

Questioning Cosmopolitanism

Edited by
Stan van Hooff
Wim Vandekerckhove



STUDIES IN GLOBAL JUSTICE
SERIES EDITOR: DEEN K. CHATTERJEE

 Springer

QUESTIONING COSMOPOLITANISM

STUDIES IN GLOBAL JUSTICE

VOLUME 6

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Aims and Scope

In today's world, national borders seem irrelevant when it comes to international crime and terrorism. Likewise, human rights, poverty, inequality, democracy, development, trade, bioethics, hunger, war and peace are all issues of global rather than national justice. The fact that mass demonstrations are organized whenever the world's governments and politicians gather to discuss such major international issues is testimony to a widespread appeal for justice around the world.

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ISSN 1871-0409
ISBN 978-90-481-8703-4 e-ISBN 978-90-481-8704-1
DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-8704-1
Springer Dordrecht Heidelberg London New York

Library of Congress Control Number: 2010924626

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Acknowledgments

The chapters in this book arise from a conference of the International Global Ethics Association held in Melbourne, Australia in June, 2008. Thanks must go to sponsors of that conference: the Centre for Citizenship & Human Rights, Faculty of Arts, Deakin University, Australia; the Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics, University of Melbourne, Australia; the Centre for Ethics and Value Inquiry, Ghent University, Belgium; and the School of International and Political Studies, Faculty of Arts, Deakin University. Special thanks must go to Dr. Robert Budd, Ms Shupin Mei and other staff of these centers for their help in organizing the conference. Both editors continued to receive assistance through these bodies during the production of the book. Thanks must also go to Dr. Paul Carter whose editorial skills have proved invaluable in putting the book together. The discussions and debates at the conference and the comments of referees have also contributed greatly to whatever quality the work possesses. Thanks to all of the participants and, of course, to the contributors to this volume.

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Introduction

Wim Vandekerckhove and Stan van Hooft

The philosopher, Diogenes the Cynic, in the fourth century BCE, was asked where he came from and where he felt he belonged. He answered that he was a “citizen of the world” (*kosmopolitês*)¹. This made him the first person known to have described himself as a cosmopolitan. A century later, the Stoics had developed that concept further, stating that the whole cosmos was but one polis, of which the order was *logos* or right reason. Living according to that right reason implied showing goodness to all of human kind. Through early Christianity, cosmopolitanism was given various interpretations, sometimes quite contrary to the inclusive notion of the Stoics. Augustine’s interpretation, for example, suggested that only those who love God can live in the universal and borderless “City of God”. Later, the rediscovery of Stoic writings during the European Renaissance inspired thinkers like Erasmus, Grotius and Pufendorf to draw on cosmopolitanism to advocate world peace through religious tolerance and a society of states. That same inspiration can be noted in the American and French revolutions. In the eighteenth century, enlightenment philosophers such as Bentham (through utilitarianism) and Kant (through universal reason) developed new and very different versions of cosmopolitanism that serve today as key sources of cosmopolitan philosophy. The nineteenth century saw the development of new forms of transnational ideals, including that of Marx’s critique of capitalism on behalf of an international working class.

But the nineteenth century also gave rise to criticism of the cosmopolitan ideal. In the context of the construction of national identities, cosmopolitanism was denounced as the love of no country and as antithetical to national pride. Accordingly, rather than being a term of praise, the adjective “cosmopolitan” came to be used to describe individuals who were seen to have an inadequate commitment or loyalty to the community or nation in which they resided. Cosmopolitans were seen to be footloose individuals who were willing to move wherever opportunity beckoned them. They were thought to have insufficient concern for their own compatriots or ethnicities and to have an excessive interest in the lives and cultures of foreign peoples. In more recent times, this pejorative usage has occurred with

¹Diogenes Laertius. 1925. *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, trans. Robert Drew Hicks. Vols. 2, VI 63. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

reference to the class of international entrepreneurs, entertainers, tourists or *fashionistas* who are equally at home in the boardrooms, casinos or salons of New York, London, Berlin or Shanghai.

While such usages highlight the global outlook of the many people who participate to a high degree in the possibilities opened up by contemporary globalization, and disparage their apparent lack of local roots, what they miss in the original term, “cosmopolitan”, is the concept of citizenship. A cosmopolitan is not just someone who feels at home in a globalized world, travels widely, and enjoys the cultural products of a global market. A cosmopolitan is a *citizen* of the world. This stress on the notion of citizenship implies a commitment and responsibility extended towards all of the peoples of the world, and a readiness to express such a commitment through political action in the context of institutions with a global reach.²

Today the term “cosmopolitanism” is widely used in the fields of political science,³ international relations,⁴ sociology,⁵ cultural studies,⁶ history,⁷ political philosophy⁸ and global ethics.⁹ It represents a broad and disparate set of attitudes, commitments and policies on the part of individuals such as citizens, scholars, politicians, and national and international leaders, and on the part of governments,

²Dower, Nigel. 2003. *An Introduction to Global Citizenship*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

³Breckenridge, Carol A., Homi K. Bhabha, Dipesh Chakrabarty, eds. 2002. *Cosmopolitanism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press; Brennan, Timothy. 1997. *At Home in the World: Cosmopolitanism Now* (Convergences: Inventories of the Present). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; Vertovec, Steven and Robin Cohen. 2003. *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context, and Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press. Andrew Strauss et al. eds. 2003. *Debating Cosmopolitics* (New Left Review Debates). London & New York: Verso.

⁴Beitz, Charles R. 1975. Justice and International Relations. *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 4/4: 360–389.

⁵Beck, Ulrich. 2004. Cosmopolitical Realism: On the Distinction Between Cosmopolitanism in Philosophy and the Social Sciences. *Global Networks* 4/2: 131–146; Beck, Ulrich and Ciaran Cronin. 2006. *Cosmopolitan Vision*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

⁶Pollock, Sheldon, Homi K. Bhabha, Carol A. Breckenridge, and Dipesh Chakrabarty. 2000. Cosmopolitanisms. *Public Culture* 12/3: 577–590.

⁷Schlereth, Thomas J. 1977. *The Cosmopolitan Ideal in Enlightenment Thought: Its Form and Function in the Ideas of Franklin, Hume, and Voltaire, 1694–1790*. Notre Dame, Indiana: Notre Dame University Press.

⁸Pogge, Thomas. 2002. *World Poverty and Human Rights: Cosmopolitan Responsibilities and Reforms*. Cambridge: Polity Press; Brock, Gillian and Harry Brighouse, eds. 2005. *The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Brock, Gillian. 2009. *Global Justice: A Cosmopolitan Account*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁹Appiah, Kwame Anthony. 2006. *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. New York: Norton; O’Neill, Onora. 2000. *Bounds of Justice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Singer, Peter. 2002. *One World: The Ethics of Globalisation*. Melbourne: Text Publishing; Commers, M.S. Ronald, Wim Vandekerckhove, and An Verlinden, eds. 2008. *Ethics in an Era of Globalization*. Aldershot: Ashgate; Nussbaum, Martha C. 1996. *For Love of Country?* Edited by Joshua Cohen for *Boston Review*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press; Benhabib, Seyla. 2006. *Another Cosmopolitanism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

non-government organizations (NGOs), and transnational organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and multinational business corporations. Broadly conceived, the term refers to both ethical commitments and political policies which embrace the whole world in their purview and which refuse to prioritize local, parochial or national concerns. In a globalized world, our ethical and political responsibilities do not stop at national borders or at the boundaries of identity-forming groups – whether these are religious, ethnic, linguistic, racial or traditional. As a consequence, the range of these responsibilities is vast.

In June, 2008 the second biennial conference of the International Global Ethics Association was held in Melbourne, Australia, on the theme: “Questioning Cosmopolitanism”. In holding the conference in Australia, the International Global Ethics Association facilitated the participation of scholars, students and opinion shapers from Asian regions as well as from Europe and the Americas. More than sixty papers were delivered on a very wide range of topics of concern to global citizens.

When it was decided to publish a book containing a selection of papers from the conference, this variety of topics and the quality of the papers presented a problem. Most papers had been refereed as part of the conference programming process, so we knew that they were of high quality. Accordingly, how could a relatively small selection be made? And how could a mere selection present a development of ideas along a defined intellectual trajectory? The task of “questioning cosmopolitanism” was clearly broader than could be encompassed within the covers of a single volume.

Accordingly, it was decided that the book would focus upon the attitudes and ethical commitments which constitute the cosmopolitan vision. In more technical terms, it was decided to explore the nature and implications of what we might call “Cosmopolitan Subjectivity”. What is it to *be* a global citizen? Alongside the policy prescriptions, political stances and institutional arrangements which are expressive of cosmopolitanism, there are individual existential dimensions and ethical commitments which constitute the cosmopolitan identity and motivate the cosmopolitan outlook. Whereas many liberal theorists, such as John Rawls, envisage moral and political subjectivity as abstracted from all the particular attachments, concerns, and commitments to substantive conceptions of a good life that an individual might have – a form of subjectivity created by being placed behind a veil of ignorance about one’s own chances of having one’s preferences met – our argument is that cosmopolitanism must be a form of subjectivity lived by real people in concrete and normatively thick situations. While the original position heuristic may allow us to see through the other’s eyes, as it were, it does so at the expense of bracketing the existential and ethical reality of our subjectivity.

A cosmopolitan form of subjectivity differs in fundamental ways from the forms of subjectivity that express themselves in chauvinism, nationalism, intolerance of difference, belligerence towards foreigners, racism, imperialism, ignorance of other cultures, and bigotry. In our view, contemporary cosmopolitans evince a form of subjectivity that comprises all or most of the following attitudes. They are suspicious of nationalism, all forms of chauvinism, and even patriotism. They refuse to see the national economic and military interests of their country as more important

than global values such as human rights, global justice and the protection of the global environment, and they refuse to give their co-nationals any priority in their concerns or responsibilities at the expense of more distant others. This is perhaps why they have earned the ire of nationalists everywhere. They respect basic human rights, see them as universally normative, and acknowledge the moral equality of all peoples and individuals. They consider the people of the world as united by reason, sociability and a common humanity, and believe in a globally acceptable concept of human dignity. In their actions they demonstrate benevolence to all others irrespective of race, caste, nationality, religion, ethnicity or location, and are willing to come to the aid of those suffering from natural or man-made disasters, including extreme poverty. They evince a commitment to justice in the distribution of natural resources and wealth on a global scale, and display solidarity with the struggles for human rights and for social justice of all the world's peoples. They are happy for the states of which they are citizens to open their borders to refugees and immigrants and to embrace their differences into the national culture. They long for, and work towards, lasting world peace, and acknowledge the rule of international law. They are opposed to tyranny and are committed to open and participatory political processes throughout the world. They respect the right to self-determination of peoples. They display tolerance of religious and cultural differences and accept the global existence of moral pluralism. They are prepared to enter into dialogue and communication across cultural and national boundaries, and to see the world as a single community.

Such attitudes do not arise fully formed in the hearts and minds of cosmopolitans. They need to be developed and nurtured through processes of education and reflection. We hope that this book will contribute to such processes. Accordingly, we have gathered together those papers from the conference that throw light on these subjective dimensions and some which explore their political or institutional implications.

Plan for the Book

The essays in the book are ordered into two sections. The first of these explores various dimensions of cosmopolitan subjectivity while the second explores how some dimensions of cosmopolitan subjectivity express themselves in institutional forms. The first essay, by Nigel Dower, sets out to answer many of the criticisms that have been leveled against cosmopolitanism. We offer it as our opening chapter because it provides a useful summary and overview of a number of positions under the broad umbrella of "cosmopolitanism" and maps them against the distinction between subjectivity and institutional realization which we are using to structure the book.

Dower uses a four-point matrix in order to characterize a number of cosmopolitan positions. Deepening the well-known distinction between ethical cosmopolitanism, which insists that all individuals have equal moral value, and institutional or legal

cosmopolitanism, which advocates global institutions that respect human rights, Dower points out that this distinction does not correspond to that which considers cosmopolitanism from the perspective of individual attitudes and commitments on the one hand, and national governmental policies and responsibilities on the other. At the individual level, Dower defends the notion of global citizenship from those who would assert that there is no global polity of which individuals can be citizens. At the state and international level, Dower defends the UN as an institution that can embody cosmopolitan values against those who would see it as an inescapably internationalist institution used to pursue the national interests of member states. Both individuals and governments should adhere to a global ethic and both individuals and governments have global responsibilities. Whether these norms are based on abstract reasoning about the moral status of individuals or whether they are based on motivations of caring and concern which cross national boundaries is a question that is not as significant as the claim that those norms are incumbent on both institutions and individuals. Accordingly, Dower's essay sets up the terms for the explorations of both cosmopolitan subjectivity and of the institutional prescriptions that such forms of subjectivity would give rise to.

Andrew Linklater's essay approaches cosmopolitan subjectivity by asking whether, in a world of increasing interconnectedness, there is a corresponding growth in cosmopolitan ethical sensitivity. One school of thought – in the tradition of Arnold Toynbee – would say that our capacity for harming one another over great distances has increased in history without a concomitant ethical commitment to reduce such harms, while others – as exemplified by Peter Singer – have suggested that there has been sufficient moral progress to ensure that the new destructive powers held by human beings through the agency of states and other institutions will not be used irresponsibly. Central to the essay is “the harm principle” which takes it as a given that harm and the suffering it causes are basic human evils. It also asserts that human beings have a capacity to respond to the suffering of others with acts of rescue, and to commit themselves to avoiding actions that would harm others. Even when those others are at great distances from us geographically, institutionally or historically, there is a disposition to care about them and to avoid harming them. Linklater here places himself in the tradition of David Hume and Adam Smith who highlighted the caring emotions of compassion and pity, rather than the tradition of Immanuel Kant for whom our feelings of concern for others were not as important as our rationally grounded duties not to harm them. For Linklater it is our mutual vulnerability to harm and suffering that grounds universal human solidarity and he is confident that there is a growth of such solidarity in the world today.

Whether these considerations constitute empirical claims about the moral condition of contemporary humanity or whether they should be read as advocacy on behalf of the cosmopolitan values that will be needed to prevent the world from sliding into a state of barbarism and mutual destruction is not easily settled. Cosmopolitan thinkers within the disciplines of International Relations and Political Science will stress empirical considerations, while philosophers and ethicists will support the advocacy of such values with rational argument. What the essay does make clear is that the heart of cosmopolitanism is not so much the Kantian doctrine

that all people are of equal moral status, as the humanitarian principle that the world is a community constituted by a form of solidarity grounded in our shared vulnerability to harm and suffering and in our mutual concern for each other as such vulnerable beings. It is worth elaborating on this point.

In the disciplines of Political Philosophy and International Relations cosmopolitanism is often defined as the view that all people, no matter their national, ethnic or religious backgrounds and no matter their gender, have an equal moral status.¹⁰ The most telling enunciation of this view is the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, the focus that is given to rights and a global form of legal equality by this document is not rich enough to capture all of the ethical demands that global society places upon those who would think of themselves as world citizens. Cosmopolitans discern a subjective dimension to global injustices that is not captured by either the experience of being the victim of harm or the understanding of such an experience as the violation of a right. Stan van Hooft's paper explores what else might be involved in injustice through the social theory of Axel Honneth who argues that the core of all experiences of injustice is the withdrawal of social recognition. Honneth identifies three spheres of recognition in modern societies: that of the self where recognition takes the form of love, that of social interaction where recognition is based on law, and that of society where recognition lies in the sphere of achievement. Van Hooft argues that global justice must be understood to embrace the substantive ethical values that arise in these three spheres as well as the procedural standards of moral rightness that belong to the second of them. Hence, along with the stress on human rights and the equal status of individuals that is characteristic of institutional cosmopolitanism, there needs to be an acknowledgment that the subjective element of recognition is central to the conception of global justice espoused by cosmopolitans. Such an expanded conception of global justice will extend cosmopolitanism beyond Kantian norms and motivate the caring and concern that are characteristic of cosmopolitan subjectivity.

Accordingly, van Hooft's essay expands on what might be included within the harm principle that was enunciated by Linklater. While Linklater does not explicate the harms to which human beings are vulnerable aside from mentioning the many and transnational sources of such harms in our globalized world, his assumption seems to be that only physical harms are significant. While natural disasters cause such basic forms of harm, injustice adds a deeper dimension to physical suffering. What constitutes the moral suffering that accompanies the harms which result from injustice is the refusal or denial of recognition. Whereas harm that is the result of bad luck is hurtful without giving rise to resentment, harm that is the result of injustice is both hurtful and productive of resentment. This resentment is the extra and specifically subjective element of suffering to which cosmopolitans are especially sensitive. Van Hooft argues that the expanded notion of harm that can be drawn from Honneth's theory allows us to understand the concept of human dignity in such non-metaphysical terms as could be understood by people from any culture

¹⁰Pogge, Thomas. 1992. Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty. *Ethics* 103/1: 48–75, 48.

the world over. The denial of recognition, both at an individual and at a community level, would be a violation of human dignity in this sense.

Cosmopolitanism has been accused of being a form of Western liberalliberalism hegemony. It has been suggested that the global promotion of the kinds of political freedoms and rights which are typical of liberal democratic societies pays scant regard to the “decent” forms of social and political life that may obtain even in societies where such political freedoms and rights are absent.¹¹ It has been suggested that the hidden motivation for promoting liberal values is to make the world available for capitalist exploitation and the growth of consumerism in a free market.¹² Liberals interpret the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as endorsing an individualist conception of political freedom based upon a philosophical conception of “autonomy” and deduce from it the need for democratic participation in decision making.¹³ Philosophers of a more communitarian persuasion, on the other hand, insist that human rights can be honored in social and political formations which pay less heed to individual autonomy and which insist upon the individual’s immersion into the community’s conception of what makes human life worth living.¹⁴ Whether such conceptions flow from theological beliefs or from ancient or ethnic traditions, the end result, as liberals see it, is conformity at best and repression at worst. Accordingly, cosmopolitans are divided as to whether they should embrace the liberal values that seem central to the cosmopolitan tradition and seek to advocate them globally (albeit by peaceful means such as discourse and example), or whether they should acknowledge the difference and legitimacy of non-liberal forms of life and governance in other societies, provided that a more minimal set of basic human rights are still honored in them.¹⁵ But what is missing in this debate is any questioning of the liberal ideals of liberty and autonomy. Such questioning is provided in the chapter by Jiwei Ci.

Although liberal societies come in many differing forms and although even some non-liberal societies embrace a rhetoric of freedom, Ci directs his attention beyond specific political formations in order to explore the forms of subjectivity which the concept of freedom serves to interpret. Basic to any human life is the feeling of power and subjectivity that arises from being an agent. However, this feeling requires interpretation in terms of categories available in that society. In Western societies this interpretation is necessarily given in terms of freedom. It is not so much *true* that we are free as that this is a plausible way for us to interpret our

¹¹Rawls, John. 1999. *The Law of Peoples*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

¹²Brennan, Timothy. 2003. Cosmopolitanism and Internationalism. In *Debating Cosmopolitanism*, ed. Daniele Archibugi, 40–50: 45. London & New York: Verso. See also Gowan, Peter. The New Liberal Cosmopolitanism. 51–64, in the same volume. Gowan argues that “The New Liberal Cosmopolitanism” is an ideology that serves the interests of American world hegemony.

¹³Tan, Kok-Chor. 2002. *Tolerance, Diversity, and Global Justice*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.

¹⁴Walzer, Michael. 1994. *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.

¹⁵Rawls, John. 1999. *op. cit.*

ability to pursue our goals in the way we do. While there is something inevitable about the way we are subjected to this interpretation, we do have a limited capacity to revise and question it through democratic discursive processes. However, such processes will meet resistance from those whose interests are served by this mode of social subjection or from those whose sense of self-identity derives from it. What gives our lives meaning will be made to seem natural to us in terms of an ideology of freedom and is thus resistant to reflection and review. Yet we can only “redeem” this mode of subjection by seeing through it and thus disarming its ideological functions. Ci’s essay is a clear warning not to over-value freedom. Nevertheless, he also redeems freedom in the sense of legitimating the concept. We cannot deny social categories. Nor can we deny that freedom requires subjection to social categories. But it is also true that we want to change social categories. That is where the importance of freedom lies, and it retains its importance even as it loses its ideological status.

While Ci does not go on to offer corresponding analyses of the ideological formations of non-liberal societies – analyses that might serve to render them more acceptable to dispassionate eyes – his argument does serve to bracket the self-assurance with which some liberal-cosmopolitan scholars advocate the value of autonomy, or base their claims for the reality of human rights upon the raw phenomenon of agency.¹⁶

As noted earlier, cosmopolitanism has been attacked as a form of subjectivity marked by rootlessness. As an ethical commitment it has been accused of lacking heart and of relying upon an abstract and moralistic conception of persons as nodes in an impartialist system of justice.¹⁷ As a personal and existential stance, it has been accused of lacking grounding in home and hearth and of having no attachment to place. On this view, the cosmopolitan inhabits the world in the way that a shopper inhabits a supermarket. Siby George’s essay explores cosmopolitan subjectivity through the concept of a “hybrid self” but sees such a self, not as rootless or as coldly duty-driven, but as open to the other in a way that those who insist on the thickness of communitarian attachments cannot comprehend. Drawing on the writings of Kant, Lévinas and Rushdie, George provides a uniquely Indian and postcolonial perspective on the links between cosmopolitanism in the global sphere and multiculturalism in the national sphere. In a sense, George performs a comparable exercise to Ci’s. He investigates the self and cultural identity in order to question the so-called essence of cosmopolitanism. “Can one really rise beyond one’s home and hearth, kin and kith”, asks George, and embrace the world? His answer is yes, if you break through the binaries of having roots/being rootless, and having an identity/having no identity at all. Instead, cosmopolitanism can be a celebration of difference. This makes cosmopolitanism a form of subjectivity which is

¹⁶Brock, Gillian. 2005. Needs and Global Justice. In *The Philosophy of Need*, ed. Soran Reader, 51–72. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁷Barber, Benjamin R. 1996. Constitutional Faith. In *For Love of Country?* Ed. Joshua Cohen for *Boston Review*, 30–37. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

not merely aesthetic, but moral as well. George builds on the work of Lévinas, who breaks with any notions of essence and identity, and of Derrida, who talks about the aporia of cosmopolitanism as annexionist and expansionist, to develop his notion of cosmopolitanism as a secular transcendence. The cosmopolitan then is not selfless but has a porous self or a hybrid self. Such a self is never “pure”. One’s self can never be reduced to its roots, although it has roots. Moreover, rather than a totalizing conception of a universalist cosmopolitanism, George advocates a myriad of “little cosmopolitanisms” which allow individuals to embrace both their home communities and their global solidarities.

The next two papers discuss the relation between self and other and how this relation is mediated or hindered through proximity and distance. They pursue George’s question of how cosmopolitan subjectivity is open to the other. Is the other a morally constructed object of duty, or is the other marked by a form of subjectivity which evokes a sense of care and responsibility in the cosmopolitan subject?

Debates on global justice, our obligations to the world’s poor, and on the cultural coherence of established national communities have been structured by a deep ethical dichotomy: namely, that between our obligations to all others considered impartially, and our obligations to just those others towards whom we have special obligations by virtue of their being related to us in a variety of ways. The most intimate of these relations are those of the family, but the bonds of community, ethnicity, language and nationality are also deemed to be appropriate bases for favoring some over more distant others. Nation-states take themselves to have responsibilities to their own citizens which are greater than those they have towards foreigners. That this pursuit of the national interest threatens the pursuit of global justice or even the provision of basic forms of rescue for those suffering from natural or man-made catastrophes is but one instance of the problem of balancing impartial considerations against partial ones. The cosmopolitan nostrum that all people have equal moral status would suggest that cosmopolitan thinking would be impartial in that it does not favor one’s co-nationals or members of one’s own identity-forming group or ethnicity. Communitarian and nationalist thinking, in contrast, is partial in that it gives preference to co-nationals.

An Verlinden’s essay offers us a deep framework for theorizing this problem. She identifies a number of binaries that surround cosmopolitan discussions of our duties to others. Communitarians stress the right of a collective community in their partialist arguments, while cosmopolitans argue in impartialist terms for the rights of all individuals. Universalists argue that borders don’t really matter, while particularists disagree and claim that they matter a great deal. Another, related binary frame is that offered by Thomas Nagel who argues that all moral issues can be brought down to the first-person perspective which asks, what should I do? or the third-person perspective which asks, what ought to happen? Nagel sees the demands of impartial justice as arising in the sphere of the public, institutional and third-person moral realm while the demands of particular obligations arise in the private first-person realm of individual concern and commitment. Verlinden’s essay is an attempt to enrich cosmopolitanism with more nuances in order to move beyond the impasses in which cosmopolitans find themselves. There must be something like a

second-person perspective because a concern for oneself is quite different from a concern for those who are close to one's self, and it is also different from a concern for those whom one does not know. For Verlinden, the inherent moral value of second-person relationships cannot be argued for within Nagel's first- or third-person framework. The first-person perspective leads to isolation because the ego is the only source of reference. The third-person perspective enables only disinterested interpersonal relationships. Instead, she turns to Martin Buber and Emmanuel Lévinas to explore the issue. The second-person perspective lies in between the first and third since it neither entails a full identification with others nor allows us to perceive others primarily as objects. It values the proximity between persons within a face-to-face relation. Buber and Lévinas explore the intersubjective, second-person realm of relationships in order to uncover a source of normativity that arises from the presence of you, the other, in my life and from my responsiveness to your presence. This theoretical approach allows us to overcome the partial/impartial duality in favor of an undifferentiated notion of responsibility to others, and to break through the boundaries which threaten to place more distant others outside of the sphere of my moral concern.

