

## Politics, Democracy and Peace Management

Author: Adelina Marku-Ibrahimi

WDN Conference: Women's Conflict Management and Coalition Building  
Istanbul, Turkey 2008

It is an honor to get the chance to speak to this auditorium on the lessening of conflicts, which in the political theory can be also called an attempt to establish and build peace. I am even happier to see a woman as a speaker, as I believe that women in politics represent what is called the soft power in politics, as a woman is always willing to find a compromise as a mean of eliminating a conflict.

I do not know whether in the early days of the development of political thought, **peace was regarded and treated as a theory**, but I am convinced that today peace has developed in a constant political aspiration compounded of its stability mechanisms. This has not come about because man has evolved his ideas on human nature, but because the world has changed a lot due to the technological breakdowns in warfare and communication and the new geo-strategic and political movements. I believe that man's (woman's) beliefs and ideas on peace and politics are similar to those of the philosophers of the antiquity and this leads me to believe that only man (woman) can open and close the vicious circle of the world.

I would like to build my lecture on these five pillars:

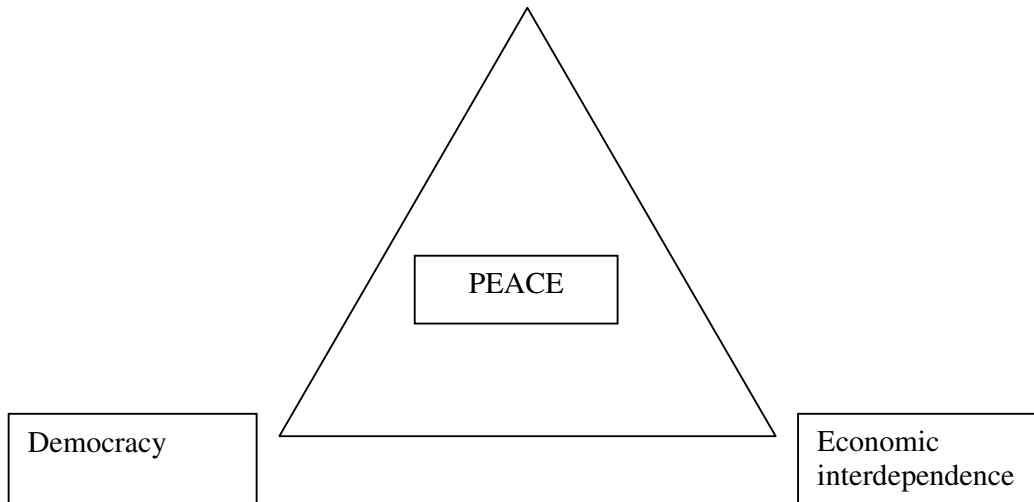
1. the definition of peace as an institution
2. politics as a mean of holding together the skeleton of this institution
3. man as a leader
4. political agreements and
5. society

### 1. PEACE

There are many definitions on peace, but peace as a concept is mostly a concept of **self-control**. Countries that have the human and intellectual capacities that acknowledge the importance of territorial belonging – a group of people that are self aware of the importance of their motherland; guard its territory with jealousy. A country with strong abilities of self control has peace within. These people with these abilities are called LEADERS.

What is self control for a country (state)? I can describe it through this triangle:

EU/NATO – Global international institutions
--



Theory of democratic Peace (competition runs in a plural system)

Jealously guarding of the motherland, in humans political language is called **patriotism**. Any attempt to ruin others motherland is called an **occupation**. Any attempt from outside to collapse a dictatorship of a suffering country, is called **integration**.

A consolidated democracy is far more expensive and costly in a multicultural society than in ethnical states. These countries face a constant problem: keeping the inner multicultural cohesion. It is this cohesion that always puts to the test human rights, respecting or disrespecting them, practiced rights and unpracticed rights. ( the prerequisites of con dem are: 1. 2 or more political party, 2. periodically and constitutionally required elections 3. free press and freedom of expression 4. no political prisoners 5. no intervention by extra-parliamentary factors (especially the armed forces) following elections that call for change of parties in power, 6. the functioning of pluralist , civil society.)

