Global Justice and Perpetual Peace

- The Case for a World Government? -

A Critique of Torbjörn Tännsjö’s ‘Global Democracy – The Case for a World Government’

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"Act as if the future of the Universe depends on what you do, while laughing at yourself for thinking that your actions could make any difference."

- A Buddhist saying
Abstract

The problems of the world today are global and thus we must act on a global level to solve them. We need to establish a perpetual and global peace and we also need to create global justice. How is this to be done? In 2008 the philosopher Torbjörn Tännsjö tried to provide an answer on these questions in the book *Global Democracy – The Case for a World Government*. In his book Tännsjö argues for an institutional cosmopolitan approach, trying to convince us that a world government would guarantee both a global and perpetual peace, as well as global justice. In this thesis I will present Tännsjö´s main argument and then share my thoughts and give my critique on them.

Keywords: Global Democracy, Torbjörn Tännsjö, World Government, Institutional Cosmopolitanism

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

“There is no denying that many problems facing humanity are global in nature. If we are to solve them at all, we need to solve them on a global level. This is probably true of problems with war and peace. This is true also of problems to do with global justice. [...] These problems cannot be solved within nation-states, they need to be solved on a global level. How could this be achieved?”

The question above is both important and interesting. It is also hard to grasp and fairly easy to question the question itself, “is there one solution to global and perpetual peace and global justice?” The first time I came across an argument, in support of the idea that there is a solution to the problems which face humanity was when I attended a lecture with Torbjörn Tännsjö and he presented the idea of a world government. The basic line in the argument is that a world government will secure peace and justice, and this is the only solution able to solve these huge problems. I wasn’t convinced and therefore I choose to write this thesis, in which I will look into the core arguments of this idea and scrutinize the claims Tännsjö makes.

1.2 Problem

In this thesis, I will focus on Torbjörn Tännsjö’s version of institutional cosmopolitanism and the theory’s solution of creating perpetual peace and global justice. According to institutional cosmopolitanism, the establishment of a world government is the solution to global and perpetual peace and global justice. The problem with this argument is obviously: is it possible to create global justice and global peace? And, if that is possible, is the democratic system truly the final solution to the problem?

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1.3 Aim

The aim with this thesis is to scrutinize Torbjörn Tännsjö´s arguments supporting institutional cosmopolitanism. The question I’m going to work from is therefore;

*Is the establishment of a world government and global democracy a guarantee for global justice and perpetual peace?*

1.4 Method, Material and Disposition

This thesis will be a critique on Tännsjö´s work ‘Global Justice – The Case for a World Government’ in which I will scrutinize Torbjörn Tännsjö´s arguments: that a world government as well as institutional cosmopolitanism, will guarantee global justice and perpetual peace. Since cosmopolitanism is a normative theory, my critique will also be of normative nature.

The main material for this thesis is the book *Global Democracy – The Case for a World Government* by Torbjörn Tännsjö (2008). Since Tännsjö has a long background in this field of study I will also use his other works; *Moral Realism, Populist Democracy: A Defence, Hedonistic Utilitarianism, Politik & Filosofi and Läget- Om krig, moral och världens framtid*. In addition to this I will use the book *World Poverty and Human Rights* by Thomas W. Pogge and the article *Global Citizenship as the Completion of Cosmopolitanism* by Luis Cabrera (2008) for the chapter on cosmopolitanism. Further I will use different sources in the background chapter about democracy.

The disposition in this thesis will be as follows: in Chapter 2 I will briefly summarize the history of political philosophy and the problems with democracy, cosmopolitanism and global justice to give a deeper background on the problem. In Chapter 3 I will present Tännsjö´s position. Chapter 4 will be a presentation of Tännsjö´s argument for a world government. In Chapter 5 I will criticize Tännsjö´s argument both trough political theories and also trough my own thoughts.
2. Democracy, Cosmopolitanism and Global Justice

2.1 Democracy Through Time

The history of political philosophy is long and filled with different approaches to democracy, individual freedom, senses of right and wrong, punishment systems and so on. One of the first philosophers to formulate an idea about democracy was Plato (427-347bc). In *the Republic* Plato presents the idea of a society led by a philosopher-king, who would rule the society based on his knowledge. Plato doesn’t believe in the ‘democratic’ society that Athens turned into; he believes in an aristocratic rule with enlightened people in the key position.

“Unless either philosophers rule in our cities or those whom we now call rulers and potentates engage genuinely and adequately in philosophy, and political power and philosophy coincide, there is no end, my dear Glaucon, to troubles for our cities, nor I think for the human race.”

Plato’s pupil, Aristotle (384-322bc), continued Plato’s argument with a deep skepticism against democracy. This skeptic approach towards democracy that Plato and Aristotle founded has remained almost unchallenged in philosophical literature for hundreds of years. Even notable thinkers like the 16\textsuperscript{th} century Niccolò Machiavelli, who supported a totalitarian sovereign in *The Prince* and the 17\textsuperscript{th} century philosopher Thomas Hobbes, who also supported a totalitarian sovereign in *Leviathan*, kept the tradition of skepticism towards democracy alive.

In the 18\textsuperscript{th} century a quasi-democratic wave of philosophical literature began to overflow Europe. Among the most notable contributors is Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) with *The Social Contract* and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) with the framework *Perpetual Peace*. These two philosophers started a discussion that has yet to conclude. The discussion regards

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democracy: Who is demos?\footnote{Demos is the Greek word for ‘People’.} Who should be included or excluded? What form of government is superior?

