

# Chapter 5

## Can Democracy Be All Things to All People?



**Abstract** Many observers postulated that we were in a post-ideological age especially from the 1970s on. This may be true in the context of doctrinaire Marxism or Christianity. However, ordinary people are viewing ideology on different levels, albeit without using the term, and looking for credible dynamic leaders to bring change as witnessed especially with the rise in populisms. Diversity of contested ideas, conflicts and geographical scales makes analysis additionally complex. Whether due to local and regional planning in mature democracies, or that regarding the MENA countries, Kosovo, Venezuela, South Sudan or Myanmar, the common factor is power relationships, and balances of fear and influence in specific places. Hence the solution is habitually the least unjust response. If hostilities are put down by force, then the long-term reasons for conflict remain and will eventually resurface. All conflict does not necessarily lead to violence as proven by democratic consensus reached in many jurisdictions, including traditional conflict resolution methods as found throughout Africa and Asia in contrast to the highly adversarial and litigious culture often associated with America. Disputes exist within and between democratic states, war does not.

**Keywords** Ideology · ‘isms’ · Governance · Democracy · Citizenship · Competition · Fundamentalism

### 5.1 Introduction

In trying to comprehend the sources, root-causes and categories of conflicts, we often find ‘isms’ denoting a distinctive practice, system or philosophy frequently based on **dogma**—a set of principles laid down by an authority as irrefutably true—or typically a political ideology such as nationalism, republicanism, liberal-capitalism, socialism and so forth. **Ideology is a system of ideas that is usually codified** and an ideologue may be viewed as a revolutionary thinker; and, or as a person who articulates and narrates his or her own space, time and society as with President Hugo Chavez and Bolivarianism (died 2013) in Venezuela.

While some observers postulate that we are in a post-ideological age especially since the 1970s, this may be true in the context of **doctrinaire Marxism or Christianity**, or the evolving social reservations in capitalism regarding unbridled consumerism and non-sustainable environmental destruction, but many **ordinary people** are viewing ideology on another level, albeit without seeing or using the term ideology, and they are **looking for dynamic leaders to bring change**.

In the human quest of individuals **to give their own lives a meaning and purpose** and socially to avoid anomy, and empathize or connect with other people, in a **post-modern globalizing world**, many are highly suspicious of explicit ideologies with a certain ‘we have seen it all before’ attitude. Others are drawn towards **syncretic cultural and ideological beliefs**, or a credence in drawing on **fundamental ideas from culture or religion in a revivalist manner**. The internet has offered virtual spaces for all types of ‘we’ groups, both ethical and unethical, both legal and illegal. Some people manipulate aspects of ideologies **searching for a meaning for themselves and to promote it** through sects, associations or the ballot box in the respective societies. Others may use **extreme methods to impose ‘their truth’** often in order to try and reassure themselves, leading to violent conflict. **Romanization** of violence for those searching for a cause, especially in cyberspace and dark web, can have a strong pull effect on recruiting delusional or self-perceived heroes, and that cultivates the extremes of the ‘us and them’ syndrome that nurtures **cultures of hatred**.

### *5.1.1 The Pillars and Organs of Ideology*

The characteristics of the **pillars and organs of ideology** can include top-down factors as with an **establishment ideology of the state**, associated **bureaucracies, military, law and judiciary, educational system, and sometimes religion**. Regarding **bottom-up ideologies**, they may be a reaction to, or rejection of the current lived situation, and attempt at offering what it perceives to be solutions. Viewing ideology in this spectrum of doctrine, myth, or belief that guides an individual, a way of life, a mentality and a personality, it could be argued that there are **root ideologies** based on cultural and social constructs. This does not necessarily suggest one ideological vision or deterministic cultural world-view. Often individuals interpret ideologies, and select aspects of them, and numerous syncretic types of ideology evolve differently and diffuse over space and time and are influenced by other ideologies and cultures. With this in mind, Albert Einstein is reputed to have said that: ‘it is harder to crack a prejudice than an atom’. However, in the Socratic tradition, we are reminded about wisdom and that: “I do not think I know what I do not know”; while Victor Hugo says that: “No army can stop an idea whose time has come” and “There shall be no slavery of the mind”.

Regarding **ideology and religion**, during the Christian Reformation in 16th century Europe, following the 15th century Renaissance or rebirth of interest in Greco-Roman civilization, several emerging states established **national churches** in the

process of **nation-state building** including England and many German-speaking states, Denmark and the Scandinavian countries, breaking with religious rule from the Roman Catholic Church under the authority of the Pope in the Vatican state. In contrast, Roman Catholicism continued to play key roles in the nationalisms of Spain, Austria, Poland, Portugal and Ireland well into the late 20th century. In Eastern Europe and the Balkans, many countries developing proto nation-states such as Serbia, Russia, Romania and Greece that established their own Christian Orthodox churches with their own autonomous religious patriarchs having special links with the Pope in Rome, but closely connected to their respective 'nations' from the 9th century on. This was consolidated in the 11th century East-West schism. Interestingly these old power and cultural fault-lines had shadows of the splitting of the Roman Empire in the third century into two spheres, with one based on Rome and the other on Byzantium, later to become Constantinople and eventually Istanbul in 1553. With the demise of communism in the Soviet Union, the **Russian Orthodox Church has re-emerged as a strong political force in the Russian Federation with resilient links to the political elite**, while in Ukraine the Orthodox Church has been re-asserting its independence from the Moscow Patriarchate over the past decade.

From the 7th century on, Islam influenced legislation in all territories with Muslim majorities and the Caliph, chief Muslim civil and religious ruler, regarded as the successor of the prophet Mohammad, ruled in Baghdad until 1258 and then in Egypt until the Ottoman conquest of 1517. The title was then held by the Ottoman sultans until the sultanate and caliphate were abolished in 1924 by Kemal Atatürk, president of the new modernizing Turkish republic who promoted **separation of religion and politics** within the state following the historic precedents set in the revolutions and constitutions of secular France and the USA. In the Arabian Peninsula, Sunni Muslim revivalist puritanical **Wahhabism** was born in the 18th century, where its preacher made an alliance with the leading Bin Saud family, consolidating religious and political alliances, which has endured over the centuries, making Wahhabism the state religion in Saudi Arabia today. With the **Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, the new Shia government there proclaimed the first official theocracy in modern history**.

In the above examples from Europe and the MENA, it could be argued that **religious fundamentalisms and nationalisms became part of root-ideologies**. Nonetheless, many Islamic fundamentalists believe that state sponsored nationalism is essentially in contradiction of Islam's Koranic prescription to convert all humankind to Islam and not just a specific ethnic or national group; essentially a similar philosophy found in the Christian missionary universalizing tradition.