Vince Marotta's essay broaches the question of how cosmopolitan subjectivity is open to the other in a different way. Marotta uses a definition of "the stranger" given by the classic sociologist Georg Simmel, according to which a stranger is someone who is physically close but socially and culturally distant. Thus the stranger is a non-member of one's community but one whose proximity to us undermines the opposition between "us" and "them". Simmel, and also Zygmunt Bauman, suggest that the stranger undercuts such binaries. The stranger is neither close nor distant, but takes the in-between position. The hybrid stranger disturbs the pre-existing social and cultural boundaries which the host takes for granted. In this way Marotta's chapter approaches the topic of cosmopolitan subjectivity from a sociological perspective. Marotta asks whether Simmel's definition of the stranger might apply to cosmopolitans and whether it might be normative for anyone who espouses a global outlook. While the type of the stranger could be readily applied to foreigners and immigrants as seen from the occupiers of mainstream perspectives, Marotta asks whether cosmopolitan thinkers might themselves be strangers in their own communities. He wonders whether the kind of rootlessness which is characteristic of cosmopolitans is ethically positive in that it could provide epistemological advantages in understanding others in a multicultural world. In the end, Marotta casts doubt on the thesis of some sociologists that cosmopolitan subjectivity is inherently virtuous or more objective.

Could it be that it is because the form of cosmopolitan subjectivity is that of the stranger that cosmopolitans are more sensitive to the needs of others and to the injustices of which they might be victims? Or is the cosmopolitan motivated by moral considerations that impartially give to each person globally an equal moral status? What is it that motivates the cosmopolitan quest for global justice and for human rights around the world? Tom Campbell and Holly Lawford-Smith disagree strongly about what can ground the cosmopolitanism outlook: the notion of justice or that of humanity. Campbell begins his essay by questioning whether cosmopolitanism is a

truly unique and original approach in contrast to other normative theories of international relations. But his main concern is with the question of whether what he calls the “principle of justice”, with its stress on global institutions and an impartialist conception of the persons who are the object of cosmopolitan concern, is as strong a basis for a cosmopolitan ethics as what he calls the “principle of humanity”. Whereas such cosmopolitan thinkers as Kok-Chor Tan¹⁸ and Thomas Pogge¹⁹ stand in a Kantian tradition which valorizes duty and impartiality and apply a broadly Rawlsian conception of justice to the globalized world, Campbell, like Linklater, appeals to the tradition of David Hume and Adam Smith with their stress on the “sentiments of humanity” such as caring and compassion. From this perspective the cosmopolitan outlook could be motivated by responsiveness to the suffering of others more than by an obligation to design and maintain global institutions that consider the interests of all others as no greater than one’s own. According to Campbell, the principle of humanity is as powerful and normative a consideration as is the principle of justice, and overcomes some of the limitations inherent in the Rawlsian approach.

For her part, Holly Lawford-Smith explores the debate between the principles of justice and of humanity by appealing to empirical data from social psychology. This data suggests that the principle of justice is more motivating for people than the principle of humanity. Against Campbell, Lawford-Smith argues that we should prefer to ground cosmopolitan proposals to end global poverty in justice because that will give them a better chance of success, at least in those cultures which place a greater stress on individual rights than on collective responsibilities. Cosmopolitans who respond to the needs of the global poor, whether by acknowledging a duty to rescue²⁰ or a duty to secure justice,²¹ must also balance the almost infinite demands of the global poor against the more particular and emotional demands of family, friends, dependents and, arguably, co-nationals. According to Lawford-Smith, it is the principle of justice that is more effective in securing this balance.

The essays that follow introduce a new theme to the book and thereby constitute a new section. Whereas the previous section concentrated on the kind of ethical identity cosmopolitans display – what we have referred to as “cosmopolitan subjectivity” – this section focuses more on policy prescriptions and on the kinds of national and transnational institutions which would reflect a cosmopolitan outlook. If the clearest opponents to the cosmopolitan outlook in the past were racism and colonialism, the clearest opponent to that outlook in the present is nationalism in either its bellicose or commercial forms. Pursuing the national interest through the projection of military or economic power at the cost of the socio-economic status of

¹⁸Tan, Kok-Chor. 2004. *Justice without Borders: Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism, and Patriotism* (Contemporary Political Theory). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁹Pogge, Thomas. 1989. *Realizing Rawls*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. See also Beitz, Charles R. 1999. International Liberalism and Distributive Justice: A Survey of Recent Thought. *World Politics* 51/2: 269–296.

²⁰Singer, Peter. 2009. *The Life You Can Save: Acting Now to End World Poverty*. Melbourne: Text.

²¹Pogge, Thomas. 2002. op. cit.

those peoples who lose out in global economic competition or without consideration of the environmental costs that impinge on other peoples, constitutes a repudiation of cosmopolitan ideals. The concept that best captures these cosmopolitan concerns is that of global justice.

The classic statement of what social justice requires comes from John Rawls in his *A Theory of Justice*.²² Envisaging an “original position” in which participants assemble in order to design the distributive institutions of their society and do so from behind a “veil of ignorance” which prevents them from knowing what positions they will occupy in that society, Rawls argues that such participants will choose arrangements which will ensure that the least advantaged in that society will nevertheless have fair access to social goods. Such arrangements will be just if the advantages that the better-off receive also flow on to advantage the poor and if everyone, irrespective of whether they are rich or poor, has the opportunity to act freely so as to advance themselves in the system. There must be no institutional barriers to self-improvement. The implicit context for this theory is the nation-state since it is the nation-state which is the institutional framework for cooperation between citizens and for the distribution of the social goods generated by the efforts of those citizens. In his *The Law of Peoples*, Rawls makes clear that he does not envisage a global version of his original position in which individuals construct just global institutions.²³ At the global level it is states or “peoples” that interact with each other and the consequences of this for individual welfare and rights is limited by the power of state sovereignty. However, thinkers such as Thomas Pogge have applied Rawls’s original ideas on justice to the global economic system and its institutions.²⁴ If the principles of justice demand that the poor should benefit from the increasing wealth of the rich and should have opportunities to enjoy social and economic opportunities equal to those of anyone else, why should these demands only be met within national economies? In order for Pogge’s suggestion to have purchase, it is necessary to see the world as an analogue of the state. Just as the state is a set of institutions for the ordering of social cooperation and the distribution of the resultant social goods, so the world must be seen in institutional terms. However, as the papers in this section show, this does not necessarily imply a world government.

Carol Gould’s essay introduces this section by bridging the notions of cosmopolitan subjectivity and cosmopolitan institutions. Gould recognizes the distinction between the two, but unlike authors who prefer the separation of moral and political cosmopolitanism not to be breached, her essay addresses the interrelations between cosmopolitanism in ethics and in democratic theory. People possess capacities for self-transformation, which can take individual or socio-cultural forms. Hence, cosmopolitanism entails more than people’s abstract equality. For those capacities for self-transformation to be effective, constraining conditions need to be absent and enabling conditions need to be present. The specification of rights

²²Rawls, John. 1972. *A Theory of Justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

²³Rawls, John. 1999. op. cit.

²⁴Pogge, Thomas. 1989. op. cit.

and their institutional realization are the recognition of those conditions. It follows that moral cosmopolitanism and political cosmopolitanism mutually imply each other. Basing her argument on a social ontology of individuals-in-relation who seek autonomous agency and self-transformation within social and political contexts, Gould argues that associative forms of social life require democratic forms of governance. The vision espoused by cosmopolitan subjectivity must include the democratization of global institutions as well as of national governments. Gould points out several routes to transnational democracy and comments on the problem each of these brings with them. Feasibility (avoiding excessive bureaucracy) and subsidiarity (taking decisions at the lowest level possible) are important focal points for new forms of associative democracy, but, argues Gould, the main issue is that of co-determination. Policies and decisions have effects on distantly situated people. Therefore, cosmopolitical processes must include mechanisms for “all-affected” and especially the global poor to participate or at least have input into those policies.

The essay by Rekha Nath addresses this problem by arguing that state-based institutions do not limit the obligations that citizens have to only co-citizens within those institutions. People in other countries and other living conditions in other parts of the world have interactions with us which justify the claim that we have responsibilities of justice towards them of an essentially similar kind to those which we have to co-nationals. Duty-generating institutional cosmopolitanism frameworks exist on a global level and extend beyond national boundaries. Accordingly, the norms of justice that Rawls had defined are not confined by the boundaries of nation-states but extend to all of humanity globally. Nath defends the idea that global interactions generate global duties of justice. This idea is denied by “statists” like Rawls who argue that global economic interactions do not bring forth duties of justice comparable to the ones we have towards our co-nationals. However, Nath argues that the realities that come with global economic interactions defeat the statist position. Moreover, duty-generating institutional frameworks exist on a global level and extend beyond national boundaries. Accordingly, the norms of justice that Rawls had defined are not confined by the boundaries of nation-states but extend to all of humanity globally.

By arguing for global institutions as a vehicle for pursuing co-determination and justice, Gould and Nath set up the problems that Steven Slaughter and Wim Vandekerckhove go on to deal with.

Slaughter tackles Nath’s critique of statism. He argues that the state does have an important role to play in global governance. According to him, cosmopolitanism is too quick to dismiss the state as a locus of ethical global governance. He builds his case with republican arguments for redeveloping the state. A republican project of contestatory democracy where people have “editorial” powers would address the problems of institutional power, and offer grounds to bridge the “democratic deficit” that exists in contemporary international governance. Slaughter argues for a renewed confidence in the possible progressive role of nation-states in global affairs. Cosmopolitans, he argues, need not seek a reduction in the power and influence of states in order to secure cosmopolitan goals. Nor do they need to advocate democratic transnational institutions. What is needed is that state governments be more

responsive to the cosmopolitan aspirations of their own people. In order to secure this, states must become more democratically responsive or “republican” within their own polities. Just as Kant had argued that republican (read, genuinely democratic) states would not go to war against each other,²⁵ so Slaughter argues the republican states would pursue the cosmopolitan vision of lasting peace, human rights and global justice.

Following Nath’s claim that there exist global institutional interactions between everyone in the world which generate obligations of justice between them, and Gould’s claim that cosmopolitan subjectivity must commit itself to the democratization of global institutions, Wim Vandekerckhove’s essay specifies an important and relevant class of such institutions: namely, multinational business corporations. Since most theorists of international relations, such as Slaughter, focus on the role of the state in either causing global injustice or in seeking to secure global justice, Vandekerckhove fills an important gap in conceiving of a larger set of institutional frameworks through which human rights and global justice can be secured. It is not only through state or governmental international institutions that rights claims are mounted or met. Just as the processes of negotiation around industrial relations within states can either make use of state instrumentalities or be confined within business enterprises, so international quests for human rights can be handled by a variety of public and private institutions – although the distinction between public and private used here must itself be interrogated. Vandekerckhove describes the responsibilities for securing social justice that transnational business corporations have in the countries where they operate, and argues that those responsibilities should not be avoided by those corporations through any attempt on their part to re-direct them towards governments or other transnational agencies. Corporations are unable to do a government’s job and demanding them to step in where governments fails or are weak would grant them a status they do not deserve. Corporations engage in specific types of interaction that are quite different from government interactions. Vandekerckhove describes the many kinds of interaction that corporations are engaged in and which ground their cosmopolitan responsibilities to secure social justice. His indications of how these responsibilities might be exercised can thus serve as a framework, not to justify the role of corporations in globalization, but to confront them with their unavoidable responsibilities towards the fulfilling of global human aspirations.

Cosmopolitanism is a multifaceted social movement. It resides in the sensibilities of individuals as well as in the policies and structures of state and non-state institutions. It is at once an ethical commitment and a set of political ideals. It is hoped that by exploring it in both its subjective articulations and institutional expressions we and our fellow authors will have advanced its realization in the contemporary world.

²⁵Kant, Immanuel. 1991. Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch. In *Immanuel Kant: Political Writings*, Edited with an introduction and notes by Hans Reiss, trans. Hugh Barr Nisbet, Second enlarged ed. 93–130. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Part I
Cosmopolitan Subjectivity

Questioning the Questioning of Cosmopolitanism

Nigel Dower

1 Introduction

In this chapter I want to identify a number of criticisms that can be made of cosmopolitanism and to show that whilst some of these criticisms are successful against some forms of cosmopolitanism, cosmopolitanism as such is not undermined and that an appropriately conceived cosmopolitanism is both theoretically right and practically essential in the world today.

2 The Framework of Analysis: Four Dimensions of Cosmopolitanism

I need to make two distinctions at the outset. First there is a well-worked distinction drawn between ethical cosmopolitanism and institutional (or legal) cosmopolitanism. The former is a basic ethical position that all human beings matter, expressed in Thomas Pogge's formulation, as the theses of individualism, universality and generality.¹ Such an ethical position is consistent with different approaches to how the world ought politically to be organized: some ethical cosmopolitans may want the international order of states to work better in the promotion of cosmopolitan values, others may argue for moderate reform to global governance, and others may make

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This essay was originally presented as a keynote Lecture at the 2nd Biennial Conference of the International Global Ethics Association, "Questioning Cosmopolitanism", Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia, 26–28 June 2008. Although most of the papers were on different aspects of cosmopolitanism and questioned cosmopolitanism only in the sense of "interrogating" it, I was asked specifically to look at the range of objections that are raised against the general idea of cosmopolitanism

¹Pogge, Thomas. 2002. *World Poverty and Human Rights*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

radical proposals for world government or – rather differently – a post-Westphalian world order. Institutional cosmopolitanism is *either* the actual recommendation of either moderate or radical reform to the global political order into something significantly different from the Westphalian order which we have had for the last 350 years, *or* an analysis that these changes are in any case already happening as an aspect of globalization, *or* a combination of both normative and analytic claims.

Second, there can be different levels of focus for both ethical and institutional cosmopolitanism. At one level ethical cosmopolitanism is focused on what the moral standing of individual human beings is in regard to their obligations, rights and so on. Much of the discourse on global citizenship is focused on these ethical issues. Arguments such as those of Peter Singer over the obligations of the rich towards the poor are of this kind.² But at another level such an ethical perspective can be brought to bear on corporate bodies such as nation-states or business companies, generating positions in such areas as the ethics of international relations or international business ethics. Likewise, when we turn to institutional cosmopolitanism, there can be a focus on what is needed for an adequate expression of individual global citizenship – what makes individuals global *citizens* as opposed to merely globally concerned moral agents – and also a focus on “cosmopolis”, that is, on what changes in political institutions are needed in global governance to adequately realize the values identified in ethical cosmopolitanism. I like to characterize these different focuses as the four dimensions to cosmopolitan discourse. The following diagram may help:

	ETHICAL	INSTITUTIONAL
INDIVIDUAL	Global citizenship as a commitment to a global ethic or possession of a universal moral status	Global citizenship as embedded in global civil society, cosmopolitan democracy, globally oriented citizenship, international human rights law, etc.
STATE	Ethics of international relations from a global ethics point of view, hence generally a critique of international relations	Proposals for new forms of global governance, new global political order, neo/post-Westphalian order, stronger international institutions, cosmopolitan law, world government

Diagram 1 The four dimensions to cosmopolitan discourse

At any rate I shall discuss the criticism of cosmopolitanism using this framework, and defend a version of cosmopolitanism in regard to all four dimensions.

²Singer, Peter. 1972. Famine, affluence and morality. *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 1/3: 229–243. Singer extends his argument in a chapter entitled “Rich and Poor” in his *Practical Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1979.

3 Ethical Cosmopolitanism

Criticism of ethical cosmopolitanism can really be divided into two broad areas: first, the criticism of the ethical universalism assumed in cosmopolitanism and second, the criticism of cosmopolitanism's claim that we have significant trans-boundary obligations towards human beings anywhere in the world. A cosmopolitan ethic involves both elements – a claim about universal values and a claim about transboundary obligations. They are not the same. Indeed, one could have a form of global ethic which only focused on universal values as such. Two examples illustrate this. In many ways some, but not all, defenders of the internationalist tradition accepted certain universal values (for example, about how to fight in wars) without accepting any cosmopolitan obligations to *promote* values in the world. Likewise, the rationale behind the human rights thinking in the formulation of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) was that whilst human rights were universal, the responsibility to realize and protect them resided within individual states – an approach which in the thinking of many has been superseded in more recent times by a more “cosmopolitan turn” – for example, in the endorsement by the United Nations of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) in 2005.³

3.1 *Cosmopolitanism as a Global Ethic*

The criticism of the universalist element of cosmopolitan ethics comes from the ethical relativist or post-modern perspectives. The debate between universalism and relativism is a very general and indeed well-worked one not specifically linked to cosmopolitanism. Accordingly, a rehearsal of these arguments here seems redundant and would deflect from other more specific arguments to do with cosmopolitanism. Simon Caney provides an excellent critique in his recent book *Justice Beyond Borders*.⁴ I would only mention two specific arguments he makes.⁵ First, in arguing that there are universal values one is not arguing that all values are universal; some may be culturally specific.⁶ However, how thin or thick the universal core should be remains one of the areas of contention.⁷ Second, as a shared ethic, the global ethic

³In his keynote lecture for the same conference (also in this book) Tom Campbell criticized cosmopolitanism *inter alia* because, insofar as it made general global ethics claims, this did not really distinguish it from other forms of global ethics thinking. I believe it is this emphasis on trans-boundary responsibility that helps distinguish cosmopolitanism from other kinds of global ethics, including a general sense of humanity towards fellow human beings as the basis of occasional responses to distant needs.

⁴Caney, Simon. 2005. *Justice Beyond Borders*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁵As indeed I do. See Dower, Nigel. 2007 (1998). *World Ethics – The New Agenda*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

⁶Caney, Simon. 2005. op.cit. 41.

⁷See, for example, Kim, Yersu. 1999. *A Common Framework for the Ethics of the 21st Century*. Paris: Unesco.

is one that includes the worldviews which different thinkers have who support it⁸ – a point of some importance to which I will return.

Both these points lead to the more substantive issue thrown up by modern discussions of cosmopolitanism. What is the cosmopolitan trying to promote in the world? Many critics, such as Danilo Zolo,⁹ see the cosmopolitan project as essentially a hegemonizing one, one of projecting values onto the rest of the world which are not appropriate for the rest of the world. There are two levels to this criticism: it may be that what is inappropriate is the scope of the content of the ethical values promoted, projected or proselytized, for instance because they are ethnocentric or too culturally specific about property, marriage and so on. Or it may be that what is projected is not merely the set of values but the whole worldview from which these values emanate. One motive lying behind these projections is a belief that the values and the worldview supporting them are correct or true and one's duty is to promote the truth, for instance the theological truth. Another motivation is that the conversion of other parts of the world to one's values and views makes the world more amenable to one's geo-political interests. Walter Mignolo, for instance, saw two early cosmopolitan phases as illustrating these kinds of promotion (and though they were not necessarily called cosmopolitan, they were in essence). Christian cosmopolitanism at the time of the Crusades illustrates the promotion of a worldview, whilst the colonial or imperial project from Columbus onwards was also a cosmopolitan project of bringing the rest of the world under the Western value system and sphere of influence.¹⁰ In the modern era the confrontations of the cold war can be seen in this light, and one can argue that the promotion of neo-liberal values and of human rights in the current era, if promoted in a specific and dogmatic fashion, is also a form of inappropriate cosmopolitanism.¹¹

There is much to be acknowledged in these worries. All too often, especially in the past, there has been an inappropriate projection of values onto the rest of the world, whether explicitly in the name of cosmopolitanism or in other ways. But the response to this should not be to reject cosmopolitanism but to fashion a form of cosmopolitanism which avoids these criticisms. Indeed, if we reject cosmopolitanism in all its forms we are in effect rejecting the general idea of global responsibility,

⁸Caney, 2005. op.cit. 46.

⁹Zolo, Danilo. 1997. *Cosmopolis – Prospects for World Government*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

¹⁰Mignolo, Walter D. 2002. The Many Faces of Cosmo-polis: Border Thinking and Critical Cosmopolitanism. In *Cosmopolitanism*, eds. Carol A. Breckenridge et al., 157–188. Durham NC: Duke University Press.

¹¹Human rights and liberal values may well form the basis of a non-dogmatic cosmopolitanism which is entirely appropriate. If human rights are promoted in such a way as to be sensitive to varieties of cultural expression (but not tolerating harmful kinds of cultural practice such as genital mutilation, ethnic discrimination etc.), and if liberty and freedom are promoted likewise in ways that accommodate cultural differences, as in the thinking of Amartya Sen (for example, Sen, Amartya. 1999. *Development as Freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press), then the promotion of these values is fine – though here as elsewhere with global values the dividing line between what counts as genuinely universal and what is seen as culturally imperialistic or dogmatic is one of contestation.

which, for pragmatic reasons if not others, is a counsel of despair in the modern world situation, since it would undercut any moral arguments for giving aid, or against engaging in exploitative transnational economic practices, or indeed against using military force against other countries for national gain.

There is a kind of parallel between cosmopolitanism and development in this regard. Development all too often has been promoted as essentially or primarily economic growth coupled with free market assumptions and criticized for this by many, but it does not mean we cannot provide a richer conception of development – for instance along the lines of Amartya Sen’s capabilities approach – which is acceptable.¹² Some thinkers may take the view that cosmopolitanism, like development, is so tied to certain traditional assumptions that it cannot be conceived in a way that is satisfactory. I believe that we need not accept this kind of conceptual determinism in regard to cosmopolitanism or indeed development: such terms are essentially contested and we need to invest our conceptions of them with the values we think are important.¹³

So the challenge for the cosmopolitan who wishes to avoid these criticisms of inappropriate projection is to arrive at some set of values – conceptions of the good, of the right and of justice – which can be seen as genuinely acceptable – or accessible for acceptance – by people from anywhere in the world – and, *a fortiori*, an ethic which does not presuppose any one particular worldview (theology or philosophy) but could be accepted by people with a wide range of worldviews. As Yersu Kim notes,

Charles Taylor attempts to throw new light on the relationship between diversity and universality by making a distinction between the fact of cross-cultural consensus on certain norms and values and the divergent ways of their justification. Background justifications may differ from society to society, whilst factual agreement on the norms themselves would be left unaffected by the differences of underlying belief.¹⁴

Likewise Bhikhu Parekh argues for a global ethic which we can both *assent* to – given our own particular but differing intellectual stories – and *consent* to as a product of cross-cultural dialogue.¹⁵ Whilst words like “assent” and “consent” can be used more loosely to mean much the same thing, here they are being used to mark an important contrast: it is one thing to accept a value because that is what one’s own *monological* reasoning leads one to accept, another to affirm it as something which has been agreed *dialogically* through discussions, including discussions between people of different cultural backgrounds. Parekh’s point recognizes the importance

¹²Sen, Amartya. 1999. op. cit.

¹³I recall, for instance, a conversation I had with Iris Young, sadly no longer with us, some years ago in which she suggested that cosmopolitanism came from the thinking of the Stoics which was speciesist, and from that of Kant and the Enlightenment which was essentially racist, and so could not escape its tainted conceptual legacy.

¹⁴Kim, Yersu. 1999. op.cit. 30.

¹⁵Parekh, Bhikhu. 2005. Principles of a Global Ethic. In *Global Ethics and Civil Society*, eds. John Eade and Darren O’Byrne, 26. Aldershot: Ashgate.

of both dimensions of an acceptable global ethic. Such an ethic is not merely something which is the product of agreements – agreements can after all be bad – but which is endorsed by one’s own ethical reasoning. Moreover, it is not merely something produced by an individual thinking in an armchair, but is also validated by the fact that it is acceptable across cultures.

A global ethic can be seen as a set of norms or values (GE) supportable from many points of view, or it can be seen as a set of norms or values *plus* a supporting story or worldview (GE+). Any cosmopolitan thinker has a global ethic in this full sense (GE+): the question is whether his or her interest is in seeking convergence over a GE – the approach of the non-dogmatic cosmopolitan whose approach I am defending – or persuading others to accept his or her GE+ in the manner of proselytizing, conversion and the imposition of values. For the former approach, the requirement of both assent and consent is important, both because consent and mutual agreement on their own do not guarantee that what is agreed is actually right, and because the requirement that one has to give one’s own intellectual assent means we are not dealing with a lowest common denominator. A global ethic as an ethic actually universally shared is an impossibility anyway, but an ethic which is genuinely supportable by people from different cultural or intellectual backgrounds is both possible and desirable. For each cosmopolitan their worldview supports or rationalizes the ethic they accept but they accept that others will support the same ethic for their own different reasons.

3.2 *Cosmopolitan Responsibility*

Let me now turn to the other criticism that can be made of the cosmopolitan assumption that there is some kind of responsibility to promote the conditions of human well-being anywhere in the world and oppose what undermines it. Whereas the chief objection to universalism comes from relativism, the chief objection to the global responsibility aspect of cosmopolitanism comes from communitarianism. At the root of this is Alasdair MacIntyre’s dismissal of the idea of global citizenship in that it makes us “rootless citizens of nowhere”.¹⁶ Robert Pinsky, in his rejection of Martha Nussbaum’s cosmopolitanism, argues as well that the idea of cosmopolitanism lacks any of the emotional energy and color of membership of particular communities.¹⁷ Gertrude Himmelfarb puts it thus:

What cosmopolitanism obscures, even denies, are the givens of life – parents, ancestors, family, race, religion, heritage, history, culture, traditions, community – and nationality. These are not “accidental” attributes of the individual. They are essential attributes.¹⁸

¹⁶Alasdair MacIntyre as presented in Almond, Brenda. 1990. Alasdair MacIntyre: the virtue of tradition. *Journal of Applied Philosophy*. 7/1: 99–104; 102.

