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Reasonableness and Law



for the protection of constitutional rights in Europe reflects the constitutional duty of judges to protect "constitutional justice"; it should serve as a model for similar cooperation among national and international courts with overlapping jurisdictions in other field of international law,⁷⁵ notably if the intergovernmental rules protect cooperation among citizens across national frontiers, such as the settlement of transnational trade, investment and environmental disputes. Especially in those areas of intergovernmental regulation where states remain reluctant to submit to review by international courts (e.g., as in the second and third pillars of the EU Treaty), *national courts* must remain vigilant guardians so as to protect citizens and their constitutional rights from inadequate judicial remedies at the international level of multilevel governance for the collective supply of international public goods demanded by citizens.

7 Judicial Protection of "Principles of Justice" as Constitutional Limitation on Intergovernmental Power Politics

The prevailing perception of the "international law among states" as a foreign policy instrument for advancing *national* interests in an anarchic world prompts many international lawyers and diplomats to argue that effective international tribunals must remain "dependent" tribunals staffed by ad hoc judges closely controlled by governments, for example through their power of reappointment and threats of retaliation. Independent international courts are perceived with suspicion because independent judges risk allowing moral ideals and interests of third parties to influence their judgments; the domestic ideal of rule of law is seen as inappropriate for the reality of international power politics: "Dependent tribunals" are more likely to "render judgments that reflect the interests of the states at the time that they submit the dispute to the tribunal."⁷⁶ In support of such power-oriented conceptions of international judges as agents of the governments which appoint them, reference is also made to the empirical voting patterns of ad hoc judges (e.g., in the ICJ and arbitral tribunals) who side much more often with the legal claims of the government nominating the judge than with the legal claims of the other party to the dispute (see Posner and de Figueiredo 2005). From such state-centered rather than citizen-oriented perspectives, intergovernmental trade and economic rules should be interpreted and applied as intergovernmental commitments about reciprocal market access without private rights of action (see Sykes 2005).

⁷⁵ "[I]f the *Solange*-method would be applied by all international courts and tribunals in case of jurisdictional overlap, the risk of diverging or conflicting judgments could be effectively minimized, thus reducing the danger of a fragmentation of the international legal order [...]. One could argue that the *Solange*-method, and for that matter judicial comity in general, is part of the legal duty of each and every court to deliver justice" (Lavranos 2008, 235).

 $^{^{76}}$ See Posner and Yoo (2005, 6), who define the function of international tribunals as providing states with neutral information about the facts and the law in a particular dispute.

Citizen-oriented constitutional approaches, by contrast, emphasize the "constitutional functions" of international law for correcting governance failures at national levels and for enabling citizens to collectively supply private and public goods that are ever more important for individual and democratic self-development in a globally interdependent world. The more citizens live and cooperate not only in local and national, but also in transnational communities (e.g., as EC citizen, migrant worker protected by ILO conventions, refugees protected by UN human rights and humanitarian assistance, researchers protected by UNESCO and WIPO conventions), the more the universal recognition of inalienable human rights calls for providing citizens with effective legal and judicial remedies across national frontiers. As empirical evidence confirms that most national parliaments no longer effectively control intergovernmental rule-making in worldwide organizations,⁷⁷ parliamentary democracy must be supplemented by more decentralized forms of participatory, rightsbased democracy empowering self-interested individuals by more effective legal and judicial remedies. The ideal of "deliberative democracy"-i.e., that all rules and governance powers be justified through a fully inclusive, informed discourse among all persons affected by the rules-remains utopian in view of the rational ignorance of individuals, their limited cognitive capacities, and the inevitable "discourse failures" (e.g., due to asymmetries of power and knowledge; see Teson and Pincione 2006; Kuper 2004). Rights-based "cosmopolitan justice" and independent, impartial courts settling disputes "in conformity with principles of justice and international law" offer horizontal and vertical "checks and balances" that limit abuses of public and private power without relying on unrealistic idealization of citizens, civil society, organizations and rulers.

The *jus cogens* core of inalienable human rights, the ever increasing number of international "treaty constitutions" limiting national policy discretion by collective rule-making and international adjudication, the proliferation of and cooperation among international courts, their judicial protection of rule of law and judicial clarification of "constitutional principles" continue to transform the intergovernmental structures of international law (notably in Europe) by procedural as well as substantive "constitutional restraints." Multilevel constitutionalism and rights-based "constitutional justice" have become a reality for ever more European citizens thanks to the multilevel cooperation of judges in European integration. Disputes among European states have become rare not only in the EC Court, the EFTA Court and in the ECtHR; they are also decreasing in worldwide courts (e.g., the ICJ) and in other dispute settlement bodies (such as the WTO). The ever closer networks of independent regulatory agencies and other multilevel governance institutions in Europe, and the rare recourse to the "horizontal" enforcement mechanisms of international law (such as inter-state sanctions) in relations among European democra-

⁷⁷ On the inadequate parliamentary control of intergovernmental rule-making in the WTO see, e.g., the following two publications by the European Parliament: *Role of Parliaments in Scrutinising and Influencing Trade Policy* (European Parliament Study December 2005, DV/603690.doc); *The Parliamentary Dimension of the WTO* (2006).

cies, confirm that "state sovereignty" is "disaggregating" in Europe.⁷⁸ Constitutional rights and principles of justice have been protected more effectively by means of the "*Solange*-method" of multilevel judicial cooperation in transnational relations among European states than at any previous time during the centuries of intergovernmental power politics depending on national majorities and interest group support for periodically elected governments.