Of course this close **alliance of concepts was challenged by free thinkers in many societies**, and especially in Europe from the 18th century on with the **Age of Enlightenment**, an intellectual and scientific movement characterized by a scientific approach to religious, political, social and economic issues which influenced the **Revolutions** in America (1776) and France (1789) with the American Constitution promoting the individual citizen and Bill of Rights which influenced the France Constitution and Declarations of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. In essence

both constitutions forbade formal links between religious authorities and institutions, and the state, guaranteeing citizens freedom of individual beliefs. The above two examples are seen as watersheds in the construction of Western democracy and human rights.

**Ideology has been, and is used by all states and imperial powers in an attempt to sustain power and control.** However, it should be noted that many images of the state still carry **symbols** of root-ideologies, as with religious symbolism. A third of the 196 country flags in the world have religious imagery: 31 Christianity, 21 Islam, 3 Hinduism/Buddhism (Cambodia, India, and Nepal), 2 Buddhism (Sri Lanka and Bhutan), with one for Judaism (Israel), and 6 other religions (Argentina, Japan, Mexico, Mongolia, South Korea and Uruguay). Christian crosses are found on the flags of the UK, Switzerland, Slovakia, Serbia, Georgia, and the Scandinavian states. Muslim stars and, or sickle moon images exist on the flags of Algeria, Libya, Jordan, Turkey, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and the distinctive flag of Saudi Arabia with the Muslim creed written on it. The Star of David is prominent on the Israeli flag.<sup>1</sup>

According to Samuel Huntington's **Clash of Civilizations** (1993) thesis, he identified eight (re)emerging civilizations: Western, Latin American, Islamic, Sinic, Hindu, Orthodox, Buddhist, and Japanese, and a possible ninth, African. For Huntington, the hegemony of the Christian West would be most threatened by the Sinic Civilization—spurred on by Chinese economic growth, Islam—fuelled by a youthful population bulge and age structure, and Latin American civilizations, with Mexican and other migrants transforming the culture of cities like Los Angeles and Austin. According to Huntington, global politics today is structured around a Clash of Civilizations in which religions are playing a crucial role—as both harbingers of conflict and advocates of peace. But this thesis has been heavily criticized and many argue that it fails to capture the complexity of the tensions, cultural faultlines, conflicts and wars which are at work in the world. In short, Huntington's—*The Clash of Civilizations* (1993) postulated that sources of conflict post-1991 would not be primarily purely ideological or economic, but cultural.<sup>2</sup>

Edward Said's (1935–2003) rebuffal to the so called *Clash of Civilizations*, argues that we have a **Clash of Ignorance** (2001): “These are tense times, but it is better to think in terms of powerful and powerless communities, the secular politics of reason and ignorance, and universal principles of justice and injustice, than to wander off in search of vast abstractions that may give momentary satisfaction but little self-knowledge or informed analysis. ‘The Clash of Civilizations’ thesis is a gimmick like ‘The War of the Worlds’ better for reinforcing defensive self-pride than for critical understanding of the bewildering interdependence of our time”.<sup>3</sup>

Dominique Moïsi in *The Geopolitics of Emotion* (2010) argues that: “... mapping of emotions ... is .... as legitimate and compulsory ... as ... mapping of geographical

<sup>1</sup>Religious symbols on national flags. [http://www.pewresearch.org/files/2014/11/FT\\_14.11.25\\_religionFlags\\_640px1.png](http://www.pewresearch.org/files/2014/11/FT_14.11.25_religionFlags_640px1.png).

<sup>2</sup>Huntington (1993) and Fukuyama (1989).

<sup>3</sup>Edward Said: The Clash of Ignorance The Nation, October 2001.

realities...; the post-9/11 world has become divided by more than cultural faultlines between nations and civilizations... **geopolitics of today is characterized by a “clash of emotions...; cultures of fear, humiliation, and hope are reshaping the world.”** The West, is dominated and divided by fear. For Muslims and Arabs, a culture of humiliation is quickly devolving into a culture of hatred. To understand our changing world, we need to confront emotion. “Self-preservation means change—the status quo is untenable”. Moisi also argues that the two major globalization hubs are: (i) the USA regarding the evolving world ‘culture’ and (ii) Asia, with China and India as cores, for economy; with the West trying to re-adjust.<sup>4</sup>

### 5.1.2 *Ideological Competition*

From 1945 to 1990 the most obvious ideological conflict lay between the communist and capitalist political-economy ideologies as led by the superpowers Russia and the USA, and their respective allies.<sup>5</sup> While hostilities existed the superpowers did not confront each other directly in open warfare but rather indirectly through propaganda and proxy wars supporting different regimes and factions in countries ranging from Vietnam, Indonesia and Korean to Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, Cuba, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Chile. The **Cold War** (1947–91) protagonists followed the so called policy of **Deterrence**, a theory which holds that nuclear weapons are intended to frighten other states from attacking with their nuclear weapons, through the promise of retaliation and possibly mutually assured destruction (MAD), and hence the balance of fear was maintained. Whatever the discourses concerning the Cold War, it must be remembered that the vast majority of ordinary people, and especially those in the NICs, were more concerned with basic issues regarding their daily livelihoods and especially poverty, food and work.

With the ‘physical’ ending of the Cold War (1990–91), there was much hope for a more stable world with less conflict and war, and greater collaboration in the international community, that would have a positive knock-on effect on development. This was short lived due to the wars in the Balkans, former Soviet republics in Asia, and in Africa, and the 9/11 terrorist attacks on America.

Following the US-UK debacle in invading Iraq in 2003, the main justification offered was that Saddam Hussein’s regime held WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction), but none were ever found. Some pundits insightfully defined WMD as words of mass destruction. In the mutual destruction and fear games, Iraq as part of this geopolitical Shatterbelt zone degenerated into a multifaceted civil war zone contributing to regional instability, and increasing rise of the fundamentalist Jihadi phenomenon

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<sup>4</sup>Moisi (2016).

<sup>5</sup>Communism Versus Capitalism. [http://www.sjUSD.org/leland/teachers/sgillis/geog/asia/Communism\\_Capitalism\\_pro\\_con.pdf](http://www.sjUSD.org/leland/teachers/sgillis/geog/asia/Communism_Capitalism_pro_con.pdf) and Defining Capitalism and Communism. [http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/engl\\_258/lecture%20notes/capitalism%20etc%20defined.htm](http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/engl_258/lecture%20notes/capitalism%20etc%20defined.htm).

in Iraq and especially neighbouring Syria. The nuclear balance of fear came to the fore once more regarding Iran and Western policy.

