Globalisation and the Promotion of Democracy:  
A Trojan Horse or a Genuine Humanitarian Paradigm?  

By:  
Pr. Mohamed DELLAL  
Mohamed I University, Oujda.

Abstract:  
Much of what has come to be known in political sociology, and in common parlance in general, as globalisation is a reference to the strong wind of change associated with political and social constructions of culture and identity. Indeed, the concept has been used – quite often loosely – by rank and file to mean different things. The present paper purports to locate the concept within a political sociological frame where it has been dubbed a Trojan Horse (that is an excuse to promote specific political and economic agendas) or, in a more optimistic tone, a United Nations new humanitarian paradigm shift.

Keywords:  
Introductory Remarks

The strong winds of change brought in by economic and technological developments have impregnated everyday discourse — particularly within academia— with visceral associations made between the political, the sociological and mostly the political constructions of identity. Over the years, as a matter of fact, conferences are being held around cultural constructions much more evidently since the Huntington thesis on the “Clash of Civilisations”\(^1\). This has been exacerbated through the wavering policies on migrations adopted by Western countries, initially to people and rebuild a devastated Europe in the aftermath of the second world war. This has been done via chartered and unchartered waves of immigrants moving North and West in search of better opportunities and better social conditions (El Manjara 1995; see also Carling 2007). But in recent years, the massive assaults on the Southern coast of Europe may have forced the citadel of Europe into changing course and adopting more hostile approaches towards migrants in search of asylum for political and/or economic reasons (Carling 2007). These are perhaps the most visible consequences of the now infamous globalisation.

Notwithstanding the benefits offered by the first package of policies that opened up world frontiers to facilitate mobility of people and goods, which became apparent in the 1980s, it would be a travesty of truth to ignore the fact that such a move may have started much earlier than that. In fact, the drive to push the frontiers for commercial reasons may have started, indeed, long before the Phoenicians and Carthaginians bartered with the Greeks and other sea merchants on the Mediterranean coasts (Rawilson 1909). These according to historians may have started the world on a path toward globalisation albeit in a rather more unscheduled and natural way (Anghie 2004). Earlier in 16\(^{th}\) century (1525) Francisco de Vittoria —fighting for recognition of a natural international law that would take the plight of the Indians into consideration— has also probed to secure the right of the Spanish traders to “travel in Indian lands, and the right to trade” (Anghie

\(^1\) Reference is made here to the famous book by the same author with the same title. The book has created an upheaval and galvanized hostility from different quarters mostly those from Eastern cultures.
251). These, in his view, are fundamental principles of natural law" (Ibid.). It was, though, until the 17th century that a charter to secure sea-routes was drafted in the form of a maritime manifesto by Hugo Grotious (1625). This was not a law, but it gradually gained approval and became a treaty that sea-faring nations signed on bilateral level; and it would take years before it evolved into an International Maritime Law under the tutelage of the International Maritime Organisation —created to oversee to that by the United Nations (UN) in 1954. The latter became effective only in 1974.² One may also want to refer to the Famous Berlin Conference (1884-5) in which Bismark characterized commerce as a “means of spreading civilization itself” (Anghie 252). The same assertion may have been made by British Politicians Chamberlain and Lugard when they said that “we develop new territory as Trustees of Civilisation for the commerce of the world” (Lugard 1965). Some literature, indeed, would place the beginning of globalisation at that time; if so, it is evident, therefore, that at the very beginning, the move to change world geographies was driven by commercial interests just like it is today. It is also true that commercial interests were the origins of bloody encounters between the peoples around the world. The confrontations during the colonial period, and the periods after are better testimonies that globalisation has never been a peaceful drive (Anghie 2004).

In the aftermath of the second world war, the confrontations resulting from the Cold War —leading to the demise of the communist ideology— eventually culminated in the Fall of the Iron Curtain (the Berlin Wall); and consequently brought jubilations in celebration of Market economy much to the satisfaction of some leading political sociologists who saw in that a signal of the end of history (Fukuyama 1992).