Kant is convinced that a liberal republic with a democratic system is essential for the survival of the state and also for the creation of a perpetual peace. The republic will be ruled by a rational leader, who has been ‘chosen’ by the people. Kant also argues that justice will reign when a perpetual peace is established.\footnote{Kant, Immanuel. 	extit{Perpetual Peace – A Philosophical Essay}. 1992, Thoemmes press, Bristol, UK. p. 125 (Introduction, Not Kant’s own words)}

Despite the fact, that a democratic republic is favorable, Kant asserts: “democracy, in the proper sense of the word, is of necessity despotism, because it establishes an executive power.”\footnote{Kant, Immanuel. 	extit{Perpetual Peace – A Philosophical Essay}. 1992, Thoemmes press, Bristol, UK. p. 55 (Introduction, Not Kant’s own words)} And, “… therefore say that the smaller the staff of the executive […] their representation of the people, so much more is the government of the state in accordance with a possible republicanism; and it may hope by gradual reforms to raise itself to that standard.”\footnote{Ibid. 127} Kant shares a critical thought about democracy with Plato and Aristotle, which is that in a democracy, everyone desires the role of master and since that is impossible, democracy is not, in the end, a functional system. Kant’s position is therefore hard to summarize: in a modern analysis, he would seem too skeptical about democracy to be acknowledged, but the other part of the argument, which stakes that peace would arise if all states converted to a republic system and that this will lead to justice (maybe even global justice) is still alive today, for example in 	extit{democratic peace theory}.

In his 	extit{Social Contract}, Rousseau defends a state ruled by the 	extit{general will}. General will is the idea that the citizens in a society are trained to ‘will nothing contrary to the will of society’.\footnote{Wolff, Jonathan. 	extit{Introduction to Political Philosophy}. Oxford University Press, 2006. Oxford, NY, U.S. p. 78} In this society, laws are created and the only aim for this group, or society, is to create a common good for the whole society, and not for the individual himself.\footnote{Nicholson, Peter. 	extit{General will. Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy}. URL: http://www.rep.routledge.com/article/S0275ECT1. Retrieved 20081215} In this society a democratic government, in modern terms, is more or less unnecessary (Rousseau is not
convinced it’s good) since the citizens create their own laws and therefore don’t have a problem living according to them.

The real theoretical-democratic revolution began in the 19th century. One of the most distinguished philosophers arguing for democracy was John Stuart Mill, who in the middle of the 18th century heated up the discussions about democracy with his book Representative Government and the essay On Liberty.

From this point and forward, democracy has been a central character in every attempt to create a theory of global justice, or justice in general. Early in the 20th century theories about international relations started to evolve, which are also connected with the issue of global justice. Notable theorists and philosophers that should be mentioned are E.H. Carr, Jürgen Habermas, Michael Walzer and John Rawls. With a base in this contemporary tradition, theorists like Peter Singer, Thomas W. Pogge and Charles Beitz started their theories, which led to what we today label as cosmopolitanism.

2.2 Modern Cosmopolitanism

Cosmopolitanism is a diverse term which should be understood as a perspective that seeks to explain our global political system instead of specific states in a world society. One problem with this diversity is that when one uses the term ‘cosmopolitanism’, it is easily misunderstood. To sort out the different perspectives of cosmopolitanism I will present the two major perspectives in cosmopolitanism: moral cosmopolitanism and institutional cosmopolitanism.

The basic assumption in moral cosmopolitanism is that all human beings have a moral responsibility and that every human being is a unit of moral concern. Thomas Pogge, defines moral cosmopolitanism as “An interactional conception […] which postulates certain fundamental principles of ethics.”10 These principles of ethics are, according to Pogge, the U.N.´s Universal Declaration of Human Rights.11 Moral cosmopolitanism can therefore seem

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vague, since the only moral concern the position is aiming for is the thin morality that human rights can offer. But there is a more substantial part of moral cosmopolitanism as well.

One of the more substantial examples is Pogge’s global tax that will arrange economical distribution in the world. Pogge calls this tax ‘Global Resource Tax’ (GRT) and stakes that “the basic idea is that, while each people owns and fully controls all resources within its national territory, it must pay a tax on any resources it chooses to extract.”\(^{12}\) Pogge then asserts that: “It must be noted, however, that the funds raised through the GRT scheme do not disappear: They are spent by, and for the benefit of, the global poor and thereby generate effective market demand that spurs economic activity.”\(^{13}\) This part of Pogge’s argument also falls under ‘the prioritarian view’, which stresses that the poorest must be the priority to get money through distribution.

On the opposite side of the theory, we have institutional cosmopolitanism. Institutional cosmopolitanism focuses on creating global citizenship and global justice through the creation of a world-state.\(^{14}\) This world-state is supposed to function as a nation-state is meant to function in our present world. There should be a global democratic system which is based on the principles of representative government\(^{15}\) and a form of federal legislation. The idea of a global government is centered around the thought that a global citizenship based on moral rules (moral cosmopolitanism) never have to respond to any authority when these moral rules are broken and therefore it is better to create a world-state that can control this.\(^{16}\) Since this approach is not very developed, until now with the recent work from Tännsjö, I will hereby end the introduction and continue with this approach when presenting Tännsjö´s argument.

\(^{13}\) Ibid. 203
3. Torbjörn Tännsjö

3.1 Tännsjö’s Position

In this section I will present Tännsjö’s general philosophical position in order to give a better background for his arguments for a world government.