### 5.1.3 *Religion and Fundamentalism*

**Clashes of every type now form part of globalizing internet news.** They can range from social, moral and ethical matters, to so called political correctness extremism in Western and other cultures surrounding various interpretations of feminism, LGBT issues, same sex marriage, abortion and human cloning, to Daesh terrorist operations in Syria and Libya, or nationalistic Hindu groups seeking supremacy in India, or Buddhist attempts to dominate political life in Sri Lanka. Overuse of the term **fundamentalism** by the media and public alike has made the word **fundamentalist** almost synonymous with conflict and terrorism. Nonetheless, fundamentalism can be defined as **a strict adherence to some belief or ideology**, especially in a moral or religious context, whereby the **holy books or perceived words of God are taken literally**. For instance, in the Abrahamic prophetic monotheistic tradition of Judaism, from which Christianity and Islam developed, and the associated sacred books, it is stated that God created the world and everything in it including the first people Adam and Eve in seven days. Hence extreme fundamentalists adhering to the above religions take these words literally leaving little room for interpretation including metaphor and paradox, and refute the scientific theories of the so called Big Bang and evolution. This is just one example among many.

Religious fundamentalism is not unique to sections of believers in the Abrahamic religions and is found in others in different contexts including Hinduism and Buddhism.<sup>6</sup> **Religious fundamentalists often try to establish a blueprint for social and political organization based on very selective readings, offering guidelines from the holy books and traditions, as with the Christian Mennonite Amish communities found mostly in Pennsylvania and Ohio.** However religious fundamentalists can become militant and violent when such groups try imposing their vision by force or terrorism—the unofficial or unauthorized use of force—fear, terror, intimidation and violence—in the pursuit of political aims targeting their own social community and place, or country, neighbouring states and their populations. In certain instances, complex collaborative arrangements and relationships may exist informally or formally between governments and fundamentalist terrorist organizations within or outside their own states, using such terrorist groups to strike outside that state. Such accusations have been made against Iran and Saudi Arabia among other countries.

**Militant fundamentalism** depending on specific geographical contexts can be the product of over-simplified ‘us and them’ classifications, and pseudo racial, ethnic or cultural profiling. It may be a response to fear, real or imagined failures of moder-

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<sup>6</sup>Read more: Hindu Fundamentalism: Does it exist? <https://tamaraalom.wordpress.com/hindu-fundamentalism-does-it-exist/>.

nity whether in the richer or poorer societies, globalization, development processes and poverty, bad governance and political inertia, and shortcomings in democracy as experienced by populations in many post-colonial societies where neither communism, socialism nor market-led liberalism are perceived to have delivered a better way of life for many people as in Iraq, Sudan, Somalia, Algeria and northern Nigeria. But this fundamentalist phenomenon is not exclusive to the former colonies, and has been witnessed in the USA among so called right-wing groups. The phenomenon has also been seen with terrorism in the name of religious fundamentalism carried out by American citizens within the USA, and similarly in European countries and Russia, including series of attacks in France, Britain, Germany and Russia especially since 2014.

Usually fundamentalism engenders centrifugal force impacts for states and the international community. In Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* (1993) and the *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996), he posited that people's cultural and religious identities would be the main source of conflict in the post-Cold War world; his theory was in response to Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man* (1996) in which he speculated that: we are witnessing the endpoint of mankind's ideological evolution and so the universalization of **Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government**.<sup>7</sup>

By the 1970s, many social scientists believed that **modernity**—including **science and technology, education and higher living standards**—would replace religion as a major force in society and identity politics, and especially in geopolitics. This perspective was seriously **challenged by the Iranian Fundamentalist Revolution in 1979** and declaration of a theocracy or system of government in which clerics rule in the name of God. Nonetheless, in Latin America, sections of the Roman Catholic clergy and congregations were becoming influenced by **Liberation Theology** seeking to redress problems of poverty, social injustice and human rights as well as spiritual matters despite objections from conservative Vatican leaders. Though not part of the Liberation Theology clerical circles, in 1980 Archbishop Óscar Romero of El Salvador, who spoke out against poverty, social injustice, assassinations and torture was killed by right-wing paramilitaries during a religious service. The Vatican remained ominously quiet on the issue, but in 2018 he was elevated to the status of sainthood.

Missionary work of various American-based **Christian Evangelical churches** targeted **Latin America**—promoting the sole authority of the Bible—based on fundamentalist literalism—in order to gain salvation through regeneration or rebirth, and a spiritually transformed personal life. Such religious activities in Latin America must also be seen in the context of the Cold War being fought out in the USA's 'back yard'. This wave of **Christian fundamentalism** became especially visible in the US during the presidential administrations of Ronald Regan (1981–89), George Bush (1989–93) and George W. Bush (2001–2009).

Issues of **identity**, religion and its use and misuse remain a real factor **in internal and international conflict**. In this context it should be remembered that **religion**

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<sup>7</sup>See Footnote 2.

can be defined as a set of beliefs related to the cause, nature and purpose of the universe and human life, particularly when viewed as the creation of a super-human agency or agencies, usually involving rituals, sacred places, and moral codes governing individual and social conduct. In an era of hyper-globalization and media interconnectedness, people are looking for answers not only about a possible afterlife, but coping with **fear for their current everyday needs**, and are alarmed by the cultural changes taking place around them, and its manifestation with increasing immigration.

Historically, overtly or covertly, consciously or subconsciously, **religion has usually been closely linked to other social and political ideological systems** of ideals such as monarchy, nationalism and resistance movements. Over the past half century, examples of this became evident in conflicts in Israel—Palestine, Northern Ireland, Serbia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Chechnya, Kashmir, Sudan and Myanmar with its Buddhist majority population witnessing discrimination against the Rohingya Muslim minority.

#### *5.1.4 Democracies and Conflict*

Democracy or a system of government by the whole population, or all eligible members of a state, typically through voting for elected representatives does not necessarily mean an **absence of conflict neither in democratic states, nor within the context of foreign interventions** as witnessed in US-led allied interventions in Afghanistan (2001) and especially Iraq (2003). However, democracy facilitates citizens in contesting government decisions affecting them at home, and also abroad in their name, but too often taken by the political authorities without fully taking into account local opposition. Nonetheless, democratic culture and process within states permits debate surrounding the root causes of conflict, and search for resolution, decision-making and planning, promoting appropriate policy within the states and internationally; especially choices concerning intervention in an armed conflict situation not within the state's own territory.

#### *5.1.5 Inherent Contradictions*

Democracy is an ideal that can be abused by political regimes as witnessed by African-American citizens in the southern US states under the Jim Crow laws supporting **racial segregation** that was in operation there until 1965, with iterations of **apart-heid** politics. Similarly, with **gerrymandering** of electoral district boundaries practised in the USA and Northern Ireland in the past, so as to give one political group or party a permanent majority in many districts, while concentrating the voting strength of the other party into as few districts as possible. In the emerging attempts



at democratic political systems in the so called post-conflict situations in Afghanistan and Iraq, this has posed major challenges.

Political democratic changes ushered in by Mikhail Gorbachev's leadership in the USSR and satellite countries (1990–91) led to the almost bloodless implosion of the Soviet empire, but occasioned major **conflict in the Caucasus region**, with a resurgence of historical grievances. Old cultural and ethnic fault-lines erupted, leading to conflicts and territorial demands, ranging from the Nagorno-Karabakh area disputed by Armenia and Azerbaijan, to the horrific destruction of the Chechnya wars in 1994–96 and 1999–2009, where the population had never fully accepted foreign rule under tsarist, communist nor the new post-communist Russia.

