Harnessing Alterity to Address the Obstacles of the Democratic Peace Theory

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In the present work, I argue that democracy and democratisation are not the surest route to peace: notions of democracy and peace co-constitute notions of non-democracy and non-peace. Both democracy and democratisation are at first taken individually, assessed – and then critiqued through the lens of 'otherness'. They are subsequently brought into conversation with peace, expounding the main hindrances to their connection to it. In order to support my thesis, I harness the Lévinasian concept of 'Self and Other', disclosing the binarisation of a 'democratic-and-peaceful' *vis-à-vis* an 'undemocratic-and-war-prone' grouping. The theory of Self-and-Other proves fundamental to illustrate that democracy and democratisation are not the surest route to peace. In fact, in order to bring about peace, democracy and democratisation need to overcome the hindrances they face. This can be accomplished through a hypothetical 'absolutisation' of democracy and democratisation – an extension to their absolute reach. However, this would contradict the ontological premises that I set: democracy and democratisation rely upon their boundaries and co-constitute the Other that exists beyond them. Moreover, peace itself – the ultimate goal – co-constitutes spaces of war, thus being bound to remain relative.

Following the logic of the argument, the present work is organised into three Chapters – each of which further divided into two sections. Chapter 1 investigates democracy and its connection to peace, identifying the reliance upon otherness of this connection, and its shortcomings. The first section of the Chapter engages in a definitional assessment of the notion of *democracy* within the Democratic Peace Theory (DPT), assessing its ultimate dependency upon a discursive 'Other'. The second section assesses the conceptualisation of *democracy as productive of peace*, highlighting the main hindrance of this link: the produced peace is dyadic, meaning that democracies are peaceful, but only with one another. Chapter 2 examines democratisation and its alleged link with peace. The first section assesses the definition of *democratisation* as part of the DPT, putting it into conversation with the theory of Self-and-Other and with civilisational discourses. The second section, building upon this assessment, looks into the main issue of the idea of *democratisation as leading to peace*: the process is violent. Lastly, Chapter 3 examines the possibility to overcome the limitations of the DPT. An initial section summarises the two addressed hindrances to peace, to hypothesise their overcoming and the achievement of a peace born out of democracy and democratisation. The second section discloses the ultimate failure of such a peace, by uncovering the reliance of democracy, democratisation and peace upon spaces of un-democracy and war.

As concerns the rationale and the scope of the present analysis, through the theory of Self-and-Other I provide a critique to essentialist narratives of 'peace through democracy' and 'peace through democratisation'. The significance of such an analysis stems from the fact that it opens up the space for a re-understanding of democracy, democratisation and peace. Indeed, unveiling the extent to which democracy and democratisation are not productive of peace, in the current meaning assigned to the terms, does not imply a rejection *in toto* of the concepts. The goal is rather that of investigating and evaluating the current terms of the debate. The value of a critical approach stems not from a replacement of the current scholarship – but rather from a critical assessment and re-reading of the latter.

Chapter 1- Democracy and the Road to Peace

This Chapter investigates the notion of democracy and the relationship it establishes with peace, to critique the

theory that the former is the surest route to the latter. First, the definition of democracy is analysed and problematised, to argue that it is tailored upon the Western Self, as opposed to – and reliant upon – the 'undemocratic' Other. Secondly, I investigate the connection of democracy with peace, using the theory of Otherness to address the main obstacle to such a connection.