¹⁷Pinsky, Robert. 1996. Eros against Esperanto. In *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*, ed. Joshua Cohen, 85–90. Boston: Beacon Books.

¹⁸Himmelfarb, Gertrude. The Illusions of Cosmopolitanism. In *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*, ed. Joshua Cohen, 72–77; 77. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

The key corollary to this account of identity is a rejection of obligation owed in principle to any fellow human being who is not of one's own community. Communitarianism is about the reciprocal obligations embedded in tradition and history which are owed to members of one's own community in a way they are not to fellow human beings anywhere. These obligations may be reinforced by a specifically political conception of communitarianism in which the relations of citizens to their political community is one of special obligations of loyalty to the state that provides the secure framework within which citizens live their lives. Communitarians do not necessarily deny that one has some obligations towards fellow human beings as such. David Miller, for instance, in his conception of "bounded citizenship" is clear that we have global obligations,¹⁹ certainly not to harm others and to some limited extent to help others suffering from extreme poverty or disasters. But these take second place.

What are we to make of these criticisms? If we look first at the issue of meaningful identities, is it fair to say that cosmopolitanism commits us to rejecting these? First, as Nussbaum remarked,²⁰ the Stoics accepted the idea of concentric rings of identity – accepting the idea of being a citizen of the world did not involve rejecting one's identity as a member of a family, local community or a larger political community. It is more about affirming an identity than denying other identities. Still, it may be argued, surely if cosmopolitanism is held consistently, it would have the effect of emptying other identities of their significance. If all humans being matter and matter equally, would not any partialities deflect from focusing on such a goal?

Now there are at least three different ways in which a cosmopolitan can respond to this issue. First, a cosmopolitan can argue that the best way in which cosmopolitan values can be promoted in the world is to have a number of particular relationships, attachments and loyalties – within families, towards friends, in associations such as churches, charities or sports clubs, in the workplace or towards one's political community. These identities have secondary derivative value (just as secondary rules do within utilitarianism).

Second, one could still be a cosmopolitan and be an ethical pluralist. That is, one accepts duties to all human beings as such, but alongside this and not derived from it, other particularist duties and loyalties, some community-based, others in particular relationships to family and friends. This could in effect be a mixed position combining cosmopolitanism and communitarianism as separate sources of value (and might in practice not be very different from a communitarianism which saw concern for fellow human beings anywhere as part of one's community's traditions).

Third, and this is the way which I would favor, one could argue that communitarian values are *internal* to the values that a cosmopolitan wishes to promote. If cosmopolitanism is about promoting the conditions of human well-being, we need to

¹⁹Miller, David. 1999. Bounded citizenship. In *Cosmopolitan Citizenship*, eds. Kimberly Hutchings and Roland Dannreuther, 60–80. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

²⁰Nussbaum, Martha. 1996. Cosmopolitanism and Patriotism. In *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*, ed. Joshua Cohen, 3–21. Boston: Beacon Books.

have an adequate account of well-being. If this includes, as surely it does, elements such as love within family relationships, loyalty to the organizations one participates in, devotion to one's own projects (whether in work or beyond work), then these are the values that cosmopolitanism can be committed to promoting and sustaining, not merely as means to other goals but as part of one's cosmopolitan goals.²¹ Thus there is no reason in principle why a cosmopolitan cannot acknowledge the role of various particular meaningful identities, including the role of communities – local, selected or national – though the degree of importance of these will vary.²²

However, what I have said so far may give the impression that the cosmopolitan concedes that one's broader level of identity as a world citizen is basically colorless and abstract and that, whatever *moral* arguments may attach to this level of identity, it lacks the same kind of motivational power – at least for the vast majority of people – possessed by particular local identities. Thus, for instance, thinkers like Ulrich Preuss and David Cooper argue for the importance of local community, particularly for instance in regard to getting people to care for the environment – or rather their own local environments.²³ Before I turn to the issue of obligation shortly, I want to reflect briefly on this issue of emotional color. Does cosmopolitanism have to be conceived as a matter of the head and not the heart?

Writers like Kate Nash have suggested that cosmopolitanism can have an affective dimension.²⁴ Indeed, if we cannot persuade people to see themselves as being *inspired* by their being human beings sharing a finite and fragile planet with many others or being bound together in a shared community of fate, then the moral arguments of enthusiasts may fall on deaf ears. Janna Thompson, arguing from a communitarian background, sees how we may come to a cosmopolitan outlook from a communitarian background partly because we have been developing various forms of global community as a social reality anyway.²⁵ This way of conceptualizing cosmopolitanism may be different from the traditional armchair theorizing of a Kantian or utilitarian, and it links to my point earlier about a global ethic being not merely assented to but also consented to in a process of cross-cultural dialogue.

²¹This is the approach taken by Kok-Chor Tan in his *Justice without Borders*. (Tan, Kok-Chor. 2004. *Justice without Borders: Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism, and Patriotism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.)

²²Thus for me rather more importance would attach to particular relationships to family, to significant individual others and to local community than to national community.

²³Preuss, Ulrich K. 1995. Citizenship and Identity: Aspects of a Political Theory of Citizenship. In *Democracy and the Constitutional Culture in the Union of Europe*, eds. Richard Bellamy et al. London: Lothian Foundation Press; Cooper, David E. 1992. The idea of environment. In *The Environment in Question*, eds David E. Cooper and Joy A. Palmer. London: Routledge.

²⁴Nash, Kate. 2005. Cosmopolitan Political Community: Why does it Feel so Right?. In *Global Ethics and Civil Society*, eds John Eade and Darren O'Byrne. Aldershot: Ashgate; cf. the idea of embedded cosmopolitanism in Erskine, Toni. 2008. *Embedded Cosmopolitanism: Duties to Strangers and Enemies in a World of 'Dislocated Communities'*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

²⁵Thompson, Janna. 1992. *Justice and World Order*. London: Routledge; Thompson, Janna. 2001. Planetary citizenship: the definition and defence of an ideal. In *Governing for the Environment*, eds. Brendan Gleeson and Nicholas Low. 135–146. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Whether this dialogue occurs at conferences on global issues (where ethics informs the debate), in international organizations, through discussion on the internet or indeed through encounters with others through travel abroad, the dialogue process is part of the establishment of *felt* global community.

It is worth adding that the cosmopolitan does indeed have a reply to the criticism of Himmelfarb who stresses the importance of contingency and history for identity. If it is a contingent fact that I am British, interested in philosophy and a lover of baroque music, it is also a contingent fact that I am a human being or – different – a rational being. This may seem a strange claim since, in a sense, it is no accident that it is as human beings with reason that we can understand these claims. Still it is a contingent fact that I am living on this particular planet and, more importantly, that I exist at this point in the history of humans on this planet with all the particular problems and opportunities which that presents. There is no reason why this cannot be an emotionally charged fact, and indeed if, as Nussbaum argues, we had more cosmopolitan education, far more people would feel it.²⁶

Still I think it needs to be stressed that typically a cosmopolitan is not relying on the degree of established global community or felt identity for grounding significant transboundary obligations. Such developments are of course crucial to the enterprise of getting cosmopolitanism more widely accepted. But the intellectual source of claims about transboundary obligation come from the cosmopolitan's own theory about the ethical relations we have to one another as such. That is, it is at least partly grounded in the reasons she has to *assent* to a cosmopolitan global ethic, however much *consent* may be crucial as well.

Indeed, it would be fair to say that one of the significant fault-lines in ethics – as significant as the consequentialist/non-consequentialist fault-line more commonly attended to – is over whether a thinker is primarily drawn to an ethic based on community, particular actual relationships and the legacies of tradition and the past, or to an ethic based on general facts about humans, for instance about their vulnerabilities or their rational capacities – general facts which, according to the thinker, show that we have duties towards other human beings irrespective of whether these duties are widely acknowledged. This fault-line has sometimes been characterized as the liberal-communitarian debate, but in a sense the latter is rather a particular aspect of a wider debate. This is because cosmopolitan ethics, in acknowledging the moral status of all human beings as such, does not have to be specifically liberal in conception.

Although I have said this is a major fault-line in ethics, it would be misleading to see this as a simple either/or opposition: that is, you either have to accept a fully-fledged cosmopolitanism that in practice denies putting any special status on relationships to particular others or to one's communities, or a communitarian who denies that we have *any* responsibility to others outside one's community. As I argued earlier, cosmopolitanism can accommodate in several different ways the significance of particularist values. Most actual ethical positions lie somewhere on the continuum between these extremes.

²⁶Nussbaum, 1996. op. cit.

An illustration of this comes from attitudes towards immigration. Some cosmopolitans might argue for totally open borders, and some communitarians may reject immigration altogether. But in practice cosmopolitans accept various kinds of restrictions, and communitarians are responsive to some kinds of humanitarian arguments for allowing in some immigrants. Likewise some cosmopolitans may argue for very extensive duties to use one's wealth, time and efforts to a maximum extent in alleviating distant poverty, and some communitarians may reject altogether any obligation to help alleviate distant poverty. But in practice many cosmopolitans will argue for *significant* duties to alleviate distant poverty alongside a range of other duties of a more localized kind, and most communitarians will be responsive to some extent to distant need. Nevertheless there are differences of emphasis and over the extent of obligation proposed and over rather different kinds of justification.

It is worth noting, as Andrew Linklater emphasizes, that cosmopolitanism at the very least takes seriously the idea that we – as individuals and as collectivities such as states or companies – have duties not to harm other people in other parts of the world (or if we do there have to be very strong reasons justifying this).²⁷ Generally, cosmopolitan thought either theorizes this idea in a robust form or goes beyond it. First, the duty not to harm includes duties of compensation or counteraction if we recognize that our lives are beneficiaries of others doing harm, or are indirectly parts of causal chains involving others, such as transnational companies or governments, that harm others. Thomas Pogge's cosmopolitanism is a recent example of this kind of approach, as he bases his main argument on the negative rights thesis not the positive rights thesis; that is, that the economic system involves the violation of the rights of the poor.²⁸ Second, other cosmopolitans prefer, alternatively or in addition, to argue for some level of positive obligation to help others – whether their suffering is caused by natural disasters or environmental deterioration, by economic systems, or by the active violation of rights by others. This can be seen as an application of a widely accepted principle of general benevolence as a vital part of morality but extended globally, or as an implication of a certain understanding of basic rights – such as Henry Shue's analysis of basic rights as being the minimum reasonable demand of all humanity on all humanity.²⁹

²⁷See Andrew Linklater's chapter in this book (which was also a keynote at the conference). We should note that many communitarians and adherents to the internationalist tradition in international relations would also accept a duty not to harm others. Indeed for Grotius, an intellectual founder of internationalism, it was a limited "no harm" morality that should inform international relations. Two points need to be made. First, how the no harm principle is interpreted is a key issue – cosmopolitans tend to give a more robust interpretation of it, as I indicate in the main text. Second, if the communitarian accepts a significant obligation not to cause harm elsewhere, then his position becomes a mixed position anyway, and if the internationalist does so, particularly if his reasoning is based on more than the conventions of states, then his position slides into a form of cosmopolitanism. (Indeed Grotius' thinking in natural law terms was in effect a cautious form of cosmopolitan thinking.)

²⁸Pogge, Thomas. 2002. Ch.1. op. cit.

²⁹Shue, Henry. 1996. *Basic Rights: Subsistence, Affluence and US Foreign Policy*, 2nd ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

3.3 *Cosmopolitanism as An Approach to International Ethics*

Ethical cosmopolitanism does not merely apply to individuals; it is also applied to the state system and to international relations. It is one of three main approaches generally recognized – the other two being realism or international skepticism, and internationalism or the morality of states approach – but we may want to add, as Simon Caney argues, a distinct fourth approach called nationalism.³⁰ Whether or not a cosmopolitan argues for new forms of global governance – we come to that issue later – the cosmopolitan at least wishes to assess how well or badly nation-states and the international system deliver on the goals that the cosmopolitan accepts or advocates. As such the cosmopolitan will tend to advocate better and larger aid programs, more open and generous immigration and refugee policies, stronger measures to deal with environmental problems, reductions in armaments together with the general promotion of peace anywhere, concern about human rights violations elsewhere and appropriate responses to them, and so on.

Critics will argue that such an approach is idealistic, inappropriate or dangerous. National governments are not merely entitled but also have a duty to protect and promote the national interest, whether this has to do with strong defenses in an insecure world or protecting the country's economic interests. The duty of governments is that of trustees and is justified through various kinds of political theory. Particularly in democracies, governments have a duty to do broadly what their electorates expect them to do and that is to protect and promote the interests of their electorates. The duties of governments are also partly to be understood in terms of the commitments their countries have made to other countries in the international arena. *Pacta sunt servanda* is a well-accepted principle: agreements, whether bilateral or through international law, do create a framework of obligation although this framework has nothing to do with cosmopolitan assumptions. So what the cosmopolitan advocates, if it goes beyond these two types of duty, is inappropriate.

It is also dangerous, as realists like E. H. Carr argue, because on the whole the world is a more dangerous and unstable place if countries promote ethical agendas in other parts of the world rather than stick to protecting their vital national interests.³¹

But these considerations do not undermine a cosmopolitan approach to international relations. What they do is complicate the ethical analysis that is needed. If a cosmopolitan, as most nowadays do, advocates democratic values, then she will welcome, other things being equal, governments being genuinely responsive to the democratic will. If a cosmopolitan accepts the value of promise-keeping and the value of peace and stability that comes from a well functioning international order, then she will welcome, other things being equal, the observance of international agreements and laws. Indeed, if commitments such as those to do with alleviating world poverty (for instance, the 0.7% GNP commitment in the 1970s and the

³⁰Caney, Simon. 1995. op. cit. 13–15.

³¹Carr, Edward Hallett. 1939. *The Twenty Years' Crisis: 1919–1939*. London: Macmillan.

Millennium Development Goals of 2000) were properly honored, and if commitments to environmental law and to human rights protection were properly carried out, many of the goals which cosmopolitans hold dear would be much more realized than they generally are in current circumstances.

But this does not prevent the cosmopolitan from advocating that more should be done or that things should be done differently. There is no more paradox involved here than what is standardly accepted in regard to democracy. In one sense governments ought to do what their electorates mandate, but this does not prevent each citizen advocating policies for governments which are different from what is mandated. Indeed, if we were unable to have views about what governments ought to do other than that they ought to carry out the democratic will, the democratic will would be groundless! What the democratic argument shows is that if a cosmopolitan wants his views to be implemented by governments, then the crucial task is that of persuading sufficient numbers of citizens of his views, and preparing the next generation through cosmopolitan education. As for realist arguments like Carr's, the cosmopolitan does indeed have reason to be cautious about advocating policies that would undermine peace and order. But in fact Carr's strictures are more directed at the kind of proselytizing cosmopolitanism we considered earlier than one focused on creating the conditions for the general realization of human well-being.

4 Institutional Cosmopolitanism

The ethical critique of foreign policy and of international relations leads naturally into the second (and shorter) part of my discussion, namely about institutional cosmopolitanism.

4.1 *Global Citizenship*

The critique of this aspect of cosmopolitanism can be either a descriptive critique or a normative critique. In its strongest form it can be the rejection of the whole idea that we are citizens of the world. Michael Walzer's outburst is typical:

I am not a citizen of the world . . . I am not even aware that there is a world such that one could be a citizen of it. No one has even offered me citizenship, or described the naturalization process, or enlisted me in the world's institutional structures.³²

That is, to put it more mundanely, we need a world state in order to be world citizens. Not far behind this descriptive rejection is a normative rejection: we have no good reason to work towards a future in which this becomes a reality: a world ordered with many sovereign states within which there is meaningful bounded

³²Walzer, Michael. 1996. Spheres of Affection. In *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*, ed. Joshua Cohen. 125. Boston: Beacon Books.

citizenship is preferable. This criticism of course assumes a certain rather rigid conception of citizenship which requires a fully instituted political order. Why should the idea of citizenship have this implication? Citizenship is a far more complex and contested concept than that argument presupposes.³³

However, there is a general point lying behind it. Does the word “citizen” do any real conceptual work here? Just as, as I indicated at the beginning, ethical cosmopolitanism does not entail institutional cosmopolitanism, so we could have a conception of global citizenship which was merely an ethical conception. The word “citizen” would, on this view, really be a placeholder for some more general idea like “moral agent” or “member of a global moral community” where the latter description “member of a global moral community” means no more than “belonging to a moral realm in which she has obligations in principle towards any human being”. No doubt there are some thinkers for whom the thesis of global citizenship is just this and no more.

However, I do think we can defend the use of the word “citizen” by pointing to two features of the normal idea of citizenship which do seem to be reflected in global citizenship. The idea of citizenship has at least two significant elements – first, as T. H. Marshall brought out in his studies of citizenship, there is the idea of citizens as the bearers of rights – civil, political and socio-economic³⁴ – and second, the idea, often referred to, as David Miller refers to it,³⁵ as the “republican” conception of citizenship. This is the idea of active participation in “res publica”: meaning, the public affairs of one’s community or country, with the attendant duty of such active participation.

Are there features of the current global reality which reflect these elements of citizenship at a global level? On the face of it there are. First, the development of international human rights law provides a legal framework in which we can talk of the rights of human beings as such – not merely moral rights but legally codified rights. Likewise the setting up of the International Criminal Court in 2002 also represents a new cosmopolitan legal relationship of individuals to the world as members of a global legal system. Second, there are various ways in which individuals can contribute to the shaping of global “res publica” through NGOs in global civil society and in other ways.

Now the critic may argue that there is here more of an appearance of similarity than a real similarity. First, as a matter of descriptive analysis, the rights that citizens have are what they are because the rights are justiciable within a legal system that is part of the political system. International law is quite different: even though covenant law is binding, its lack of real enforceability makes the status of “human rights holder” hardly a claim of citizenship at any level. Likewise with global civil

³³See Dower, Nigel. 2003. *Introduction to Global Citizenship*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

³⁴Marshall, T. H. 1973. *Class, Citizenship and Social Development*, Westport, CN: Greenwood Press.

³⁵Miller, David. 1999. op. cit.

society, participation in this may well engage the energies of individuals interested in global concerns and may well have some influence on those who engage in global governance, but what they do is not part of global governance, nor is their “political” engagement that of citizens in a democratic polity. Second, there is no normative case for trying to establish human rights law on a par with rights within domestic legal jurisdictions, since for that to be the case there would indeed need to be a world state. Nor is there a case for trying to introduce citizen participation at the global level through institutions such as cosmopolitan democracy, of the kind that David Held and Daniele Archibugi have argued for.³⁶ There is far more of a case for making democracies work better within established systems and making active citizenship more robust within them, as Roland Axtmann has argued.³⁷

The cosmopolitan can of course reply to these moves by arguing that, first, the current state of international human rights law and of global civil society is such as to make the claims of “citizenship” meaningful and that citizen participation can be thought of as contributing to – not merely influencing – global governance; and, second, that it would be good for both these features to become more established and for more formalized arrangements for global democracy to be established.

On the first point – the factual claim – what side one takes on this depends partly on terminological preference and partly on how one reads the extent and nature of globalization. I would only make three observations: first, sometimes the influence of NGOs in global civil society is rejected as not being democratic because they are not elected to represent constituencies. But we should remember that active citizenship within established political communities is no more democratic in this sense. Active citizens seek to exert and do exert an influence out of proportion to their numerical “voting” strength and in a range of ways which are not part of the formal democratic process. Second, if governance is not the same as government, it is not clear why such groups are not contributing to governance albeit usually in fairly informal ways. Third, one of the most effective and common ways in the world today in which people do contribute to global governance is actually via political engagements *within* their own political community. This is what Parekh calls “globally oriented citizenship”; that is, one way in which we can be, in a political sense, global citizens is via the political processes within one’s own states in which we pursue “global agendas” through our government’s foreign policies.³⁸ This point incidentally gives the lie to the pragmatic argument that global citizenship takes away from effective ordinary active citizenship. Indeed, one of the contributions to a revitalized citizenship may be an interest in global issues and an attempt to counteract the democratic deficit.

³⁶Archibugi, Daniele and David Held. 1995. *Cosmopolitan Democracy – An Agenda for a New World Order*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

³⁷Axtmann, Roland. 2002. What’s Wrong with Cosmopolitan Democracy? In *Global Citizenship: A Critical Reader*, eds Nigel Dower and John Williams. 101–113. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

³⁸Parekh, Bhikhu. 2003. Cosmopolitanism and Global Citizenship. *Review of International Studies* 29/1: 3–17.

On the second point – the normative claim – it is hard not to believe that decision-making is made more effective by the input of concerned “citizens” with global perspectives, and that such inputs will contribute more effectively to the realization of cosmopolitan goals than leaving decisions to be made by nation-states in the old settled international system. Of course, as John Williams and others have argued, one could get nation-states to become good or better “international citizens” themselves,³⁹ that is, to be thought of as good or better “citizens” of the society of states. But it is unrealistic to suppose that state’s leaders will adopt a more global perspective unless there is a constant pressure on them to do so from their citizens acting politically as global citizens in both local and global civil society. We should also note that arguments for strengthening global civil society and for global or cosmopolitan democracy are not as such arguments for world government. Some cosmopolitans advocate this, such as H. G. Wells and Bertrand Russell did and members of world federalist associations still do, but it is in no way a necessary component of the institutional cosmopolitan agenda.

4.2 *Cosmopolitanism and Global Governance*

The reader may have noticed that in talking about the institutional possibilities for individual global citizens we have moved into a discussion of issues relevant to cosmopolitanism as an advocacy of new forms of global governance. I say “new forms of global governance” rather than simply “global governance” because defenders of the Westphalian system can argue that states and the international institutions and laws that they have created provide – and have provided for some time – global governance defined as the way we manage our common affairs at the global level.⁴⁰ Governance is wider than government since it includes forms of “steering” which do not involve coercion and this is exactly what characterizes much of international relations by states. It is true that the term “global governance” has only come into usage in recent times with the interest in globalization, the need to address global problems and the return of interest in cosmopolitanism. But, having come into usage, it can be seen retrospectively and currently as something that is delivered by the international society of states. And this is exactly what defenders of the international order will argue against institutional cosmopolitanism: first, we do not have cosmopolitan institutions in the world as it is now; second, we do not need them and there is no argument for the ethical desirability of developing them.

We should note that such a rejection of institutional cosmopolitanism could come from a fairly traditional view that states and states alone through their international institutions and laws can deliver adequate global policies. Such an approach could

³⁹Williams, John. 2002. Good International Citizenship. In *Global Citizenship: A Critical Reader*, eds. Nigel Dower and John Williams. 41–52. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

⁴⁰This follows the terminology used in The Commission on Global Governance (CGG). 1995. *Our Global Neighbourhood*. 2. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

come from an ethical approach that is not seen as cosmopolitan – the view that, whilst a global ethic with certain core values may be valid anywhere, for a variety of reasons states are both competent to address and responsible for addressing their own problems. But it could also come from a cosmopolitan ethic. This I think motivates the interest, as I noted earlier, in “good international citizenship” and the idea that states ought to be more willing to promote global values. We need to recall that ethical cosmopolitanism does not entail institutional cosmopolitanism.

Likewise someone of a less traditional approach may acknowledge and welcome the role of non-state actors in world affairs – both global civil society actors and actors in the economic sphere such as transnational companies (which likewise could become seriously committed to globally oriented ‘corporate social responsibility’ as corporate global citizens) – and thus acknowledge that we are entering a neo-Westphalian world (even if it is not a post-Westphalian world). But, such an ethical cosmopolitan may continue, whilst the influence of global civil society and businesses may be accepted as contributing to global governance or at least to the promotion of appropriate global goals, such influence may be of a different kind from what an institutional cosmopolitanism would look like. Furthermore on the normative issue, if these new forms of global influence and global governance are welcomed, this can be based on cosmopolitan ethical arguments – namely that their existence or development can help to promote or promote more effectively cosmopolitan goals. But this ethical argument is not an argument for institutional cosmopolitanism as such.

In this respect it is worth noting that the criteria for global institutions which would comprise “cosmopolis” may well be more stringent than those for what makes individuals institutionally global citizens or “cosmopolites”: the conceptual geography of “cosmopolis” may be a little different from that of “cosmopolites”. What I mean by this is that we may well acknowledge that individuals working through NGOs in global civil society or engaging in globally oriented citizenship, as discussed earlier, are global citizens in some kind of political or institutional sense (not merely in an ethical sense), even though we do not have at the global level an institutional cosmopolis. Moreover, we could argue normatively for the development of the former without arguing for the development of the latter.

There is a large interpretive issue here. In what ways do the forms of global governance have to change in order for us to talk of the emergence of cosmopolitan institutions? We are not talking here of an “all or nothing” situation. No doubt a world government would constitute an unambiguous form of cosmopolis, but that is not the issue. So far as I can tell, most modern cosmopolitans, including those advocating institutional cosmopolitanism, are not in the business of advocating world government. My own defense of cosmopolitanism does not involve this. What is at issue here is whether various developments in the modern world constitute the emergence of cosmopolitan institutions and whether such developments are to be welcomed and further encouraged.

Take the United Nations for instance. Few would deny that the UN was founded as an internationalist institution: its members are states and, although idealists such as members of United Nations Associations have always supported the UN because

it made it more likely that cosmopolitan ethical goals would be advanced, the UN has in many ways been a forum in which nation-states have advanced their national interests, albeit usually by “jaw-jaw not war-war” (to use Churchill’s inelegant phrase). Still, over its 60 years it has been changing.