Along with internal and cross boundary ethnic conflicts and power struggles, **the old imperial power Russia continues to cast its shadow over its former colonies and Soviet Republics** including independent states such as Belorussia and Ukraine. Since 1991 conflict has been witnessed in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Dagestan, Ingushetia, South Ossetia, Georgia, and Abkhazia. Russia's geopolitical territorial strategy came to the fore in 2014 with the annexation of the geostrategic Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine, giving access to the Black Sea and consequently Mediterranean via the Turkish Straits of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, along with Russia supporting separatist demands of ethnic Russian-speaking 'Ukrainians' for independence in the Donbass area targeting eventual territorial integration into the Russian Federation. The Russian state is struggling to redefine itself and its self-image—once imperial, soviet and superpower histories. In this process has to be re-defined Russian nationalism, and its relationship with states in the Russian Federation, as well as neighbouring states including Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, now part of the EU and NATO. Russia's role on the regional and global stage is being re-defined in such areas as Syria especially since 2015 and its salient military and political activities there in the war. Juxtaposed with the above factors, **the democratic aspirations of Russian citizens have to be met** as they are ever more aware that the introduction of liberal capitalism in the 1990s did not guarantee in-depth democratic freedom for them.

### *5.1.6 States Attempting Moves Towards Democracy*

During the Cold War (1947–1991) and in the following years, **Western regimes encouraged other states to adapt liberal economic policies, democratic systems and improvements in human rights based on universal suffrage**. However, serious **contradictions and paradoxes** in the democracy agenda were often encountered leading to conflict as in Algeria and Egypt, when elections were won by parties not acceptable to the ruling regimes, nor Western interests.

In 1991, the military supported by the FLN (National Liberation Front) one-party government that had ruled **Algeria** since independence in 1962, took control aimed at negating the victory of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) party in the national parliamentary elections and a civil war ensued. Election results sent shock waves

throughout Algeria, but also neighbouring MENA states, and Western capitals especially in France, the EU and USA. Many commentators saw the Islamist electoral victory largely as a popular protest vote against the National Liberation Front party and government, rather than a conscious decision to create an Islamist state. However, conflict intensified with jihadist violence by 1994–95 when it seemed that the government might not withstand the Islamist onslaught. Nevertheless, by 1996 violence and predication of the Islamists had lost much popular support, but jihadi attacks continued for years at different intensities and scales, especially in rural areas, and isolated desert and mountainous regions.

In 1997, massacres of entire neighbourhoods and villages peaked, with populations blaming both Islamists and government forces. With negotiations and the 1999 amnesty law many combatants laid down arms. However, small splinter Islamist groups continued their campaigns with the extreme Salafist Group (GSPC) announcing its support for Al-Qaeda in 2003. The GSPC played a pivotal role in establishing the terrorist organization al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb targeting the overthrow of the Algerian state and neighbouring regimes, and attacks on Western states including Spain, France and the USA. Total fatalities in Algeria have been estimated at between 44,000 and 200,000 people.<sup>8</sup>

Certain similarities can be identified with attempts at **democratization in Egypt** following the populist Arab Spring Revolution in 2011, resigning of President Hosni Mubarak and assumption of executive power by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces which dissolved parliament and suspended the constitution. In the 2012 general elections, leader of the Islamist party Mohamed Morsi won, but was deposed by the army in 2014 with General Abdel el-Sisi being then elected as Egypt's president.

**In Egypt and Algeria close historical linkages exist between the military, civil government, dominant political parties and control of state resources** including oil and gas especially in Algeria, and industry, particularly in Egypt, while Islamist parties and extremist groups gain support from electorates disempowered by poverty and underdevelopment.

In contrast to Egypt and Algeria, the **democratization process in Turkey**, has witnessed the military apparatus which traces its roots to the foundation of the state (1923) and political reformer Kemal Atatürk promoting secularism, nationalism and modernization, step back somewhat. The military accepted the electoral majority victories in 2002, 2007 and 2011 of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) allowing it to exercise power. The party which developed from the political Islamism tradition promotes 'conservative democracy' and held a majority of seats in parliament for 13 years. After 2002, it reinforced strong linkages with the USA and NATO. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (AKP) became President in 2014 and survived an attempted coup d'état in 2016, leading to massive crackdowns on large sections of the defence and police forces, civil servants, people working in education, media and press, and

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<sup>8</sup>Roman Hagelstein. Explaining the Violence Pattern of the Algerian Civil War. H I C N—Households in Conflict Network. The Institute of Development Studies. University of Sussex—Falmer—Brighton—BN1 9RE [www.hicn.org](http://www.hicn.org). Paper 43. Read more: <http://www.hicn.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/wp43.pdf>.

across Turkish society in general, undermining many principles and achievements of the democracy project in Turkey that had been gained over the decades since 1923. Many observers fear that Erdoğan's policies at home and abroad will lead to greater conflict.<sup>9</sup>

In 2017, a very contested constitutional referendum was held in Turkey on whether to approve 18 proposed amendments to the constitution that were brought forward by Erdoğan's governing—Justice and Development Party (AKP). Results indicated a 51–49% lead for the “Yes” vote, with the office of the Prime Minister to be abolished and the existing parliamentary system of government to be replaced with an executive presidency and a presidential system, with the president being given more control over appointments to the Supreme Board of Judges and Prosecutors. Opposition parties, international media and organizations ranging from the OSCE, Council of Europe and the EU questioned the fairness and legalities of the referendum campaigns and procedures. The referendum was held under a state of emergency legislation that was declared following the failed military coup attempt (2016), for which many questions remain to be answered. Political events in Turkey have cast shadows on its application for EU membership. Turkey signed a Customs Union agreement with the EU in 1995 and was officially recognised as a candidate for full membership in 1999. Due to Erdoğan's policies and actions, diplomatic relations with the EU, USA and other states have been under much strain since 2016.

## 5.2 War Between Democracies

Occurrence of war between states with high levels of democracy ranking (EIU Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index)<sup>10</sup> is much less likely as proven since the foundation of the UN in 1945 and the ECSC/EEC/EU—European Construction Project in 1951.

Concerning **involvement of democratic states in international conflicts**, the UN has had to face serious challenges especially since the end of the Cold War (1991). UN approval of the multilateral liberation of **Kuwait (1991)** following the **Iraqi invasion and annexation** was supported by the vast majority of democracies. In order to carry out the associated military action of Resolution 678, the UN Security Council had to vote, and it was adopted by 12 votes to 2 against (Cuba and Yemen) and one abstention from China, but by abstaining rather than using its veto power, China helped make the action possible.

