain social freedom through alliances and the country's International rights. However, democratic peaceists, including Kant, also advocated that there should be no international authority beyond the supremacy of the state. Because it will hinder the freedom of citizens within the country. Therefrom, the theory of democracy and peace encounters logical difficulties here. Because there is no authority and legal conditions for the operation of democracy in the world, the danger of war will exist in both democratic and non-democratic countries once they encounter differences in fundamental interests.

In addition, after the Cold War, a realistic background for the rise of democratic peace theory is that people have discovered that after World War II, especially during the Cold War, there are few wars between democratic countries. In fact, this is just a false peace caused by the Cold War. Studies have proved that even among the democracies during World War II, there were many wars, as well as even

140

the major democracies entered into wars many times (Layne, 1994). Also there was even the risk of local conflicts (Burstein, 1992). Even if the world as a whole remains peaceful after World War II, this state is strongly influenced by other factors, such as the equilibrium game state of major countries caused by the nuclear balance. The reason is that in this Cold War characterized by ideological confrontation, most of the countries in the world were divided into the two camps of the United States or the Soviet Union either voluntarily or involuntarily due to security and geopolitical reasons.

It must be said that the "democratic peace theory" has played a role in fueling "interference in war" to a certain extent. According to the logic that democratic countries do not fight each other, only by transforming non-"democratic" countries into "democratic" countries can world peace be ensured. For this reason, liberal democracies often use the name of "exporting democracy," and it is often considered legitimate to wage wars against "non-democratic" countries. For example, the United States has repeatedly used force to interfere with other countries and regions in an attempt to establish a "democracy" (such as Chile as mentioned above). Although most ended in failure, the turmoil and war disasters it caused clearly put the proposition of "democratic peace" in an awkward position. Whether a country implements a democratic system is determined by the country's national conditions and history, as well as the result of its citizens' choices. In any case, it cannot be achieved through "interference in war."

Through the above argumentation, it is not difficult to see that there are too many places to justify the "democratic peace theory". Although the theory of democratic peace is known as the most empirically verifiable theory, the empirical study of the theory of democratic peace has fundamental problems in the definition of basic concepts and the test of causality.

4. Elements that Promote Peace under Anarchy

According to the logic provided by Kenneth Waltz, the representative scholar of the theory of international political realism, since there is no world government beyond the country in the international system, the country is actually in anarchy. Anarchy will inevitably lead to the following consequences. In the absence of an authority that can determine disputes and implement solutions, each country will inevitably make every effort to protect and realize its own interests. Consequently, in the international community, conflicts are inevitable. In anarchy, conflicts sometimes lead to wars between nations (Waltz, 1979). As the realists said, anarchy cannot disappear. Anarchy means that even a free country has to consider that its free friends may one day turn against itself, and it also means that today's friends may be the enemies of tomorrow, regardless of whether they are democratic countries (Jackson, 2019). In other words, in the so-called anarchic self-help international society, if "democracy" and "non-democracy", "friends" and "enemies" can be switched at will like a revolving door, then there is no guarantee that democratic countries will not fight each other. In essence, the reason why wars between nations can occur is that the international society is a collection of self-interested nation-states, and its basic characteristic is the so-called "anarchy". It lacks the recognized authority, laws and central

141

government within the country, and it lacks the powerful means needed to promote this authority. Therefore, no matter how powerful certain countries are, they cannot fundamentally change this non-uniform world order. Accordingly, anarchy and the resulting "security dilemma" make it possible for any country to have "self-help" behavior due to security needs, and peace is only relative and temporary.

In "anarchic" international relations, according to the standards of international politics, peace as a simple state of no war may be the result of such conditions or efforts, such as:

1. Peace may be the result of intergovernmental cooperation and related institutional innovation. In particular, the establishment of a supranational system and the agreement between governments on the establishment of such a system have avoided frictions between countries that may have conflicted. On August 8, 2008, Georgia and Russia fought for control of South Ossetia. The European Union has adopted more complex intervention methods for different levels of the conflict and established several different mechanisms to mediate in Georgia. It can be said that under the restriction of the principles of non-recognition and non-intervention, it is necessary to form a general basic political strategy to ensure the common position of the EU (Grono, 2010). NATO has also played the same role as the European Union. Many multinational organizations and regional institutions are created in resolving differences between countries that may lead to conflicts.

2. Peace may be the result of advanced information and social communication. Due to the progress of science and technology and the diversified development of communication methods, information globalization has fully entered people's lives. The same newspapers, the same international events are read and cared by people from all over the world. And the cultural and social values that people pursue are gradually converging. These have brought an inevitable result. It is easier for people to pay attention to others and associate the interests of the people of other countries with themselves. And it is easier to integrate the common appeals and requirements of different countries and regions. For example, the anti-nuclear movement and the feminist movement. These movements originated in developed countries in Europe and the United States, but with the development of information globalization, they have gradually penetrated into the world. These movements have formed a powerful force for global peace.