Does the fact, for instance, that increasingly NGOs are involved in its meetings, both as observers and as specialist advisors, make a difference? If states came to use the UN more as “good international citizens” to promote cosmopolitan ethical goals, would that turn it into a cosmopolitan institution, whatever its outward form? Would the substance of its laws and decisions become more cosmopolitan through NGO inputs or more cosmopolitan agendas, even if its form is still internationalist? Would the introduction of a second chamber into the UN of people directly representing large constituencies (rather than nation-state representatives in the current General Assembly who act on a one-state-one-vote basis, whatever the size of the state) make it a cosmopolitan institution? This is one of the ideas promoted under the banner of “cosmopolitan democracy”.

Two further developments are relevant to the way we can think about the UN. First, human rights law – very much the product of the UN system – has arguably undergone changes in the last 60 years and what we see emerging is human rights law as, in essence, cosmopolitan law. The acknowledgement of a “responsibility to protect” in the R2P declaration in 2005 seems to signal a cosmopolitan responsibility that was formerly seen as the duty and preserve of states themselves without outside interference. Second, in recent years, there had been a revival of interest in the concept of a “cosmopolitan military”⁴¹ which might be better conceptualized as “cosmopolitan police”. Whilst the idea of a cosmopolitan military could be cashed out simply in terms of an ethical cosmopolitanism – for instance, in the case of a country or a group of countries invading another country for humanitarian reasons to stop human rights violations – it would seem plausible to see such militaries, if they were authorized by the UN, as in some sense an expression of institutional cosmopolitanism. Certainly if, as could happen in the foreseeable future, soldiers were recruited and trained as members of such a cosmopolitan military rather than a UN force being made up of soldiers trained in various national armies, then we could see that as evidence of the expression of institutional cosmopolitanism.

If we take an ethical cosmopolitanism for granted, as I advocated in the first part of this chapter, and combine this with the gravity of the global problems we face and the massive failures to address them adequately, then it seems very clear that such developments in the UN, human rights law and appropriate military institutions and the interpretations of these as cosmopolitan developments are to be welcomed, as would be the strengthening of global civil society and the formalization of ways in which such influences can contribute to global governance. We may argue about whether such developments are evidence of institutional cosmopolitanism or merely

⁴¹See Elliot, Lorraine and Graham Chesterman. 2002. *Cosmopolitan theory, Militaries and the Deployment of Force*, Working Paper 8. Department of International Relations, The Australian National University.

developments in forms of global governance that are to be welcomed for cosmopolitan ethical reasons. The important thing is to argue for the emergence of bodies of various kinds, networks, rules and practices which more adequately realize the global goals of an adequate cosmopolitan ethic.

But I happen to think, for the reasons I have only briefly sketched out, that such developments can be seen as appropriate expressions of institutional cosmopolitanism, and that thus a case can be made for the cosmopolitan approach in all four of the dimensions I introduced at the beginning of this chapter.

Moral Progress and World History: Ethics and Global Interconnectedness

Andrew Linklater

1 Introduction

Enlightenment thinkers such as Kant linked the question of cosmopolitanism with an analysis of the long-term trend towards the greater economic and social interdependence of the human race.¹ Reflecting that influence, the following discussion begins with some brief comments about two broad approaches to world history that are significant for an inquiry into modes of cosmopolitan thinking that can meet the challenges of unprecedented levels of global interconnectedness. Arnold Toynbee's remark that there has been little or no progress outside the technological sphere represents the first standpoint. His comment stressed the persistence of the "morality gap" in world affairs: the gulf between increasing destructive power and limited control over the potential for "evil". Reflecting on the fate of all past international states-systems, Toynbee doubted whether societies will ever find a peaceful solution to the dangers inherent in rising levels of interconnectedness.² Human societies, on that account, have still to demonstrate that they possess the capacity to eliminate conflict and war.

Radically different is that conception of long-term tendencies which is captured by Peter Singer's observation that "the expanding circle" of moral consideration is a central feature of social and political development.³ That comment is evidently more optimistic than Toynbee's position on the course of human history. While largely concurring with Toynbee on the existence of a "morality gap", Singer displays greater confidence in the human capacity to make progress in the rational

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¹Kant, Immanuel. 1970. Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View. In *Theory of International Relations: Selected Texts from Gentili to Treitschke*, eds. M.G. Forsyth, H.M.A. Keens-Soper and P. Savigear. 183–191. London: Allen and Unwin.

²Toynbee, Arnold. 1978. *Mankind and Mother Earth*. 590 ff. London: Paladin.

³Singer, Peter. 1981. *The Expanding Circle: Ethics and Sociobiology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

organization of social and political interaction. A parallel with certain forms of sociological reasoning is worth noting. In his writings on the sociology of morals, Emile Durkheim stated that the need to coordinate longer chains of human interdependence has forced humans to rely on abstract and universal moral codes which have become critical for regulating relations between strangers.⁴ In similar lines of inquiry, contemporary sociologists who focus on world history as a whole have emphasized the overall trend towards widening the scope of emotional identification. They note how attachments to the small-scale kin groups that were the norm for most of pre-history gave way to loyalties to larger associations such as the first cities, states and empires, and the modern territorial units that prevail today.⁵ In a related discussion, analysts of “global history” have pointed to levels of solidarity between members of transnational civil society organizations as well as to tangible, though relatively powerless, expressions of identification with the whole of humanity.⁶ Those approaches are closer to Singer than Toynbee in assessing the human potential for organizing social and political relations around cosmopolitan principles.

2 Competing Claims

When faced with competing claims about reality, it is necessary to ask, in good Hegelian fashion, whether it is imperative to choose between them, or whether they are best regarded as advancing partial truths that can be combined in a higher synthesis. The argument here is that Toynbee and Singer’s positions can be integrated in ways that cast substantial light on the matter of moral progress and cosmopolitan ethics. Toynbee’s stance on the limited expansions of moral community provides a reminder that history has witnessed the rise of ever-larger territorial concentrations of power that can project military might over greater distances and cause suffering on an unparalleled scale. Singer’s thesis about the “expanding circle” draws attention to major long-term shifts within the ethical domain. But transitions in that sphere need to be seen in conjunction with larger social processes. As Durkheim contended, more universalistic moral orientations should be understood in association with the appearance of large-scale social systems and extended social relations that require people to become better attuned to each other if they are to live together amicably. The two responses to the meaning of long-term social and political change can therefore be brought within a more sweeping grand narrative

⁴Durkheim, Emile. 1933. *Ethics and the Sociology of Morals*. 100–101. New York: Prometheus Books.

⁵Swaan, Abram de. 1995. Widening Circles of Identification: Emotional Concerns in Sociogenetic Perspective. *Theory, Culture and Society* 12/2: 25–39; Mennell, Stephen. 1990. The Globalization of Human Society as a Very Long-Term Social Process: Elias’s Theory. *Theory, Culture and Society* 7/ 2: 359–371.

⁶Mazlish, Bruce. 2006. *The New Global History*. Abingdon: Routledge.

that focuses on one crucial overall trend in human history over the last six millennia – the steady “scaling-up” of social and political organization.⁷ That general path of development has made it possible for more and more humans to identify with each other along longer chains of interdependence. Furthermore, especially in the affluent regions of the contemporary world, the dominant power monopolies that preside over those lengthening webs have enjoyed significant success in pacifying larger social systems. As studies of the “civilizing process” maintain, that development has altered attitudes to cruelty, violence and suffering.⁸ Examples of a reduced tolerance of those phenomena extend from progress in identifying with the victims of the Atlantic slave trade during the abolitionist movement in the early nineteenth century to the solidarity with suffering strangers that underpins the universal human rights culture and international criminal law today. But the “scaling up” of social systems has led to destructive territorial concentrations of power that often behave in the ways that support Toynbee’s view of world history – those associations have been caught up in the processes that led Adorno to observe that there may be little more to human history than the journey from “the stone catapult to the megabomb”.⁹

Kant’s conception of universal history recognized the importance of the higher synthesis that was mentioned earlier for the project of creating a cosmopolitan ethic. If that seems to be a curious observation, it is because Kant is frequently regarded as wedded to an Enlightenment project in which the purpose of universal history is to demonstrate that there are good reasons for deriving moral satisfaction from contemplating the human past, or at least for not collapsing into resignation or despair.¹⁰ However, Kant was one of the first modern thinkers to place the ambiguities of rising levels of interconnectedness at the heart of a universal history with cosmopolitan aspirations. On the one hand, he argued, lengthening social ties have produced the many advantages of commercial and cultural exchange. They have made it easier for humans to identify with each other over great distances, and to assist distant strangers by wielding the power of the pen to make sure that any violation of human rights is brought to the attention of concerned publics everywhere. But crucially for Kant, closer ties between human societies also made it possible for the most powerful to cause harm in the most remote of places.¹¹

Moving closer to the discussion of cosmopolitan ethics, it is important to take account of Kant’s moral claim that humans in the original state of nature had a fundamental duty to enter into a civil condition with anyone they could possibly injure.

⁷Sherratt, Andrew. 1995. Reviving the Grand Narrative: Archaeology and Long-Term Change. *European Journal of European Archaeology* 3/1: 1–32.

⁸Elias, Norbert. 2000. *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations*. Oxford: Blackwell.

⁹Connerton, Paul. 1980. *The Tragedy of Enlightenment: An Essay on the Frankfurt School*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁰Immanuel Kant, 1970. Perpetual Peace. In *Theory of International Relations: Selected Texts from Gentili to Treitschke*, eds. M.G. Forsyth, H.M.A. Keens-Soper and P. Savigear. 200–244. London: George Allen and Unwin.

¹¹Kant, Immanuel. 1965. *The Metaphysical Principles of Virtue*. 126. New York: Bobbs-Merrill.

He advanced that principle in an era when societies were becoming more vulnerable to the disrupting influence of external events. The aim was to support a cosmopolitan ethic in an era of growing interconnectedness, and to stress the vulnerabilities to mental and physical suffering that form the most accessible points of solidarity between strangers. One must recognize the importance of Rorty's claim that Kant sent moral philosophy off in the wrong direction by aiming to ground universal principles in immutable reason rather than in a shared aversion to pain and humiliation.¹² But despite his unmistakable preference for "cold-blooded" reason, Kant believed that moral agents should not strive to avoid sites of human suffering since such spectacles could arouse moral sensibilities that might not appear otherwise.¹³ It is true that Kantians deny that morality can be grounded in anything as unstable as emotional responses to suffering. But Kant's ideas about the ambiguities of human interconnectedness, and his remarks about the duty to establish a civil order with anyone that can be harmed by one's action, provide the foundation for the following four points about long-term processes of change that frame much cosmopolitan reasoning today.

The first notes how the evolution of the capacity to injure – how human ingenuity in inventing new ways of causing harm – has altered the relationship between the human and the non-human environment. During the first waves of urbanization and state-formation, humans transformed themselves from "the hunted to the hunters", eliminating or pacifying many other species in the way, and acquiring – notwithstanding numerous set-backs and reversals – an astonishing power to transform the natural world. New ethical frameworks have emerged in response to the question of whether humans can rein in the power to harm that has led to transformations of the planet that now threaten the existence of vulnerable communities and which may even jeopardize the survival of the human species. More forward-looking, cosmopolitan ethical orientations have encouraged widening the scope of moral concern to take account of the well-being of humans in other communities; similar dispositions inform arguments for caring about the interests of unborn generations and the plight of non-human species.

The second point turns to larger monopolies of power with the capacity to cause unprecedented injury in distant places. Those aspects of human development have long underpinned ethical discussions about the "just war" and specifically reflections on *jus in bello* that underpin international legal conventions that prohibit "unnecessary suffering" in military conflict and criminalize acts that are now regarded as an offence against humanity. It is worth adding that the laws of war in different civilizations lend support to the view that was expressed earlier, namely that the most accessible points of solidarity between strangers are to be found in shared aversions to pain and suffering. That has been the foundation on which

¹²Rorty, Richard. 1989. *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*. 192–193. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹³Cunningham, Andrew. 2001. *The Heart of What Matters: The Role for Literature in Moral Philosophy*. 222. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

radically different societies have built agreements about the need to protect humans from forms of misery and distress that are regarded as disastrous more or less everywhere. Those points of unity have checked the tendency for states to tolerate or encourage acts of violence against outsiders that are usually regarded as reprehensible when directed at members of the in-group. Those vulnerabilities provide the basis for a global civil condition that can combine transnational solidarities with loyalties to particularistic associations such as nation-states.

The third point notes one respect in which the rights and wrongs of going to war (*jus ad bellum*) have become central to cosmopolitan reasoning. The gross violations of human rights that scarred the twentieth century provide a reminder of the state's success in increasing its power over all areas of society. At least prior to the invasion of Iraq, the evidence was that public support for humanitarian intervention had increased where states were found guilty of failing to discharge their responsibilities to protect citizens. Leaving aside the question of whether support for humanitarian intervention has declined more recently, higher levels of interconnectivity and identification with others as fellow humans continue to support moral concern for the victims of human rights abuse. Those cosmopolitan responses to the abuse of other humans are further evidence of how changing sensibilities to violence, domination and discrimination have shaped modern states and the structure of international society.

The fourth point is that success in pacifying core regions of the world system has facilitated the development of global economic ties with the result that new ethical questions have arisen about transnational as opposed to international justice – about forms of injustice and exploitation that occur not in relations between separate states but in the ties that bind the most and least powerful groups in world society together.¹⁴ Evidence of ethical concerns about the effects of increasing levels of interconnectedness on vulnerable persons extends from support for dismantling global coercive regimes to calls for modifying patterns of consumption given that everyday conduct generates questions of global moral significance (as various discussions of fair trade, personal carbon footprints and so forth have shown).¹⁵

The central point is that global interconnectedness has increased popular awareness of the many ways in which humans harm, and can be harmed by, each other. The result is increased interest in the nature and possibility of a cosmopolitan ethical code that may eventually enjoy levels of practical success that the critics have long regarded as improbable.¹⁶ It is significant that writings on NGOs have argued that transnational advocacy networks usually enjoy most public support when there

¹⁴O'Neill, Onora. 1991. Transnational Justice. In *Political Theory Today*, ed. David Held, 276–304. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁵Pogge, Thomas. 2002. *World Poverty and Human Rights: Cosmopolitan Responsibilities and Reforms*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

¹⁶Miller, David. 1999. Bounded Citizenship. In *Cosmopolitan Citizenship*, eds. Kimberly Hutchings and Roland Dannreuther. 60–80. London: MacMillan; Walzer, Michael. 2002. Spheres of Affection. In *For Love of Country?*, Martha Nussbaum et al., ed. Joshua Cohen. 125–9. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

is clear evidence that unjustified harm has occurred, and when there is a compelling narrative about the ultimate causes of indefensible injury. Support is usually greatest when agents suffer physical harm, acts of humiliation or deliberate forms of exploitation. It tends to be lower in the case of structural harm: moral agents often find it easier to ignore hardship that is not regarded as deliberate or which is taken to be the short-term side-effect of “rational” institutions such as free markets. It is nevertheless important that the recent literature on cosmopolitan ethics has addressed the harms that persons do “in our everyday lives”.¹⁷ The key point is that human beings in diverse societies and cultures can find common ground in a grand narrative that begins with the ambiguities of global interconnectedness. More specifically, they can build global solidarity from an awareness of the ecological and other consequences of human inventiveness in devising ways of causing harm that have evolved in unplanned ways over hundreds of thousands of years; and they can develop respect for universal forms of moral and political consciousness through the recognition that support for a cosmopolitan harm principle is mandatory if different societies are to coexist peacefully. As a result of such processes, it is easier to understand how cosmopolitan principles might yet be embodied in the individual self – in basic emotions and drives – as opposed to being treated as well-meaning but utopian aspirations that are remote from daily existence; it is simpler to comprehend how such principles might yet come to be observed more or less instinctively because they are compelling in their own right and also critical for the reproduction of immensely complex, globally-interconnected social systems.

3 Humanity and Harm

Some world historians have argued that long-term perspectives on human development can help foster identification with humanity as a whole. McNeill and others have maintained that world history can promote a degree of detachment from pre-occupations with immediate issues in one’s own life or in one’s own society – and in time that may encourage greater concern about the unfair burdens that may be imposed on coming generations.¹⁸ That theme was central to Kant’s conception of universal history. Following his approach, it is arguable that overall trends towards higher levels of interconnectedness strongly suggest that the issue is not whether to be for or against cosmopolitanism: it is about which version to support. The point recognizes the fears that universal moral standpoints can arouse, and the doubts that many have that advocates of cosmopolitanism attach too little value to cultural and other differences. But it is important to stress that, in the absence of a global catastrophe, pressures to create more powerful international institutions are almost

¹⁷Honderich, Ted. 1980. *Violence Against Equality: Inquiries in Political Philosophy*. Harmondsworth: Pelican.

¹⁸McNeill, William H. 1986. *Mythistory and other Essays*. 16. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

certain to continue – hence the importance of promoting visions of world citizenship that can ensure that such global bodies are accountable to all who are affected by them (rather than instruments of the most powerful groups). That is not to deny that difficult questions remain about the ethical framework that can best address the four sets of problems listed above, that can deal with the “morality gap”, and ensure that moral codes do not lag behind the future “scaling up” of human organization.

As already noted, Kant’s approach to the problem of rising levels of interconnectivity insisted that agents who can harm each other should cooperate to establish a civil constitution. Nussbaum maintains that the theme was derived from Stoics such as Cicero who argued that if humans owe one other anything at all, it is the duty to spare each other unnecessary harm. She proceeds to criticize that standpoint because it privileged negative duties of refraining from harm over positive obligations of assistance to others.¹⁹ A related theme is evident in an important critique of the liberal harm principle which states that it effectively legitimates practical indifference to the plight of victims of human rights abuse.²⁰ Those issues deserve closer investigation because of their significance for “questioning cosmopolitanism”.

For some theorists, negative obligations are just that – duties to refrain from injury – but others have argued that compliance with elementary negative duties requires positive acts of assistance. Key examples are Feinberg’s claim that the liberal harm principle supports acts of rescue, and Pogge’s thesis that negative obligations require political measures to dismantle or reform global coercive regimes.²¹ The argument that the duty to avoid injury requires major global institutional reform is compelling. Again, there is a clear link with Kant’s discussion of the case for establishing a universal civil constitution. One of his core assumptions was that, as a precautionary mechanism, heads of state should associate to identify harms that could result from societal interdependence. The supposition was that the sheer possibility of harm required greater foresight on the part of governments and practical steps to provide security for all. Contemporary Kantians pay tribute to that idea by arguing that the Roman law principle, *quod omnes tangit, omnibus tractari et approbari debet* (what touches all should be agreed by all) requires the establishment of transnational public spheres that recognize that all persons have an equal right to protest against harmful acts that have been committed against them, or which are possible given the nature of current global structures and relationships.²² In short, “affectedness” provides the rationale for supporting cosmopolitan arrangements.

Needless to say, complex disputes about what it means to harm or be harmed are not about to be settled once and for all; questions about how to distinguish between

¹⁹Nussbaum, Martha C. 2000. Duties of Justice, Duties of Material Aid: Cicero’s Problematic Legacy. *Journal of Political Philosophy* 8/2: 176–206.

²⁰Geras, Norman. 1998. *The Contract of Mutual Indifference: Political Philosophy after the Holocaust*. 58. London: Verso.

²¹Feinberg, Joel. 1984. *Harm to Others: The Moral Limits of the Criminal Law*. Ch.2. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Pogge, Thomas. 2002. op. cit.

²²Fraser, Nancy. 2007. Transnationalizing the Public Sphere: On the Legitimacy and Efficacy of Public Opinion in a Post-Westphalian World. *Theory, Culture and Society* 24/4: 7–30.

more and less serious forms of harm are not poised to disappear; and debates about harms that should be criminalized and harms that should be deterred and discouraged in other ways are not obviously coming to an end. Evidence of the difficulties can be found in heated controversies about whether pornography harms women, and whether abortion constitutes murder. It is also important to take account of persistent fears that some may impose their conception of harm on others without regard for the duties of respect that can only be honored through dialogue and consultation. But those problems do not mean that the harm principle is so vague and imprecise, so open-ended, that advocates of a cosmopolitan ethic can freely dispense with it.

4 Positive Duties of Citizenship

It is reasonable to think that an assumption that everyone more or less agrees on what counts as serious injury underpinned Kant's claims about the duty to progress towards a condition of universal civility. But complex questions arise about how far potentials for such agreements exist in all forms of life. A few comments about Simone Weil's ideas about duties of rescue, as described by Gaita, have special relevance for this discussion.²³ Weil described a condition in which a person with ample water in his or her canteen encounters a total stranger with no such supply, a person who will die if left unaided. (For present purposes, it is assumed that the potential rescuer and the desperate stranger belong to different societies.) In general, Weil argued, moral agents would decide that considerations of humanity should make rescue "automatic". In the main, third parties would not think that a decision to rescue was baffling or that it required an explanation. But the decision to walk past, totally ignoring the person's plight, would prompt the request for a justification, and might raise serious doubts about the moral character of any agent who chose not to assist.

Weil did not deny that many moral agents in different times and places would refuse to assist the stranger in the condition just described, and many would believe that they had sound reasons for walking past. A history of enmity between the societies to which the parties belonged might result in the determination not to help. Moreover, it is clearly the case, as Singer has pointed out, that the world's affluent pass by opportunities to assist the global poor on a daily basis.²⁴ The same people usually think that there are compelling duties to rescue someone who is drowning in their own society, and they would generally be quick to condemn anyone who chose not to help when clearly able to assist. The shock or indignation that Weil believed that most agents would feel when discovering a failure to rescue are rarely

²³Gaita, Raimond. 1994. Critical Notice. *Philosophical Investigations* 17: 613–28. The following points are based on the discussion in Linklater, Andrew. 2007. Towards a Sociology of Global Morals with an Emancipatory Intent. *Review of International Studies* 21/1: 135–150.

²⁴Singer, Peter. 2002. *One World: The Ethics of Globalization* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

central to how communities conduct their relations with each other or, indeed, to how most individuals think about their personal obligations to other members of the human race. That is perhaps less about distance (more on this later) than about what agents regard as salient suffering, or about whose suffering most affects their lives. As we know, duties to co-nationals have pride of place in the ethical imagination of typical moral agents. However, there is evidence that more people than before are disposed to the “Weil-Singer thesis” that there are moral duties to assist the distant suffering as well as those who are closer to hand, and that a failure to help invites reproach especially where there seems to be no obvious difference between killing and letting die.²⁵

Greater acceptance of the Weil-Singer position is sufficiently unusual in the history of complex societies to deserve comment as an indicator of progress towards more cosmopolitan forms of consciousness. Such shifts should not be regarded as evidence that modern universalistic moralities are more advanced than the ethical systems of earlier times. What is striking about Weil’s thesis is the belief that moral agents in very different times and places may have held broadly similar views about obligations to assist desperate strangers, that rescue would be commonplace or at least not unusual, and that failures to assist would often raise doubts about the moral worth of the potential rescuer. It must not be assumed, of course, that rescuers in different eras would offer the same reasons for deciding to assist. But it does not seem outlandish to think that many would have argued that they were motivated by the simple fact that victim and rescuer are both human beings. Interesting conclusions follow about the potentials for universal solidarity that are shared by most if not all societies. Weil’s strangers clearly do not have to belong to the same ethical community for assistance to occur, and they need not speak the same language. But they must possess a shared emotional repertoire – specifically, a capacity to recognize suffering in another and evidence of the desire to be helped rather than ignored. They must have mutually intelligible emotional expressions, a theme that unites those writers from Darwin to Ekman and Nussbaum who have argued that all humans have some basic moral emotions in common. In short, rescue can depend on nothing more than sympathy for the suffering, and on nothing other than the belief that inaction would constitute wrongdoing.

Weil’s discussion points to the most accessible points of solidarity between strangers that can provide the basis for an overlapping moral consensus (where different philosophical commitments are no impediment to agreements to uphold certain cosmopolitan principles). Many world religions have explored that route to universality (while introducing distinctions between the community of the faithful and the unbelievers that blocked breakthroughs to more complete forms of cosmopolitanism). The same theme runs through various Western moral and political perspectives, including Frankfurt School critical theory. Influenced by Schopenhauer, who had pointed to the importance of such ethical themes in Asian

²⁵Feinberg, Joel. 1984. *op. cit.* Ch.2.; Pogge, Thomas. 2002. *op. cit.* Ch.4.

thought, Horkheimer referred to the unifying power of shared vulnerabilities.²⁶ “Correct solidarity”, he maintained, is grounded in the fact that human beings are “finite beings whose community consists of fear of death and suffering”, and who can sympathize relatively easily with each others’ efforts to improve and lengthen life.²⁷ Related themes can be found in many recent approaches to ethics – in Butler’s critique of US policy on unlawful combatants following 9/11, in Rorty’s argument for recognizing that the shared capacity for pain and humiliation is more important for ethics than the cultural and other factors that divide human beings and which often attract greater attention, in Turner’s use of the sociology of the body to defend universal rights, and in O’Neill’s opposition to any practice that makes “a principle of injury” central to social and political life.²⁸

As already noted, such ideas are not the preserve of scholars. Similar approaches to global solidarity underpin cosmopolitan versions of the harm principle that are evident in the laws of war, that exist at the heart of the human rights culture, and inform international criminal law. Such innovations might be regarded as evidence of progress in “expanding the circle” of moral consideration and in widening the scope of emotional identification. To use a currently unfashionable phrase, they signify moral progress in the sense of applying a “principle of humaneness” across different spheres of social interaction (where humaneness refers to the desire to promote “sensitivity” to, and reduce the “tolerance” of, the “pain and suffering of other human beings” through appropriate changes in “laws, customs, institutions and practices”).²⁹

Some may oppose enthusiasm for the view that there has been progress in the moral sphere by stressing that changes in international law and morality reflect the preferences of the dominant Western powers and embody their bias towards the liberal thesis that “cruelty is the worst thing we do”.³⁰ They may argue that Western political dominance privileges the paradigmatic forms of harm in liberal orders – actions that deliberately inflict suffering or pain.³¹ The crucial question is whether the dominant versions of liberalism do enough to address harms that have little or nothing to do with agents with malevolent intent or a desire to act cruelly – that is, harms that are the unintended effect of social structures.