Tännsjö’s meta-ethical position is moral realism.\(^{17}\) When defending moral realism, Tännsjö has three main claims;

(1) There are hard moral facts, that is, there are moral facts obtaining independently of human cognitive capacities and conceptual claims.
(2) These moral facts concern concretely existing things (events).
(3) We can observe that they obtain.\(^{18}\)

Tännsjö argues that “if we accept moral realism, we have good reasons to be concerned about moral arguments and we are able to account for moral fallibility […] We may even come to think, when accepting moral irrealism rather than moral realism, that our lives lose much of their meaning.”\(^{19}\)

Tännsjö’s ethical position is the one of hedonistic utilitarianism. Tännsjö defends classic hedonistic utilitarianism, with features from Jeremy Bentham,\(^{20}\) and defines utilitarianism as “A particular (concrete) action is right if, and only if, in the situation, there was nothing the agent could have done instead such that, had the agent done it, the world, on the whole, would have been better.”\(^{21}\) This approach is the guideline for all of Tännsjö’s arguments, whether it is regarding democracy, vegetarianism or bioethics.

Tännsjö’s political position is widely known, and he is open with the fact that he is a member of the Swedish left-wing party and therefore a socialist. Tännsjö also wrote the ‘party


\(^{18}\) Ibid. 111

\(^{19}\) Ibid. 127


program’ for the Swedish left wing party in 1987.\(^{22}\) A big part of Tännö’s political philosophy has always been to defend a populist democratic system of the world. The populist democracy is, according to Tännö, “… both comprehensible and viable.”\(^{23}\) A more detailed presentation about populist democracy will appear in chapter 3.3.

### 3.2 Tännö’s Cosmopolitanism

Tännö is an *institutional cosmopolitan*. Tännös definition of cosmopolitanism is that it is “an ideal of an all-encompassing polity, that is, an ideal of global citizenship.”\(^{24}\) This ideal polity, as I interpret it, is the world-state. Tännö argues that,

“At least since the seventeenth century there have been some voices advocating ‘cosmopolitanism’ in a strong sense implying a world government serving a sovereign world parliament. And during the twentieth century many thinkers have added that the world government should be democratic.”\(^{25}\)

In this argument for a democratic world-state, Tännö argues that if we don’t have a world-state, but merely a moral ‘global citizenship’, we also include other forms of governments in this citizenship, for example dictatorships, plutocracies, military-juntas etc. Tännö argues that “if a rationale behind cosmopolitanism exists, it should acknowledge some kind of individualism, equality and universality.”\(^{26}\) Other forms of government, like the examples above, do not comprise those values and therefore we are to prefer democracy.

3.3 Tännsjö’s Democracy

Tännsjö argues that the world-state should be based on *populist democracy*. Tännsjö defines populist democracy as a democratic form that always sides with the unique majority side in a vote issue.\(^{27}\) This means that if we have issue A that demos should vote for and we have option X and Y to choose from, we can democratically find a right decision if one of the options obtains a unique majority. If there is a tie (50/50) among the people, the chairman could decide which option wins, since there is no democratic obstacle in that form of decision.\(^{28}\)

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\(^{28}\) Ibid. 70
4. The Case for a World Government

In this section I will present Tännsjö’s idea of how the world government should be designed, the argument of why we should have a world government as well as how we should act to establish a world government.

4.1 The Design of the World Government

The design of this world parliament, which is the political base for the world government, i.e. the structure of how politicians should represent the voters, should be based on the democratic system of *populist democracy*. This structure is to prefer to a parliament of this size and magnitude. Tännsjö argues that:

“a world parliament, elected in a representative manner, ensuring that the laws that are adopted by it are, in a manner of speaking, the laws that would have been enacted had it been possible for the global population to meet under the oaks, to discuss various different proposals carefully and, finally, to reach their decision through the application of majority rule.”\(^{29}\)

This parliament should be an extension of the United Nations (UN) and based upon its structure. The design of this representative parliament should be divided in two. Tännsjö propose the Great Britain system with House of Lords and House of Commons. Every nation should have a representation from the number of people living in the state.\(^{30}\) Tännsjö argues that; “I believe that it is crucial that a directly elected world parliament be established, and I think it is crucial that this global parliament is sovereign when it comes to adopting laws.”\(^{31}\)

One argument against the idea above is that populous areas, like China and India, would have a large advantage in that type of parliament. Many people from “the West” see this as a major problem with a global parliament. On this issue, Tännsjö argues that we cannot compromise the idea of *populist democracy* since it is the system necessary for creating a world

\(^{30}\) Ibid. 96
\(^{31}\) Ibid. 74
To solve the problem with populous areas and ‘unfair voting’, Tännsjö introduces the idea of global political parties. These parties do not, however, need to be all-encompassing, but must focus on problems such as global justice, global peace and the environment. These parties do not have a national agenda, even though they are founded inside the borders of existing national-states, and are therefore an alternative for every cosmopolitan living in the world. This will also, according to Tännsjö, solve the problem with very small nation-states that could be outnumbered in such a parliament, since these states can vote for global political parties they feel represent them.

Tännsjö also stresses, which I’m going to emphasize more later in this thesis, that the monopoly of violence is the answer to how to solve the issue of global peace. The main argument that Tännsjö presents is that if we militarize the U.N. and create this world government, we would no longer fear war, since the democratic world-state would monopolize violence. Tännsjö argues that, the one (state, organization etc) in control of the military is in control of the world, and since “one of the most urgent tasks for the world government to deal with […] is to see to it that international law and order is established” we therefore need to militarize the U.N.