In Europe, the "public reasoning" and multilevel cooperation of independent and impartial judges has become an important constitutional constraint on intergovernmental power politics and on one-sided governmental definitions of opinio juris in international law. Multilevel judicial governance has become one of the most dynamic and "principled" parts of constitutional democracy in Europe. Yet, the limited role of European courts in the second and third "pillars" of the European Union as well as the limited cooperation among European and worldwide courts (like the ICJ and the WTO's Appellate Body) illustrate the political limits of international courts also in Europe, notably in areas of national security and foreign policy disputes over the distribution of power or the legitimacy of international law rules. Beyond Europe, international relations remain dominated by power politics, refusal by most UN member states to submit to the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ, insistence on state sovereignty and introverted "constitutional nationalism" impeding collective supply of global public goods.⁷⁹ Proposals for extending European "multilevel constitutionalism" to worldwide organizations (such as the UN and the WTO) are opposed by most states outside Europe (including the United States) in view of their different constitutional and democratic traditions and power-oriented foreign policies. The more intergovernmental networks and worldwide organizations evade parliamentary and democratic control, and the more legislators fail to correct the ubiquitous "market failures" and "governance failures" in international relations, the more citizens-as legal subjects of international law and "democratic principals" of government agents-have reason to appeal to the "public reasoning" of independent and impartial courts mandated to protect constitutional rights and rule of law "in conformity with principles of justice."

If democratic institutions are perceived as instruments for protecting the constitutional rights of citizens without which individual and democratic self-development in dignity is not sustainable (e.g., due to public and private abuses of power, including majoritarian abuses of parliamentary powers), then multilevel judicial protection of fundamental freedoms of citizens can be justified as a necessary precondition for constitutional democracy in a globally integrated world. The risk of paternalist abuses of judicial powers must be countered by "deliberative democracy" and "public reasoning." Rights-based "judicial discourses" focusing on "principles of justice" tend to be more precise and more rational than political promises to protect

⁷⁸ More generally on "disaggregated sovereignty" see Slaugther 2004, 266ff.

⁷⁹ On this "globalization paradox" (i.e., needing multilevel governance for the collective supply of international pubic goods, but fearing and opposing such governance) see Slaughter 2004, at 8ff. On the need for "multilevel constitutionalism" as a necessary legal framework for collective, democratic supply of international public goods see Petersmann (2006b).

vaguely defined "public interests." Similar to European courts, national constitutional judges and international courts outside Europe increasingly argue that constitutional democracies must be premised on "active liberty"; hence, the exercise of rights to individual and democratic self-government (in citizen-driven "political markets" no less than in consumer-driven economic markets) may serve as a "source of judicial authority and an interpretative aid to more effective protection of ancient and modern liberty alike."⁸⁰ Judicial determination of the international opinio juris sive necessitatis must insist today that legitimacy no longer derives from (inter)governmental *fiat*, but from democratic and judicial justification of the relevant rules as being reasonable and *just*.⁸¹ The independence, impartiality and constitutional function of judges to protect constitutional rights against abuses of power legitimize adjudication as a necessary component of constitutional democracy. Citizens must hold judges more accountable for meeting their constitutional obligation to protect "constitutional justice" in terms of justifying legal interpretations and judicial decisions in conformity with the human rights obligations of government institutions and the constitutional rights of citizens. The increasing cross-references in ECJ and EFTA judgments to their respective case-law, as well as to other European and international courts (such as the ECtHR, WTO dispute settlement rulings, the ICJ), should serve as models for cooperation also among other international courts in order to better coordinate their respective jurisprudence on the basis of common legal principles (Rosas 2006).

Civil society and their democratic representatives rightly challenge traditional conceptions of international justice shielding an authoritarian "international law among states" as being inconsistent with the universal recognition of inalienable human rights, which call for constitutional conceptions of justice as a shield of the individual and of her human rights against abuses of power. As long as world governance for the collective supply of the ever more needed "global public goods" (such as international "democratic peace," respect for universal human rights, poverty reduction, protection of the global environment) remains so deficient as it is, legal and judicial protection of constitutional rights in transnational relations "in conformity with principles of justice and international law" remain essential for protecting human rights through pragmatic piecemeal reforms of international legal practices. It is to be welcomed that ever more international dispute settlement bodies (e.g., in the WTO and investor-state arbitration)-by admitting amicus curiae briefs—are willing to listen to the public reasoning of citizens, whose *opinio juris* as the "democratic principals" of government agents-may be relevant for judicial limitations of abuses of government powers (e.g., if concession contracts with non-

⁸⁰ See US Supreme Court justice S. Breyer (2005).

⁸¹ On the diverse (e.g., rational Kantian, contractarian Rawlsian and discursive Habermasian) methodological approaches to identifying just rules see, e.g., Nino (1994, 275, 286ff). On "justice as fairness" and "first virtue of social institutions" see Rawls (1973, 3). See also Forst (2007), who infers from the Kantian idea of reason based on universalizable principles that individuals can reasonably claim moral and legal rights to participation in decision-making affecting them, as well as to receive a justification of restrictions of individual freedoms.

democratic rulers are influenced by corruption). Just as multilevel constitutionalism in Europe was rendered possible by the intergovernmental creation and judicial protection of common markets and of rights-based, transnational communities (rather than by "Wilsonian liberalism" projecting national democratic institutions to the worldwide level), so will the needed "constitutionalization" of intergovernmental power politics and "cosmopolitan peace" depend crucially on the vigilance of democratic citizens and on the wisdom and courage of judges supporting citizen-oriented reforms of international economic law and judicial protection of constitutional rights in the peaceful cooperation among citizens across national frontiers.

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