Since the 1990s especially, legal issues concerning **'rights' and 'duties' of states**, and interventions in internal conflicts and humanitarian emergencies in other countries has been replaced with the evolving UN norm of the **Responsibility to Protect**

<sup>9</sup>Amnesty International. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/take-action/tell-erdogan-free-amnesty-turkey-idil-eser-and-nine-others/>, International Crisis Group. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/western-europemediterranean/turkey>.

<sup>10</sup>EIU Democracy Index (2017).

**(R2P).** Sovereignty no longer exclusively protects States from foreign interference. The R2P entails a restatement of the responsibility, that holds States accountable for the welfare of their citizens. (i) A state has a responsibility to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and massive human rights abuses. (ii) The international community has a responsibility to assist the state fulfil its primary responsibility. (iii) If the state manifestly fails, or refuses to protect its citizens from the above mentioned mass atrocities and peaceful measures have failed, the international community has the responsibility to intervene through coercive measures such as economic sanctions. (iv) Military intervention is considered the last resort and must be approved by the UN Security Council.

Hence **prevention requires apportioning responsibility to, and promoting collaboration between concerned States and the international community.** The responsibility to prevent and halt genocide and mass atrocities lies first and foremost with the relevant State, but the international community has a role that cannot be blocked by the invocation of state sovereignty. This principle is enshrined in Article 1 of the **UN Genocide Convention** and embodied in the principle of “sovereignty as responsibility” and in the concept of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).<sup>11</sup>

Foreign states intervening in other countries without UN mandate regarding humanitarian emergencies, or abuse, or perceived abuse, of the R2P in the regional and global geopolitical theatres has proven problematic. In the majority of instances, Russia and China have used their UN Security Council veto powers to thwart concerted action regarding use of the R2P in Sudan’s Darfur wars as of 2003, and in Syria (2015–18).

Much legal debate and political criticism surrounds the US-UK led invasion of Iraq in 2003, without UN approval, ostensibly to topple the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein accused by the latter two states of hosting WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction), which were subsequently never found, and then arguing human rights abuses as a reason, suggesting the UN Responsibility to Protect principle. Military action was used in **Bosnia** in 1992 to halt the massacres of the Muslim population there by Serbian forces which caused revulsion in EU democracies. Similarly, the **massacres of Kurds by Saddam Hussein in Iraq in 1992** shocked global TV audiences and electorates. With the **2011 civil war in Libya** and massive government repression, the UN invoked the R2P. From the beginning of the intervention, the initial coalition of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, Norway, Qatar, Spain, UK and USA expanded to 19 states. The major military intervention was led by France and UK, with command shared with the US and NATO.

Regarding the UN approved intervention in **Libya**, adopting UN Resolution 1973 (2011), the Security Council by a vote of 10 in favour to none against, with 5 abstentions (Brazil, China, Germany, India, Russian Federation), the UN Security Council authorized Member States, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, to take all necessary measures to protect civilians under threat

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<sup>11</sup>Read more: <http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/responsibility.shtml>.

of attack in Libya, including Benghazi, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory—requesting them to immediately inform the Secretary-General of such measures.<sup>12</sup>

However, while the Kaddafi regime was ousted in 2011, instability, power struggles and armed conflict have continued. Among the major factors which have impeded peace and democracy building and development since the demise of the Kaddafi regime is the strong sense of **regionalism** that exists in Libya as with Tripolitania and its capital Tripoli, and Cyrenaica with its main city Benghazi. Also the geographical location and quest for control of the massive hydrocarbon resources mustn't be underestimated.<sup>13</sup>

It should be noted that challenges in democracy building and management are not always as extreme as in the above examples of Libya or Iraq, as has been witnessed in Tunisia. Development within states and associated rivalries may be managed relatively peacefully and with democratic debate as witnessed in South Africa's electoral history since the end of the Apartheid regime in 1994. Interest in the civic aspects of the geography of conflict is central to understanding processes that support **non-violent resolution of conflict**.

Usually, an amicable exchange of territory between states does not occur, and is very rare. The following examples concern **territorial exchange and border adjustments between well-established democracies**. Presqu'île de l'Isal (15 hectares) is a small wooded peninsula that juts into the Meuse River just south of the Dutch city of Maastricht and has been officially Belgian territory since the border between the two countries was established in 1843, despite the fact that it lies on the Dutch side of the river. Due to problems of physical access for the Belgian authorities, they were challenged to counteract the anti-social and criminal activities that developed there over the decades. **In 2015 both states agreed that the Netherlands would take control of the territory in 2016, in exchange for two other small outcroppings farther down the river.**

Due to the **melting of glaciers** in the Alps and consequent impacts on the rivers and topography this has impacted on the inter-state boundaries of Switzerland, Italy and France. To reflect this changing topography, the governments of Switzerland and Italy, and Switzerland and France entered into bilateral agreements to redefine affected portions of their borders. In 2005–2006, a joint effort between Switzerland and Italy redefined the border based on photogrammetry. In 2009 the Italian government adopted legislation recognizing the border as movable and subject to change. Switzerland adopted the change without legislation. The peaceful exchanges of territory like this do happen occasionally.

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<sup>12</sup>Security Council Approves 'No-Fly Zone' over Libya, Authorizing 'All Necessary Measures' to Protect Civilians, by Vote of 10 in Favour with 5 Abstentions. 17 March 2011. <http://www.un.org/press/en/2011/sc10200.doc.htm>.

<sup>13</sup>Read more: Regional, ethnicity and tribes in the trial of Libya's democratic transition. CAI 20 October 2011. [http://www.consultancyafrica.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=872:regionalism-ethnicity-and-tribes-in-the-trial-of-libyas-democratic-transition-&catid=60:conflict-terrorism-discussion-papers&Itemid=265](http://www.consultancyafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=872:regionalism-ethnicity-and-tribes-in-the-trial-of-libyas-democratic-transition-&catid=60:conflict-terrorism-discussion-papers&Itemid=265).

Despite the challenges faced by India and Pakistan, and especially regarding the disputed Cashmere region, in 2015, they agreed to swap over 160 pockets of land in each other's territory left over from the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947.<sup>14</sup>

### 5.2.1 *Regional Nationalisms*

There is a wide geographical spectrum of **regional nationalisms** and in the **geo-historical experience** of states, the vast majority of regimes have tried not to give up territory in a non-conflictual process, and have limited regionalism and regional **languages and cultures** in the quest to develop the nation-state model and variations thereof, including federalism. **State policy has circumscribed regional movements** lying claim to nationhood as is well documented in the older European states regarding Spain with Catalonia, the Basque region and Galicia; France concerning Brittany and Corsica; the UK especially regarding Ireland, and after 1922 concerning Northern Ireland, and more recently Scotland; Belgium with reference to Flanders and the more recent radicalization of some Flemish parties; and Italy regarding the Northern League. Other striking examples include the policies of the Turkish state concerning the Kurdish regions and population, and Serbia's vis-à-vis Kosovo.