Democracy: definitional assessment and critique

The notion of democracy, upon which the edifice of the DPT is erected, is premised upon a specific set of definitions. It is initially important to note, for the sake of definitional clarity, that the DPT makes liberalism and democracy coterminous. In Nehru's words (1979), 'Western democracies […] describe themselves as "liberal" democracies' (p.54). This assimilation, albeit allegedly building upon Kant's *Perpetual Peace* (1795/1995), actually forces the philosopher's argument. Kant argues in fact that the desirable *forma regiminis* (government) should be republican rather than despotic. On the contrary, he sees democracy as a type of *forma imperii* that 'is necessarily a form of despotism' (Kant, 1795/1995, p.57). Doyle (1992), and DP theorists more in general, do not tease out this definitional nuance. Doyle's assessment of liberalism and democracy thus builds upon a Kantian foundation, but blurs the line rigidly drawn by the philosopher. This being specified, the three pillars of democracy can be outlined. Doyle harnesses Kant's work to argue that 'liberalism calls for freedom from arbitrary authority' (Doyle, 1992, p.206). This is the first element of liberalism: 'negative freedom', the Hobbesian 'freedom *from*' guaranteed by the state's non-interference *vis-à-vis* individuality. Secondly, the liberalism of the DPT also calls for the provision of the Lockean 'positive freedoms'. The distinction between positive and negative, which transcends Kant and builds upon Berlin's *Four Essays on Liberty* (1969), is at the core of the DPT. Both these types of 'human rights', positive and negative, as outlined by Nehru's 1979 critique of Western liberal democracy, 'are generally considered as being inseparable from western democracy' (p.53). Eventually, a third element, democratic participation or representation, is needed to ensure the achievement of the other two. In the DPT's framework, the combination of these three factors lays the foundation for equality, prosperity and democratic 'success' *senso latu* (Huntington, 1993; Fukuyama, 2010). On the whole, the implant erected by the DPT's definitional framing of democracy is markedly axiological and teleological – with liberal democracy being conceptualised as 'the final form of government' (Fukuyama, 2010, p.31).

This conceptualisation of democracy tends to escape complexity: the 'Western Self' is dependent upon and co-constitutes the non-Western Other. Democracy is a concept in need of pluralisation and complexification, whereas the DPT tends to outline a single narrative tailored upon a Western political *forma*. Building upon Nehru's critique, it can be argued that the three pillars that are taken to define democracy are not a sufficient nor necessary condition for democracy *senso latu*. Rather than being 'universal', the notion of democracy is hegemonically *universalised* building upon a socio-politically and historically contextual basis. This hegemonic process of theoretical induction then enables some to argue, as Huntington does (1993), that democracy has little resonance outside 'the West'. My goal is to analyse the discourses of identity and alterity which underly this and similar narratives, and which can be best analysed by reference to the theorisation of Self and Other. In response to Hobson's claim (2008) that 'non-democracies may offer an unwanted reminder of the fragility and historical contingency of democracy' (p.94), I here argue that non-democracies offer an ontologically-essential means of comparison that enables to establish the Self's democracy. In fact, 'identity and difference are intimately bound together' (Widder, 2002, p.15), with democratic identity being strongly *relational*, in the Hegelian sense. Clear marks of this discursive economy of otherness can be found in Doyle's work (1992), as he claims that 'liberals are fundamentally different' (p.235). This claim is *tranchant*, and it uncovers an 'us vs. them' narrative. Indeed, Doyle's 2005 reworking of his thesis displays a stronger consciousness of the process of othering at play in the DPT, as he acknowledges that liberal states *consider* themselves different. Yet, it is useful to take a further step to problematise the way Doyle's 'democratic liberals' (Doyle, 2005, p.464) define themselves in terms of liberalism. This self-definition, I argue, is rooted precisely in the desire to maintain a stable differentiation *vis-à-vis* those which Nehru terms the 'socialist' or 'Islamic' democracies, and which we could define more generally as 'non-universal'. To apply Lévinas's terminology (1961) to this analysis, the Self of Western liberal democracy cannot be 'produced in the form of a monotonous tautology: "I am I"' (p.26)[1]. That is to say, the logic of the democratic Self requires undemocratic otherness to be ontologically sustainable.