²⁶Horkheimer, Max. 1974. Schopenhauer Today. In *Critique of Instrumental Reason*, Max Horkheimer. 63–83. New York: Seabury. The following points are based on the discussion in Linklater, Andrew. 2007. *Towards a Sociology of Global Morals with an Emancipatory Intent*. op. cit.

²⁷Quoted in Stirk, Peter M. 1992. *Max Horkheimer: A New Interpretation*. 178. Hertfordshire: Hemel Hempstead.

²⁸Butler, Judith. 2004. *Precarious Lives: the Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London: Verso; Rorty, Richard. 1989. op. cit.; Turner, Bryan S. 2006. *Vulnerability and Human Rights*. London: Sage; O’Neill, Onora. 1996. *Beyond Justice and Virtue*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

²⁹Macklin, Ruth. 1977. Moral Progress. *Ethics* 87/4: 370–382; 371–372.

³⁰Shklar, Judith. 1984. *Ordinary Vices*. 44. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

³¹Barry, Brian. *Justice as Impartiality*. 1995. 88. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This is an opportune moment to add that philosophers have debated whether the decision not to rescue simply withholds a benefit – which an agent may be entitled to do – or whether it constitutes harm that should be morally condemned and may merit punishment under “Bad Samaritan” legislation. There is no space to do more than register agreement with Feinberg’s argument that a failure to rescue can count as omissive harm. Feinberg’s monumental study of the harm principle is relevant to the current discussion because it is not simply concerned with the paradigmatic forms of deliberate harm that cause mental and/or physical suffering. The analysis also includes “public accumulative harm” – harm that results from the repetition of acts that are trivial in themselves, but may be so damaging when repeated by numerous agents over and over again that it becomes necessary to outlaw them. The approach also considers harmful exploitation, although largely with respect to the moral dimensions of dyadic relations. As already noted, a recurrent criticism of classical liberalism is that the problem of structural harm usually goes neglected. However, one could enlist Feinberg’s defense of the harm principle to support welfare-liberal or social-democratic arguments for global justice and international institutional reform. Beyond that, it is not unreasonable to suggest that a broadened conception of the harm principle underpins many contemporary responses to the ethical problems that stem from increased interconnectedness. Changing moral attitudes to fair trade, child labor, and socially responsible investment, as well as developments in global environmental law (including concerns about harm to other states and the global commons) are noteworthy in this regard. Such efforts to “expand the circle” of ethical concern and to promote “correct solidarity” can be regarded as a small but not insignificant expression of emerging norms of world citizenship that provide humans with the moral resources for meeting the challenges of probable future advances in global integration.

It is important to add that liberals are especially sensitive to the dangers of pressing the harm principle too far – of extending it to the point where it is virtually coextensive with morality and may lead to ever more demanding obligations that could become “a sink that can drain almost all our resources”.³² From Mill to Feinberg, liberals have stressed that societies must protect the highest levels of personal liberty and so criminalize only the most serious forms of harm. Some critics will argue that liberals do not strike the right balance between, on the one hand, personal freedoms, the rights of states and the privileges of transnational corporations and, on the other hand, cosmopolitan duties to avoid harm in its very different forms to other persons as moral equals. While recognizing those philosophical concerns, it is necessary to stress that the harm principle draws attention to personal and collective traits and dispositions that are pivotal to developing a cosmopolitan ethic under conditions of growing interconnectedness. It demands that moral agents bring higher levels of ethical reflectiveness to deliberations about personal conduct

³²Arneson, Richard. 1998. The Priority of the Right over the Good Rides Again. In *Impartiality, Neutrality and Justice: Re-Reading Brian Barry’s Justice as Impartiality*, ed. Paul Kelly, 60–86, 85. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

and about the behavior of the private and public organizations with which they are affiliated. It invites thoughtfulness about whether freedoms are exercised in ways that cause unjustifiable harm to distant strangers, and whether agents display appropriate levels of moral, political and legal accountability to those whose interests are, or can be, affected adversely by their own actions or by the decisions and policies of the associations to which they belong.

5 Distance

The reference to distant strangers requires some comments about how to span the oceans that have obstructed the development of a community of nations.³³ Recognizing that geographical distance complicates the task of building support for a cosmopolitan morality, philosophers have often stressed that moral agents are more likely to assist those who are emotionally close to them. Adam Smith noted that a person who cannot sleep because s/he will “lose his little finger tomorrow...will snore with the most profound security over the ruin of a hundred million of his brethren”. Sleep comes more easily when distance protects agents from witnessing such suffering.³⁴ But distance is a complicated notion that extends beyond matters of geography. The British or Australian parents of a backpacker are unlikely to say that they sleep more easily at night because their loved one has gone missing in Thailand rather than in Bristol or Wangaratta. In other words, distance has no obvious importance where persons stand in a morally significant relationship, and where the suffering of any of those involved has particular salience for the others, wherever it may occur.

The argument can be extended by noting Aristotle’s tri-partite division of emotional responses to suffering. A person is more likely to feel pity, he suggested, when (a) the victim “does not deserve” his or her plight; (b) when it is possible to imagine similar suffering crippling a friend or oneself; and (c) when it “seems near”.³⁵ To rephrase those points, the argument is that pity is more likely to be aroused if there is little *moral distance* between agents (that is, when the victim is thought not to deserve his or her fate); if there is little *social distance* between the parties involved (similar suffering is imaginable in the case of a friend); and if there is little *geographical distance* (suffering is proximate rather than remote).

It is important to pause to consider moral distance because of the historical importance of distinctions between “us” and “them” in channeling pity or compassion towards insiders and breeding indifference to, and even pleasure in, the suffering of outsiders. The effects of moral distance on efforts to reduce global suffering are all too apparent. But perhaps its influence can be reduced by fostering a more rigorous scrutiny of how personal conduct and the actions of one’s

³³Kant, Immanuel. 1965. Op. cit. 126.

³⁴Smith, Adam. 1982. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. 136–137. Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund.

³⁵Aristotle. 1959. *The ‘Art’ of Rhetoric*. Book 1.13. London.

group harm distant others. Heightened reflectiveness about the ethical issues that arise from material connections with remote strangers – a condition that various international non-governmental organizations and the media often promote – can serve as a counterweight to the effects of a fourth form of distance – the dangers of *psychological distance* which are so pronounced in modern societies.³⁶

The growing influence of that form of distance was an important theme in nineteenth century analyses of the radical transformation of modern societies. Tocqueville maintained that, in such circumstances, individuals “forget their ancestors, [have a clouded view of their descendants] and [are] isolate[d] from their contemporaries. Each [person] is forever thrown back on himself alone, and there is a danger that he may be shut up in the solitude of his own heart”.³⁷ Many writers in that period focused on the high levels of psychological distance in the modern city, as exemplified by polite indifference to strangers. Enlarging on such points, it has been argued that the conditions of modern life lead to considerable detachment from others.³⁸ Detachment brings costs and benefits. It can have the effect of encouraging a critical stance towards the ethnocentrism of one’s way of life, and it may promote efforts to think from the standpoint of radically different others in the hope of reaching agreements about suitable principles of coexistence in the context of increasing levels of social diversity. A measure of detachment from immediate individual and group interests is essential for ethical impartiality – for the belief that “my” interests or those of “my” group have no greater intrinsic moral significance than the objectives of other persons and societies. Detachment is no less important for the ethical idea that the welfare of human beings is not self-evidently more important than the interests of other sentient creatures.³⁹ But the other side of the individual’s capacity for detachment from social groups is the phenomenon that Tocqueville and others described, namely the ability or need to view social processes, as if from the outside, in order to assess how to respond to the uncertainties of growing interconnectedness. As part of that development, individuals can view distant suffering in a spirit of detachment, passively reflecting on the terrible fate that can befall the inhabitants of “exotic” societies. It is then possible to consume images of remote suffering with a sense of wonderment rather than with sympathy for the inflicted and with the urge to help.⁴⁰

According to Mazlish, who has traced those developments in recent social thought, many leading thinkers of the nineteenth century were preoccupied with the question of how new social connections might be forged as traditional ideas of

³⁶See Dobson, Andrew. 2005. Globalisation, Cosmopolitanism and the Environment. *International Relations* 19/3: 259–273; Dobson, Andrew. 2006. Thick Cosmopolitanism. *Political Studies* 54/1: 165–184.

³⁷Tocqueville, Alexis de. 1966. *Democracy in America*. Volume 2, book 2, chapter 2. New York: Harper Row.

³⁸Elias, Norbert. 2007. *Involvement and Detachment*. Dublin: University College Dublin Press.

³⁹Singer, Peter. 1981. op.cit. Ch. 4.

⁴⁰The issues are considered in more detail in Linklater, Andrew. 2007. Distant Suffering and Cosmopolitan Obligation. *International Politics* 44/1: 3–35.

community and obligation went into decline as a result of urbanization, capitalism and the creeping influence of the “cash nexus”.⁴¹ Applying such ideas to world politics, it is important to ask how far the harm principle can help foster an awareness of connectedness with distant others along with support for a cosmopolitan ethic of care and responsibility. The point is best considered in relation to the problem of ethical motivation that is often raised in the critique of notions of cosmopolitan democracy and world citizenship. Miller, Walzer and other thinkers of a communitarian or republican disposition have argued that allegiances to specific others – to family members or co-nationals – provide the main incentives for acting ethically. It may be impossible, they continue, to acquire the psychological disposition to behave morally where emotional ties to the family, nation or some other historical community are absent. On that basis, Walzer denies that there is a world that he can be a citizen of.⁴² In short, the problem with cosmopolitan arguments is the dearth of evidence that they can be embodied in the individual’s inner life where they have the force of a “second nature”.

Some cosmopolitans have argued that a sense of connectedness with distant others may foster the kinds of collective consciousness that Walzer, Miller and others believe will remain elusive. In an important work on care and responsibility, Clement argues that those who are closest to us emotionally may be especially vulnerable to our actions.⁴³ But the conditions of modern life are such that distant strangers are often just as vulnerable to how we behave and to how we are organized. For that reason, they have equal rights to be included within the scope of moral consideration. Clement argues for freeing the ethic of care and responsibility from particularistic contexts such as the family, and for displaying the same concern for avoiding harm, or for resolving disputes in such a way that no-one is harmed, whenever actions affect others, no matter where they are situated in the webs of global interconnectedness. Some such connection between distant strangers is essential for ethical conduct where powerful moral sentiments do not exist. It is conceivable otherwise that psychological distance may continue to increase (while the classical problems that have stemmed from insider-outsider distinctions may lose some of their importance if nationalism should decline in core industrial societies).

6 Expanding the Circle, Once More

Over seven decades ago, the neo-Kantian philosopher W. D. Ross maintained that duties of beneficence may only develop once humans have become accustomed to

⁴¹Mazlish, Bruce. 1989. *A New Science: The Breakdown of Connections and the Birth of Sociology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. An example is Mill’s comment in *Spirit of the Age* that some imagine that “because the old ties are severed mankind henceforth are not to be connected by any ties at all”.

⁴²Walzer, Michael. 2002. op. cit.

⁴³Clement, Grace. 1996. *Care, Autonomy and Justice: Feminism and the Ethic of Care*. London: Westview Press.

refraining from injuring each other.⁴⁴ Critics may argue that duties do not usually develop in quite that sequential manner in most social arrangements. But it may be suggested that in international relations, where the recurrent problem has been to persuade the powerful to avoid causing violent and non-violent harm rather than to embrace an ethic of benevolence, recognizing *prima facie* duties not to harm those with whom we are interconnected is a critical first step in building a cosmopolitan community.

As previously argued, everyday life is suffused with moral questions that arise from closer material connections with outsiders. There are three sides to that development. First, the powerful have to ask if they leave themselves open to reproach when they fail to alter behavior that affects others adversely. Second, they need to recognize that those who are harmed may react in nationalist or xenophobic ways when they face losing power or status as a result of being forced to coexist with other groups on the latter's terms. Third, they need to take the initiative in constructing global norms that can check the danger of the coarsening of sensibilities when greater interconnectedness leads to fear and insecurity, as occurred in the aftermath of 9/11. It falls on the most powerful social strata to ask how they can introduce cosmopolitan harm conventions – conventions that can protect all persons from unnecessary harm, whatever their nationality or citizenship may be. On their shoulders rests the responsibility to deal with a problem that has arisen time and time again in world history, namely how to ensure that the structures of everyday life and the routine assumptions about whose interests most deserve moral consideration keep pace with rising levels of human interdependence. It may be that an ethic of interconnectedness is essential for the cultivation of strong cosmopolitan emotions – for feelings of guilt or shame when harm is caused or when there is a collective failure to provide restitution. On such foundations, new social bonds between the members of different societies, and between the individual and the species, may eventually be created, bonds that combine global institutional innovation with profound changes in emotional responses to suffering and in the organization of human loyalties. On that basis, later generations may yet come to think that the balance of the evidence supports not Toynbee's bleak summary of the dominant long-term trends in history, but more optimistic interpretations of the human capacity for making progress in designing a cosmopolitan ethic that can contribute to the goal of eradicating violent and non-violent harm from world politics.

⁴⁴Ross, W. David. 1930. *The Right and the Good*. 22. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Cosmopolitanism, Identity and Recognition

Stan van Hoof

1 Introduction

The cosmopolitan ideal – defined as the view that all people are of equal moral standing – can be read more broadly than the modern liberal insistence that everyone has the same fundamental rights. On the liberal view of justice, an injustice is understood as a violation of a right held by an individual person. Whether the right is the right to life, to subsistence or to property, any act which denies or takes away such a right – killing someone, letting them starve, or taking their land, for example – would be an act of injustice. Such acts would be injustices not only because they cause unjustifiable material harm to their victims – by taking their life, radically diminishing their life prospects or taking away their livelihood – but also because they are violations of the rights those individuals possess as rights bearers. This conception has been criticized for allowing little room for the harms that come from the systematic or occasional denigration that groups as such might suffer, and for giving but little regard to the vulnerabilities of people that arise from the social – as opposed to political and economic – relationships in which they live their lives.¹ Accordingly, if we could develop a concept of injustice which is broader than that of a violation of individual rights, we would have a concept which could be understood not only in modern liberal terms, but also, perhaps, in communitarian terms. If such a concept could indicate a bond between people richer than the reciprocal negative duty of not violating the rights of individuals but rather a bond marked by

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¹Fraser, Nancy. 2003. Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, Recognition, and Participation. In *Redistribution or Recognition? A Political-Philosophical Exchange*, ed. Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth, trans. Joel Golb, James Ingram, and Christiane Wilke. 7–109. London: Verso.

solidarity,² then this concept would suggest a new conception of cosmopolitanism: no longer one of every individual having equal moral status, but of all individuals constituting a global community.

The preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 asserts that “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” and goes on to affirm its faith “in the dignity and worth of the human person”. This appeal to the concept of human dignity should not be read as an endorsement of the metaphysical or religious doctrines native to the cultures of any of the nations that signed the declaration. If the notion was to be thought of in this way it would jeopardize the universality of the declaration. Accordingly, just as the concept of human rights needs a universally applicable justification in order to be normative globally, so the concept of human dignity needs an interpretation that would be acceptable to all peoples of the world.

In order to provide a way into these two conceptual problems: that of theorizing justice in communitarian terms and that of understanding human dignity in non-metaphysical terms, I will explore a thesis from the work of a German philosopher associated with the Frankfurt School of Critical Social Theory, Axel Honneth. Honneth has argued that political thinking needs “a basic conceptual shift to the normative premises of a theory of recognition that locates the core of all experiences of injustice in the withdrawal of social recognition, in the phenomena of humiliation and disrespect.”³ I will explicate this thesis and show how it can provide the richer concept of cosmopolitanism which I have indicated.

2 The First Sphere: Love

The theoretical basis for Honneth’s thesis derives from such varied sources as the political philosophy of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) and the social psychology of George Herbert Mead (1863–1931). Hegel had argued that a person’s identity is formed in the context of the recognition that others – initially parents – give to that person, and Mead’s developmental psychology bears this out. Social psychology confirms how the identities of individuals are shaped by their upbringing and their social environments.⁴ According to Honneth, the form of recognition that sustains us and grounds our development as children is that of love. From the point

²Habermas, Jürgen. 1990. Justice and Solidarity: On the Discussion Concerning Stage 6. In *The Moral Domain: Essays in the Ongoing Discussion Between Philosophy and the Social Sciences*, ed. Thomas E. Wren, 224–251. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

³Honneth, Axel. 2003. Redistribution as Recognition: A Response to Nancy Fraser. In *Redistribution or Recognition? A Political-Philosophical Exchange*, ed. Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth, trans. Joel Golb, James Ingram, and Christiane Wilke. 110–197, 134. London: Verso.

⁴Harré, Rom. 1979. *Social Being: A Theory for Social Psychology*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell. See also Harré, Rom. 1983. *Personal Being: A Theory for Individual Psychology*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

of view of the parent, what it is about the growing child that this love responds to is its need. Because the object of this relation of recognition is needful and the one who accords the recognition is the one who loves, the relationship of love is between the needs of one and the love of the other. So, for Honneth, love is a recognition of need which sustains the growth and development of the needy. The institutional or social framework in which this first level of recognition is manifest is that of the family or of whatever surrogate for the family the society provides. The benefit that flows to the child who is loved is not only physical sustenance but the kind of emotional support that allows it to grow in self-confidence. This in turn supports the sense of individual identity that emerges within a loving family and enlarges it as the child enters its supportive community. As Honneth puts it,

This fundamental level of emotional confidence – not only in the experience of needs and feelings, but also in their expression – which the intersubjective experience of love helps to bring about, constitutes the psychological precondition for the development of all further attitudes of self-respect.⁵

It is significant for my argument that the processes being described here are processes both of individuation and of insertion into a community.

Love is an affect. It is an emotion and in most cases – especially as it relates to parenting – it is given unconditionally, unilaterally, and disinterestedly. The principle of reciprocity, so central to liberal thought, does not apply to love. A parent does not love her child provided the child loves her back or in order to gain an advantage for herself. As an emotion there is a degree of passivity to it in that it is elicited in the one who loves by the object of that love. It is seldom planned for or parceled out in rationally delineated measures. In order to apply his concept more widely than the family, Honneth also highlights the concept of “care” and argues that even outside of the context of family relations there is a form of affective and practical recognition of the other in which the one who cares acknowledges the needs of the other and is moved by such emotions as compassion and solicitude to meet those needs in whatever way the situation might call for.

For Honneth one of the ways of distinguishing the sphere of love and caring from other moral spheres is by identifying the specific forms that injustice or the failure to meet the demands of this sphere might take. If the appropriate kind of recognition of a person at this level is to love that person or to care for them as the situation requires, the harm of not being accorded the appropriate recognition at the level of caring relationships between people is the harm of not being loved or cared for when one needs to be. This will take different forms in different contexts. For a very young child, being unloved and neglected can be literally fatal, but even in less dramatic cases it can leave psychological scars that last a lifetime. Feeling that one is not lovable or “dirty” or “cheap”, being unable to trust others or open out to them, or harboring inchoate feelings of anger at rejection are all harms that can come

⁵Honneth, Axel. 1995. *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, trans. Joel Anderson. 107. Cambridge: Polity Press.

from not being recognized at this level.⁶ The kinds of actions that evince a failure to accord recognition at this level range from parental neglect and bureaucratic heartlessness to torture and rape. If torture and rape seem conceptually far removed from parental neglect, the link that Honneth draws between them is that they both produce or exacerbate physical helplessness in their victims. The neglected child is helpless and is therefore unable to develop the kind of self-confidence that comes from being looked after physically and loved emotionally. Such a child is not able to see itself as valued or as being in possession of its own person in the world. The victim of torture or rape is made to feel that they have no control over their bodies.⁷ They suffer the ultimate humiliation of losing their bodily integrity and sense of self-control. This is a dire threat to that basic self-confidence that comes from being in possession of one's own physical being. Despite the many differences between these two kinds of injustice, therefore, they are both failures to recognize the basic bodily needs of the victim: needs that would be met by love or by caring. As Honneth puts it, "The forms of practical maltreatment in which a person is forcibly deprived of any opportunity freely to dispose over his or her own body represent the most fundamental sort of personal degradation."⁸

Honneth's thesis is that such actions result in a form of injustice which consists in more than the material and physical harms that they inevitably cause. Rather, it is the injustice of personal degradation and of an attack upon the psychological bases of one's self-confidence. It is the injustice of not being recognized as worthy of love and care. Moreover, this form of injustice has no culturally specific elements and is therefore universal. The damage to the sense of self, self-control and bodily integrity caused by it does not depend on culturally specific constructions of the self or of the self's autonomy.

3 The Second Sphere: Law

Honneth also draws from Hegel an account of a second level of social interaction marked by a new form of mutual recognition. This is the sphere of law. The concept of law that is intended here makes connections between the moral law and civil law. The central idea is that any individual has a legal or moral status which is equal to that of any other individual in a given legal/moral framework. The principles of equality before the law and of impartiality in moral thinking are central to this outlook. This form of recognition arises from the faculty of reason more than from the emotions of love or care. From the perspective opened up in this new relational

⁶Honneth, Axel. 2007. Between Aristotle and Kant: Recognition and Moral Obligation. In *Disrespect: The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory*, ed. Axel Honneth. 129–143, 136. Cambridge: Polity Press.

⁷Scarry, Elaine. 1987. *The Body in Pain: the Making and Unmaking of the World*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press. See also, Sussman, David. 2005. What's Wrong with Torture? *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 33/1: 1–33.

⁸Honneth, Axel. 1995. *op cit.* 132.

sphere of moral recognition, everyone is equal. The object of the relation of recognition at this level is the moral individual as a bearer of rights, and the one who accords this recognition is the moral agent who does what is right. The institutional or social framework within which this level of recognition is articulated is that of law. The sphere of modern law is one of equality of legal standing. It was when legal rights were uncoupled from any traditionally based status – whether inherited or purchased – that they became truly equal. This required a legal system with no exceptions or privileges not open to anyone under the jurisdiction of that system.

But this is not a sphere in which an individual is set free from the need for recognition from others. It is because people acknowledge one another as moral subjects capable of moral choices that they both accede to others the right to make such decisions and expect from them a reciprocal recognition of their own right to make them. “In obeying the law, legal subjects recognize each other as persons capable of autonomously making reasonable decisions about moral norms.”⁹ To recognize a person in that way is to respect them, and knowing oneself to be recognized as a person “capable of autonomously making reasonable decisions about moral norms” gives rise to an attitude of self-respect.

Notice that there is more at issue here than a purely legalistic or procedural affirmation of equality. Insofar as such an affirmation is based upon an attitude of respect for the capacity of all individuals to make responsible decisions for themselves, there is also an affirmation of a conception of what constitutes a good human life. Such a life is one marked by the ability to make responsible decisions and by the recognition of that capacity on the part of others in a given community. Not only do we have here a reconciliation between the liberal ideal of autonomy and the communitarian ideal of mutuality, but also a reconciliation between a minimalist and procedural conception of justice and a more substantive conception alluding to an ideal of human excellence. It is on the basis of this ideal that both the mutual social recognition of respect and the individual’s capacity for self-respect are based.

Accordingly, the harm that people suffer who are not recognized at this level is the undermining of their sense of self-respect. It is a challenge to their sense of themselves as autonomous agents and as bearers of rights. There is an appreciable difference between the feeling that no one cares about you and the feeling that you have been taken advantage of. The crimes that can give rise to the latter feeling include deception, fraud, robbery, exploitation, enslavement and oppression. Once again, Honneth’s thesis is that, along with the material deprivations or injuries that might arise from such crimes, there is the injustice of not being recognized in the appropriate manner. To sum up:

Just as, in the case of love, children acquire, via the continuous experience of “maternal” care, the basic self-confidence to assert their needs in an unforced manner, adult subjects acquire, via the experience of legal recognition, the possibility of seeing their actions as the universally respected expression of their own autonomy.¹⁰

⁹Ibid. 110.

¹⁰Ibid. 118.

4 The Third Sphere: Achievement

The third sphere of recognition that Honneth identifies is that of achievement. Everyone seeks to earn the respect and admiration of others through the things that they do and the kind of person that they are. When others accord them such esteem and admiration they are recognizing those achievements. This in turn provides encouragement and validation for the talents and achievements that that person has displayed. Societies depend for their progress and development upon the initiative and creativity of their members. In order to provide incentives for individuals to contribute their talents to the community, they must be accorded recognition in the form of praise, reward or acknowledgement. This recognition may take the form of monetary rewards, promotion, or other forms of social preferment. However, while such material rewards may be the concrete signifiers of the recognition, it is the recognition itself which is of greatest moment. Social psychologists such as Abraham Maslow have highlighted this need in us.¹¹ The desire for status and for the recognition of one's achievements can be said to be ineliminable from human motivations and thus from human society. In contrast to the legal sphere in which everyone has equal status, this sphere is marked by stratification, hierarchy and even elitism. However, it remains a normative sphere in that there is a requirement that recognition, praise and other rewards should be accorded to all and only those who deserve them.