² Prior to the mid-1970s, most international conventions concerning maritime trade and commerce originated in a private organization of maritime lawyers known as the Comité Maritime International (International Maritime Committee or CMI). Founded in 1897, the CMI was responsible for the drafting of numerous international conventions including the Hague Rules (International Convention on Bills of Lading), the Visby Amendments (amending the Hague Rules), the Salvage Convention and many others. While the CMI continues to function in an advisory capacity, many of its functions have been taken over by the International Maritime Organization, which was established by the United Nations in 1958 but did not become truly effective until about 1974. Web. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Admiralty_law. Retrieved on 22 March 2017 Web.
Associated with these developments are a number of paradigm shifts worked out and advanced by the UN and its working groups in line with market economy and the drive to globalise in earnest for fear of set-backs by hostile forces. It is undeniable that the concept of “good governance” may have been in the back of the minds of the legislators who engineered and drafted the Mandate System as stipulated in article 22 of the League of Nation Charter. But it has gained prominence in 1980s and 1990s following the collapse of the communist ideology. The concept meant that certain social and juridical structures and measures be created, strengthened and enforced, as it has become clear to the multinational corporations and the UN decision makers that political stability is a guarantor of economic welfare and security. Non-democratic regimes, are thought to be antithetical to such expected goals (see Milanovich 2016). In response to these requirements, a paradigm shift has to be enacted by the UN to speed up democratisation of political regimes deemed authoritarian. It was not surprising, therefore, to advance the view that “good governance” should be conceptually linked with international human rights law and that it enjoys a certain legitimacy and coherence as a result. In this regard, Civil Liberties —until then only achieving moderate success— have become battle grounds for countries, political organisations, think tanks, Advocacy groups and UN working groups much enthused by the promise of a more democratic, egalitarian society these ideals would yield.

Motivated by such an ambitious program, Boutros Ghali and his teams initiated a much more vigorous program as he inaugurated another stage in the history of the UN by turning the Civil Liberties regime into an excuse for intervention (Humanitarian Intervention)3, particularly with the ethnic cleansing started in some parts of the world in defiance of the international community laws (Jensen 2016). In this line of thought, the US administrations—one after another and as self-sworn custodians of

3 Reports of the UN since 1992 have started using this epithet to refer to the enforcement of Intervention either from Peace Keeping forces (to preserve peace between belligerent parties) or Coalition forces where muscular force is needed. This was also known as the “Agenda for Peace” as the following assertion from Timothy D. Sisk shows: The Agenda of Peace penned by the United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali just following the first-ever meeting of the UN Security Council at the level of the heads of state in January of that year, both reflected and ultimately shaped the ability of the world’s preeminent organisation to adapt to the turbulent systemic changes under way in the international system”. (Sisk 8)
democracy—committed themselves to promoting what they see as a transposable democratic model. Similar drives have been advanced by NGOs committed to save lives, secure basic Human Rights (HR) such as freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of information and conscience. Amnesty International, for instance devoted themselves to securing lives from torture and illegal imprisonment. Information Society—another advocacy group and also a UN working group—devoted their work to democratize information and knowledge through the dissemination of cybertechnology (WSIS 2003).

While most of these endeavours manifest outright optimism as to the results and genuine intentions behind their drives, the present paper purports to show that other contenders have doubts as to the acclaimed genuineness and the optimism displayed by the proponents of such ideals. Three of such paradigms—closely connected as they stem from the same principle—appear to have galvanized international political discourse, mostly as contenders see them as being rigged with hypocrisy, biases and, quite often, ill-intentions on the part of the states or organisms advancing them. The first of these is an overarching paradigm consisting of a drive to globalize democratization of political structures, nationally and internationally, has been turned into a crusade led by the West. This will be dealt with in the folds of the following sections of this paper. The other two paradigms, namely, the drive to universalize HR and democratize information and knowledge are not less important, as they show similar flaws—in our modest view—due to the inconsistencies they are flagged with. These will also be dealt with in the sections to follow.

A. The Political Crusading for Democracy

What appears to have been the basic paradigm affecting world politics in the wake of the drive to globalize, is that the ethical principles would matter very little where geostrategic interests—a reference to the economic as well as political—are at stake. One only looks at the decision makers’ changing attitudes over geostrategic issues, over the years, to be convinced of the
hypocrisy underlying them. Taking into consideration the wavering attitudes of the US administrations, for instance—one after the other—one is stunned to see that at times, they create regimes only to dismantle them when they are not needed; at other times, they support them only to vilify them when their course is run (Chomsky 2003). The literature on this issue is replete with examples some of which will be brought up in the folds of this debate.