4.2 Arguments for the World Government

Tännsjö stresses three important issues on why we should create a world government: To create global and perpetual peace, to achieve global justice and to provide a global solution to the environmental issue. Since the environmental issue is not directly, but indirectly, connected to global peace and justice I will focus on Tännsjö’s arguments that purely deal with perpetual peace and global justice.

Tännsjö also provides a sketch on how we should act to create this world-state, which I also will present. The argument of how the world government should be actualized is important since Tännsjö’s intension is to prove that a world government is not only desirable, but also feasible.

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33 Ibid. 83
34 Ibid. 99
4.2.1 Global and Perpetual Peace

Tännösjö is very clear in his argumentation on perpetual peace. His first claim for the argument is: “Unless a world government is established, there will be war in the world. If a world government is established, peace will be guaranteed. Surely, therefore, as we don’t want war, so we ought to opt for a world government.”\(^{35}\)

Tännösjö’s first argument for the idea above, that a world government will guarantee peace, is that peace is established in nation-states when a sovereign regime is in power with the monopoly of violence, i.e. the military and a punishment system.\(^{36}\) If the world government would be created as a nation-state, the world would see a future of perpetual peace since the world government would have the monopoly on violence.

Tännösjö is aware of the problem with the claim above. The first problem is that it doesn’t hold true that peace is always obtained in a nation-state.\(^{37}\) Tännösjö’s explanation of this problem is that the creation of the world-state wouldn’t give it the same features as nation-states have. For instance, (1) A lot of the existing nation-states are created by force, and (2) many of the current nation-states are based upon a colonial system. Tännösjö also argues that this isn’t going to pose a problem since (1) the world government would be based on a voluntary affiliation\(^{38}\) and therefore the ‘created by force’ problem is not applicable. Tännösjö also argues that (2) when creating the world government, none of the colonial structure would be used.\(^{39}\) Therefore, since these two arguments, (1) and (2), aren’t relevant to the world government, we don’t need to take them into consideration while discussing the creation of the world government.

Another problem with the argument above, that a world (democratic) state would guarantee peace, that Tännösjö is aware of, is that terrorism and civil wars even occurs in the most stable democratic states.\(^{40}\) Tännösjö argues that civil wars and terrorism shouldn’t pose a problem

\(^{36}\) Ibid. 10
\(^{37}\) Ibid. 10
\(^{38}\) Ibid. 11
\(^{39}\) Ibid. 18
\(^{40}\) See for example the problem with Basque Provinces in Spain, terror-bombings in London and the terror-attack in the U.S
since; “… such problems can be handled in most nation-states by respective governments; in a similar vain, they will be handled, on a global level, by the world government.”

Tännsjö’s second claim is that there is a lack of security in peace agreements between nation-states. The argument, which derives from Kant and Bentham, is this: If we would create a league of nations that would respect the sovereignty of each nation-state, then we could achieve perpetual peace. Tännsjö doesn’t believe in this argument since this is what the UN is today, obviously doesn’t work to create peace. Tännsjö also rejects the “democratic peace theory”, which is a modern version of Kant’s idea that republics don’t wage war against each other. Tännsjö states that:

“Two important claims have been made in the discussion; first, that democracies do not engage one another in wars; and secondly, that democracies do not initiate wars with non-democracies, instead resorting to armed combat only as a defensive measure.”

Tännsjö argues that the statement above is wrong, which is reinforced by history, therefore we cannot have faith in this theory. And if we can’t have faith in a theory that supposes all nation states to be democratic, how can we then have faith in the world order? Tännsjö concludes that we need to resort to a world government if we want to spread democracy and peace globally since a system of democratic nation-states is not a guarantee for peace. And since Tännsjö equals democracy and peace, he also states that: “It is also reasonable to assume […] that [the world government’s] introduction will mean that democracy will spread across the world.”

A conclusion of Tännsjö’s arguments, that a global government would benefit global peace, could be: “If a world government is established, then the world government will have the monopoly on the use of violence. This means that peace is secured as long as the government

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42 Ibid. 18
43 Ibid. 27
44 Ibid. 19
45 Ibid. 20-26. (See for example WWI, United Kingdom and Finland in 1941 and also when Britain and France went to war against Egypt in 1956)
46 Ibid. 29
persists.” What Tännsjö says in this sentence is that as long the state (which is democratic and based on utilitarianism and socialism) has a monopoly on violence, peace is secured.

4.2.2 Global Justice

When arguing about global justice Tännsjö tends to focus on the economical injustices that we face in the world today. How are we to solve this issue? Tännsjö focuses on a form of distributive utilitarianism with socialism as a political system.

The first argument is that utilitarianism is a solution to global justice. In the presentation of utilitarianism as the solution to the global justice, he first defends the idea that utilitarianism can be seen as a distributive theory, even though a utilitarian, in a normal case, wouldn’t be concerned with an individual’s status of well-being, as long as the total happiness is maximized, or in Tännsjö’s words: “… the utilitarian does want a distribution resulting in the largest possible sum of well-being.” Tännsjö is also aware that distribution can be a problem, according to a utilitarian, since distributive justice can make some part of the population less happy when they have to ‘give away’ some of their wealth and therefore lose some happiness. There is also a risk that, “redistribution over the lifecycle of each individual on the globe…” occurs, which is not feasible nor a sustainable solution. However, Tännsjö concludes, there is no manner in which a utilitarian could argue that fighting poverty would not to gain the world happiness, since there are so many currently living in poverty.