In traditional societies social status and esteem were tied to one's position in society in a way that was relatively independent of one's personal achievements. If one was born into the nobility or if one joined the priesthood one was accorded social standing just by virtue of the position that one held. This was an ethos centered on honor rather than achievement. It depended upon a monolithic conception of which social achievements were worthwhile and this, in turn, involved a strong sense of attachment to community values on the part of members of the social group. Where group identity is dominant and honor sought, recognition of the achievements of group members would produce group pride, and the mutual recognition of such achievements would produce a strong sense of community solidarity. It might be suggested that examples of such an ethos survive in modern societies in the form of allegiance to sporting clubs and in the form of nationalism. In such contexts, individuals can feel self-esteem and pride to the extent that they identify with the achievements of the groups of which they see themselves as members.

In modern capitalist societies, in contrast, given a starting point of equal legal status and the social provision of a level playing field, esteem will be legitimately awarded on the basis of achievement and of one's contribution to the common goals of the community. However, while modern capitalist culture accords esteem only to what is deemed to be a useful social achievement, there is no consensus as to what is to count as such an achievement. Is the work of women in the home to be

¹¹Maslow, Abraham. 1998. *Toward a Psychology of Being*. 3rd ed. New York: J. Wiley & Sons.

the basis of social esteem? Is entrepreneurial success such a basis? How will we measure sporting prowess against heroism in military enterprises? Certain groups within society value some of these achievements and not others. For social esteem to be based on achievements, there must be a consensus on what achievements are to matter. But in the context of modern value pluralism one cannot count on the recognition of one's achievements on the part of others. Prestige arises from one's contribution to publicly acknowledged goods but one might have to struggle to have the goods that one is striving for accepted as publicly valuable. For example, in a capitalist society where money is the measure of value, wealth is taken to be an indicator of worthwhile contributions. Accordingly, rightly or wrongly, the wealthy are admired by some irrespective of their actual achievements, while artists, for example, are relatively devalued even when they are successful.

Given the uncertainties that attend social prestige, what is sought in modern societies is more individualized and takes the form of self-esteem. In this context solidarity has less to do with group identification and more to do with symmetrical relations of acknowledgement. If these relations cannot be based on a shared conception of what achievements are valuable in a situation of value pluralism, then they must be reduced to the minimal standard of not being denigrated. Solidarity then consists in not being devalued on the basis of one's difference. That is, it would consist merely in tolerance. Although recognition at this third level of status and esteem becomes fractured in modern pluralist societies, it can have an all-embracing scope in the negative form of tolerance for practices, achievements and values that are different, provided that they do not offend against the requirements of recognition of the rights of others at the level of law.

The object of the relation of recognition at this third level is the social individual as both a possessor of talents and abilities and as a member of an identity-conferring group, and the one who accords the recognition is the individual or group which creates and sustains the prestige or honor which that individual is given. In this way the institutional or social frameworks through which this level of recognition is realized will include the relatively formal system of rewards given through wages and other forms of remuneration, and the relatively informal systems of differentiation of status and of social esteem which individuals or groups can achieve within a modern multicultural society.

The harm suffered by those who are not given the recognition that is their due at this level is a loss of their sense of self-worth. One will feel oneself to be insignificant within the community and as having little or reduced worth in the eyes of others. This in turn will undermine one's assurance that one has any value. Once again, just how this will be different from the loss of self-confidence that comes from not being loved or the loss of a sense of dignity and self-respect that comes from being exploited might be more difficult to articulate than Honneth allows, but his key point is that there is a form of injustice which consists in suffering this kind of psychological harm. The kinds of crimes that can give rise to this feeling, and which are thus offences against the demand that a community should accord recognition to achievement, include discourtesy, sexism, racism, the cult of celebrity, discrimination and stigmatization.

In the three spheres of love, law, and achievement Honneth has sought to uncover the necessary and universal intersubjective conditions for the achievement of one's life-goals of personal self-realization – goals that can only be achieved socially. As he puts it: “In this way, the prospect of basic self-confidence is inherent in the experience of love; the prospect of self-respect, in the experience of legal recognition; and finally the prospect of self-esteem, in the experience of solidarity.”¹²

5 The Scope of Justice

The three spheres that Honneth has described, when taken together, constitute the scope of justice. There are not three kinds of justice. In each sphere justice consists in one thing: being recognized. Justice consists in obtaining what one needs in the context of love and care, being accorded equal treatment before the law, and being given social status in ways that one deserves. In each case, justice consists in being accorded the appropriate kind of recognition.

How the three spheres of recognition interact can be seen when we consider the notion of distributive justice. The social rewards just alluded to will largely take material forms, thereby linking the sphere of recognition of achievement to the issue of distributive justice. All other considerations aside, a distribution of material and social rewards will be just insofar as it is deserved by the contribution the recipient has been able to make to society through their talents and achievements. However, just what material and social rewards are deserved will be open to considerable contestation. Wages, salaries and executive pay packages are matters for constant negotiation and debate. Such debates are the sharp end of deeper debates about the nature and bases of distributive justice in modern societies. Overshadowing such debates, and standing as a constant horizon to them, is the legal/moral order in which everyone is deemed morally equal to everyone else. This framework provides a constant pressure towards egalitarianism in social and political struggles over distributive justice. Insofar as everyone is morally entitled to an equal opportunity to enter the competition for recognition based on achievement, so a minimum provision of social goods must be made in order to allow for a level playing field. Any stratification that results from differentiation in talents and achievements beyond this base level is just only insofar as it is deserved. But any differentiation or stratification that prevents an individual from having a fair opportunity to achieve would offend against the egalitarian principle of equal moral status and equality before the law and would therefore be unjust.

Honneth argues that the struggle for recognition is foundational and motivational for all political struggles. Even if the announced objective of a social movement is fair distribution of social goods, what motivates the struggle is not merely an economic interest in redistribution but the sense of insult that accompanies the unfair system of distribution which is being opposed. I am reminded of the peasants in

¹²Honneth, Axel. 1995. op. cit. 173.

the barrios of Caracas under the rule of President Hugo Chavez in Venezuela who were interviewed in John Pilger's film, *The War on Democracy*.¹³ They appreciated the better economic deal they were getting under the new regime, but they were most impressed by the recognition they were accorded through the creation of local community democracies and educational opportunities. Previously their barrios had not even appeared on the city maps of Caracas, but now they were being helped to educate themselves and to take charge of their own communities. Another example occurred in Memphis, Tennessee in 1968 when Afro-American striking garbage workers carried placards that did not convey economic demands but simply stated, "I am a man".

Honneth concludes that the struggle for recognition is basic and that identity politics and class conflict both get their impetus, and also their legitimacy, from this struggle because the perceived refusal of recognition gives rise to anger, humiliation and resentment. But we need to be able to decide which claims for justice are legitimate through seeing what the motivational bases for them are. If it is not to be such morally inappropriate bases as anger, greed and envy, or the forms of resentment described by Friedrich Nietzsche and Max Scheler, we need to posit the ethically legitimate and necessary conditions for identity formation and social inclusion. Recognition is such a condition. Recognition is a substantial good because it is a prerequisite for psychological maturity, legal equality and social inclusion. These are substantial goods rather than procedural rights. In order to achieve autonomy as an individual, and in order to achieve admission into the community, an individual must be accepted into a system of recognition which operates at the three levels of love, law and achievement. Individualist and communitarian goals are combined here to form a motivational basis for social struggles and a rationale for the legitimacy of such struggles. As Honneth puts it:

What motivates individuals or social groups to call the prevailing social order into question and to engage in practical resistance is the *moral* conviction that, with respect to their own situations or particularities, the recognition principles considered legitimate are incorrectly or inadequately applied.¹⁴

Recognition theory combines procedural concepts of the right with substantive conceptions of the good: namely the individuation of people and their inclusion into society. This constitutes what Honneth calls a "teleological liberalism"¹⁵ in which the values of individual freedom are combined with substantive goals of human psychological and social development. These values of individuation and social inclusion admit of both principles of equality and of differentiation of esteem. The three levels of recognition do not all reduce to equality because love and esteem are not spheres of justice in which egalitarian recognition principles are appropriate.

As the phrase "teleological liberalism" might suggest, the structure of Honneth's argument is Aristotelian. The value and normativity of recognition – the fact that

¹³Details at <http://www.johnpilger.com/>

¹⁴Honneth, Axel. 2003. op. cit. 157.

¹⁵Ibid. 178.

a refusal of recognition is an injustice rather than just a misfortune – arise from recognition's being a necessary condition for both individuation and social inclusion. Insofar as individuation and social inclusion are both necessary for a happy and fulfilled human life – a life marked by what Aristotle would call *eudaimonia* – they are ethical goods, and any social action or circumstance that is necessary for their attainment becomes normative. To accord recognition in the spheres of love, law and esteem is an ethical demand, a moral duty and a requirement of justice. Everyone has a right to such recognition.

6 Conclusion

The first lesson that can be drawn from this argument is that the concept of human dignity now admits of an explication that does not require metaphysical underpinnings such as that provided by the doctrine that God has created us all in his image, but can be understood in the social-psychological terms that Honneth has provided. To have dignity is to be accorded the recognition that is one's due at the three levels that Honneth describes. Moreover, it follows that dignity is not possessed only in the mode of individuality, as a quality of oneself as a moral person, but also in the mode of sociality and solidarity. An individual's dignity is not only a function of her self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem, but also a function of the recognition accorded to her identity-forming group.

It follows from this argument that cosmopolitanism should not be thought of simply as espousing an equal moral status in international law for all human beings in the world. It needs to be thought of in more substantive terms. By including the three levels of recognition that Honneth has identified, we can understand cosmopolitanism as the view that everyone in the world has a legitimate claim and expectation that they will be recognized as the three levels that Honneth has described: the levels of love, law and achievement. The more usual understanding of cosmopolitanism focuses almost exclusively on the second level and sees individuals primarily as bearers of rights. The richer understanding I propose embraces the first and third levels as well. What such a richer conception of cosmopolitanism will bring to the discourse of global ethics is a widening of scope and a deeper understanding of what justice requires. It is arguable that the values of love, equality and achievement are of greater universal relevance than a discourse centered purely on rights in that they are the prerequisites for the solidarity that marks communities the world over. Love and esteem are pre-eminently social phenomena and their fulfillment constitutes the solidarity that grounds the lives of all individuals. Moreover, this wider form of cosmopolitanism allows us to urge that a fuller range of human needs and capabilities be included in economic development goals and made the object of the care and political struggles of the world's peoples. The preservation and enhancement of differing forms of family and cultural life through which self-confidence and self-esteem can be attained will be as important as the honoring of basic human rights so as to preserve self-respect. This implies that a cosmopolitan will be as concerned for

group rights as for individual rights – provided always that a group does not claim the right to violate the individual rights of its members. The cultural rights and traditional ways of life of peoples who are different from the Western individualist norm will be accorded respect by cosmopolitans because of the constructive role they play in the lives of those peoples. While it cannot be denied that this stance will introduce internal contradictions into the cosmopolitan world view, the cosmopolitan insistence on individual rights must be tempered by an acknowledgement of the communitarian values within which those rights should be allowed to flourish.

Finally, by acknowledging the social and communitarian contexts in which people develop self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem, and by noting the shared values which constitute such contexts, we can more readily see the world as a community of peoples constituting a public discursive sphere rather than as a combative arena for individualist struggles over rights.

Redeeming Freedom

Jiwei Ci

The claim to legitimacy is related to the social-integrative preservation of a normatively determined social identity. Legitimations serve to make good this claim, that is, to show how and why existing (or recommended) institutions are fit to employ political power in such a way that the values constitutive for the identity of the society will be realized.

Jürgen Habermas¹

1 Introduction

Among the values constitutive of the identity of a modern liberal society, indeed increasingly of other modern societies, freedom occupies a preeminent place. I mean this in the sense in which Jürgen Habermas takes the realization of such values to be the ultimate ground of claims to legitimacy. If the validity of a claim to legitimacy depends on realizing the value of freedom (among other values), what counts as success in this regard depends in turn on how the value of freedom is conceived. It is the latter issue – the conceptualization of the value of freedom – that I will take up in this essay. One of the premises upon which I will proceed is that freedom as exercised by human beings in their unavoidable capacity as social beings is intrinsically constrained by at least two forms of social external determination, namely, identification and subjection. These forms of social external determination make up an irremovable background against which freedom can be conceived and practiced as a value. My main argument, given this premise, is twofold: first, that while identification and subjection need not render freedom a self-contradictory and insupportable value, these forms of external determination do need to be redeemed by having the value of freedom applied to them as well; and, second, that failure to

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¹Habermas, Jürgen. 1979. Legitimation Problems in the Modern State. *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, trans. Thomas McCarthy. 178–205; 182–183. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

do this, or indeed to recognize the very need for such redemption, is an ideological move that compromises the value of freedom and hence also the validity of any claim to legitimacy that rests on realizing the value of freedom.

2 Agency: Power and Subjectivity

I propose to place freedom in the context of a brief account of agency. By agency I mean a certain combination of “power” and “subjectivity”. The relation between these two components of agency can be expressed as: power organized as subjectivity, or subjectivity achieved through power.²

I understand power in a broad sense to cover all human doing or acting. Nietzsche’s account of power is an obvious point of reference here, but only provided that it is given a more abstract construal than some of his remarks appear to suggest, in two ways. First, to be sure, the physical, sensuous dimension of power is unavoidable insofar as the being that expends power is a physical, sensuous being.³ But power can also take forms which are not totally physical or sensuous in the ordinary sense and which cannot be completely reduced to the physical or sensuous in the ordinary sense. Think, for example, of so-called intellectual power. Thus, power needs to be understood in a sufficiently abstract sense to cover all its forms, physical or otherwise. In this more abstract sense, power is, in a nutshell, acting, doing, getting done. Second, Nietzsche’s claim that “life itself is essentially appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker; suppression, hardness, imposition of one’s own forms, incorporation and at least, at its mildest, exploitation”⁴ needs to be taken more abstractly, in terms of acting upon, doing to, or causing to happen. Power thus understood may or may not literally take the form of injury, suppression, or exploitation. As a characterization of power *in general* rather than specific instantiations of it, Nietzsche’s expression “overpowering of what is alien” is plausible only if taken in this more abstract sense.

Power matters to human beings as agents. But why it matters, and especially why it matters well beyond self-preservation, is a question that needs to be answered with reference to subjectivity. What is fundamentally at stake in power for human beings as *human* beings is the formation and maintenance of a self, along with its reflexive

²This concept of agency is a largely Nietzschean one, of which Mark Warren has given an excellent exposition. See Warren, Mark. 1988. *Nietzsche and Political Thought*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. The expression “power organized as subjectivity” is taken from p. 59. My own account of agency draws on Nietzsche and Warren, especially at the early stages, but is meant to be judged on its own merits rather than in terms of accuracy of representation of either source.

³In its physical, sensuous dimension, power is energy or strength, and, as such, something to be “discharged” or “expended”. It is this aspect of power that Nietzsche refers to when he writes that “A living thing seeks above all to *discharge* its strength – life itself is *will to power*”. Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1966. *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann. Aphorism 13. New York: Random House.

⁴Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1966. op. cit. aphorism 259.

dimension in the shape of a sense of self. A self is not given but rather is a potential that becomes actual only through experiences of power. It is only through such experiences, cumulatively and unceasingly, that a self, actual rather than merely potential, is able to emerge and persist: a subject who forms so-called intentions and causes things to happen in accord with such intentions, registers such intentions and the effects of carrying them out as emanating from and belonging to a self, and attaches value to this self and its activities. Thus, power is invariably expended as the power of a self already formed or in the process of being formed, or else it would be an expenditure of energy devoid of all distinctively human motivation. Conversely, a self can be formed and remain formed only through power, through intentional and goal-directed activities, or else it would be nothing more than a potential. In the final analysis, all worthwhile human power is the power of a self, and hence has the self in it, and accordingly what Nietzsche calls the will to power is, in the human case, actually the will to selfhood through power.⁵ Put another way, human agency is power organized as subjectivity, or subjectivity achieved through power.

Central to this notion of agency is a mechanism of attribution. Power organized as subjectivity is a matter of *attributing* power to a subject or potential subject. A subject, an “I”, is formed and sustained by means of, and in the process of, such attributions. A “normal” self, it might be said, is one who makes and accepts “normal” attributions. In terms of genesis, attributions by society and by others are prior to self-attributions, attributions of power by a self to oneself. Social attributions take the form of praise and blame, reward and punishment, and, in general, of making individuals responsible for what they do and creating a memory commensurate with such responsibility.⁶ Even after one becomes routinely capable of self-attributions – that is, after one is properly formed as a self or subject – one continues to rely on society and others to confirm one’s self-attributions.⁷

The important thing about attributions, no matter by whom and to whom, is that they are acts of interpretation, and, as such, are plausible or implausible, rather than true or false. Humans are not agents in virtue of some a priori, inalienable essence but rather become agents by making attributions that are plausible to themselves and to members of their community. Agency, then, is not a fact of human experience

⁵Nietzsche’s insight here is twofold: seeing selfhood as systematically dependent on power and, more radically, showing that even the self, not just our picture of the external world, is in an important sense a construction. Nietzsche writes, for example, that “the ‘subject’ is not something given, it is something added and invented and projected behind what there is”. Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1967. *The Will to Power*, ed. Walter Kaufmann, trans. Walter Kaufmann and Reginald John Hollingdale. Aphorism 481. New York: Random House.

⁶See, for example, Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1967. *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and Reginald John Hollingdale. II, 1–3. New York: Random House; Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1974. *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann. Aphorism 354. New York: Random House.

⁷Nietzsche speaks derogatorily of those human beings who are herd animals. By herd animals Nietzsche is best taken to mean not those who rely on attributions by others as such, for all humans do so by virtue of the way in which subjectivity is formed and sustained, but only those who rely exclusively on conventional attributions or attributions by institutional authorities.

amenable to empirical proof but an interpretation of experience. Its ultimate proof, of the kind that matters to what Kierkegaard calls “existing human beings”, is the feeling of power and, ultimately, the constitution of subjectivity that such feeling makes possible.

3 Understanding Freedom in Terms of Attribution of Power and Constitution of Subjectivity

All societies have values whereby power-attribution and subjectivity-constitution can take place. Freedom is a preeminent value that serves this purpose. It belongs to that set of values which directly and explicitly attribute power to the individual and help form a corresponding type of subjectivity. It will be a mistake, however, to reduce agency to freedom or to equate agency with freedom. For while all humans perform attributions of power and thereby form and maintain their subjectivity, only in some societies do they make use of such values as freedom. Since the need for agency is an essential feature of human being as such, not just a feature of human being in a liberal society, we must treat freedom as but one strategy for the attribution of power and constitution of subjectivity. Call this strategy *agency through freedom*: what happens here is the attribution of power to the individual under such familiar descriptions as freedom and autonomy and the formation of a corresponding type of subjectivity. In this light, the crucial questions to consider with respect to freedom are the following: Of what human practices, exactly, is the value of freedom an interpretation? And under what conditions can this interpretation acquire plausibility in the eyes of those whose freedom it is?

Since freedom is a value in the sense just explained, it does not apply merely to activities that are de facto unimpeded or unconstrained. As a value, freedom is a way of organizing power as subjectivity, and as such it consists in the subsumption of activities under the description of freedom in a manner that is plausible to those whose description it is. In a successful act of subsumption an agent *acts* freely (power) and *is* a free person (subjectivity), although the act of subsumption need not be consciously registered as such until it becomes difficult or impossible.

This notion of freedom is existential, not metaphysical. Freedom is not a matter of proven self-determination, an objective vindication of free will against determinism. Rather, understood as a constructed and acquired property of existing human beings, freedom involves the exercise of power and the constitution of subjectivity under the plausible (as distinct from objectively true) rubric of “self-determination”.

Such self-determination obviously cannot be anywhere near total, and it is worth spelling out in what ways the self-determination that is constitutive of freedom is *necessarily* limited, and why the rhetoric of freedom, paying insufficient heed to such limits, so often involves over-interpretation.

I have noted that power is always sought as the power of a subject. Let me add that the subject that seeks power and maintains its subjectivity in the process is not just some generalized subject but always a specific kind of subject, that is, a subject with a particular *identity*. A subject seeks power in those domains of activity that are related to its identity. Power is channeled by subjectivity, which in turn is specified

in terms of identity. For this reason, power and identity are inseparable: what counts as being a subject is defined by what one has come to take as one's identity, while one's identity always realizes and manifests itself through a specific expression of power.

These identity-forming domains of activity, in turn, presuppose a *horizon*. A horizon is that which serves to distinguish those things that matter from the potentially infinite number of other things that do not – forming, in Nietzsche's words, "a line dividing the bright and discernible from the unilluminable and dark."⁸ It narrows the field of vision so that one can focus on seeing and doing a few things; and in exerting power in these few things, one acquires and maintains one's subjectivity.

It is a commonplace that such a horizon is socially rather than individually constituted. Thus, when we act as so-called free individuals we actually choose our projects from among those that are endowed with value or meaning by our society, or at least a segment of our society, and it is only by carrying out such *socially* valued projects, or choosing from social categories of being, that we are able to express our freedom as *individuals*. If the exercise of freedom is channeled by identity, identity in turn is formed through *identification*.

We need to go a step further: To say that freedom involves identification with social categories of being is already to imply that subjectivity is made possible by *subjection to* such categories of being.⁹ It is the process of subjection that creates subjects in the first place, subjects capable of exercising freedoms. It is necessary to introduce this further idea because the idea of subjection, as distinct from that of identification, captures the fact that individuals have *no choice* but to identify with social categories of being. Put another way, identifying with such categories is a matter of *being made to* identify with them through education and through socialization in general.

4 What Freedom is, and Does, in a Liberal Order

There are thus two senses in which freedom as an interpretation of human experience can be an *over-interpretation*. First, when freedom serves as a value under which human activities are subsumed, there may not be sufficient awareness of the fact that, or the degree to which, individual freedom is dependent on identification with social categories of being. Second, when freedom plays this role, there may not be sufficient awareness of the fact that, or the degree to which, individual subjectivity is dependent on subjection to social categories of being.

It is arguable that the liberal concept of freedom, in practice if not as much in theory, is informed by this double over-interpretation. If this is true, freedom may be viewed as part of a modern, liberal strategy of government that erases from individual consciousness the moments of identification and especially of subjection

⁸Nietzsche, Friedrich. 1983. *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*. In *Untimely Meditations*, trans. Reginald John Hollingdale. 63. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁹See Althusser, Louis. 1971. Ideological state apparatuses. In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster. 127–186; 182. New York: Monthly Review Press.

and thereby turns the process of being governed into an ostensible exercise of self-governing. This over-interpretation does not mean, however, that we ought to treat freedom as nothing more than an ideological fiction. Liberal thinkers sometimes take freedom at face value and come close to equating it with self-determination, whereas some Marxist thinkers, such as Louis Althusser, speak of the illusory character of freedom and treat it as nothing but misrecognition of external determination as self-determination.¹⁰ Both sides, in my view, have a point, but they seem blind to each other's point.

To avoid the one-sidedness of both, Michel Foucault's idea of "mode of subjection" is helpful. According to Foucault, every morality comprises three elements. First, it contains, with varying degrees of explicitness and coherence, a "moral code", that is, "a set of values and rules of action that are recommended to individuals through the intermediary of various prescriptive agencies such as the family, educational institutions, churches, and so forth."¹¹ Second, a morality refers to the actual behaviors of those who are supposed to follow this code and who may do so with varying degrees of resistance or compliance. Foucault calls this dimension "the morality of behaviors".¹² Third, and this is the dimension that moral common sense and much of moral philosophy tend to ignore, every morality must rely on what Foucault calls an ethics or ascetics, that is, the way in which individuals constitute themselves as "subjects" of a moral code. The so-called mode of subjection belongs under ethics, and by it Foucault means "the way in which the individual establishes his relation to the rule and recognizes himself as obliged to put it into practice"¹³ or "the way in which people are invited or incited to recognize their moral obligations."¹⁴

I want to suggest that the invocation of freedom in a liberal order is best treated as a mode of subjection. In other words, some notion of freedom – an interpretation of human activities in terms of some notion of freedom – is a crucial element in the mode of subjection that goes together with the kind of moral and political code typical of a liberal order.¹⁵ This way of thinking about freedom has the advantage of shifting our attention from the superficial question of whether people, say

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Foucault, Michel. 1990. *History of Sexuality*, vol. 2, *The Use of Pleasure*, trans. Robert Hurley. p. 25. New York: Vintage Books.

¹²Ibid. 26.

¹³Ibid. 27.

¹⁴Foucault, Michel. 1984. On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress. In *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow. 340–372; 353. New York: Pantheon Books.

¹⁵The kind of moral and political code typical of a liberal order has at its center the idea that it is up to individuals to decide how to lead their lives according to their own best lights. To be sure, people desire this kind of freedom not only for its own sake but in order to pursue one conception of the good or another. But it is to be expected, in any liberal order, that people will pursue diverse, often conflicting conceptions of the good, and that they, or a very large percentage of them, will value the possibility of revising their conceptions of the good. Thus, a shared and enduring identification with a liberal order cannot come from any particular conception of the good, or even from any particular set of conceptions of the good, but must come from the more abstract notion of freedom

in a liberal-democratic order, *are* free to the more appropriate and fruitful question of under what conditions people may be able to think of themselves as free or self-determining while subjecting themselves unawares to one form or another of external determination – and changing the feel and very character of external determination in the process.