One has to admit that this attitude is not typical of the US administration alone. Over the years, states have systematically done that. Thin lines have always been the common denominator of the walks these states have taken; their rationale being to preserve some façade of democracy while finding ways to circumvent it; a behaviour which, unequivocally, has become a *modus operandi* as the preservation of the principle is necessary for further legitimization of relations and actions to be taken either for or against “abusers”. In this connection, democracy has been the fortress to support and defend as it offers the necessary legitimacy for any actions to be taken in reprisal against abusing states. In essence, such a political stances is rigged with contradictions that can only be motivated by the fear to undermine economic and political interests of stakeholders be they states or corporations. In his *Failed States* (2006), Chomsky surveys instances of world famous thinker and leaders who have been fascinated by this truism: promoting democracy to further their interests. Among others, he quotes Japanese Hirohito’s seminal surrender speech given in 1945 where he says that:

> We declared war on America and Britain out of our sincere desire to ensure that Japan’s self-preservation and the stabilization of East Asia, it being far from our thought either to infringe upon the sovereignty of other nations or to embark upon territorial aggrandizement” (104)

Although one ignores the oxymoron in relation to “territorial aggrandisement” at the heart of the assertion, one has to agree that sparing the stability of East Asia primes for all Asians. But the paradox underlying
the assertion is that Japan had to embark on territorial conquests, presumably, to save these nations from being conquered by others; a posture one would qualify as somewhat “kielingnesque”\(^4\). One should not be misled and see in the defeat of Japan and their surrender anything other than falling into another form of territorial aggrandisement benefiting the winners of the war.

Chomsky also paraphrases Martin Hiedegger’s\(^5\) (1935) declaration in 1935 as well as the position held by John Stuart Mill (1859) calling for humanitarian interventions to save countries and peoples still under the sway of darkness (Chomsky 104-105). One may also add up lists of famous literary texts (a poem) by Rudyard Kipling — *The White Man’s Burden* — epitomizing a position advanced by Western countries with regard to what has been termed “backwardness and atrocities”. In fact, this has always been a driving force of, practically, every move made by conquering nations be they of the East or of the West. Other epithets have been coined to turn these truisms into blameless policies; for the British it was a “burden”, for the French and Europeans it was a “civilizing mission” (Anghie Anthony, 2004; see also Lawrence 2013; Oke 2009). History has thought us that the real motives have always been other than those advanced.

Worthy of attention in this regard, is the attitude held by other prominent thinkers who explain the policies in economic terms as shown in the following assertion of Adam Smith who spells out, unequivocally, who the real actors behind ‘globalization’ are; their lack of concern for the ills perpetrated against their victims as well as their compatriots to secure their own interests has also been disclosed.

‘The principal architects’ of global policy, ‘our merchants and manufacturers,’ have sought to ensure that their own interests have ‘been most peculiarly attended to’, however, -‘grievous’ the impact

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\(^4\) Reference is made here to Kipling’s claim that the West has the burden of civilising the people under the yoke of backwardness.

\(^5\) Heidegger and Mill were quoted in Chomsky (2006) but have not been referenced. For the sake of clarity, we insert the reference in the end of the article.
on others, particularly the victims of their ‘savage injustice” in India and elsewhere, but even the domestic population (105).

Although the war on terrorism may have been officially declared after 9/11, one would do back to periods earlier than the Fall of the Berlin Wall to trace signs of the crusading campaign against terrorism. For the sake of convenience, we may want to stop at the campaign started by the Reagan administration which declared it wanted terrorists and states supporting them eradicated (Chomsky 2006). Indeed, a list of states that went under the hammer as “rogue states” supporting terrorism was drafted in 1979. The list was extended under the Clinton administration in 1994; and a few years later another concept of “Failed States” added up names or changed others; the rationale being that these states failed to provide the basic needs and civil liberties of their respective peoples (Chomsky 105-107). This is better phrased in the following:

Even in the narrowest interpretation, “failed states” are identified by the failure to provide security for the population, to guarantee rights at home or abroad, or to maintain functioning (not merely formal) democratic institutions. The concept must surely also cover “outlaw states” that dismiss with contempt the rules of international order and its institutions, carefully constructed over many years, overwhelmingly under US initiative. (Chomsky 109-110)

Such paradigm shifts have led the international community and the custodian states supervising it, to consider actions against such states even if “illegal but legitimate’ (Chomsky 109), particularly as the UN has endorsed the project of promoting HR should that necessitate military intervention against alleged (or proven) states abusing any of these rights. This truism, seems very promising on the face of it, although in reality, a selection process has led to hold some states accountable while others are spared while committing practically the same abuses. This selective process has
generated wider doctrinal criticism for its biases (Loconte 2005); this being an aspect which will be elaborated upon in the next section.