Democracy and peace: the connection and the dyadic obstacle

To assess the connection between democracy and peace and ground the critiques outlined in the following paragraph, the notion of 'democratic peace' must be addressed. In Doyle's writing (1983), it is intended as the 'absence of war between liberal states […] for almost two hundred years' (p.217). Breaking down this concept at the heart of the DPT, we are faced with an essentially negative definition of peace, conceptualised as a space without war. War, in turn, is intended in function of the number of battle deaths it causes – thus excluding any 'small war'. Additionally, the war against which the democratic peace is defined is rigidly of the interstate type – where the state is designated as the sovereign product of Westphalia. Barkawi and Laffey (1999) summarise the DPT's notion of peace by expounding how it is in fact defined as absence of war between core Westphalian states: 'the decline in interstate war in the core is […] accounted for by reference to the existence of a "zone of peace" between democratic states' (p.403). Civil wars, covert interventions and destabilisation missions are not taken into account by the DPT, as admitted by Doyle himself (1992). Only in these terms is democracy held to be productive of a peace. For those who accept these terms, however, the democracy-peace connection becomes a reality, and assumes a markedly teleological connotation. As liberal regimes gain 'deeper domestic foundations and longer international experience, a pacific union of these liberal states' is *naturally* accomplished (Doyle, 1999, p.217). Kant, in Doyle's view, offers the best guidance to understand this exceptionally teleological 'liberal pacification' (Doyle, 1999, p.225). According to the three Kantian articles for a liberal peace (1795/1995), the key to peace lies in the civil constitution being republican, in a federal international law established between free states and in cosmopolitan right coextensive with universal hospitality. What is however established by Kant, as anticipated, is the framework of a *republican* alliance against war – while the DPT stretches this conceptualisation to explain the democracy-peace connection.

What emerges from these definitional framings is a notion of peace that, just as democracy, is tailored upon the Western Self, being opposed to and co-constitutive of a non-Western Other – the consequence being that peace dyadically functions within the locus of the democratic Self. Doyle (1992) asserts that the very institutions and constitutional respect for human rights 'that promote peace among liberal societies can exacerbate conflicts in relations between liberal and non-liberal societies' (p.325). In other words, for the DPT, democracies do not fight each other, but war with non-democracies endures. What is behind this admittedly *dyadic* DP is that peace is defined in such a way as to function for the Self and not for the Other. Definitions being indeed highly politicised performances, a West-centred notion of democracy comes to be discursively productive of peace *in the West*. As explained by Özkeçeci-Taner (2002), the 'definition of democracy has made the proponents of the theory to exclude important incidences of "dyadic democratic war" such as the US Civil War, the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon' (p.43). The DPT is premised upon a careful set of exclusions, which root an over-simplified peace within Western democracies – while definitionally ostracising the undemocratic Other from such peace. Precisely this exclusion of the Other from the space of peace enables to constitute and reify the borders of the democratic-and-peaceful Self. A necessary precondition for the establishment of such a 'Self' is in fact 'the existence of an external Other, since the universal is established by ruling out those identities which go beyond the existence of this particular type of universality' (Hošková, 2016, p.29). In other words, behind the tautological façade of the Lévinasian 'I am I' lies the 'You', the *différence* that is required by the logic of the Self. The very dyadic connotation of the DPT, on the whole, relies on a peace that is limited to the Self – and premised upon the exclusion of the Other.

Chapter 2- Democratisation and the Road to Peace

This Chapter investigates the notion of democratisation – as rooted in and proceeding from democracy – and its connection with peace. I here continue the analysis begun in Chapter 1, laying the foundation to argue that democratisation, as democracy and proceeding from it, is not the surest route to peace. First, democratisation is critically assessed, to compare it with democracy and, by framing it within civilisational discourses of Self-and-Other, problematise it. Secondly, I analyse the link between democratisation and peace, teasing out through alterity the key hindrance it faces.