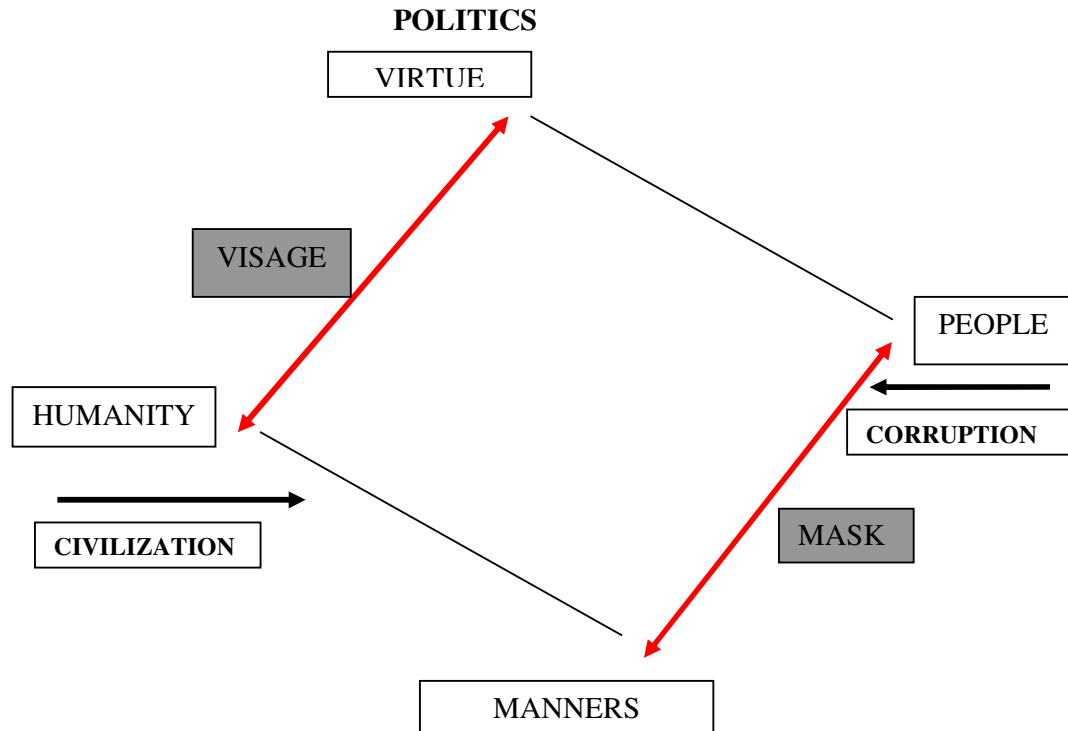
Democracy is regarded as the most successful form of human regime, the most successful form of balancing the powers in the world, keeping the peace. Yet understanding democracy is a long process for the countries in transition. (Those suffering dictatorship) Understanding democracy is not always enough; what is most important is understanding its application in the states administration. And the state administration for countries in transition, especially those of multiethnic character, is always difficult to manage.

Countries can only function if they fulfill these three conditions:

- inner multiethnic cohesion (the case of Macedonia)
- a developed economy and
- liberal democracy

Inner cohesion can be accomplished through dictatorship (without liberal democracy) but with a strong and centralized economy (exYugoslavia), but when this dictatorship is ruined – the case of Iraq, the scenario is anarchy.

## 2. Politics as a means for holding together the institution of peace

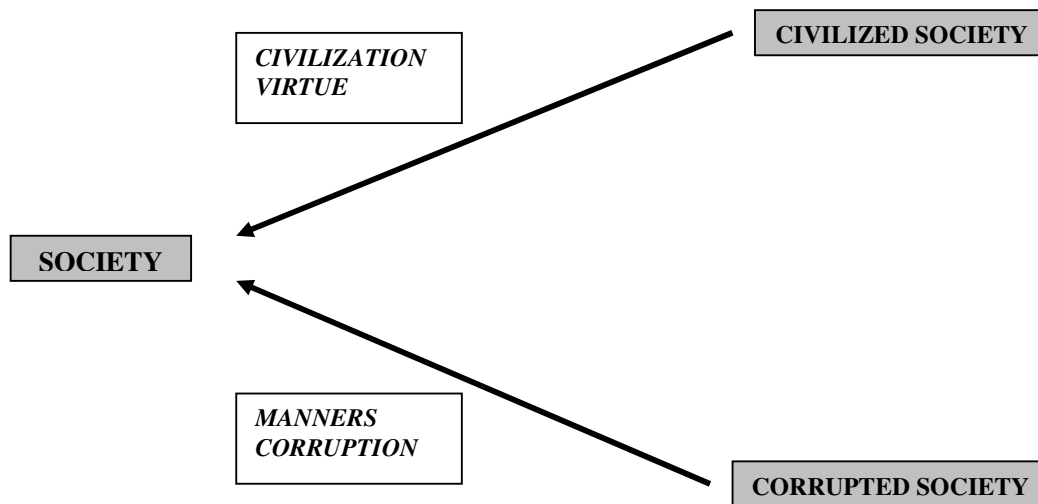


Man makes politics. The leader in fact represents himself through politics. He has his appearance (Visage) with the formula  $\text{Humanity} + \text{Virtue} = \text{Civilization}$ .