B. The Human Rights Regime: The Trojan Horse

Although authors like Noll (2003) argue that HR be treated outside the realm of politics if they are to be successful, it is worth underlining that the promotion of Democracy through HR is —and certainly can only be— done through the transfer (not transposition) and adaptation of political institutions, given the fact that the states are still the central players in national and international politics. It is also undeniable that this centrality is being eroded as the role of NGOs and the Civil Society, in general, is becoming gradually more significant; but a measure of political realism shows that the time for a parity between the state and non-state actors in political management is still in the offing (Viotti and Kauppi 1999: 1-13). Yet, it is also through the dissemination of a culture of democracy —epitomized in the promotion of Civil Liberties legally acknowledged as Human Rights— that strength can be given to such a drive.

For this and many other reasons, any drive to democratize through the HR regime —it being the essence and raison d’être of democracy— has been shelved at times, and rejected at others, subject to hostilities on the part of certain elites and governments. As Kofi Annan’s assertion shows:

Few peoples, groups or governments oppose globalisation as such. They protest against its disparities. First the benefits and opportunities of globalisation remain highly concentrated among relatively small number of countries and are spread unevenly within them. Second, in recent decades, an imbalance has emerged between successful efforts to craft strong and well enforced rules facilitating the expansion of global markets, while support for equally social objectives, be they labour standards, the environment, human rights or poverty reduction has lagged behind (Annan 2000).
While one can only acknowledge that these are well founded reasons for protesting against globalization, it also seems that Annan — given his position as secretary General of the UN — has been very diplomatic in his assessment. Many protests against globalisation and HR, indeed, are marred in verbal diatribes and a porousness of the discourse they generated following the advent of “identity and cultural politics” within academia (Kennedy 2012; see also Chowdhury 2011).6 The critiques are, as a matter of fact, articulated around sensitive issues such as the fear of loss of sovereignty and/or the loss of identity. But specialists are agreed that such protests revolve more around the economic disparities that such a drive has or may generate (Kennedy 2012). The gaps between the countries, the have and have-nots, continues to grow generating hostile reaction and criticism (Milanovich 2016). Although issues of culture and identity come to the fore in many of the critiques, it is an overwhelming truth that it is the economic interests that are very much at the heart of such diatribes.

Over the history of humanity, one is not astonished to see the great concern of the International Community with economic issues and the need to avoid any anarchy that could endanger trading worldwide. This concern — nuanced in the 19th century and more so since the beginning of the 20th century— tells much about the seriousness with which economy did/ does and will still work as a major driving force behind the institutionalization of

6 In this connection, David Kennedy, make a very poignant assessment of the Humanitarian Law and the Intervention Programs of the UN. For the sake of clarity it is being included here: “We might say that the modern law of force represents a triumph for grasping the nettle of costs and benefits and infiltrating the background decision-making of those it would bend to humanitarian ends. Modern war is a legal institution. Once a bit player in military conflict, law now shapes the institutional, logistical, and physical landscape of war – and even more so for occupation. Law and human rights have infiltrated the military profession, and become - for parties on all sides of even the most asymmetric confrontations - a political and ethical vocabulary for marking legitimate power and justifiable death. Indeed, as law became an ever more important yardstick for legitimacy, legal categories became far too spongy to permit clear resolution of the most important questions - or became spongy enough to undergird the experience of self-confident outrage by parties on all sides of a conflict.(Kennedy 27). Availbale on http://www.law.harvard.edu/faculty/dkennedy/publications/Internation%20Human%20Rights%20Regime%202012.pdf, retrieved on 28 March 2017.
globalization. In this line of thought, the literature on the issue speaks of earlier endeavours of globalization which were done in an anarchical way and led to some serious humanitarian catastrophes namely WW1, the Economic Crisis of 1929 and culminating in WW2 (Milanovich 2016). This is also partly corroborated by the following:

From the 20-year crisis between the wars, however, the architects of the post 1945 world learned how utterly destructive it was for countries to turn their backs altogether on economic interdependencies. Unrestrained economic nationalism and ‘beggar-my-neighbour’ policies took root almost everywhere in 1930s, spilling over into political revanchism, totalitarianism and militarism in some countries, isolationism in others. The League of Nations was critically wounded from the start and in the face of those forces stood no change.”(Annan 10-11).