From democracy to democratisation: becoming democratic, making democratic

Having assessed and evaluated democracy and its relationship with peace, I now aim at investigating the notion of democratisation – to subsequently determine the extent to which it connects to peace. Democratisation can be read as an operationalisation of democracy – which, while being its ἀρχή (*arké*), its origin in the Aristotelian sense, is

made into the endpoint of the process of democratisation. A critical assessment of democratisation starts here with an investigation into the intransitive and transitive use of the verb 'democratise' – given that the two have different implications in the framework of the DPT. The former use can be found in Doyle's notion, built upon Kant, of a 'process of graduation into republicanism' (Doyle, 1983, p.350). This autonomous graduation relies in fact on an intransitive employment of the verb 'to democratise', meaning '*becoming* democratic'. In the framework of the DPT, this intransitive democratisation is intended as a form of progress which is conceived as natural – as a 'natural evolution' (Doyle, 1983, p.227) towards democracy. The transitive use of the verb, however, becomes necessary when the process comes to face setbacks and obstacles: as Doyle admits, it might become necessary to 'help' democratisation – to transitively *make* democratic. This 'support' is performed 'to assist in driving history "forward" along a path that is thought to be a universal history of human progress' (Bowden, 2004, p.45). Fukuyama (2010) offers an excellent example of such narrative – and, what is more, he equates an evolution from authoritarianism to democracy with one from barbarianism to civilisation. Building upon Chapter 1, what states are 'helped' to become is in fact 'universal' democracies guaranteeing 'human' rights – in the framework of a discourse of civilisational progress.

Such a notion of a 'democratising' progress towards a civilisational *telos* is, as in the case of democracy, strongly premised upon a discursive economy of otherness: harnessing the theory of Self and Other enables once more to shed light on the terms and processes at stake. If democracy ontologically relies upon an undemocratic Other to be (statically) instantiated, democratisation sets this narrative into motion. In a process of mutual implication, the identity of the democratic Self, as opposed to the undemocratic Other, justifies expansion (i.e. democratisation); concurrently, this expansion enables to reify that very identity. On the one hand, in fact, the democratic character of identity legitimises its expansion: 'more Western intervention in the "uncivilized" world' is needed 'to save the wretched of the earth from home-grown "barbarism"' (Bowden, 2004, p.55). On the other hand, expansion through democratisation does the political work of solidifying the very democratic identity. The narcissistic expansion of the democratic Self, breaking through the Other's boundaries, reproduces the boundary itself through a form of negative dialectics. This in turn reifies the identity of the Self, of that which is within the limen: in Campbell's terminology (1992), the frontier scripts the Self. The Self is thus indeed *activity*, manifested in the form of a yearning for totality and expansion, but it concurrently displays a passive need for the Other to be ontologically instantiated (Lévinas, 1972). We thus witness a process of democratisation that instantiates and reproduces democracy by expanding it at the expense of the Other – which comes to perform as 'a potentiality or function of the establishment and affirmation of ego, or I' (Burggraeve, 1999, p.35). The main takeaway of this analysis, expanded in the following paragraph, is that democratisation, motioning democracy towards an undemocratic Other, is a function of such alterity. This democratising process (while being legitimised by the democratic identity) is indebted to that very Other towards which it expands. If the DPT's *democracy*, as shown in Chapter 1, is statically peaceful, it is now worth exploring how *democratisation* dynamically connects to peace.