If it is true, as Althusser argues, that freedom is misrecognition of external determination as self-determination, it is no less importantly true that such misrecognition, or the illusion of freedom, has *real* conditions of possibility. Those who subject themselves unawares to external determination in terms of some concept of freedom must find the concept itself plausible as an interpretation of their real existence or, as Althusser would prefer to put it, of their imaginary relationship to their real conditions of existence. Indeed, other things being equal, the more obvious (to observers) it is that their use of the concept of freedom involves misrecognition, the more demanding or substantial must be those conditions that need to exist if such misrecognition is to be plausible (to the participants). In practice, these conditions boil down largely to the existence of a significant number of freedoms in the domain of private life, along with a modicum of democratic participation in the choice of government.

Liberal thinkers tend to make the mistake of equating *conditions for the plausibility of the concept of freedom* with freedom itself, but their mistake contains an element of truth. There is something real about freedom in a liberal order: not about freedom itself but about the conditions for the plausibility of the value of freedom as an interpretation of a way of life. On the other hand, and this is equally important, that certain real conditions, such as the existence of a set of civil and political rights, must obtain in order for the misrecognition of external determination as freedom to be possible does not change the fact that in an important sense it is misrecognition. It is here that Marxists like Althusser rightly insist that freedom contains a moment of illusion.

Once we think of freedom as belonging to a mode of subjection with its own conditions of plausibility, we are able to accommodate in our account both aspects of freedom in a liberal order: its moment of reality and its moment of illusion. This makes possible a fuller understanding of the nature and role of freedom in a liberal order than either the liberal or the Marxist account alone could supply. The following phenomena, for example, call for explanation in terms of both freedom and subjection or, more precisely, in terms of freedom as a mode of subjection.

To begin with, a liberal society seems to be the most effortlessly and unobtrusively governed large-scale society hitherto invented. Much of the credit (or blame, depending on one's point of view) must go to the fact that the mode of subjection to a liberal order has at its center some notion of freedom. The invocation of freedom as an interpretation of their conduct allows individuals to participate willingly and actively in their subjection to a social order that shapes them much more than it is

to pursue and revise conceptions of the good. In other words, the mode of subjection must take the form of freedom, not the good.

shaped by them. This very willingness, based as it is upon real conditions of plausibility (as I have explained), changes the psychological character of subjection itself, turning the process of identification with and subjection to social categories of being into an *experience* of freedom.¹⁶ Given that the stage for the exercise of freedom is set by identification and subjection, the question is not whether individuals are free but whether they think of themselves as free and of their conduct as the realization of freedom. When individuals think of themselves and their conduct as free, this makes a world of difference to how they behave, for they will act in socially delimited and expected ways under the description of individual freedom and therefore take initiative, and pleasure, in doing so. And because they derive pleasure, and indeed a sense of identity, from what they regard as exercises in freedom, they will dispense with much of the need for external supervision and enforcement. Thus, liberal government consists essentially in creating and maintaining conditions that render plausible the interpretation of individual conduct in terms of freedom. To the significant (if never anywhere near complete) extent that this is taken care of, the rest of government can safely be left to self-government, unsurprisingly the most reliable and least costly form of government there is.¹⁷

Nor is it surprising that such self-government does not go together with the flourishing of individuality. Uniformity and conformism seem no less a feature of a liberal society than they are of societies in which the concept of freedom does not figure so prominently or at all. It is only by understanding freedom as part of a mode of subjection, I think, that we can explain a phenomenon that ought to strike us as very odd and thought-provoking were it not so familiar, namely the existence, in well-established liberal societies, of so much uniformity of behavior in a social environment that affords such a wide range of liberties, of so much conformism that passes for individuality and choice.¹⁸ Once we think of freedom as belonging to a mode of subjection, it should no longer be surprising that the practice of individual freedom often turns into an exercise in conformism. Although conformism involves the reduction of individual agency, other things being equal, it nevertheless provides one with a relatively stable identity in terms of which one can exercise one's agency in ways that are recognized by society even as they are delimited by it. Those who are unwilling to pay this price may have to pay a different, sometimes higher, price, for they run the risk of failing to secure any sustainable identity altogether. That this should be the case gives us perhaps the best glimpse of the moment of subjection to freedom, and explains why the line between freedom and conformism is so thin.

¹⁶As Nicolas Rose puts it, "What began as a social norm. . . ends up as a personal desire." Rose, Nicolas. 1999. *Powers of Freedom*. 88. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁷See Dean, Mitchell. 1999. *Governmentality*. 12. New York: Sage Publications.

¹⁸In this connection, Herbert Marcuse's critique of the liberal-capitalist order in, say, *One-Dimensional Man* (1964, Boston: Beacon Press) remains relevant and illuminating. See also Dean, Mitchell. 1999. op. cit. 15: "She is thus urged to exercise her freedom in a specific fashion. . . . The margin of the exercise of freedom is of course extremely narrow."

The reason that we need to think of freedom as a mode of subjection in order to make sense of phenomena such as those just mentioned is that freedom and subjection are utterly inseparable in such phenomena. In these phenomena freedom serves as a mode of subjection, or, put another way, subjection takes place through freedom. Without the idea of freedom (as subjection), we would be at a loss to explain how liberal government mostly takes the form of self-government. Equally, without the idea of subjection (through freedom), we would be helplessly baffled by the degree of uniformity and conformism in societies that pride themselves on how much freedom their members enjoy. Thus the moral to be drawn from these phenomena is that where freedom goes together with uniformity and predictability, as it does in liberal societies, it had better be understood as part of a mode of subjection. That the notion of freedom *can* play this role should alert us to the existence of *real* conditions that lend some plausibility to the application of this notion to human experience and yet should not blind us to the (in part) illusory character of freedom itself. And this in turn ought to lead to a normative assessment of a liberal society that contains both appreciation and critique.

5 Ideology and Redemption

Why critique? What is there to be critical of if identification and subjection make up a *necessary* background for the exercise of freedom? Given the necessity of identification and subjection, what is amiss with not owning up to it?

One way of thinking about these questions is in terms of how, and to what degree, identification and subjection can be *redeemed*. If, as we have seen, freedom necessarily involves an element of identification, indeed subjection, what is it that makes the exercise of freedom against the background of identification and subjection different from such forms of identification and subjection as largely exclude freedom? One answer is that in the case of the exercise of freedom, the identification – and by the same token the identity that rests on it – is redeemed by individual endorsement, which is itself a form of agency. In other words, the identification that is unavoidably present in any exercise of freedom is *in part* underwritten by a simultaneous exercise of agency. Likewise, the subjection involved in an exercise of freedom is redeemed when what begins as the passive object of subjection is turned, as in any successful process of socialization, into its active and willing subject. In either case, what characterizes the exercise of freedom is not that it involves no identification or subjection but that the identification or subjection in question is sufficiently grounded on individual endorsement to be compatible with the feeling of being a subject. It is this grounding that gives a measure of normative validity and psychological reality to the exercise of freedom despite its moments of identification and subjection.

This prompts a further question: Can there be more to freedom than endorsement of the given, and, on the basis of this endorsement, uncoerced identification with and unimpeded choice from existing categories of being? In other words, if

freedom has to do with the choice of individual or collective projects *within* an existing framework of freedoms and (social) necessities, is it possible to extend freedom to the collective examination and determination of this very framework? Is it possible, that is, for there to be a democratically intersubjective moment to subjection? If subjection, as a precondition for the formation of subjects, is necessarily prior to any form of democratic intersubjectivity, is it at least possible for subjection – both its form and its substance – to be revised through the practice of democratic intersubjectivity?

To be sure, given the very nature of horizons, there are limits to what democracy can do with respect to any existing framework of freedoms. But, just as surely, some aspects of the framework can be democratically shaped or at least revised to one degree or another, if not in a wholesale fashion. It may therefore be said that the less the democratic process accepts as given, the more it will live up to the true spirit of democracy, namely, the intersubjective determination as far as possible of the framework for the exercise of freedom.

What is problematic about the use of the notion of freedom in a liberal democracy is that questions about frameworks or horizons are generally bracketed in the exercise of freedom and democracy alike. As a result, freedom seldom goes beyond choice from, and identification with, existing categories of being, no matter how these categories have come about, and democracy is mostly confined to collective decision-making within the parameters of the given. It is an important feature of the given, of the existing background of identification and subjection, that to the extent that this background is amenable to being shaped by humans it is in large part not shaped in ways that are fair, and that the background that results from being so shaped cannot be said to be equally in the interest of all. More simply put, the background of identification and subjection is often shaped in ways that reflect relations of domination. It is this political fact about the background, not the existence of a background as such, that calls for ideology critique. This fact also explains the ideological resistance to problematization of the liberal horizon.

Let us first be clear about what need *not* be ideological here. What need not be ideological is that there is something arbitrary about the liberal horizon and about the particular set of freedoms to which liberalism attaches so much prominence and importance, for arbitrariness is a characteristic of all horizons. Closer to being ideological is the concealment, or more precisely the non-acknowledgement, of the arbitrariness of those freedoms that are visible on the liberal horizon, of the possibility of potential significant freedoms that are not visible on the liberal horizon, and, not least, of the liberal horizon itself as a horizon. This non-acknowledgement largely takes the form of naturalizing what is social, but this too is a feature of horizons in general, as is the mostly unquestioning acceptance of social, in principle removable or alterable constraints by mistaking them for natural, inevitable ones.

A pointer to the ideological character of such non-acknowledgement is the entrenched refusal to contemplate alternative horizons, alternative thematizations, even when these alternatives are suggested, along with the passion with which the liberal horizon and the freedoms rendered visible and important by it are defended

as natural when under challenge. Such stubbornness of vision and epistemic confusion raise the hint that there is something to hide, not in the sense that those involved, knowing it themselves, consciously hide it from others, but in the sense that they benefit from that which is hidden and from its being hidden. What is thus hidden is that the liberal horizon, at least as presently constituted, goes systematically together with a certain set of unequal relations of power. Not to put too fine a point on it, these relations involve the domination of capital over labor, along with the priority of the drive for profit over all human needs that are incompatible with it. In the final analysis, what is concealed or not acknowledged is just the set of unequal relations of power that have helped give shape to the background of identification and subjection – as well as the ever-present possibility of reshaping that background.

What is thus ideological about the liberal use of the notion of freedom is that the freedoms that are rendered visible and important by the liberal horizon, and the liberal horizon itself, are guarded with a closed-mindedness that befits the defense of vested interests in maintaining relations of domination.¹⁹ Accordingly, what is non-ideological or anti-ideological is not the defense of an alternative set of freedoms and an alternative horizon, but rather the willingness to acknowledge the socially constructed character of freedoms, to be as open as possible about any construction of freedoms, not least when alternative constructions are proposed, and to render any such construction as free of domination as possible. Put another way, the antidote to the ideological use of the notion of freedom is the attempt to redeem the identification and subjection that make up its necessary background – to redeem identification, itself unavoidable, by making it amenable to endorsement that is as free and informed as possible within the context of the subjection that is given, and, going a step further, to redeem subjection itself, also unavoidable, by making it maximally amenable to intersubjective deliberation and revision.

Thus, the range of approaches to the identification and subjection that constitute the background for freedom is one whose poles are redemption and ideology. Ideology consists in failure of redemption and, more radically, failure of acknowledgement even of the need for redemption.

6 Ideological Over-Interpretation and the Nature of Its Plausibility: Freedom Versus Pleasure

I have argued that the misrecognition of external determination as self-determination, or the illusion of freedom, has real conditions of possibility, and that these conditions involve the presence of a significant number of *freedoms* in the domain of private life, along with a modicum of democratic participation. By

¹⁹On an understanding of ideology as a combination of epistemic confusion and service to reprehensible ends, see Geuss, Raymond. 1981. *The Idea of a Critical Theory*. 13. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

way of further clarification, it will be helpful to compare my account with Herbert Marcuse's rather different explanation of why capitalist liberal democracy is so seductive.

According to Marcuse, liberal democracy is actually "democratic unfreedom", and this unfreedom is rendered palatable largely by consumerism, by the increasing ability of the capitalist market to deliver all manner of pleasure and comfort. Marcuse rightly points out that commodities "indoctrinate and manipulate; they promote a false consciousness which is immune against its falsehood", and that this has a lot to do with the capacity of advanced industrial civilization to "increase and spread comforts".²⁰ It is no exaggeration when Marcuse says that "The people recognize themselves in their commodities; they find their soul in their automobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment",²¹ and this thanks in no small part to the comfort and pleasure such objects bring.

These acute observations of the political role of pleasure and comfort do not tell the whole story, however. What is missing is how commodities and their capacity to indoctrinate are related to *agency* and *meaning*. Given that human beings are agents with a need for meaning, not just for consumer goods, it cannot be pleasure and comfort as such that preempt or dispel dissatisfaction with the capitalist system and the desire for qualitative change. Rather, pleasure and comfort, even if to some extent sought after in their own right in a consumer society, acquire *meaning* in the form of items of choice in the domain of private life, so much so that the pursuit of pleasure and comfort is nothing less than an instantiation of freedom.²² Insofar as members of a capitalist liberal democracy are agents, what matters to them is not so much the enjoyment of pleasure and comfort as the exercise of freedom in the process of pursuing them and especially the symbolic value in them – not so much consumption as *consumer agency*. This pursuit takes place in the context of developing a career and realizing a lifestyle, and thus the kinds of pleasure and comfort valued and sought after are constitutive of personal identities and as such are bases of self-esteem and social recognition.

Marcuse, otherwise extremely insightful about the power of consumerism, misses the target when he accounts for that power by arguing that the increasing availability of pleasure and comfort is able to override and eventually erase any feeling of unfreedom²³ – when he attributes "the conquest of the unhappy consciousness" to what he calls "repressive desublimation".²⁴ It is as if pleasure as such is somehow more important than freedom for those who live in an advanced, consumerist capitalist society, or at least more or less on a par so that they can be traded off one for the other. And it is as if ideological over-interpretations in terms of

²⁰Marcuse, Herbert. 1964. op. cit. 12 and 9, respectively.

²¹Ibid. 9.

²²See Wuthnow, Robert. 1987. *Meaning and Moral Order*. 79–89. Berkeley: University of California Press.

²³Marcuse, Herbert. op. cit. 1–12.

²⁴Ibid. ch. 3.

freedom were dispensable now that lack of freedom was outweighed by abundance of pleasure. In giving an explanation with these implications, Marcuse makes the fundamental mistake of (implicitly) committing himself to a view of human beings as essentially or largely sensual beings rather than first and foremost beings whose most important need is that of agency. If such a view were correct, what would be lost would be nothing less than the possibility of critiquing liberal-democratic capitalism for preventing human beings from becoming the more rounded agents that they could be.

7 Conclusion

I have argued for the need to redeem the identification and subjection that make up a background of unavoidable social external determination against which freedom can be conceived and practiced as a value. It is hardly a bold claim to suggest, as I have done, that existing liberal or liberal-democratic societies fall considerably short of carrying out such redemption. To the extent that this is the case, such validity (as seems to belong to claims to legitimacy based on the realization of freedom) is an ideologically engendered appearance that calls for critique and improvement. This is something that liberals, both domestic and cosmopolitan, have generally not addressed with sufficient seriousness or even at all. Until they do, there is no assurance that their liberalism, despite its manifest intentions, is not a species of ideology serving to maintain the status quo rather than part of a radical fight for the materialization of a realistic utopia. Thus, domestically, liberal rights require more justification than is typically provided, or, to be more precise, a further kind of justification on top of the standard normative one; and, in the global arena, all talk of extending liberal rights beyond liberal societies is not only premature but potentially dangerous. This is not in itself to say that liberal rights may not be worth cherishing and even spreading, but first such rights – in both theory and practice – must be shown to be capable of withstanding ideology critique. And this in turn suggests the need for liberal political philosophy to incorporate ideology critique as an essential part of its intellectual agenda. An important and difficult question that should be on this part of the agenda is how best to conceive the redeeming of identification and subjection as elements of social external determination (my suggestions in this essay are provisional in the extreme) and what institutional form such redemption can feasibly take. Puzzling this out is, as I see it, a pivotal task for all those who take freedom seriously as a central value upon which claims to legitimacy must rest.

The Cosmopolitan Self and the Fetishism of Identity

Siby K. George

For in the most general form it [metaphysics] has assumed in the history of thought it appears as a movement going forth from a world that is familiar to us . . . toward an alien outside-of-oneself, toward a yonder.

Emmanuel Lévinas¹

1 Introduction: Celebrating Difference

Today, we are witnesses to a steady, if disparate, revival of the ancient philosophy of cosmopolitanism. The exigencies of growing globalism, of the visibility of cultural mixing that is so characteristic of our times, and cracks in modernity's hallowed foundations of liberal nationalism and rigorous individualism have led to this revival. The current discourse on cosmopolitanism usually asks either *what* it is or *how* it is to be practiced; and many times both these discourses overlap. Our questioning of cosmopolitanism in this essay shall concern only an aspect of the former: a questioning (admittedly, among many such questionings) of the essence and meaning of cosmopolitanism. And more particularly, in questioning the essence of cosmopolitanism, we shall ask the following: does the human self manifest any positive tendency in its structure, even an ambivalent one, to rise above its own world, its "personalized space", to inhabit the other's world? So, the question is about the essence of the cosmopolitan self, even if that essence finally unfolds itself as a non-essence, an inherent discomfort in settled identity.

A few things should become immediately clear to us. One of these – which we need to state strongly at the outset – is that this discussion is not about the kind of

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¹Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1991. *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis. 3. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

“normative cosmopolitanism” which would articulate a coherent set of norms for a “cosmo-polity”, as one might find while reading the much discussed essays by Martha Nussbaum and her respondents in the volume *For love of country*,² or the Tanner Lecture by Seyla Benhabib and the responses to that lecture in the collection *Another cosmopolitanism*.³ Here we are not thinking about “the emergence of norms that ought to govern relations among individuals in a global civil society.”⁴ Nor are we asking why values that “instruct us to join hands across boundaries of ethnicity, class, gender, and race, [should] lose steam when they get to the borders of the nation.”⁵ Rather, we are thinking about the essence of the cosmopolitan self from a phenomenological vantage point. In doing so, we are taking a perspective opposed to a single, reductionist, totalizing cosmopolitanism in the belief that there is a way of “living at home abroad or abroad at home – ways of inhabiting multiple places at once, of being different beings simultaneously, of seeing the larger picture stereoscopically with the smaller.”⁶ The idea is to explore the power (or the lack of it) of the self to inhabit the other under its skin.

An assumed position of this enquiry, therefore, is to look at difference with respect – a way of honoring the plural pluralistically. To begin with, it is beneficial to view cosmopolitanism in the plural, for there are varieties of cosmopolitanisms and the issue of this “ism” is not settled yet – neither conceptually nor in practice.

We may also ask: can it be so settled; settled once and for all? Cosmopolitanism is “yet to come, something awaiting realization.”⁷ We want to evoke the “unsatisfaction” that Homi Bhabha suggests in his discussion of cosmopolitanism:

Unsatisfied . . . because “unsatisfaction” is a sign of the movement or relocation of revision of the “universal” or the general, such that it is producing a process of “unanticipated transformation” of what is local and what is global.⁸

Bhabha locates a possibility of such an “unanticipated transformation” in the debates on neoliberal secularism in the West: debates that have yet to integrate the perspectives of those who have been excluded from the “egalitarian and tolerant values of liberal individualism”⁹ such as migrants, minorities and refugees. Such discussions would involve a postmodern celebration of difference – unabashed, unremorseful, unscrupulous embracing, taking in of difference rather than passively tolerating it. Is there any need for another militant, all-conquering universalism,

²Nussbaum, Martha C. 1996. *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*, ed. Joshua Cohen. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

³Benhabib, Seyla. 2006. *Another Cosmopolitanism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

⁴Ibid. 20.

⁵Nussbaum, Martha C. 1996. op. cit. 14.

⁶Pollock, Sheldon, Homi K. Bhabha, Carol A. Breckenridge, and Dipesh Chakrabarty. 2000. Cosmopolitanisms. *Public Culture* 12/3: 577–590: 587.

⁷Ibid. 577.

⁸Bhabha, Homi K. 2000. Unsatisfied: Notes on Vernacular Cosmopolitanism. In *Postcolonial Discourses: An Anthology*, ed. Gregory Castle, 38–52: 48. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

⁹Bhabha, Homi K. 2000. op. cit. 50.

at least in these unsettling times? Agreeing with Emmanuel Lévinas' clarion call not to be "duped by morality",¹⁰ and opposing the modern tendency to respond to breaches of morality with violence, Zygmunt Bauman's *Postmodern ethics*¹¹ argues that "... the postmodern perspective succeeded in... pierc[ing] through the thick veil of myths down to the common moral condition that precedes all diversifying effects of the social administration of moral capacity ... [and] similarly administered 'universalization'."¹²

2 Cosmopolitanism as Moral Regard for Difference

Let us now turn to the ability of the self to have the other within itself. Behind every idea of cosmopolitanism – whether it is political, economic or cultural – there lies a primarily moral idea of rising beyond one's home and hearth, kin and kith to embrace the other or the world, in big ways and small. It is realized that the moral impulse as in postmodernism, or moral reason as in modernism, is too artificially, too narrowly constrained by boundaries of home, hamlet and homeland – all fences of affinity, affection or association. The acknowledged moral unity of the human species across boundaries may be based on enlightenment reason as typified in Kant, or it could be based on the Lévinasian idea of the self's infinite responsibility for the irreducible, alien other. Kant argues that one can speak of a "right of visitation", which entitles all humans the right to hospitality in foreign lands, because originally the right of possession of the earth is held equally by all, and the necessity for existence in a particular portion of the earth arises from the fact that we cannot infinitely spread across a finite, spherical earth.¹³ Or, one can speak, like Lévinas, of the self's infinite responsibility for the other on account of "the inevitable *orientation* of being 'starting from oneself' toward 'the Other'".¹⁴ We need cosmopolitan political norms, cultural acceptance and affirmation, and economic hope for every citizen of the world because the cosmopolitan reason or impulse, as may be the case, is moral through and through. Although separated by political borders – artificially or not, although separated by cultural landscapes – essentially or not, although separated by economic inequalities – avoidably or not, we are not separated as moral beings. Our moral agency or sensibility is our hope.

Even so, it appears that what truly is honored in the colloquial, everyday usage of the word "cosmopolitan" is not the moral solidarity or fundamental sameness of the human species, but rather a taste for human difference in a Lévinasian sense – a

¹⁰Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1991. op. cit. 21.

¹¹Bauman, Zygmunt. 1993. *Postmodern Ethics*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

¹²Ibid. 14.

¹³Kant, Immanuel. 1917. *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay*, trans. M. Campbell Smith. 137–138. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.

¹⁴Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1991. op. cit. 215. Emphasis as in the original. See also the essay by An Verlinden in Chapter 6.

moral acknowledgement, acceptance and affirmation of the very homely and spicy fact of human variety. It is not merely about the aesthetics of variety, but the ethics of it.¹⁵ When we say “a cosmopolitan city/neighborhood” or a cosmo-polis, are we not speaking of an “anthropological museum”, a Noah’s Ark, a place where people of different and even opposed backgrounds and cultures come and cohabit? A cosmopolitan place manages and affirms human diversity; it celebrates the many ways people choose to be human. Moral cosmopolitanism is a confirmed celebration of difference.

No doubt, there is an air of sophistication, an elitism, concerning the word “cosmopolitan”. The word breathes the air of urbane tastes, discreet manners and refined sagacity for getting on with the world in any corner of the globe. This sharply distinguishes the cosmopolitan from the commoner who is nostalgic about home food, homely faces, bathing in the countryside river. The cosmopolitan is a citizen of the world and feels at home anywhere. She has tuned herself for different tastes and styles and does not want to project the uniqueness of her human situation as superior to any other. If this is indeed the case, then what is essential to the cosmopolitan is not so much elitism as it is a respect for difference; an acknowledgement that beyond a priority of affections that are authentic and valid on account of human embeddedness, there is no priority of value among persons and what make them unique. The constitution building process of India – a true cosmo-polis, a paradise of multiplicity that many intensively globalized pockets of the world still cannot visualize – and its very struggle for freedom, are representative of such a celebration of difference. Despite the partition pogrom and simmering communalism ever since, both religious and linguistic, an interesting form of the idea of the celebration of human difference (“unity in diversity”) has been integrated into the Indian constitution, though one may question whether the very last in India’s supposedly stringent social hierarchy or those outside it were taken into confidence in this process.¹⁶

¹⁵ Appiah raises the problematic paradox of liberal cosmopolitanism, but succumbs to it in his *The Ethics of Identity* (2007). He accepts “difference” from an instrumental, agency-oriented consideration, betraying thereby the West’s worst fears – the demons of uncivilized cannibal savages, always calling for western liberal cosmopolitan’s civilizing mission. He writes: “Cosmopolitanism values human variety for what it makes possible for human agency, and some kinds of cultural variety constrain more than they enable. The cosmopolitan’s high appraisal of variety flows... from the human choices it enables, but variety is not something we value no matter what. (This is one reason why I think it is not helpful to see cosmopolitanism as expressing an aesthetic ideal.)” (Appiah, Kwame Anthony. 2007. *The Ethics of Identity*, 268. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.) Although we reject the instrumental view of accepting human difference, we shall emphasize that there is no need to ontologize difference, or, for that matter, cosmopolitanism itself. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the difficulty entailed in the liberal view that a moral eye for human difference should immediately evoke a normative paralysis regarding human evil. Such a view smacks of moral blame game, moral patronizing, the “without us the deluge” syndrome.