Another support for such an idea may easily be found in the fact that the same architects that the quote speaks of have endeavoured to reform the world by creating the famous Bretton Woods financial institutions, practically to control Trade and Finances before anything else. It is not any surprise if these also appear to be the only effective institutions that the UN runs. It is a fact that Annan also speaks of benefits to reap from globalization such as easier commercial transactions through opening markets; lifting trade barriers; making communication and sharing of knowledge easier; facilitating travels and, mostly, transfer of some non-sensitive technology (Annan 12). But it is imperative to understanding that these do not come free of vulnerabilities be it in terms of transmissible maladies and pathologies, trafficking, arms dealing causing more insecurity within and between the states (Annan 12).

Having said so, it is also imperative to underline that in the struggle to promote the culture and ethics of democracy, HR —which have been dubbed as universal human values needing fighting for— have also been
used more often as a Trojan horse to advance political, ideological and economic agendas of certain parties (Noll 2003). Their universal value, —although quite often debated— has offered decision makers within UN legislature a venue to circumvent the cardinal right of states to sovereignty. It should be underlined in passing, that such a right is a prerogative of each states, by virtue of the Westphalian Treaty of 1648, be it totalitarian or not. It is also pertinent to underline that HR have always been either opposed or rejected entirely because of the view that they have been used by the Right as well as the Left or the Middle, for geostrategic and political concerns leaving their humanitarian aspect in limbo. Noll (2003: 2) confirms this in saying that “at the end of the day, the work of both promotional and positivist human rights lawyers are easily subjected to one or other forms of political hi-jacking be it by NGOs or by states”. The claim for universality—mentioned above—has offered contending parties enough leverage to oppose or reject them; and in the felicitous way, to be shelved until further notice (Loconte 2005). In the folds of the next section, a survey of the debates over such an issue will help clarify the subterfuges, and the contradictions underlying both their promotion and/or their demotion.

In the aftermath of World War 2, the drafters of Universal Declaration had to spend days, weeks and months debating the language to be used to couch the teaching of the principles they wanted to draft. One of such linguistic warring was over the use of the term “universal” (Jensen 2016). On the face of it, the term has been taken sometimes very lightly by advocates; sometimes with scepticism. In probing this issue, Noll (2003: 7) dwells on the doctrinal research conducted into the HR's philosophy and ends up acknowledging that the universality of HR is more complex than even dissenters and supporters can admit. In his view, there is an unsurmountable tension between HR regime and the political realities of each state. Some such controversial areas are “citizenship, location, personal attributes or demeanour” (Noll 7) which run at loggerhead with the laws of the countries and the sovereignty principle. In illustration of this tension, one can bring the problem of illegal migrants/immigrants which is raising serious security concerns worldwide. Where the UN stipulates
rights for such subjects, state laws find it very difficult to award them more than a minimum while waiting repatriation (See Carling 2007).

Noll continues his probe into this issue of “universality” by underlining that this notion of delimited state (or extraterritoriality), seen through the Westphalian principle of sovereignty, leaves gaps that are unaccountable for by the HR law; gaps where no meaningful responsibility can be determined (Noll 8). This debate is neither new nor an isolated one; Jensen (2016) contributes an historical survey of the controversies that have rigged the drafting of the first Declaration of 1948, initially labelled an “International Declaration” before it has been changed into a “Universal Declaration” (Jensen 29) —not out of conviction of its universality— but only to pave the way for considering that as a possibility in the future as long as no binding force has been there to see that the provisions are respected.

The debate, among other things, covers even the phrasing of some provisions within the Charter as the case has been with the notion of “right to social justice” — which has been deemed as unclear about the jurisdictional responsibility of the authority to enforce it. It has been, therefore, replaced by “right to social security”; a rather more diffuse phrase because it can easily be brought, in the worst scenarios, under chapter VII the prerogative of the Security Council.

Further critiques have been levelled at the notion of “universality” by certain associations as the case may be with the American Anthropological Association (AAA) in 1947 at its drafting stage on the grounds that that it ignored the cultural relativism of non-Western countries (Jensen 31). These critiques could be said to have anticipated reactions from Middle Eastern and other Third world states —until then, still under colonial occupations. Most have seen in this drive an act of consolidating of western Christian values and strengthening of the hold on the acquisitions the West has rather than anything else (Whelan 2009).