Democratisation and peace: the connection and the obstacle of violence

Having assessed the contours of democratisation discourses, the relation established with peace can now be assessed. Building upon what has been argued so far, it is here the goal to see how these narratives apply to the notion of a connection with peace – to subsequently address the main hindrance to this connection. If democracy is conceived by DP theorists as coextensive with peace, democratisation is conceived as expansively generative of the latter. That very expansion of the democratic Self, analysed in Section 2.1, is taken to be productive of pacification. The evolution from authoritarianism to democracy is interpreted as one from war to peace – thus being normatively justified and actively sought. As epitomised by Hobson's critical account (2011), 'the zone of peace can be expanded by force, if it does not continue to extend naturally. […] If liberal democracies are the key to a more peaceful international order, this form of government should be *encouraged* [emphasis added]' (p.1911). In other words, through a process of expansion of the democratic Self there is the possibility to bring into being the peace that is linked with being democratic. In Doyle's words (1983), this represents a chance to 'accelerate the process of graduation into peace' (p.350). This transitive and expansive pacification can be framed in terms of a civilising mission – in ways that deeply resent from Self-and-Other narratives. To this respect, Paris's *International Peacebuilding and the "Mission Civilisatrice"* (2002) is useful to explore the connections, within the DPT, between democratisation and peace. In Paris's words, 'peace operations should be construed as a modern version of the

colonial-era *mission civilisatrice*' (Paris, 2002, p.656). Overall, in the DPT model, democratisation proceeds from a core, expands outward and generates peace – radically transforming the recipient societies in the sense of civilisation. If democracy is peaceful, democratisation is actively productive of peace, and thus elevates the 'periphery' to the status of the Self.

We can now analyse, as has been done for democracy, the main obstacle faced by this alleged connection between democratisation and peace: the democratic *violence* of the Self. As shown, the DPT-based process of 'pacification through democratisation' relies upon a discursive economy of Self-and-Other. Democratisation expands democracy towards the war-prone, uncivilised Other, attempting to subjugate alterity. I now disclose how, when peace is 'bought at the price of difference' (Hobson, 2008, p.92), the democratisation-peace connection is hindered. I read this relationship of alterity through Lévinas's *Totalité et Infini* (1961). In contrast to the reading suggested by Freud's *On Narcissism* (1914), rooted in the notion of the love for the Other, I read the rapport between democracy and non-democracy as carrying an implicit propension to *aggression*. As expressed in Avşar's *Egocentrism and Violence: A Critique of Democratic Peace Theory* (2004), 'in democratic peace theory, there exists a fundamental narcissism of ego, which takes itself to be the centre of all meaning' (p.16). The narcissistic imposition of the Self through democratisation represents a violent triumph of the 'civilised' over the 'uncivilised', in the name of a Self-imposed standard of civilisation. This narrative of triumph is premised upon a set of coercive actions of violent de-othering that are not factored by the DPT, but that are in all respects carried out by democracies – in the name of democracy. Within this framework, 'the end of defending and expanding Democratic Peace comes to contain coercive and violent means' (Hobson, 2011, p.1911). Applying Lévinas's phraseology, democratisation performs as a 'movement of annihilation' (Lévinas, 1961, p.233). For the DPT, however, this movement does not instantiate a 'passage to nothingness' but rather 'to another existence' (Lévinas, p.232): a democratic and peaceful one. Democratic violence is thus read by DP theorists as transformative rather than annihilating. Peace being the ultimate end of the process, the obliteration of undemocratic existences is justified through the creation of a zone of democratic sameness that drives to peace. Yet, even if we accept this teleological, legitimising reading of aggressive democratisation, the process is *ad interim* a violent and bellicose one – this being its fundamental setback. If peace is re-read beyond the narrow DPT framework, its incompatibility with this process becomes evident.

Chapter 3- Democracy, Democratisation and the Obstacles to Peace

This Chapter builds upon the previous ones, hypothesising an overcoming of the two hindrances that democracy and democratisation encounter on their path to peace. First, I summarise and bring together the hindrances, to hypothesise a solution based on the absolutisation of democracy and democratisation. Secondly, I harness the notion of otherness in which democracy and democratisation are rooted (*supra*), to expound the ineradicable character of the *Others* to both democracy and peace. Non-democracy and war ontologically must endure, which contradicts the narrative of a road to peace.

Democracy, democratisation and peace: beyond the hindrances to the DP?