And the Mask:  $\text{people} + \text{manners} = \text{corruption}$ .

Man is characterized by his human image and by his desire for power (power consists even of corruption). The domination of a larger nation over a smaller one can be considered of form of corruption (discrimination. Exp taxes). But this kind of corruption in countries in transition raises the awareness of the society and helps in climbing of the steps of its own development; there is a process of getting from the banal stage of making politics through discrimination, to a more civilized stage of understanding one another.

In this period of creating this awareness conflicts might arise, through war and bloodshed (2001 in Macedonia). The process of reconciliation is long and painful.



I consider that societies are not static, and modernization is not necessarily a one way street. Countries can progress and retrogress depending on circumstances that are well beyond their control sometimes. Therefore, as an opportunity for a country I would emphasize the good political will of a country for peace, based on my analysis this will come as a consequence of some codes:

1. While thinking about peace in this phase of transition, a country begins to learn about the roots of its identity,
2. while thinking about peace a country mobilizes the state institutions to seek for sustainability;
3. While thinking about peace a country desires to become a member of an organization that generates peace capacity (EU and NATO);
4. While thinking about peace no matter how small you are, a country starts to identify itself without fear building likewise the state dignity.

In the case of my country the cause for the conflict should be explained through science. It is the incompatibility between the multi-ethnic concept and the ethno-centric concept of a society.

It is the majority's domination over the minority, cultural discrimination which includes the attempt to assimilate and acculturate the minority what drove the country to the 2001 conflict.

The 2001 conflict in Macedonia provoked some uncertainties about this country. In the future, it will be proved if the aforementioned conflict had the transition's stamp or the recidivist one, however as a result of this conflict Macedonia was exposed as a conflicting country in front of the world. However this conflict was finalized with the Ohrid peace agreement. **This agreement has the sole purpose, to introduce the multiethnic reality of the society in the concept of the functioning of the country.**

### 3. The role of the leaders in the realization of the Ohrid peace agreement

Leaders in my understanding belong to two different types of schools of thought:

- The recidivist type and
- The transition type.

Macedonia used to have both types of leader and it will continue to have such in the future. In the view of the **leader of a recidivist type**, Macedonia is labeled as a region condemned by history, culturally deficient, conflict prone, uniquely flawed; so a recidivist leader's recommendation is that the international community should not get involved into the murky and the divisive domestic condition of this area. Their advice is always the same: "Stay at arms length", led by the axiom that the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must. The strong in this case would have been for example Milosevic's Serbia, Saddam's Iraq, etc.

A transitions' leader posits that war is a product of economic, political, social underdevelopment rather than being specific to particular geographic regions of cultures. In their view, war in Macedonia was the product of the uncontrolled corruption, ethnic discrimination, and economic underdevelopment, coupled with the inability of political institutions to control corrosive inputs by demagogic leaders, so in their view there was nothing unique about Macedonia if one were to compare its conflict proportion with those of many developing regions of the Third World. In fact, one should not exclude from the comparison much of Western, Central and Eastern Europe, the US, China and Japan given the nightmarish butchery they experienced during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. So their recommendation to the international community was to become engaged in Macedonia using a conflict resolutions technique such as the Ohrid peace agreement and taking preemptive measures to support the economic development of the troubled country.

#### Leaders and political agreements

In my belief, the Ohrid agreement being an international peaceful agreement was signed by two international representatives and all local leaders of the time, so it can have a supranational character. Was that so easy to convince local leader who used to fight against each other to sign this paper? No, indeed not so easy! What happened?

What it means to be a transitionist leader? It means that you have to be able to mix the soft power and the hard line power. Exercising soft power is called by psychologists "**emotional intelligence**", which means to master your emotions and to use them to reach out and attract others. The second case of soft power is **vision**. A vision is the ability to produce a picture of the future, which attracts others to want to follow you or to help you achieve it. But it has to be realistic enough so that followers believe it. In other words, its one thing to draw a beautiful picture if it has no relation to reality it makes no good. But, if you can produce a picture with the prospect that it can be achieved (as OA is), that can draw people to you and increase your soft power. Finally, the third case soft power skill that a leader needs in this modern age is the ability to **communicate**, (like Martin Luther King was).