Such a claim can be corroborated by the lip service states — irrespective of their political status at the international level— have paid the Declaration of 1948 during and even after its drafting. One example to
bring forth in this connection, is the position of the colonial powers vis-à-vis certain provisions of the Charter. Winston Churchill, for example, has never been a fervent defender of the internationalisation of the implementation of certain provisions, although he may have wanted to regionalise them for reason we will see later. France would object to their implementation in the colonies because that would jeopardize its economic interests (Jensen 33-38).

These attitudes, however, as would be obvious in later years, would change with the changes of the ideological frames and the policies enforced by successive administrations; something I will come to in due time. What is markedly significant is the hypocrisy underlying such attitudes. The Churchill attitude—as an example—shows that he has been very flexible to implement the HR at the regional level in order to instrumentalize the European Charter\footnote{The European Charter, just all other regional Charters, has adopted the same provision as those included in the Universal Declaration of HR.} to upset the Soviet Union—then an imminent danger for the West. So much for the Trojan Horse metaphor.

Another example of the same metaphor is clearer in the behaviour of smaller states as well. Their support and enthusiasm for the provision of the Charter has been obvious only because it promised them independence (Jensen 2016). Once that objective has been achieved they have shown very little restraint and respect of any of the provisions to their own peoples.

Over the years, what has become undoubtedly clear, is that the political tensions around the world have cast their shadow over the promises made by the UN. To begin with (1) the ratification of the Charter has not been an easier task as only 35 nations have done so by the end of the 1960s; that is almost 20 or so years into its issuing; (2) the actual implementation of most of its provisions is still faltering even as we speak (Jensen 40-41). The next 15 years marking the height of the Cold War would be marked by privileging national interests over international (universal ones). Entrenched in separate ditches, East and West would each continue the lip service sometimes culminating in direct accusations of the Commission of HR as the critique levelled against it by the American diplomat Abrams shows:
We acknowledge with some sorrow and regret that some of the gross and persistent violations of human rights have never come under scrutiny or study in the Commission. We believe that the double standards should give way to the single standard. We believe that the United Nations should be even handed in the use of its powers of study and reporting, that no area should be exempt, and that no government should be unjustly condemned by the United Nations body without due process, involving fact-findings by fair representatives. (Qtd in Jensen 2016: 183)8

Further historical developments have each been marked by either a strong desire to promote HR or have favoured their demise; always with a geostrategic and political purpose in mind (Jensen 2016). The Cold War has, in fact, been a period tainted with such a tag warring between the East and West each trying to safe-guard their strategic interests (Jensen 2016). With the end of the Cold War, programs and procedures have been developed by the successive UN administrations and working groups to give HR a push. Boutros Ghali’s optimism, the development in the Balkans and the Rwandan conflicts have raised the issue of HR to an unprecedented level in the ethical scale of values. This, indeed, gave them a quality that turned them into an excuse for intervention to stop mass killing and atrocities forcing thus custodian countries into supplying peace keeping forces to enforce the resolutions of the General Assembly (GA) endorsed by the Security Council (SC) (Jensen 2016; see also Bellamy 2009 and Glanville 2011).

Such developments do not exclude the hidden agendas that such programs frequently had. There has, actually, been many agendas developed by parties from all sides of the dividing line indiscriminately. The Right had its own, the Left its own, the smaller countries their own and so have some NGOs; a fact that led certain parties to denounce the biases and prejudices of

8 Quotation taken from US National Archives (College park, MD), RG/45/250/C/16/109/Box 15- Statement by Morris B. Abrams to the Commission of Human Rights, February 20, 1968.
the selective methods used by the UN (Loconte 2005; see also Jensen 2016 or the Report of Annan 2000).

These have had dire consequences on the HR regime seen as a failure by a large number of the literature on the issue. This is a rather bleak picture reinforced by the declarations of successive Secretary Generals of the UN as in the following:

We can claim significant successes among our peace operations in the last decade or so beginning with Namibia in the late 1980s and including Mozambique, El Salvador, the Central African Republic, Eastern Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and at least partly Cambodia. We also encountered tragic failures, none more so than Rwanda and the fall of Srebrenica and the other safe areas in Bosnia. The many reasons for those failures including those attributable to the United Nations Secretariat are discussed frankly and in considerable detail in two reports I issued last year (Annan 49).