In the argument above, Tännsjö doesn’t deliver a very clear picture of how this distribution should be executed. Instead he starts to criticize egalitarianism, or more specific ‘prioritarianism’, which according to Tännsjö, proves that utilitarianism is the most favorable moral theory.

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48 Ibid. 31
49 Ibid. 46
50 Ibid. 32
51 Ibid. 50
52 Ibid. 31 -32
53 Ibid. 31
The ‘priority view’ which is defended by John Rawls and Thomas Pogge is a theory defending that we should focus on the individuals that are worst off in the world. One of Rawls claims that Tännsjö criticizes is: “People have a duty to assist other peoples living under unfavorable conditions that prevent their having a just or decent political and social regime.” Tännsjö argues against this claim, since there is a restriction in the use of ‘duty’, since justice should be not only for the worst off, but for every individual. One of Pogge’s major arguments that Tännsjö criticizes is the ‘Global Resource Tax’ (GRT). Tännsjö’s main argument against the GRT is that “the schema focus too much on redistribution of resources […] and too little on power relations.” What Tännsjö means is that even though a GRT would be introduced, there wouldn’t be a way to force people to pay this tax since there is no monopoly on violence in the world, and therefore no pressure on the states that would refuse to pay this tax.

Tännsjö’s second argument, argues for the creation of global justice, stating that all nation-states should resort to a socialistic system before resorting to a world government.

“We could resort to a world government. But before we do, let us consider one more possibility. Would not the problem with global injustice be solved if all nation-states were not only democratic but also transformed into socialism? A utilitarian would, no more than an egalitarian, have any principled objections to socialism.”

When Tännsjö argues for a socialistic world order, he’s not referring to a Soviet-socialistic world order, but a form of ‘economic democracy’ based on the philosopher David Schweickart’s ideas. According to this theory, the means of production should be socialized, workers should be allowed to have cooperatives and all parties should produce goods for a free market, as it is in capitalism. Banks should be public and provide the means of investment to the workers. If the current nation-states resorted to this kind of socialism, Tännsjö argues, the steps to a world democracy with equal rights would be easy to establish. Despite the optimism towards socialism, Tännsjö is aware of the problem that a socialistic

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55 See page 10 for a more detailed explanation.
57 Ibid. 46
58 Ibid. 46-47
welfare system requires a strong solidarity among the people, which, according to both Tännsjö and a lot of his critics “… cannot easily flourish on a global level…”

The third argument that Tännsjö presents for global justice is that the world government will secure and guarantee global justice, since the world government will have the monopoly on violence. Based on a critique to individual cosmopolitanism, this argument asserts that even though we could create world taxes or mandatory redistribution programs, there wouldn’t be a higher institution that could punish those who don’t follow the rules. Here, Tännsjö argues for the monopoly of violence and its benefits. Tännsjö also argues that; “The main idea […] is to use the world government to create better conditions for local struggle for global justice.”

This ‘local struggle’ could be, for example, also collaborated with socialistic features in that “the world government should protect the right of trade unions, provide legislation about minimum wages […] and so forth.”

To conclude Tännsjö’s arguments on global justice: A world government would create and secure global justice if we resorted to a socialistic world order with utilitarian features. The security that the world government would create should be of economic nature. Despite the argument above, Tännsjö is on the contrary to the issue of perpetual peace. He finds himself not completely convinced by these arguments and therefore adds; “I admit that what has been said here is not a complete blueprint, but merely a sketch. There may exist other policies that a world government could adopt that would be superior to those I have adumbrated.”

4.3 An Argument on How to Create a World Government

Tännsjö also presents a sketch on how we need to act in order to establish a world government. I will now present Tännsjö’s argument for this sketch.

Tännsjö’s argues that we should support the United States of America as world hegemony if we want to establish a world government. The U.S. has been, since the collapse of the Soviet

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60 Ibid. 45  
61 Ibid. 50  
62 Ibid. 51  
63 Ibid. 52
Union, the only superpower in the world and therefore created a hegemonic world system. Tännö argues that this is good and that “we should not complain about this fact but, rather, take advantage of it.” What Tännö is referring to is that we through the United Nations can more easily influence one superpower than two or more competing superpowers. Tännö also argues that it is a rational to support the U.S. military expenses, since if the U.S. would go into an arms race with India and China, the U.S. would spend even more on arms and therefore lose more and more in the economical race and, in the long run, lose against other countries. A wise Indian and Chinese leadership in this situation would then turn to U.N. as safeguard, and pull out of the arms race. Tännö then believes that after sometime the U.S. would realize that it is economically devastating to spend a large amount of money on military, and the U.S. would relinquish their military power to the U.N. The following quote will conclude Tännö’s argument:

“The final step, I have conjectured, would be when the United States surrenders its military forces to the U.N. The United States should be cajoled and shame by the rest of the world to the point where surrender is irresistible.”

4.4 Conclusion

Tännö’s argument for a world government can be concluded in five general arguments:

(1) Global democracy and a world government would create global justice and perpetual peace since a world government would have monopoly of violence and therefore a guarantee for peace. (See p. 16)

64 A hegemonic system is when one state has ‘the power’ in the world, a superpower. Opposite is ‘bipolar system’ which means that there is two superpowers, see the ‘cold war’ as an example.
66 Ibid. 104
67 Ibid. 105
68 Ibid. 135
69 My own interpretation. The references are to the pages in this thesis.
(2) Arguments against the creation of nation-states democracies can’t be applicable for a world government, since the structure is different. (See p. 16)

(3) We can’t trust agreements between democracies, and therefore a global democracy is the only alternative. (See p. 17)

(4) One hegemonic superpower is preferable, in this case the United States of America, when creating the new world order since the transition of power to the world government will be easier. (See p. 20-21)

(5) The world should resort to a world government with socialistic and utilitarian features in order to create global justice. (See p. 18-19)
5. Critique on Tännsjö’s Arguments

In this chapter I will scrutinize and criticize the major arguments that Tännsjö presents to defend institutional cosmopolitanism, a world government and global democracy. When scrutinizing, I will refer to different theories and theorists in the history of political philosophy, and also add my own personal reflections on each argument.