At the core of **EU Regional Policy** is development and greater economic integration of regions lagging behind other wealthier areas in the EU based on the principle of **subsidiarity**. The EU has greatly encouraged the distinctive regional cultures of Europe stating that their rich heritage and history play an important role in enhancing the attractiveness of places and strengthening the unique identity of specific locations. **Culture and creativity can be important drivers and enablers of innovation** as well as a significant source for entrepreneurship and is especially important in cultural tourism and promoting social inclusion.<sup>15</sup>

In Europe, many regional and nationalist groups have attempted political strategies circumventing governments of the respective states in which they are located, trying to deal directly with EU institutions and organs, as with the Flemish and Catalan delegations. However, significantly the official EU institutions gave little support to Scottish nationalists in their quest for independence from the UK culminating in the 2014 referendum, and adapted arguments very similar to those used by the 'No to Independence' campaign led by the UK Prime Minister and conservative party. One can only speculate, what if the 'Yes to independence' vote had won, what would have been the impact of this on the Brexit referendum in 2016 for the UK to leave the EU, and with an independent Scotland wishing to remain in the EU. Throughout the Catalan crisis (2017–18) and its attempted unilateral declaration of independence from Spain in 2017, the EU continued to reiterate its official position that this was an internal matter for the Spanish state, and that the **EU was constituted only on treaties signed between independent member states**.

<sup>14</sup>Keating (2015) and Studts (2010).

<sup>15</sup>EU Regional Policy. [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/policy/themes/culture/](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/themes/culture/).

In more conflictual regions and areas such as Northern Ireland, the Basque Country and Corsica, the EU has supported the respective state policies and offered much financial assistance for development and dialogue as witnessed in Northern Ireland and the Good Friday Belfast Agreement and Peace Process (1998), and the Basque militant group ETA declaring a ceasefire in 2011, disarming in 2017 and the dissolution of its structures in 2018.

This is in contrast to the majority of conflicts in the Newly Independent States of the Global South, with weak national unity following independence that often led to conflict and has impeded democracy and sustainable development as in Nigeria, Algeria and of course the Kurdish regions in Turkey, Iraq and Syria.

### *5.2.2 Multiple Causes for Regional Conflicts*

Regional nationalist militants often have a strong sense of historical and contemporary **grievance** against central government and seek reparation. In the **European context**, bearing in mind the histories of regionalism and nationalism, conflict and wars, and creation of the modern states, the inception and construction of the EU whereby states voluntarily joined and ceded many attributes of their sovereignty must be viewed as possibly the greatest experiment in territorial and citizen democracy in world history. It could be posited that in Europe, conflictual regionalism may be viewed more in the sense of grievance rather than being purely ideologically based. Hence conflict resolution has been nurtured, promoting consensual dialogue within democratic structures and fostering economic prosperity.

Nonetheless, **conflicts exist with regionalists seeking regional economic autonomy** especially on financial and tax issues, for instance, feeling that they are subsidizing the 'others' in other regions within the respective states as with resentment in Belgian Flanders, Spanish Catalonia and Italy's Northern League, leading to acerbic criticism of central government and the less developed regions. It is significant that similar populist arguments were made by British Brexit campaigners in 2016 to leave the EU by UKIP and many conservative party members regarding the EU itself, but without credible economic data to support the rhetoric and slogans.

**Identity politics** remains strong and often expressed in relation to language issues as with seeking **official language status** for 'our language' in the administration, education, media and legal systems, for example in Catalonia and in Northern Ireland in the nationalist community. This becomes more acute when **survival of the language** is involved as with Basque, Corsican and Irish in Northern Ireland. In the latter, the status of the Irish language, although covered in the Good Friday Belfast Peace Agreement (1998), has remained problematic as proven by a bitter impasse on the issue, undermining government in 2017, and running the possibility of direct rule from London being reintroduced as catered for in the Peace Agreement, in the

case that the Northern Ireland Assembly fails to agree on issues that make good governance possible.<sup>16</sup>

### 5.2.3 *Radicalization: Regionalist and Nationalist Campaigns*

Following years of regionalist—nationalist campaigns including terrorist attacks in Corsica led by the FLNC (Front de Liberation Nationale Corse), the Corsican **language** became ‘legal’ in schools from 1989 on. This agenda was driven by one nationalist party. The **language project** has had relatively little success, and it could be argued that a majority of the Corsican population have not actively engaged with it. Of course, the Corsican economy is embedded in that of France in a core-periphery relationship, and there is a long history of migration from Corsica to continental France for employment.

Sometimes a large percentage of citizens feeling a strong **sense of identity and idealised feeling of attachment to a root language** such as Corsican, Catalan, Welsh or Irish argue that ‘their’ language was attacked by a centralizing state in a historical colonizing or state-territorializing process, and especially through the legal, education and medical systems, state administration, civil service and media. However, when the original language gains ‘official status’ a majority of citizens may no longer use it as their everyday or **vernacular language**, nor be adequately proficient in it, so debilitating their entry and employment in the civil service or bureaucracy or educational systems for instance. Hence the **ambivalence of attitudes** often found. In short, many people with varying degrees of nationalist aspirations or identity politics may support the ideal of ‘their’ language but do not invest in mastering it themselves, but expect ‘their children to learn it’ at school.

Paradoxically, the **language nationalists** who gain power or recognition of ‘their’ language as an official language may find themselves perceived by sections of the same cultural population as now imposing a language, whereby the ‘victim’ group leaders become the oppressor. These **language politics** have been played out in the Republic of Ireland since independence in 1921. Irish (Gaeilge) was the language (i.e. language in linguistic terms, and not a dialect) of the vast majority of people in Ireland until the mid-19th century, and today is still spoken as a first language by a minority, and as a second for a larger group having been displaced by the English language. Irish enjoys constitutional status as the national language and first official language of the Republic, and is only an officially recognized minority language in Northern Ireland as of the Peace Process Treaty in 1998. It also ranks among the official languages of the EU. It is obligatory as a subject in the primary and secondary school system, and for matriculation to most third level education institutions, and employment entrance to certain sections of the civil service and primary education system. The ‘imposed’ nature of the language by the Irish state has occasioned a very

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<sup>16</sup>Ciaran Dunbar. Northern Ireland Assembly divided by Irish language. BBC News NI. <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-38601181>, O’Leary (2017).



ambiguous attitude on the part of the vast majority of the population with negative attitudes towards their ‘language learning experience’ at school and yet an emotional attachment to the language for subliminal nationalist reasons. In contrast to Israel’s language policy and Hebrew, the narrative of the ‘revival’ of Irish could not be deemed to have been success story.

In Northern Ireland, the issue of the Irish language must be interpreted in a different context to that of the Republic. Since 1922, the Northern Ireland—UK administration refused any formal official recognition of Irish and hence the nationalist community experienced this as part of the continuing discriminatory colonial policy further exacerbating the sense of grievance and alienation from the state.