Building upon the investigation, in the previous Chapters, of 'Democracy and Peace' and 'Democratisation and Peace', I here take seriously the hypothesis of a solution to the obstacles faced on the road to peace. I have closed both Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 with an analysis of the hindrances to the argument that democracy and democratisation are the surest route to peace. Chapter 1 has shown how democracy is linked to peace within the framework of the DPT – the critique being that, based on a discursive economy of Self-and-Other, the DP works only for the Self and in opposition to an Other. Attempting to transcend this critique, however, it could be argued that this hindrance is not *inherent* to democracy. In fact, it rather derives from the fact that democracy is *static*: it is not extended to the entirety of the world, and peace only takes place within this statically-limited reach. Here lies the key to a potential overcoming of this first obstacle. Hypothetically, the static issue pertaining to the 'dyadic peace' can be overcome expanding democracy to its *absolutum* – it's absolute, complete fulfilment. Reus-Smit (2005), building upon Kant, remarks that the key notion of Kant's *Perpetual Peace* is that only through a global expansion 'would liberal principles of right prevail and war be constrained' (Reus-Smit, 2005, p.78). Via the absolutisation of such expansion, peace would end being limited by a dyadic hindrance: the undemocratic Other would cease to exist. Russett (2013) claims that, as concerns the DPT, 'we might see a stronger monadic effect in a system where

democracies are a strong majority' (p.105): I provocatively argue that the monadic effect might be *absolute* if democracy were to be expanded to its complete reach. The dyad itself, in brief, would cease to have ontological valence: widening democracy to the point where it eradicates the Other thus hypothetically ends the static, dyadic hindrance.

In Chapter 2, I have investigated the process of democratisation – concluding that the main hindrance lies in *ad interim* violence. Unlike the static hindrance linked to democracy, the issue of the violent imposition of peace is a *dynamic* one – linked to the way democracy is set into motion. Democratisation produces a form of violence that, in the short term, hinders peace in the name of the democratic value it is expanding. And yet, it could be argued that this hindrance as well is not inherent to democratisation itself. It rather seems to proceed from the sheer incompleteness of the process: in the framework of the DPT, violence is used as a tool as long as some countries remain undemocratic. The key to a hypothetical solution thus lies once more in the *absolute* completion of democratisation. Hypothetically, from a DPT standpoint, democratisation can set democracy into motion and bring it to the point of completion where non-democracy no longer exists. This new order consequently ends the dynamic obstacle of violence: violent expansion is no longer needed. Overall, therefore, a hypothetically absolute completion of democracy and democratisation is the key to the hypothesised resolution of both hindrances to peace. The Other to democracy is eradicated, and this eradicates the Other to peace.

Democracy, democratisation and peace: the persistence of war

During the course of the present analysis, I have presented the obstacles encountered on the 'road to peace' and a hypothetical solution: it is now the goal to look back at the initial definitional assessments and at the analysis of alterity to see why the solution ultimately fails. In the first place, as shown, democracy and democratisation are reliant upon their Other, i.e. upon un-democratic ontological spaces. This is the first principle that contravenes the logic of bringing peace by expanding democracy to is *absolutum*: *democracy* needs non-democracy to be instantiated. As claimed by Campbell in his reflection on the politics of the Self in international politics (1992), 'the logic of identity requires difference': the Self 'depends for its accomplishment on the recognition of that which is other, like, and simultaneously other and like' (p.70). Applying this logic to the present case, I argue that to signify itself as democratic the Self requires dichotomy, i.e. an 'us vs. them' gnoseological movement. Differentiation is the basis for the establishment of identity – to the extent that the Self can discursively narrate its intention to conquer the Other, but such motion can never be brought to completion. Building upon Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, Widder (2002) discloses how 'the necessity of negation' draws 'from the inability of being as a simple positivity' (Widder, 2002, p.34). The democratic identity cannot exist as a 'self-identical being-in-itself' (Widder, 2002, p.58), as 'the identity of any X is determined only by its not being not-X' (p.15). In brief, democracy and democratisation co-constitute spaces of non-democracy and non-democratisation, at once shaping and being shaped by them: their extension *ad absolutum* cannot be accomplished.