5.1 Claims for Perpetual Peace

5.1.1 The First Claim for Perpetual Peace

Tännsjö’s first claim is that: “Unless a world government is established, there will be war in the world. If a world government is established, peace will be guaranteed.”

This argument derives from the founder of political realism, Thomas Hobbes, who assumed that the state of nature is a “war of every man, against every man”. Hobbes argues that every nation must have a sovereign that leads the people from ‘natural law’ and make sure that mankind doesn’t ends up in this state of nature. A man’s life, Hobbes argues, would in the state of nature be of “continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.” In the claim above, Tännsjö’s states that he also believe that the ‘state of nature’ is war.

Tännsjö’s first argument for the claim above is that: “peace is established in nation-states when a sovereign regime is in power with the monopoly of violence, i.e. the military and punishing system.” An obvious contra argument to this is that it doesn´t hold true that a sovereign with the monopoly of power creates peace. The second contra argument is one of civil wars and terrorism. Tännsjö is aware of these problems, but instead of burying this idea,
he argues that the new world-state would not be built up as the existing nation-states have been built up, and also delivers a solution to the civil war and terrorist question.

The problems with the first argument (that the world-state wouldn’t have the features of a nation-state), as I see it, is that there is no way to create a world-state without cultural colonialism, economic sanctions or military force. The ground for this argument is that there are strong implications in history and our contemporary world that prove different conclusions.

The first problem is when Tännöö argues that there wouldn’t be any colonial features, but still argues to reform the U.N. which is, to a large extent, based on a western moral discourse. I argue that: if we take all of the legislation that the U.N. has today and create a world-state, we would have a more homogenous world and this homogeneity would be western-based. This is a problem with institutional cosmopolitanism, since it’s difficult to create a legislation that encompass all cultures, religions and political systems that we have in the world today. The only way a deeply founded legislation is going to include all of the individuals on earth is through force (cultural, economical or militaristic force), which is the opposite of which Tännöö argues for. The difference with moral cosmopolitanism in this case is that moral cosmopolitanism aims for a thin legislation, like human rights, while a world government tends to create a thick legislation that’s harder to accept. One good example is the European Union that failed twice when trying to create a thicker legislation with the European Constitution and now with the Treaty of Lisbon.

The second problem is that Tännöö claims that many of the current nation-states were created by force. I argue that the new world-state wouldn’t be an exception. It would be an exception to the classical colonial features if the only variable in force is militarized violence. We need to take other approaches in considerations as well, like economy and security. The ground for this argument is that if the U.N. makes a decision to militarize itself, we can assume that not every nation-state in the world will agree that this is a good idea, but the decision will go through anyway since the U.N. has qualified majority in a voting. Therefore a lot of the countries could disagree but still be forced to be a part of this world-state since the economic

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74 See page 17 for a more detailed explanation.
75 Written 2009.01.19.
76 ‘Qualified majority’ means that 3/4 or more in the voting group must agree on the decision.
cost, as well as the cost of security of standing outside is to high, and since it means that a country would be outside the militarized monopoly and therefore stand ‘outside’ without any influence.

In the second argument, to support that the world-state wouldn’t have the features of a nation-state, Tännö contend that problems with civil wars and terrorism shouldn’t be a problem since “such problems can be handled in most nation-states by respective governments; in a similar vain, they will be handled, on a global level, by the world government.” This is a serious assumption that needs to be scrutinized.

The problem with the argument above is that it is almost impossible to control terrorism with the use of militarized power, especially in areas with struggling ethnicities, a history of conflict, different religions and different concepts of cultures. In the 21st century, we have already seen examples of terrorist attacks that have been launched in stable democracies: 2001 in the U.S., 2004 in Madrid, Spain, 2005 in London, U.K. and 2008 in Mumbai, India. The civil wars we’ve seen so far in the 21st century have occurred in less stable countries, for example in Congo. All of these terror attacks I mentioned, except India, have been followed by militarized attacks to ‘defeat terrorism’. Can we today see any signs that terrorism is coming to an end? No. But I suppose it is very speculative to make an assumption on when or where ‘terrorism’ is going to end. On the other hand I don’t think it is very speculative to say that it’s not going to be vanquished by more guns, bombs and militarized power. The only “solution” to terrorism, as I see it, is through understanding, education and integration, and not, as Tännö argues, a centralized military power (led by the U.S., an argument I will return to), based on western morality and western legislation. It is not possible, as Tännö implies with the argument that a monopoly of violence would solve the problems, to threaten terrorism with guns. Terrorism occurs when people feel insecure, without ‘real power’, challenged, provoked by an enemy or as an act to protect their own ‘freedom’. This problem with terrorism, the way I see it, is that it is impossible to solve with militarized force, and therefore; Tännö’s idea that a monopoly of violence should create peace is incorrect and also infeasible.

