

Jacques Cheminade

The Peace of Westphalia To Escape the Thucydides Trap

This is an edited transcript of the remarks of Jacques Cheminade to the Third Panel of the Schiller Institute’s April 9, 2022 conference, “Establish a New Security and Development Architecture for All Nations.” Mr. Cheminade is the President of the Solidarité et Progrès political party in France.



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Beginning in 1618, the Thirty Years’ War claimed the lives of at least five million people. It was a true European apocalypse. Today, we are sitting on a Doomsday machine. Our challenge is to stop it before it destroys mankind either through a global economic devastation or nuclear war.

The solution provided by the Peace of Westphalia, in 1648, to the atrocities of its time, should be an inspiration for us to create a dynamic of peace through a change of our way of thinking and our way of doing. Because it not only ended religious wars and established a new form of peace negotiations among states, as you can read in all history books, but more fundamentally because it addressed *agapē*, the Greek word for understanding, creative, redemptive goodwill for all men, in a secular sense.

In his 2004 essay, “Dialogue of Eurasian Civilizations: Earth’s Next Fifty Years,” Lyndon LaRouche tells us:

The implicit basis for knowledge of the competence of our choices lies not in the experience of the past but in the competence of our experience of the future.

The spirit of the Peace of Westphalia is a reference for us precisely for that reason: it relates to a concept of

mankind that did not yet exist at that time but which was nonetheless absolutely indispensable to conceive, in order to bring to an end the mutual destruction occurring then, within a lose-lose system. It is our challenge today, again, to see with the eyes of the future.

To give you a sense of the atrocities of war I show you here *The Hanging*, from a series of 18 engravings by Jacques Callot, going back to 1633, called *Miseries and Misfortunes of War*, where he depicts how wartime violence and moral degradation concerns civilians and soldiers alike. The sack of the city of Magdeburg is a terrible example of such atrocities: In one day, after the soldiers infiltrated the besieged city, only 200 of the 1,900 buildings remained undamaged and around four fifths of the city’s 25,000 inhabitants were dead.

It then took more than four years of negotiations, between 1643 and 1648, to reach an agreement through various treaties, mainly in Münster and Osnabrück.

The Three Principles of Westphalia

Peace requires to generate international principles and laws between nation-states; it can never be a mere diplomatic arrangement within an existing system.



The Hanging, from a series of engravings by Jacques Callot published in 1633 called *Miseries and Misfortunes of War*, depicts how wartime violence and moral degradation affects civilians and soldiers alike.

How was it possible then? Because it did create a higher order of relations between nations and human beings! This is basically, again, why it shall be our reference today. On the opposite side, a vicious war-monger and Global Britain addict like Tony Blair delivered a speech in Chicago, in April 1999, repudiating Westphalia and upholding his conception of murderous liberal interventionism against the nation-states.

Let's then look carefully to the three main principles of Westphalia and how they lead to a win-win system of mutual development, which was then called cameralism, mercantilism or philadelphic.

Article 1 states the core of the Westphalian philosophy:

That there shall be a Christian and Universal Peace ... that each Party shall endeavour to procure the Benefit, Honor and Advantage of the other....

It is absolutely contrary to the principle of geopolitics, according to which each player tries to take the benefit of all the gains at the expense of the others.

Article 2 outlines:

There shall be on the one side and on the other, a perpetual Oblivion, Amnesty and Pardon of all that has been committed since the beginning of these Troubles, in what place or what manner soever the Hostilities have been practis'd, in such a manner that no body, under any pretext whatsoever, shall practice any Acts of Hostility, entertain any Enmity or cause any Trouble to each other....

This is what it means "to see with the eyes of the future" and not through the never-ending and self-destructive grievances of the past.

Then the Treaty, before settling territorial claims, concentrates on addressing the economic ruin in which all were descending. Identified as potential causes feeding the perpetual war dynamic, insolvent and illegitimate debt and financial claims are sorted out and settled, mostly by debt cancellation (Articles 13 and 35-39) or negotiated rescheduling (Article 48). Article 37, in particular, states:

Contracts, Exchanges, Transactions, Obligations, Treatys, made by Constraint or Threats, and extorted illegally from States or Subjects ... shall be so annull'd and abolish'd that no more Enquiry shall be made after them.

Article 40 adds:

... and yet the Sums of Money, which during the War have been extracted bona fide, and by good intent, by way of Contributions, to prevent greater Evils by the Contributors, are not comprehended herein.

It is the spirit of the Glass-Steagall Act, against what Roosevelt called the money-makers and banksters.