Theories developed on the issue speak of the conditions for HR programs to be successful such as the necessity to separate it from politics, because this bring the programs into loggerheads with the state sovereignty principle. (Noll 2003; Jensen 2016). The notion of cultural relativism, developed by identity politics, does not help much with the idea of universalism either. It indeed, goes against the notion of universality at the heart of the Declaration of 1948; and it does so with the other covenants that followed from it (Jensen 2016). With no sign of these issues being resolved, it seems that the project of democratization via the dissemination of HR will continue wavering between moderate successes and shocking failures; although the most distressing aspect would be their continuing to be used by different parties to further their interests (Kennedy 22).  

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9 Kennedy critical assessment of such an issue is clear in the following: There were certainly many disappointments. So many interventions did not work out as we had planned. We learned that human rights can also legitimate a regime, even a regime we believe violates rights, if only by isolating the violation in a way which
The rise of ultranationalist parties around the world, will only exacerbate the HR program, given that these programs are premised on isolationist agendas privileging nationals over non-nationals, territorial sovereignty over regional and international legislations. With the Brexit developing into an epidemics, contagion will be in the offing despite the Dutch nationalist party’s defeat in the March elections (2017). Such symptoms are invigorated by the isolationist declarations of the current US president and also by a certain literature showing flagrant failures of multicultural projects in France, Holland, Australia, among others, where voices are vociferous against migrants/immigrants who, in their views, should not have any claim to any right. With these prospects in view, the biases and the lip service plaguing the HR will continue unabated.

One may easily acknowledge that the one program that may and has experienced little failure and little bias is the drive to democratise information and knowledge spearheaded by the Information Society. Yet, literature shows that it, too, has not been spared from being used to further economic, and political agendas of the stakeholders. This will be probed in the coming section.

C. On the Democratization of Information and Knowledge.

One of the most recent programs developed by the UN working groups — the Information Society — is that of democratizing information and knowledge as rights provisioned for by the Economic, Social and Cultural Protocol which is one of the Covenants\(^{10}\) completing the UN Charter of HR. During the world summit held in 2001, a list of provisions has been laid down as a foundation for a program intended to open up knowledge and information equally to all peoples of the world. One cannot deny that the promise is great, the intentions may be noble, but the realities on the ground have led people to see

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\(^{10}\) Reference is made here to the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* issued in 1960s.
in this another drive for domination and control by multi-stakeholders, the real driving force behind the project (see Salamantian 2012)

Paragraph 19 of the WSIS report (2003) testifies to the promise and the democratic ambitions of the program:

We are resolute in our quest to ensure that everyone can benefit from the opportunities that ICTs can offer. We agree that to meet these challenges, all stakeholders should work together to: improve access to information and communication infrastructure and technologies as well as to information and knowledge; build capacity; increase confidence and security in the use of ICTs; create an enabling environment at all levels; develop and widen ICT applications; foster and respect cultural diversity; recognize the role of the media; address the ethical dimensions of the Information Society; and encourage international and regional cooperation. We agree that these are the key principles for building an inclusive Information Society.

But it has not been long for the Internet community to realize that the promise of egalitarianism is not reachable as the same disparities have become more exacerbated between 1st cyber-tiered countries, 2nd, 3rd and the non-rated ones11. What is more, the contradictions between the goals of the Multistakeholders, the government agencies in control of the cyber capabilities and the common men are such that the enthusiasm felt, initially, has turned into a nightmare12. The loss of centralized control by the states, which offered a “semblant” of security has been replaced by a proliferation of risks for the individual as well as for the state; risks that could endanger their property, their physical integrity and their well-being in general. The last

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11 For further information see Dellal 2014. A Monograph presented for the Degree of a Master in Geopolitics, Defence and Security.
12 Up to now, there is no Internationally agreed upon legislation on cyberspace. The only project to that effect was sponsored by the UN resulted in the Tallinn’s Manual (2013) which has been shelved since its inception for lack of concord on its provisions. Contenders see in it a leverage offered to certain parties (The West led by the US) at the expense of the International Community. (See Hugh 2014; Salamantian 2013)
revelations including WikiLeaks\textsuperscript{13} and Surveillance programs\textsuperscript{14} by the NSA are a nightmare that states as well as individuals have not been able to understand thoroughly. What exacerbates the problem is the fact that the UN is unable to prevent that or any other similar event given the fact that they lack the jurisdictional means, the technological expertise and the funds to conduct such protective measures.