78 Spain and United Kingdom both joined the “coalition of the willing”, supporting the U.S., in the “war against terrorism”.
5.1.2 The Second Claim for Perpetual Peace

The second claim is that there is a lack of security in the international society as it is and that neither a world of democracies, nor the U.N. as it shaped today is enough to ensure security, and therefore we need a world government and a world-state.

The first argument for the claim above, that the U.N. and democratic nation-states aren’t enough, is the Kantian idea that democratic republics don’t engage in fighting, and the more modern ‘democratic peace theory’ are obviously incorrect. This is a correct assumption by Tännö, as there is proof that the ‘democratic peace theory’ is incorrect. Tännö argues, that “It is also reasonable to assume […] that [the world government’s] introduction will mean that democracy will spread across the world.”\(^\text{80}\) This is a very interesting argument. Doesn’t this argument imply that the world government would force (again with other approaches then military, but with, for example, economic embargos and security issues) democracy to countries and individuals that don’t have it now? I would say yes. Democracy is a process that comes from within a nation or a ‘people’ and not from a ‘higher power’ in form of a world government, which would be counterproductive. Tännö argues that it is not “reasonable to assume that democracy will spread spontaneously without the establishment of a (democratic) world government…”\(^\text{81}\) In this argument Tännö denies the very foundations in moral cosmopolitanism, in which the individual moral (here democratic) notions will spread from individual-to-institution-to-individual, and not institution-to-individual.

A good argument that Tännö raises is that we need action now, but still there is no way to succeed with democracy if we force people into it, if the individuals in that demos itself are not yet prepared for it.\(^\text{82}\) The only way to make people understand the benefits of democracy are through education and integration and not, as Tännö implies, through force.\(^\text{83}\)

\(^{\text{81}}\) Ibid. 29
\(^{\text{82}}\) See for example the recent war in Iraq and the “war on terror” to “spread democracy”, or the recent stagnation of democracy in Russia since the end of the Soviet era.
\(^{\text{83}}\) Note: The same kind of force I discussed earlier. Not just military force.
5.2 Claims for Global Justice

Tännösjö’s first claim is that a utilitarian distributive system of justice is the solution to global justice. Tännösjö focuses on the economical injustices that we face in the world today and argues that the total happiness would increase in the world if we distributed our economical means.

The problem with the claim above is that Tännösjö doesn’t deliver a substantial solution to the problem of global justice. Tännösjö uses sentences like “… to use the world government to create better conditions for local struggle for global justice.” and, “a welfare state requires a kind of deep solidarity, which cannot easily flourish on a global level…” These kinds of sentences are, to say the least, vague. What does ‘local struggle’ and ‘cannot easily flourish’ mean exactly? The problem, therefore, is that Tännösjö never delivers his own solution to global justice, but merely a sketch of a “big picture”, which is that we should have distribution of wealth in the world, but we just don’t know how it should be carried out.

What Tännösjö does instead of presenting his own solution, is to criticize egalitarianism and its sub-theory, the ‘prioritarian view’. There are two main arguments against the prioritarian-view. As I see it, one is against Rawls, claiming that he’s too restricted, and the other one is against Pogge’s GRT. But there are problems in the critique from Tännösjö. The first problem is in the critique against Rawls, where Tännösjö discusses Rawls’ restrictedness when he states that we have a ‘duty to assist’. An interesting angle of this critique is that when Tännösjö presents his solution to global justice, he advocates for a socialistic world order and for a world-state. But, on the other hand, Tännösjö admits that the scales are too big for Pogge’s GRT, and that there is a lack of solidarity on the global level. We here touch upon a major problem, as I see it: the scales and the proportions. What Tännösjö actually does when he admits that there is a lack of solidarity on a global scale, is to say that a world government is unable to function, since democracy is more or less founded on solidarity and trust. Tännösjö also criticizes Pogge’s GRT with a comment that it focuses on redistribution instead of power relations. The other piece of the main argument, Tännösjö is mostly focusing on power, military power first and foremost and power through legislation. This is, as I mentioned in the very beginning, a classic political realist argument, that the major variable in an analysis is

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85 Ibid. 49 (my italics)
86 See page 16 for a more detailed description of the arguments.
power, and more typically state-power. I will come back to this in the final conclusion, since I think that this is the core of the argument.

The second claim is that we should resort to socialism as a political system.

The main problem with this claim is the inconsistency with the arguments we have faced earlier. I’m nearing a conclusion when asking the question; How it is possible to create a world-state, with a sovereign government, if there is a lack solidarity in the world, since a democracy is based on solidarity? There is no doubt that Tännsjö’s argument is compatible with solidarity, which would mean every individual in every state standing up and accept a world government voluntarily. But if it is not like the example above, which I don’t believe it will be, there will be some kind of force involved and that is counterproductive if we are aiming to create more solidarity.

5.3 The Argument on How to Create Global Democracy

The argument for how we should act to establish a world government is that we should support and maintain the current world political situation with the United States of America as hegemony. The main argument is that after a certain amount of time, the U.S. after a while will spend so much money on arms that they will end up in economic stagnation and lose their position as the leading economic state in the world.\(^\text{87}\) This will then lead to the fact that the U.S. will surrender to the U.N., shamed in front of the world society and give up their arms to the U.N.\(^\text{88}\)

The problem with this argument is that Tännsjö positions himself as a utilitarian. A classic argument against utilitarianism is that it is hard to calculate the consequences of an action, and since a utilitarian simply focuses on the consequences this argument is a tough call. Do we, according to Tännsjö, have any guarantees for the fact that the U.S will surrender, voluntary, to the U.N just because of shame? I believe it is a naïve and utopian idea, which we can’t see any signs for in the present world.