In some of the former Yugoslav republics, where Serbo-Croatian was mutually comprehensible in Serbia and Croatia, since their respective independence in the 1990s, state elites have been encouraging the ‘nationalization’ of the respective ‘official state languages’ in an effort to distinguish themselves identity-wise from their neighbouring states, as in Croatia.

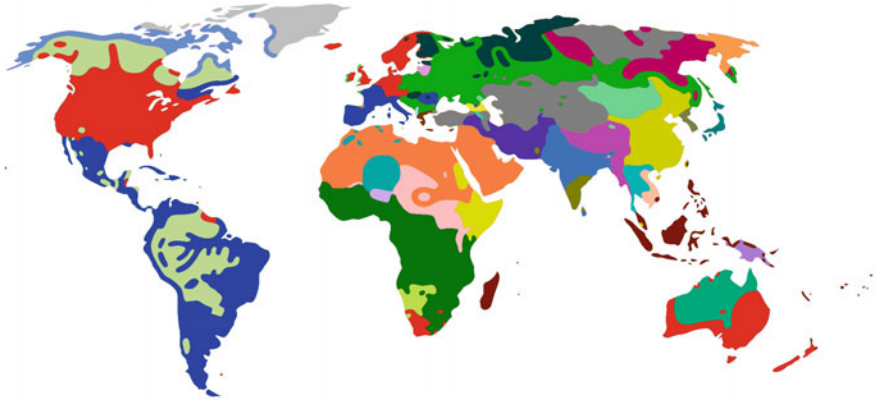
**Peaceful conflicts may exist in democracies** where strong regional nationalisms can be shared by a majority of the population and **not degenerate into violent conflict**. In Belgium, while strong popular opinions exist regarding the ‘territorialisation’ and use of either French or Dutch and other **centrifugal factors, impeding greater national unity, a modus vivendi developed within Belgium going from a unitary to a federal state, that is now confederal**. Doubtlessly, many Scots and Welsh are observing the political experience in Belgium, as are the Catalans. With Turkish aspirations of becoming a member state of the EU, its policy on the Kurdish language will have to be earnestly reassessed.

In contrast to regional planning and language policy conflicts in the mature democracies discussed above, countries such as Algeria have experienced language processes with contextual variations, with standard international Arabic being introduced as the official language after independence (1962) from France in a state where dialectical Arabic, French, and Berber languages, especially Kabyle were the norm. It was only in 2001 that Kabyle became an officially recognized national language in Algeria after a long struggle, both constitutional and conflictual. Similarly, in 2011, Berber became a constitutionally official language of Morocco, after centuries of state policies ignoring or undermining it.

Figure 5.1 illustrates the great historical diversity and constant evolutions in the development of languages and their centrality in political developments.

#### 5.2.4 *Regional Planning*

Concerning planning disputes, they are usually non-violent in the higher ranking democracies regarding **territorial and regional planning** and range from the location of industrial zones, airports, housing estates, dams and bridges to pollution control and heritage preservation. **Key stakeholders challenge state policy and planning**, especially concerning environmental issues. These actors usually involve



**Fig. 5.1** Linguistic groups in the world. Image by user: Eric Gaba (Sting) [GFDL or CC BY-SA 3.0 or CC BY-SA 2.5], via Wikimedia Commons

residents associations and groups, but also local, regional and international support groups and NGOs such as Greenpeace may become involved.<sup>17</sup> In the post-communist states, especially in Europe, there has been a burgeoning of local and national **NGOs networking with international NGOs regarding state planning and collaborations with transnational corporations**. The experiences of local opposition groups to the activities of oil companies operating off the West coast of Ireland is significant here, in contrast to that of the coastal populations in Nigeria. The growth of NGOs has been less evident in China, but is gaining momentum in the NICs especially in Latin America and Africa. In 2017, local residents, and NGOs including Greenpeace and media brought to world attention the controversial proposals in Brazil's conservative Congress, where a powerful agribusiness lobby wields substantial influence, including liberalising strict environmental licensing regulations. The government also wanted to lower the legal protection for much of a 1.3 million hectare Amazon forest reserve.<sup>18</sup>

### **5.2.5 Good Governance, Good Citizenship and Competing Voices**

Regarding regional **planning and infrastructure**—airports, motorways, high speed trains, industrial sites, waste recycling, the dirty or polluting industries, nuclear energy plants and nuclear waste—are now being **legally challenged by citizens**. **Public consultation** is necessary in development strategies to resolve conflictual

<sup>17</sup>To read more: Forty-Three Years of Inspiring Action. <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/about/victories/>.

<sup>18</sup>The Guardian (2017) and Clarke and Cowie (2017).

situations. The **effects on projects and their promoters include costly delays, cancelling projects, and rise in costs due to changes demanded by local populations.** This growth in democracy especially in the industrial countries is due to rising living standards and education especially since the 1970s, but also live local, national and international media, and crucially Internet, cover such issues and the actions of NGOs. **Citizens are speaking out on questions that were once the almost exclusive prerogative of company directors and managers, engineers, technicians and political managerial elites or civil servants.** Voters are more informed and this impacts on voting patterns. These events at whatever scales or in whatever place can now be viewed, or followed anywhere in the world due to digital media.

Examples facilitating **competing voices and platforms** include Uplift: People Powered Change, Euronews blogs, World Bank blogs, and the Anna Lindh Foundation. According to the Uplift: People Powered Change website: MyUplift is an online tool that allows people to start, run and deliver a campaign on the issue they care about including regional and urban planning, environmental and socio-economic issues. The campaign can be big, small, revolutionary or everyday type. It can be as diverse as saving your local park from development, to saving a piece of history in your community to fighting for a clean energy. Uplift is an independent community working for a more progressive Ireland through people powered action. While Uplift created this platform for anyone to use, campaigns are not run or endorsed by Uplift. Petitions and campaign results are delivered to politicians and government attention, and commercial and business interests, and the public.<sup>19</sup>

### 5.2.6 *Interconnecting Central and Local Government*

Dealing with **public conflict is part of the politicians remit** and this is interwoven with lobbying, media and influential networks and depends on the **geographical scaling of the conflict.** The main conflict categories regarding territorial planning and development—local, regional, and state cross-border include:

- (a) **Threat:** to livelihood such as closing of industries or public services.
- (b) **Sought-after:** without due regard for the rights of others and engaging in territorial competition not only within the state, but at an international scale due to globalization processes. This leads to rivalry between actors on the same territory and creates a conflict of interests.
- (c) **Rejection:** When there is outright refusal to accept, as with environmental matters—smells, noise, garbage dumps, chemical risks, and atmospheric pollution, and transportation routes and locations related to nuclear waste treatment—and

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<sup>19</sup>Uplift: People Powered Change. <https://my.uplift.ie/>, Anna Lindh Foundation. <http://www.annalindhfoundation.org/home>, Euronews Brussels Blogs. <http://www.euronews.com/tag/euronews-brussels-blog>, End Poverty in South Asia: Promoting Dialogue on Development in South Asia—Is Urban Planning Necessary? This blog is maintained by the South Asia Region of the World Bank Group. <http://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/>.

also citizens defence of the NIMBY principle. This can be applied to the national or local government planned location and placement of asylum seekers and refugees, travellers and gypsies, and hostility to the 'less well off' and poor, centres and accommodation for socially excluded people including the homeless, drug addicts and so forth, and the real or imagined fear impact that this may have on the local people's quality of life and especially on the value of their property or perception of the area. Due to the major role of the construction industry and associated entrepreneurs, this impacts on the value of land and housing and the crucial issue of affordability; governmental authorities are challenged to counteract spatial or territorial socio-economic 'apart-hide' leading to such phenomena as residential gated communities or walled estates with strictly controlled entrances, and in some cases security guards and CCT camera, juxtaposed with the rest.