The paradox in such unfolding events is that much as people, willingly, subscribe to the project of computerizing and web connection in the late 1990s, much as they, now, fear the loss of control over their lives and properties. As events develop, their fear is not going to abate, particularly as stakeholders, the custodians of the web and their controllers are not willing to share government with the public actors who are losing hold of their sovereignty. The fiction that preceded the proliferation of such technology (Orwell’s 1984, or Huxley’s Brave New World; Orson Well’s Citizen Kane) and the recent one built on the same idea (William Gibson’s Neuromancer) are adamant that the future is going to lead to more loss of control be it by the states or by the individuals to the benefit of a few who possess actual control of the Web (DAPRA and the NSA)\textsuperscript{15}. The last revelations of spying on heads of governments (Angela Merkel) and eavesdropping on millions of Web and cybertechnology users\textsuperscript{16} have only exacerbated the skepticism and fears that certain governments as well as individuals have been warning against.

\textsuperscript{13} Reference is made to the disclosure made public by Julian Assange, now, known under the name of Wikileaks. For further information consult the site on web: \url{http://people.com/politics/julian-assange-donald-trump-wikileaks/}; April 2017.

\textsuperscript{14} Reference is made to the program known as the PRISM defined as follows: PRISM program is a massive surveillance program operated by the United States National Security Agency (NSA). The PRISM program utilizes extensive data mining efforts to collect information and analyze that data for patterns of terrorist or other potential criminal activity. PRISM has been clouded in secrecy since its creation in 2007, but it gained widespread attention recently as a result of its suspected use of data obtained from the servers of major internet companies like Google, Facebook, Microsoft, Apple, Yahoo, AOL, Skype and YouTube. This data is believed to include e-mails, documents, photographs, chats (audio and video) and connection logs of users. Web: \url{http://www.webopedia.com/TERM/P/prism_program.html }, retrieved on 28\textsuperscript{th} March 2017.

\textsuperscript{15} Reference is made here to the two most important Cybersecurity Institutions in the US. The National Security Agency (NSA) and the Defense Advanced Research Project Agency (DAPRA). The latter does sponsor advanced research into the Information system and cyber-technology.

\textsuperscript{16} See supra note 14.
Should the last doubts—built around the possibility of the Russians having tempered with the American elections of November 2016—be true and the subsequent fears that they may do so with any other potential elections, we may be heading for yet another Big Brother\textsuperscript{17} of a different dimension that, at least, the UN cannot withhold. This would be a scary and dreadful tomorrow that runs counter to the optimism shown in the early stages of the Net by the Information Society—although this fear does not question the genuineness of their initial project.

**Concluding Remarks**

Having tried to shed light on the paradoxes, contradictory behavior and the hypocrisy that taint the attitudes of the various parties from the left, the right or the middle—or any other possible location for that matter—with regard to the promotion of democracy, the implementation and enforcement of the HR, we need not put a blind eye to the achievements and the successes these drives have had in curbing misbehavior, and securing multitudes of vulnerable people from tyrant and abusers. Tortures and mass killing, an astounding shock to the world, have indeed, been contained as perpetrators have become knowledgeable of the potential pursuits and punishments that they would face should they fall into the hands of the International Courts—The International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC).\textsuperscript{18} Freedoms of expression and assembly—where enforced by governments albeit as lip services—have acted as deterrents allowing oppressed peoples to topple down oppressive regimes.\textsuperscript{19}

As battle grounds for democracy, they may have been the most effective weapons—something a majority of people would describe as the positive face of democracy.

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\textsuperscript{17} Big Brother is a character in 1984, a novel by George Orwell dealing with then (1948) what was seen as a Futurist Society controlled via video cameras by this authority.

\textsuperscript{18} The International Court of Justice was established in June 1945 by the Charter of the United Nations and began work in April 1946. The seat of the Court is at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands). Of the six principal organs of the United Nations, it is the only one not located in New York (United States of America). Web: https://www.google.com/search?q=International+Court+of+Justice+of+the+United+Nations+is+located+in, retrieved on 28\textsuperscript{th} March 2017. It does not prosecute criminals. There is another court International Criminal Court (2001) that takes into consideration these kinds of felonies.

\textsuperscript{19} Reference is made to what has been commonly called the Arab Spring of 2011.
of globalization. However, it is also wise to say that where there is ill-intention, nothing good would come out, whether we speak of political institutions, human rights values or dissemination of knowledge and information; where good intention prevails, everything can be expected. The inalienable truth, though, is that the match between the political and the universally human is a challenge, probably never to be achieved without the denting of either. This denting has been seen in the amount of hypocrisy and contradictory attitudes states and individuals did/do and may couch their policies in.
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