\(^\text{88}\) Ibid. 135
There is also a problem with the fact that Tännsjö is choosing the U.S. as the leading nation who will bring peace in the world, since this is the very opposite of what the U.S. has done for the last 50 years.\textsuperscript{89} I argue that this is a very risky course of action and that this argument, in its very core, is contrary utilitarian thinking, since the consequences, looking at recent history, show that we can’t expect this to maximize the happiness in the world. Why shouldn’t we support China instead? Even though they have internal problems,\textsuperscript{90} China doesn’t show us the same imperialistic behavior as the U.S. does. Of course I wouldn’t argue for the fact that China should be world hegemony, but I will instead argue that it is a dangerous idea to let any state be the hegemony because we can never calculate the outcome of such actions.

5.4 Conclusion

We have now seen Tännsjö’s arguments and also my critique on them. I will now summarize the arguments, one by one, and add my own conclusions on them.

(1) The claim that ‘there will be war if a world government not is established’ is, according to me, false. The state of nature, as Hobbes and Tännsjö envision it, is based on a belief that human beings are not able to function in anarchy and therefore we need a sovereign state.

(2) The argument that the world-state wouldn’t have the same features as a nation-state (in terms of forced borders, colonialism etc.) is false. The only way to create a world-state is through violence (military, economically or other) and cultural colonialism.

(3) The argument that the world government wouldn’t have problems with terrorism and civil wars is, according to me, false. The further away the power is from people, people will get less and less influence, and therefore will feel more and more marginalized. I predict that a world government would increase terrorism, civil wars and cases of ‘civil disobedience’.

(4) The second claim; that peace and justice will never reign between states may be true. There is no evidence yet that the system of nation-states work as keepers of peace and justice. But instead of creating more and bigger gaps between people, and this new world-state with nation-states features, we should look for a solution with no state at all, one with local

\textsuperscript{89} See the conflict in Korea in the 1950’s, Vietnam in the 1960’s and 70’s, Nicaragua in the 1980’s, Grenada in the 1980’s, the Persian Gulf War in the 1990’s, the war in Afghanistan and Iraq in the beginning of the 21th century as examples.

\textsuperscript{90} See the Cultural Revolution in 1966-1976 and the massacre on Tiananmen Square in 1989 as examples.
governments that obey some thin moral rules, like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for example and then create the “thick rules” themselves.

(5) To give up the military power to the U.S. and hope that the U.S. will eventually give up in shame, is risky and a bit naïve. There is no argument that could convince me that the U.S., in its current status, is a good leader for the world.

(6) If we should have a distributive system, which I also believe to be true, we must have a plan for how we should distribute. I suppose Tännsjö has a good plan, but unfortunately he doesn’t give us a very clear picture of it.

(7) To make all nation-states resort to socialism is utopian but interesting. The problems are solidarity, cultural belonging, the willingness to obey the laws and the personal security towards the rulers, which all add up to powerful arguments against a world-state.

5.5 Discussion

I will now return to the question I asked in the beginning of this thesis:

*Is the establishment of a world government and global democracy a guarantee for global justice and perpetual peace?*

The answer is *no* and I have now tried to examine every aspect of Tännsjö’s argument to prove that. I will instead argue that the design of the world government, which is a critical part of Tännsjö’s argument, is a design built to exclude states and individuals that fit in the system. The problem with populist democracy is that it will never be in consensus in issues regarding *thick* morality, but only in issues regarding *thin* morality. I can personally see the benefits of thick morality, like legislation about daycare, care for the elderly, education and so on, varies throughout the world. I’m not defending a cultural relativistic position, but saying that thin morality, like “everyone should be obligated to stay in school for 12 years” is possible to solve on a global scale with our current system, without monopolized violence. The reason for monopolized violence is because we want to have *thick* morality, like a legislation that “you have to work until you are 80 years old, and otherwise you won’t get a decent pension.” That kind of particular legislation, decided in a world government, is interfering with my belief that we always need to be granted a choice to leave. If I don’t like my village, city or country I can always move to a better place. There wouldn’t be another
place to leave to if we would have a world government, since everything everywhere would be the same and controlled by the same institutions. That thought scares me very much.

I will also argue that the speculative road that Tännsjö presents towards this world government, with the U.S. in the lead role, must go against every instinct in a utilitarian who judge the actions from its supposable consequences.

Furthermore, I will argue that Tännsjö’s arguments that the creation of the world-state will not have the same features as the creation of nation-state are wrong, since there will be some kind of force involved. I will also argue that civil wars and especially terrorism will increase in a world-state, since the power is taken even further away from the people. The creation of this terrorism will be different than the one we see right now, with suicide-bombers and intercontinental robots switching owners. We will probably see a radical movement in the West, as well as the East, with economical terrorism, communication terrorism and also actions like riots and other similar activities. The terrorism that is now born again in the Middle East will probably not decrease but increase if once again a “great power” will come and force democracy on people that are not yet ready for it and maybe don’t ever want it either.

I will conclude this thesis with a continuation of the story I began with: the lecture with Tännsjö that I attended. After some time one of the audience members raised his hand and asked, “What if the moral system, which is law and order that will be decided by this world government, doesn’t please everyone? I mean, today at least some of us have the opportunity to move if we don’t agree with the system. Should they go and live on the moon then?” This question started a little giggle in the room and Tännsjö answered, also giggling a bit, “Well, yes, I guess they have to then.”
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Articles

Books
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