As in all conflict situations, the main issue has to be defined, but it is very rare that the 'specific issue' is not part of a larger source of grievance and socio-territorial political contexts. The issue has to be translated into its spatial context including the area, size, physical environment, culture and sociology. It is the specific details in the territory that impact on the project and hence the risk. **The social makeup of the population is fundamental as is their experience or not of democracy:** are the resident's permanent dwellers or not, secondary home owners or not, new comers, socio-professional categories, and are they ready to defend their homes and status, and by what means. **Levels of educated and empowerment in order to use the possibilities offered by democratic processes within the state to defend the citizen's rights is highly significant.** Of course this is **dependent on the level of good governance and transparency that already exists.**

**Depending on the economic situation and especially during recession periods, and regions and areas with little employment, citizens are more willing to accept certain activities that may be the source of the problem they fear.** If there exist precedents or a history of protest as with environmental disputes associated residents' groups and NGOs, then citizens may be ready to reactivate their power and challenge. Whatever the local culture that exists based on its historical experience, this will have an impact. If there is a long history of pollution as in the old mining regions of England, Germany, Slovakia, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Brazil, Chile or China, then people may have a higher tolerance level in being prepared to accept new threats in return for employment or wealth generated.

Various combinations of the above discussed concepts arise in new ways and help to explain the occurrence of specific conflicts and its force or not. Hence the importance of local case study analysis and not becoming over reliant on technocratic blueprints and models.

### 5.3 Conclusions

There is a wide range in diversity of contested ideas and issues, and conflicts and this makes their geographical analysis complex. Whether it is a conflict due to local or regional planning in Europe or North America, or that regarding the MENA countries, Kosovo, Ukraine, Syria, Venezuela, South Sudan, or Myanmar, the common factor in all of them is the power relationships that exist, and the balances of fear and power in specific places and territories. Hence the solution has to be the least unjust response, because the territory is laden with values: economic, symbolic and ideological. If hostilities are put down by force—as with the winner takes all approach, or peace enforcement by state or international authorities, then the long-term reasons for conflict remain and will resurface in other forms at a later date. All conflict does not necessarily lead to violence as proven by democratic consensus reached in many jurisdictions, including traditional and cultural conflict resolution methods as found throughout Africa and Asia in contrast to the highly adversarial and litigious culture often associated with America.

**The material economic and power factors of conflict** include energy and mineral resources, competition for fertile land and water, geostrategic competition within and between states, stakeholders and actors, and their zones of influence. Regarding the **existential factors of conflict, these have been broadly categorized into imagination and Utopia**, based on ideals of an imagined or socially-engineered better life and world in contrast to the present situation. This can be fuelled by idealism, or grievance, or nostalgia of imagined better historical times and Golden Ages. The dreams and ideals of **democracy** have developed over hundreds of years with various iterations in different cultures and economic systems. **Democracy** can be interpreted as a work in progress, with people and political groups always striving for greater human rights and democratisation as witnessed in the European Construction Project and the EU. But what is the ideal democracy and ideology regarding human and civil rights, and sustainability—balancing ecological, economic and socio-cultural variables. Many people and systems throughout the world strive to reach this ideal via various means and methods, and hence the resultant power struggles and ideological competition, including religious beliefs and fundamentalism.

By its very nature there are inherent contradictions in the concept of democracy such as the over **application of the majority versus minority frameworks**—can the minority group be discounted or marginalized, and what are the long term consequences of this. There is no perfect democracy or country, and democratization is a long term process over generations as witnessed in the histories of mature democracies such as the USA and in Western Europe, in contrast to the newer democracies created with the demise of the Soviet Union and its empire. In many countries, and especially the former colonies or NICs, attempts at moves towards democracy have been thwarted from within, and from outside, due to economic, power and ideological factors as witnessed in countries ranging from the Republic of South Sudan, Sudan, CAR (Central African Republic), Haiti, Colombia, Venezuela and Myanmar, and events during and after the Arab Spring protests throughout the MENA coun-

tries. Nonetheless, much progress in democratization has been achieved in countries ranging from Tunisia, to South Africa and Timor Leste.

While **disputes exist within and between democratic states, war does not.** Nevertheless, democratic countries have waged covert and overt war on other countries under different guises and sometimes in the name of democracy as with the 2003 US-UK led coalition invasion of Iraq, and attempted post justification of the action claiming the R2P—Responsibility to Protect the citizens of Iraq from the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein. In the aftermath, Iraq disintegrated into civil war often articulated through regional, ethnic and religious nationalisms. In contrast, in the mature democracies such as Canada regarding Quebec, and also the EU, regionalist nationalisms have been facilitated and embedded within the structures of the Union. But there are multiple causes for regional conflicts ranging from economics to historical grievances, which can lead to radicalization of regionalist and nationalist campaigns as witnessed in Northern Ireland, especially between 1968 and 1998. Similarly, ETA (Basque Homeland and Liberty) founded in 1959, was the main group in the Basque National Liberation Movement, carrying out political and military campaigns in the Basque country and Spain until 2018, when it stated that it had dissolved its structures and ended its political initiatives.

**Regional planning** within, and between EU states based on the principle of subsidiarity has been of great importance in the **peaceful integration of Europe**, and to a certain degree between the EU and neighbouring countries. Citizens in democracies, and outside, are putting greater pressure on local and regional authorities regarding planning, urbanization, location of industry, dangers of pollution, and the actions of companies and corporations within states and transnationally. In democracies, **good governance and good citizenship** attempt to facilitate the competing voices in the structures and processes developed to avoid violent conflict, and especially concerning information flows between central and local government, and this is reinforced by voluntary associations and NGOs. Since the 1990s, the activities of voluntary associations and NGOs have been steadily increasing in the former communist states, and NICs. A major challenge for many countries in the Global South remains good governance, and the creation of credible political-economic systems for all their citizens, ensuring basic human security, and alleviation of poverty.

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