3. Peace may be the result of external threats.

4. Peace may be the result of a high level of economic activity within a region or region and the interdependence of countries. The member states have already obtained or expect to obtain mutually beneficial economic benefits, so they are unwilling to launch a war and leave themselves in a situation of isolation and helplessness. In modern times, the emergence of various economic alliances such as APEC and the Benelux Economic Union have greatly promoted the development of the world economy and the cause of peace. In a sense, regional economic integration reflects the trend that international economy and politics are developing towards equality and democracy, and is conducive to promoting the establishment of a fair and reasonable new international order.

5. Peace may be the result of stopping the arms race and disarmament of all parties. Due to changes in the international situation and strategic adjustments between the two parties involved in an armed conflict, they voluntarily or forcibly cut their arms, making the war end in the bud. At the same time, disarmament means that a country seeks peace and hopes to strengthen its economic construction. These can promote world peace.

6. Peace may be the result of diplomatic efforts. The Sino-US ambassador-level talks to discuss easing tensions in the Far East, especially the tensions in the Taiwan region, are a typical example.

7. Peace may be the result of strong deterrence.

8. Peace may be the result of a balance of power. Such as the Warsaw Pact and NATO during the Cold War.

9. Peace may be just a pause between two wars. Such as the period between the two world wars.

10. Peace may be the result of hegemony. For example, peace in Eastern Europe and Central Asia during the Soviet "Limited sovereignty theory" period.

11. Peace may be the result of a combination or alternation of any two or more of the above factors.

And many more.

In the examples given above, democracy is basically not a sufficient condition, and in some cases it is not even a necessary condition. However, in most cases, this kind of idealistic peace is not effective. The "democratic peace theory" as an example of the non-war situation in developed democracies may be partly due to the "advanced and non-war nature of internal systems", but it is mainly due to actual interests, especially economic interests. The motive and potential for war were suppressed. Otherwise, people cannot explain "democracies", such as the acts of war in the United States. In fact, when actual interests are seriously threatened, even when the status of the hegemon is challenged, democratic countries will not hesitate to use force and launch wars. On the one hand, the academic circles have complicated and complicated definitions of democracy and war; on the other hand, direct historical experience tells us that there are wars between democratic countries (Layne, 1994). Looking back at history, the history of the rise of modern so-called democracies is largely a history of war with war and violent plunder. Barrington Moore's research directly pointed out that the emergence and development of Western democratic politics was based on violent plunder and colonial wars (Moore, 1968).

5. Conclusion

Among the relevant arguments of the "Democratic Peace Theory", the argument that most influences our views may be the so-called "peace facts" between democratic countries. We will find that the empirical examples of "democratic peace theory" will eventually fall into a quagmire, and the quagmire will be endlessly entangled. In this endless quagmire, there is also an accidental technique. Supporters of the "democratic peace theory" have cited a large number of so-called "peace facts" in so-called democracies. However, many facts were created by the proposer with the greatest possible counterexample, and they are speculative in nature.

International politics has its own set of laws with continuity characteristics: the struggle for power among nations is rooted in human nature. Within the country's territorial borders, power struggles can be weakened in many ways. For example, constitutional arrangements can legally limit the power of individuals, especially national policymakers. Various kinship and social ties can also weaken the power struggle between people. However, in the international community, all these factors are much weaker. Therefore, the state's desire for power cannot be contained. Not only that, the large number of countries and the consensus on sovereignty have strengthened the country's tendency towards free movement and anarchy. The inevitable consequence of the above reasons is that the state must regard the struggle for power based on human nature as a normal state. Foreign policy must embody and adapt to this normality, so continuity in foreign policy is no longer a choice, but a necessity. Because this continuity stems from such factors that no government can control it but it will suffer if it ignores it. The issues of war and peace are determined by these permanent factors, not by the government's organizational form and domestic policies. Countries will love peace under certain conditions (if peace is conducive to the expansion of power), and under other conditions they will like war (if war is conducive to the expansion of power).

This article believes that the democratic peace theory itself has serious problems and defects in its research methods and theoretical system, and it is difficult to withstand the test both logically and empirically. Whether in the 20th century or the post-Cold War era, democracy is not a necessary condition for peace. Instead, there are countless examples of wars launched in the name of "democracy." In a sense, the promotion of peace by democracy reflects that countries whose foreign policy is affected by this theory have the interests of leading the world order.

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144

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