The Spirit of *Agapē*

Let me add something briefly. It is the same spirit that Martin Luther King embodied in his famous political sermon delivered at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama: "Loving Your Enemies," inspired by Matthew's Gospel. He stressed:

Far from being the pious injunction of a utopian dreamer, this command is an absolute necessity for the survival of our civilization.... A second thing that an individual must do in seeking to love his enemy is to discover the element of good in his enemy; and every time you begin to hate that person and think of hating that person, realize that there is some good there and look at those good points which will over-balance the bad points....

And then: "There's another reason why you should love your enemies, and that is because hate distorts the personality of the hater."

What Martin expresses here in its deepest form is a principle shared by the best of all civilizations in our human history when you are committed to improve a person by changing his or her way of thinking and acting, and therefore, to improving yourself.

Organizing the other, in the spirit of the Peace of Westphalia, is our challenge. Inspired by Nicholas of Cusa, you have heard Helga Zepp-LaRouche challenging us to reach the level of the Coincidence of Opposites. To make peace is not to solve things with a friend but to organize an enemy at a higher level of thinking and doing than the level on which the conflict arose—from where it becomes possible to share in doing the good together.

This is precisely where the Peace of Westphalia leads to the blossoming of human creativity in the physical universe. Peace, to be maintained and developed, has to be based on an increase in human productivity associated to the discovery of new physical principles, applied in the

form of technologies ensuring improved conditions of social life for all. This was accomplished in both Germany and France under the contributions of the creative minds of the second part of the 17th Century, in particular of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. In France, around the Académie des Sciences, it is known under the name of “Colbertist” mercantilist economics. In Germany, it generated Cameralism: improvement of national government simultaneously directed toward increasing the yields of agriculture, manufacturing and social responsibility, long-term economic growth for the benefit of all.

It is key to stress here that Leibniz, in his *Novissima Sinica* from 1697, developed the concept that the West and the East of the Eurasian continent should exchange the best of each, the commitment to science and technological development in the West, and the principles of harmonious social development in China. Some exchanges of high value for both indeed took place, but the project as an impulsion toward universal unity was blocked.

Is it not precisely what has not been possible then, that is our Westphalian challenge for all of us today? I am happy that the purpose of our conference is precisely that: unity without uniformization, exchanging the best of all of us to secure peace through the common development of our human potentials in the universe, above and beyond what we know.

Leibniz, in his *Codex Juris Gentium* wrote:

A good man is one that loves everybody, so far as reason permits. Charity is a universal benevolence, and benevolence the habit of loving of willing to love the good. Love then signifies rejoicing in the happiness of the other.... the happiness of those whose happiness pleases us, turns into our own happiness.

Some would call it “Utopian.” They are deadly wrong. Deadly, because the alternative is to fall into the Thucydides Trap, the geopolitical conception that a declining power is necessarily confronted by a rising one, and that it means war. This is what ruined Sparta and Athens in the Peloponnesian wars. What threatens to ruin us now would be far worse because it is this time at the level of all humanity equipped with destructive financial algorithms and nuclear weapons. There is a culture of death. Ours is a culture of life for the common good and the benefits of future generations.

Just one word to conclude. Xi Jinping is a dedicated reader of Leibniz and the web pages Ai Sixiang (fond of thinking) is a platform for Chinese dedication to the future. What Europe has generated, including the Constitution of the United States, is the other reason why we are here.

Let’s then be happy to be different, but with the same Westphalian thrust for unity to repair and rebuild our so immediately-threatened world.

Diogène Senny

What Africa Expects from the World

This is an edited transcript of the remarks of Diogène Senny to the Third Panel of the Schiller Institute’s April 9, 2022 conference, “Establish a New Security and Development Architecture for all Nations.” Mr. Senny is President of the Pan-African League—UMOJA Congo, Republic of Congo. He is also President of the Coordination wa Partis Politiques Panafricanistes.



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Diogène Senny

Coordination wa Partis Politiques Panafricanistes of which I am the President, to speak at this important international conference. I also thank all the speakers for the quality of their interventions delivered before my own intervention.

The title of this conference is: “Establishing a New Security and Development Architecture for All Nations.” And the theme I will address in this intervention is: “What Can Africa Expect from the Rest of the World?” A theme that we rephrase in the following way:

“Pan-Africanism and the Geopolitics of War.”

The Russo-Ukrainian conflict which is currently

Dear Speakers, Dear Participants,
Dear Guests,

First let me thank the Schiller Institute for inviting me, on behalf of our Party, the Pan-African League—UMOJA Congo and of the