In the second place, as shown, *peace* is equally reliant upon its Other – war. This is the second principle that contravenes the possibility to overcome *ad interim* hindrances to peace through an absolute expansion of democracy. Negatively defined, peace is maintained precisely through its opposition to non-peace. As expressed by Lévinas (1961), 'the Self and the Other [*le Meme et l'Autre*] would not enter in a reciprocal relation that embraces them both' (p.79). What is here intended is that the oppositional *rapport* between Self and Other is one that must persist for identity – which is relational – to be reproduced. This principle finds a concrete application in the context of democracy-and-peace: as claimed by Hobson (2008), the democratic Self aims at 'promoting peace between democracies, while potentially encouraging war against non-democratic others' (p.75). Democracy is the solidification of an identity which collectively wages war – and this solidification proceeds through and as a function of the opposition to war. The 'democratic peace' is in fact linked with 'the survival of militarily, economically, institutionally weak' and ultimately war-prone states (Reus-Smit, 2005, p.75). That which Galtung defines as 'democracy domestically, belligerence abroad' (Galtung, as quoted in Avşar, 2004, p.16) is an opposition that is ultimately performative: it is productive of that which it narrates. In other words, precisely through the opposition to non-peace does peace assume ontological consistency for the Self. Peace co-constitutes spaces of non-peace in ways that contradict the statement of a democracy-induced road to peace.

Conclusion

The present analysis has evaluated how democracy and democratisation are not the surest route to peace, due to the ontological impossibility of eradicating what is not democratic and not peaceful. In the first place, the theoretical device of Self-and-Other has enabled to critically assess democracy and democratisation, showing how these concepts do not stand alone: they are 'always already mediated […] by a relational movement of forces' (Widder, 2002, p.49). Through this tool, I have expounded the reliance of the Self upon the Other – laying the foundation to argue that the former cannot be absolutised. Secondly, harnessing otherness has enabled to critique the relation that democracy and democratisation establish with peace. Here, I have exposed two main hindrances – pertaining to a *dyadic* and *violent* democratic peace. Thirdly, the analytical device of Self-and-Other has allowed to respond to a hypothesised solution of the hindrances. Democracy and democratisation *could* bring about peace through an absolute expansion – but this cannot be accomplished precisely because the limitation to the Self is what instantiates it.

Through this analytical device, I have thus analysed how democracy and democratisation are taken to lead to peace, and I have responded to this theory. The notion of a DP builds upon the idea that the Self is not indebted to alterity. If the Self intends itself as untied to the Other, in fact, the latter can be conquered and negated, in an attempted '*néantisation du néant*' (nihilation of nothingness) (Lévinas, 1961, p.260). In this framework, non-democracy and war can (and should) be overcome. I have responded to this thesis by uncovering how the democratic-and-peaceful Self is rather premised upon a discursive economy counterposing it to an undemocratic-and-war-prone Other: non-democracy and war are ultimately ineradicable from the ontology of the Self. The Self of the DPT exists by virtue of its Other, in a *rapport* of co-constitution: the spaces within which the democratic-and-peaceful identity of the Self is defined co-constitute spaces of *différence*. Precisely this co-constitution contradicts the possibility to eradicate non-democracy and war. What I argue, in fact, is that Russett's 'incompletely Kantian world' (Russett, 2013, p.104) is not a limitation to democracies but rather a condition of possibility at the root of their existence. Rather than signifying as a road to peace, democracy and democratisation are thus engaged in a relation of mutual dependency with their opposites – being productive of a dyadic, violent peace that co-constitutes spaces of war.

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Note

[1] Translations from French and Italian are my own.

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