The other two skills related to hard power are what I call **organizational skills and Machiavellian skills**. It is the ability to seize up the weaknesses, the likes and the dislikes of other people and to play upon them and develop a minimum winning coalition in order to get things done. *Bullying doesn't do much, but a bully with a vision can sometimes do a lot of good. (to harass, to intimidate)*

To get the hard and soft power to work together in a strategy, we call it a SMART power, or in complicated multiethnic societies are known as GOOD POLITICAL WILL TO NEGOTIATE. The smart power makes you understand the **context**, the nature and the outcome of a given problem. Understanding the context in peace making agreements has to do with the momentum of **bringing a certain decision**. This I would call a **contextual intelligence**. Perhaps, the best illustration of this would a quote from **Jeff Immelt**, the CEO of General Electric. Somebody once asked Immelt: *“How do you know when to make a decision”*, he replied: *“If I were to look back over the last year there are six times when I said I've heard all your arguments, we've discussed this enough. I am just going to make the decision! If I did that eighteen times I would have lost my best people, they'd go off to other companies. If I did it three times, our company would fall apart.*

The ability to know the difference the six, the eighteen and the three times is contextual intelligence as we try to train leaders to develop an understanding of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we need to train them to develop their soft power skills, as well as their hard power skills, but above all we need to have them develop contextual intelligence so that they combine the two sets of skills in smart strategies.

Which is the smart strategy as an outcome of the Ohrid agreement? Goals are dreams with deadlines. As my previous speaker Mrs. Ganka said “Macedonia is to choose its own model which shall be in compliance with the historical, cultural and the political conditions in the country”. Unfortunately I still see Macedonia suffering from the post communist transition. The ethnocentric mental construction of both nations Macedonians and Albanians is still there and suffers from the lack of capacity to bring in life the modalities to fulfill as sooner as better the conditions from OA.

During transition, there is a feeling that everything needs to start over again. There new beginnings in fact create an anarchic destruction of any system of values or of any structure. This type of transition has been called a revolutionary transition. Macedonia is still in this dimension of revolutionary transition, which means is not yet ready enough to understand the contextual intelligence of the Ohrid agreement. Reaching the goals from that agreement will bring Macedonia in the upper stage of democracy. The modalities about the use of Albanian language within the state institution, the modalities about the use of national symbols in state institutions and the status of former NLA members with no doubt are the hottest topics for political debate in Macedonia.

The role of the women:

There was no woman leader to sign the Ohrid agreement. No presence of woman as part of the negotiating process, at least not a local one. Was that a coincidence? No, it was just the set of signatures' consisted by man leaders. But is this the reason why they still show unreadiness to accomplish the goals of OA? Can be a part of discussion, because as I sad at the very beginning, it is woman leader the one which represent the soft power, which was consisted by: emotional intelligence, gifted communication skills and vision. that smart part of the negotiation process, the contextual intelligence. Why? because she keeps in her body for 9 months the fruit of a future leader, who will accomplish the vision of set goals. In my country we still have no woman running as number one in the elections lists. This talks a lot for the society itself.

### **Society**

The problems that arise suddenly as conflicts are only a repercussion of the weak and myopic politics ahead of peace. If compromise would be put on a death bed, the created agony would involve the so called process of political catharsis between ethnic divided communities in Macedonia and nationalisms would infest the peace in the region. Such destructive forces would destroy the fundamental cultural coexistence amid different ethnic communities in Macedonia. Instead of a new life cycle, we need continuation of what we have achieved up to now. Given the evidence of the convergence – political, economic and social – between the post communist Macedonia and the rest of the euro-Atlantic region a sustained period of growth, cooperation and peace can be projected.

Major problems such as state fragmentation, inflation, unemployment, corruption, organized crime will not disappear soon in the Balkans, in Macedonia also. But an environment of consolidated democracy, advanced and liberal economy and the promise of the common institutional roof over the whole region will act as a sure fire remedy for such and other ills.

### **Consulted literature:**

1. “Debalkanizing the Balkans with Kantian Theory of Democratic peace.”  
authors: Theodore Couloumbis and Ergys Ramaj
2. “Let’s recheck the standards of our Balkans manners and balance the future.”  
author : Adelina Marku-Ibrahimi
3. “Ohrid Framework Agreement” - Doc.
4. “The meaning of European Civilization.” author: Jan Ifversen
5. “Leadership and American Foreign Policy.” author: Dr Joseph Nye