¹⁶ Here we want to refer to the talk delivered by historian and novelist, Mukul Kesavan, “A Singular Nationalism”, in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay on 21 January 2008. Making the interesting point, Kesavan observed that the Indian National Congress, unable to represent the masses on account of its elitist image, enlisted people from India’s myriad communities to claim its representative nature. The Congress thus invented a

3 Ambivalence: The Case of Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism

It has also been pointed out that within enlightenment nationalism, which formalized the boundaries of the nation-state as the moral universe of the individual, glimmers of cosmopolitanism were already present. Cosmopolitanism as such is an extremely ambivalent notion. We have already acknowledged this ambivalence and its unsettled, unfinished mode of making itself present and will later speak of this ambivalence as a way of being of the self. As for the conceptual ambiguities in the notion of cosmopolitanism, let us here refer to Derrida's essay "Onto-theology of national-humanism". Closely reading Fichte's central text from 1808 in the philosophy of nationalism, *Addresses to the German nation*, Derrida notices Fichte's aporetic aim of articulating a philosophy of nationalism which is at once "nationalistic, patriotic and cosmopolitan, universalistic."¹⁷ The aporia here is a "cosmopolitan nationalism". For Fichte's linguistic German nationalism, the empirical fact of not belonging to the German nation did not exclude someone "from participation in some originary Germanity." ". . . whoever shares in this originary philosophy. . . is German . . . whereas on the contrary a *de facto* German is foreign to it if he is not a philosopher of that philosophy."¹⁸ Derrida is deeply concerned about the paradoxes hidden within both nationalism and cosmopolitanism, and observes that modern cosmopolitanism is a "fearfully ambiguous value: it can be annexionist and expansionist, and combat in the name of nationalism the enemies within. . ."¹⁹ This is truly a warning signal for all forms of normative globalism, cosmopolitanism and transnationalism. In his later writings, drawing on Lévinas, Derrida speaks

"Noah's Ark nationalism", "a non-denominational nationalism that made a virtue out of diversity." Such nationalism, according to Kesavan, has given rise to an Indian nation which can "deal with difference without hysteria because diversity was written into its being." He writes in *Secular common sense*: "In its origins, the Congress was a self-consciously representative assembly of Indians from different parts of India. . . The congress never lost this sense that the nation was the sum of the sub-continent's species; that the more Parsis, Muslims, Dalits, Marwaris, Sikhs, and Christians it could count in its ranks, the better was its claim to represent the nation." (Kesavan, Mukul. 2001. *Secular Common Sense*. 3–4. New Delhi: Penguin Books India.) Kesavan goes on to argue that although such a domesticated version of secularism of respecting all religions (as against the West's separation of church and state) has been integrated into the Indian Constitution, the gradual political assertion of Hindu majoritarianism is a threat looming large in India today. Alluding to the current controversy over raising a Ram Temple upon the site of the violently demolished Babri Mosque in Ayodhya, he comments that it won't be apocalyptic to erect a Ram Mandir where the Sangh Parivar wants it, "but the common sense of the Republic will have shifted. It will begin to seem reasonable to us and our children that those counted in the majority have a *right* to have their sensibilities respected, to have their beliefs deferred to by others. Invisibly, we shall have become some other country." (Kesavan, Mukul. 2001. op. cit. 136) Kesavan's "secular common sense" certainly is a variety of the cosmopolitanism we are here striving to evoke.

¹⁷Derrida, Jacques. 2007. Onto-Theology of National-Humanism: Prolegomena to a Hypothesis. In *Jacques Derrida: Basic Writings*, ed. Barry Stocker, trans. Geoffrey Bennington. 299–323, 312. Abingdon: Routledge.

¹⁸Ibid. 314.

¹⁹Ibid. 317.

extensively about unconditional hospitality, but insists on the necessity to “transform and improve” cosmopolitan law in the spirit of unconditional hospitality, which is nothing less than a serious attempt at balancing between “the Law of unconditional hospitality, offered *a priori* to every other . . . and the conditional laws of right to hospitality, without which *The unconditional Law of hospitality* would be in danger of remaining a pious and irresponsible desire. . . .”²⁰

Several other writers have also discussed the tension between cosmopolitan and nationalist ideals, but have tried to argue that they can nevertheless be bedfellows. Martha Nussbaum observes in an interview that cosmopolitanism does not require one to relinquish all particular loves. She argues that, just as parents who love their own children can, at the same time, strive to give other children a decent life, so people can love their nation and at the same time work towards a better world. She also makes the important distinction between the normative structures of cosmopolitanism and the primacy of a moral cosmopolitan disposition which precedes the former.²¹

Another interesting way of overcoming the stubborn ambiguity of the cosmopolitan ideal is to draw lessons from the creative practice of major historical figures. Anthony Appiah’s essay “Ethics in a world of strangers: W. E. B. Du Bois and the spirit of cosmopolitanism” is an attempt in this direction. Appiah argues that Du Bois, the black American activist and author of *The souls of the black folk* (1903), always accepted his duties towards the blacks as well as to those of other races simultaneously. Du Bois celebrated the achievements and culture of other civilizations and, like all cosmopolitans, believed that people have the right to choose and live their own lives; the very thesis of “cosmopolitanism as regard for difference” we have propounded above.²² The case of Frantz Fanon, the revolutionary African thinker, was no different. His call to the Africans was to make themselves anew within a broad human perspective that is at once local and global. He writes in *The wretched of the earth* (1961): “No, we do not want to catch up with anyone. What we want to do is to go forward all the time, night and day, in the company of Man, in the company of all men.”²³ However, his globalism was deeply rooted and did not betray a uniform notion of progress or civility: “For Europe, for ourselves, and for humanity, comrades, we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new man.”²⁴

²⁰Derrida, Jacques. 2001. *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes. 22–23. London: Routledge. Emphasis as in original.

²¹Nussbaum, Martha C. 2004. An Interview with Martha Nussbaum. *The Dualist: Stanford’s Undergraduate Journal of Philosophy* 11: 65. <http://www.stanford.edu/group/dualist/vol11/Nussbaum.pdf>

²²Appiah, Kwame Anthony. 2005. Ethics in a World of Strangers: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Spirit of Cosmopolitanism. *The Berlin Journal* 11: 23–26. http://www.americanacademy.de/uploads/media/BerlinJournal_11.pdf

²³Fanon, Frantz. 1982. *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington. 314–315. New York: Grove Press.

²⁴Ibid. 316.

Mohandas Gandhi, the architect of the Indian freedom movement, was no less cosmopolitan (as were Jawaharlal Nehru and Rabindranath Tagore). Gandhi always took great pains to demonstrate that he opposed only the colonial system and not the colonizers. To a question, “How far would you cut India off from the (British) Empire?” he answered readily: “From the Empire entirely: from the British nation not at all.”²⁵ Undoubtedly Gandhi drew his moral cosmopolitanism from a tolerant version of Hindu universalism. He believed that his message of non-violent struggle for political freedom was a universal message, but at the same time, he did not feel an urge to preach his message everywhere: “I believe my message to be universal but as yet I feel that I can best deliver it through my work in my own country.”²⁶ As an authentic cosmopolitan, Gandhi thought that one’s right to freedom implied one’s duty to allow the same freedom for all others. He wrote in *India of my dreams*: “If I want that freedom for my country, I would not be deserving of that freedom if I did not cherish and treasure the equal right of every other race, weak or strong, to the same freedom.”²⁷ In line with today’s political cosmopolitanism, he believed that the world should ultimately move toward a friendly non-warring federation of interdependent states.²⁸ However, voices of dissent against this reading of Gandhi’s negotiation of nationalism and cosmopolitanism often point the finger at his onslaught against western civilization in the *Hind Swaraj* (1909) – a potentially anti-cosmopolitan tirade.²⁹ But the charge loses steam when we consider Gandhi’s life, writings and engagements in their entirety. His exalting of Indian civilization was the rhetorical tool of a nationalist leader designed to unite a beleaguered people against the oppressor and divisive forces within, to reinvent India’s self-faith. When he became aware of the misreading of his critique of modernity and its civilization, Gandhi reframed his *Hind Swaraj* views, pointing out that wisdom was not any culture’s monopoly and there was much to learn from the West. What he questioned were the fetishizing of technology and science, the colonizing hegemony of the West and the mindless imitation of things Western by Indians.³⁰

Such a personal-history-centered view of the cosmopolitan ideal is helpful in understanding the Derridian aporia we have discussed above. However, it is also

²⁵Gandhi, Mohandas Kiranchand. 2008. *Gandhi: Essential Writings*, ed. Gapalkrishna Gandhi, 316. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

²⁶Gandhi, Mohandas Kiranchand. 2006. *Gandhi’s Life in His Own Words*, ed. Krishna Kripalani, 56. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House.

²⁷Gandhi, Mohandas Kiranchand. 2006. *India of My Dreams*. 300. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House.

²⁸*Ibid.* 299.

²⁹See Steger, Manfred. 2000. *Gandhi’s Dilemma: Nonviolent Principles and Nationalist Power*. New York: St. Martin’s Press; and Bajpai, Kanti. 2006. Indian Conceptions of Order/Justice in International Relations: Nehruvian, Gandhian, Hindutva and neo-liberal. *Political Ideas in Modern India: Thematic Explorations*, eds. V.R. Mehta and Thomas Pantham, of the Series *History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization*, general ed. D.P. Chattopadhyaya, Vol. X, Part 7, 367–392. New Delhi: Sage Publications. See also Gandhi, Mohandas Kiranchand. 2006. *Hind Swaraj*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House.

³⁰Hardiman, David. 2003. *Gandhi in His Time and Ours*. 67–72. Delhi: Permanent Black.

profitable to note that the dangerous end of the same aporia might also be observed in carefully reading the life of self-professed cosmopolitans who are unable to remove certain rugged edges from their obdurate prejudice and chauvinism. Of course, there is an incurable ambivalence we can notice in the ideal of cosmopolitanism. The cosmopolitan self is never so sure, never completely satisfied, and so its moral project of openness towards the different other is never completed.

4 Alterity: Questioning “Resemblance” as the Foundation for Human Fraternity

There is ambivalence in embeddedness and transcendence as real possibilities of the self. When we speak of cosmopolitanism as “regard or respect for difference”, the moral ability of the human person to get into the other’s world demands our attention. This esteem for difference is neither mechanical nor merely aesthetic. It is moral. The morality of respect for human difference can be either arranged into a unity in a basically Kantian fashion with its many recent varieties, or in the Lévinasian sense of an anarchic goodness of the subject that is held hostage by the other’s moral proximity. Without embarrassment, we consider the latter view more welcoming of difference than the former, and so more suited to our study. For Lévinas, this proximity is not so much spatial as it is moral, and it is captured in the singularity of humanity anywhere, to which the subject relates morally. It is not correct to say that “fundamental humanity” beckons the Lévinasian subject to be responsible. Rather, it is the fundamental difference of the other (of the face from the subject’s totalizing desire) and the other’s vulnerability and wretchedness expressed as moral height over the self that gives birth to the ethics of relation – a radical ethics of sociality indeed.

Here, the priority of the other is uncompromised and her alterity is radical. Stressing the asymmetry of human relation, Lévinas sees responsibility for the other as non-reciprocal: “. . . I hardly care what the Other is with respect to me, that is his own business. . .”³¹ Lévinas does not find this idea of the self’s responsibility for the other in any prior concept or reason in the way that existentialism finds it in commitment, or in the way that Kant finds it in the self’s freedom. In fact, he works *against* the search for universal moral foundations, which is the hallowed enlightenment project. For him, the moral sense of responsibility for the other comes

from the hither side of my freedom, from a “prior to every memory,” an “ulterior to every accomplishment,” from the non-present par excellence, the non-original, the anarchical, prior to or beyond essence. The responsibility for the other is the locus in which is situated the null-site of subjectivity, where the privilege of the question “Where?” no longer holds.³²

³¹Lévinas, Emmanuel. 2001. Philosophy, Justice, and Love. In *Is it Righteous to be?: Interviews with Emmanuel Lévinas*, trans. Michael B. Smith, ed. Jill Robbins, 165–181: 166. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

³²Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1981. *Otherwise Than Being: Or, Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis. 10. Boston, MA: Kluwer.

So, he truly destabilizes the question of ethics' foundation as one of his translators notes: "Ethics does not have an essence, its 'essence' . . . is precisely not to have an essence, to unsettle essences. . . Its 'identity' is precisely not to have an identity, to undo identities. Its 'being' is not to be but to be *better than being*."³³ That is why Bauman reads Lévinas' writings as "postmodern ethics" filled with a deep sense of incredulity toward foundations. "Morality has no 'ground', no 'foundation' . . . It is born and dies in the act of transcendence, in the self-elevation over 'realities of being' and 'facts of the case' . . ."³⁴ Lévinas acknowledges this as a radical, utopian ethics if ever there was one: "There is no moral life without utopianism."³⁵ Lévinas' cosmopolitan responsibility toward the other, ethics as "welcoming the Other, as hospitality",³⁶ however, is "post"-modern in the sense of being a radical improvement over Kant's ethics founded on the rationality of the self. Kant's discovery of the internal moral laws of respect for humanity is radicalized as respect for the other, so that "milder versions of post-Kantian ethical theory can hardly match the enormity of the moral demand which Kant's conception entails".³⁷

But, is Lévinas' sensational and unbounded ethical rhapsody untouched by a concern for actual situations, particular others? Lévinas' aim is not to point out the limits of human obligations. Rather, his aim is to paint a picture of unlimited obligations – an ethics that is never finished, a moral guilt that the human person is never cleansed of.³⁸ Kant acknowledges limits to human obligations. But in Lévinas, responsibility to the other is a "permanent fact about oneself. It has never been consciously assumed and it can never be discharged."³⁹ Existence is weighed down by the weight, the burden of alien existence. Nevertheless, Lévinas is not a philosopher of being; his thesis is not that "*being* a person who does not *wish* to murder the other *without any action* from the subject's part" is ethical enough. He is not saying that some indeterminate inner disposition will generate a person's ethics or that a finely composed constitution that takes care of political ethics would make a nation moral. Ethics is both disposition and action. "It is openness, not only of

³³Cohen, Richard A. 2007. Translator's Introduction: Better Than Being. In *Ethics and Infinity: Conversations with Philippe Nemo*, ed. Emmanuel Lévinas, trans. Richard A. Cohen, 1–16: 10. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press. Emphasis as in original.

³⁴Bauman, Zygmunt. 1993. op. cit. 73.

³⁵Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1988. The Paradox of Morality: An Interview with Emmanuel Lévinas – Tamra Wright, Peter Hayes and Alison Ainley. In *The Provocation of Lévinas: Rethinking the Other*, trans. Andrew Benjamin and Tamra Wright, eds. Robert Bernesconi and David Wood, 168–180: 178. London: Routledge.

³⁶Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1991. op. cit. 27.

³⁷Bauman, Zygmunt. 1993. op. cit. 49.

³⁸Lévinas' engagement is meta-ethical and originary in the sense that he is speaking about what lies behind normative morality. He admits: "I have been speaking about that which stands behind practical morality; about the extraordinary relation between a man and his neighbour, a relation that continues to exist even when it is severely damaged." (Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1989. Ideology and Idealism. In *The Lévinas Reader*, ed. Seán Hand, 235–248: 247. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

³⁹Blum, Roland Paul. 1983. Emmanuel Lévinas' Theory of Commitment. In *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 44/2: 145–68; 147.

one's pocketbook, but of the doors of one's home, a 'sharing of your bread with the famished,' a 'welcoming of the wretched into your house' (Isaiah 58)."⁴⁰ Even as this is the case, no action, however hallowed, is enough to release the subject from responsibility. Morality is not a day's work. It is a continuous shattering of one's freedom and enjoyment in the giving of precedence to the other.

For Lévinas, the other person, whether my next-door neighbor or the distant other, is equally a stranger, completely different from my conception of her: the "absolutely other, the stranger whom I have 'neither conceived nor given birth to'."⁴¹ But it is always from the concrete that universality arises; "the epiphany of the face qua face opens humanity."⁴² Accordingly, there really is no reason why I should not take responsibility for someone from a strange land or for someone unknown to me. In order to maintain the singularity of each human existent and human fraternity simultaneously, Lévinas destabilizes the notion of "a humanity united by resemblance" and bases human fraternity on monotheism, the fatherhood of the infinitely other, and the desire of the self for otherness, which is already visible in any face-to-face relation.⁴³ Here, we see that Lévinas has opened the doors for a cosmopolitan ethics and politics from the perspective of the other's difference. Lévinas' intention was to defeat the ethical fencing off within nations and communities that depends on resemblance and similarity.

If everyone is a stranger, completely different from my conception of her, then where is the need to exclude some strangers from my moral universe? The difficulties of thinking practically about this extension of the moral universe are immense. But that should not hamper our moral creativity, our thinking of alternatives. There is no doubt that the plight of the homeless and the destitute inspired this radical and expansive ethics. Derrida confirms that "Lévinas never turned his eyes away from" the persecution of "the foreigner, the immigrant (with or without papers), the exile, the refugee, those without a country, or a State, the displaced person or population."⁴⁴ Lévinas refers to the plight of the universal stranger in this way: "He has no other place, is not autochthonous, is uprooted, without a country, not an inhabitant, exposed to the cold and the heat of the seasons. To be reduced to having recourse to me is the homelessness or strangeness of the neighbour."⁴⁵

Can the moral subject enter the world of the destitute other? Can her very at-homeness be challenged? For Lévinas, to be oneself is to be challenged by the other in one's very identity: "It is to be like a stranger, hunted down even in one's home, contested in one's own identity and one's very poverty, which, like a skin still enclosing the self, would set it up in an inwardness, already settled on itself,

⁴⁰Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1981. op. cit. 74.

⁴¹Ibid. 91.

⁴²Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1991. op. cit. 213.

⁴³Ibid. 214. We will refer to the notion of "desire for otherness" in the next section.

⁴⁴Derrida, Jacques. 1999. *Adieu to Emmanuel Lévinas*. 64. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

⁴⁵Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1981. op. cit. 91.

already a substance.”⁴⁶ Hence, in thinking of “getting inside the other’s world”, it is difficult to imagine another perspective than the Lévinasian one. His conception of a morality explained in terms of alterity and the self’s struggle to embrace the other’s radical alterity through hospitality, welcoming and openness, for which language is the medium, (host of the other in *Totality and Infinity*: “The subject is a host”⁴⁷) and through responsibility and substitution (hostage of the other in *Otherwise than being*: “A subject is a hostage”⁴⁸), is a rich perspective for conceptualizing cosmopolitanism as moral regard for difference. If cosmopolitanism entails citizenship of a world community, irrespective of the acknowledged differences that separate human communities from each other, then, accepting their difference morally and matching up that acceptance with actions and practices would surely be a cosmopolitan project.

This program of action, as clarified earlier, is not our area of concern in this study. Rather, our concern is the self’s ability to enter and immerse itself in the alien world of the other. Whence comes the self’s cosmopolitan ability to enter the other’s “world”?

5 Habitation of the Other’s World

Entering the ethical space that Lévinas opens up for the self’s moral prerogative that comes from yonder, from beyond itself, let us now explore how contemporary subjects, with their hybrid porous selves, become capable of entering the other’s world. How does the self inhabit the world of the other? What really is behind its cosmopolitan impetus? First of all, we may note here that taking a traditional solid notion of the self would throw up many hurdles to our present study of the self’s cosmopolitan comportment, delimited as a positive and ethical affirmation of the other’s difference in terms of responsibility for that other. Hence, in agreement with Heidegger’s observations in *Being and Time* (1927), “man’s ‘*substance*’ is not spirit as a synthesis of soul and body; it is rather *existence*”,⁴⁹ we accept a non-substantial view of the phenomenologically given entity that we call “self”. Understanding the self as a solid substance, a substratum of the stream of experiences, or a *cogito*, which philosophy invented by the rigorous employment of the regress argument, is an extremely limited way of conceptualizing human identity. On the other hand, the existential notion of becoming, a phenomenological fact in itself, does not really help us explain how the self becomes capable of inhabiting the other’s different world. Rather, it only shows that the self is not a hard unchanging substance incapable of movement. But, Heidegger’s analysis would suggest that this movement

⁴⁶Ibid. 92.

⁴⁷Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1991. op. cit. 209.

⁴⁸Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1981. op. cit. 91.

⁴⁹Heidegger, Martin. 1973. *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. 153. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

is comprehensively within its own particularized world. Nevertheless, the idea of a solid identity is already shattered in this conception. Lévinas uses this notion to unsettle the idea of identity. “There is a consuming of human identity, which is not an inviolable spirit charged with a perishable body, but *incarnation*, in all the gravity of an identity which alters itself.”⁵⁰

In the title quote we have adopted for this study, Lévinas sees transcendence as a “movement going forth from a world that is familiar to us. . . toward a yonder”, which is nothing but the human desire for otherness. In religion and the spiritual sciences, this human capacity for transcendence is explained spiritually. But it is not only an authentically spiritual experience that is transcendental; an authentically ethical or aesthetic experience could equally be so. For Lévinas, “Transcendence is ethics.”⁵¹ Indo-British novelist, Salman Rushdie, argues that transcendence is secular; merely “the flight of the human spirit outside the confines of its material, physical existence. . .”⁵² The capacity for transcendence should, then, explain the human ability to inhabit another’s world by way of transcending one’s own immediate existence.

Now, broadly speaking, we may notice two kinds of views with regard to this latter capacity of the human person to transcend her natural, given existence and dwell in another’s land and world, and be seriously part of both. Heidegger’s ontology of *Dasein* and his nostalgia for the ground of Being leans toward a strong sense of place, of roots and of a definitive homestead in which the human person can be human. His engagement with “enframing” as the essence of technology in “The question concerning technology” (1954), and his wistful reflections on homelessness as in *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1935) and “Letter on Humanism” (1946), come across more as a mourning for the loss of Being’s ground rather than as an acknowledgement of radical homelessness as an existential characteristic of *Dasein*.⁵³ The theme of nostalgia for home and roots recurs consistently in many later essays of Heidegger. The “Memorial Address” (1955) says: “. . . the *rootedness*, the *autochthony*, of man is threatened today at its core!... The loss of

⁵⁰Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1987. Transcendence and Evil. In *Collected Philosophical Papers*, trans. Alphonso Lingis. 175–186: 179. Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff.

⁵¹Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1987. God and philosophy. In *Collected Philosophical Papers*, trans. Alphonso Lingis. 153–173: 165. Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff.

⁵²Rushdie, Salman. 1991a. Is nothing sacred? In *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981–1991*, ed. Salman Rushdie, 415–429: 421. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 1991. Thanks to my colleague, Sudha Shastri, Associate Professor of English Literature, for introducing me, an amateur in the art of literature appreciation, to the work of Salman Rushdie as a wonderful exemplar of contemporary notions of identity.

⁵³See Heidegger, Martin. 1961. *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim. New York: Doubleday-Anchor Books; Heidegger, Martin. 1993. Letter on Humanism. In *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell, trans. Frank A. Capuzzi and J. Glenn Gray, 213–265. New York: Harper Collins; Heidegger, Martin. 1993. The Question Concerning Technology. In *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell, trans. William Lovitt, 307–341. New York: Harper Collins.

autochthony springs from the spirit of the age into which all of us were born.”⁵⁴ Despite his existential and “becoming”-oriented understanding of the human person, Heidegger’s human person is closely rooted in her own world with a strong sense of historicity and heritage.

It is well known that Lévinas’ ethics was a pronounced tirade against Heidegger’s “philosophy of the neuter” (non-ethical ontology) and, his oeuvre as a whole may be read as a response to Heidegger’s brief but unfortunate association with Nazism (certainly, a response to the Holocaust as such). For Lévinas, the fetishizing of identity and rootedness is directly opposed to subjectivity. The ego, questioned in its spontaneity and enjoyment, becomes a hostage of the other. Human desire for otherness is insufficiency of homeliness; the ego’s metaphysical restlessness for otherness is met only in the ethical act of assuming responsibility for the other. The never-to-be-saturated condition of metaphysical desire for otherness is, therefore, the clue to the human capacity for inhabiting the other’s world.

6 Our Hybrid Selves

If we are embedded beings, does not the “yearning for roots” challenge and destroy what we have called the “capacity for transcendence” and habitation of the other’s world? The question of roots is an ever nebulous one, over which much blood has already been shed. The essentialist reading of human embeddedness is neither factual nor profitable. We need to look at such foundationalist understandings of the human condition with suspicion. Our sense of belonging to a home and homestead, and our ability to fly away from it are both to be taken account of, as Salman Rushdie does in his novels. Evoking the experience of migrants, Rushdie expounds the essential ambivalence regarding the question of roots (rootedness) and flight (flying away from home) in *Shame*.⁵⁵ For him, both are inexplicable. The facticity of the human condition is indeed a “natural” endowment in the sense that it is the only available and proximate plane of human relations and of life. But it is not “natural” in the sense of being the only or intrinsic possibility of the self, or in the sense that it follows naturally from the self. The self in fact is potentially driven out of itself, and so the essentialist argument of culturalism that something intrinsically and inescapably ties the individual to her culture is not sound. We do value our cultural proximities and they, in turn, shape our notion of the self in some ways, but not in any absolute way. We need to conserve and preserve cultures and communities because of the very lack of any inherently worthy “pure culture” as an entity in itself. Their difference and variety is worthy of respect because of the absence of a single culture that is uniquely valid.

⁵⁴Heidegger, Martin. 1966. Memorial Address. In *Discourse on Thinking*, trans. John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund, 43–57: 49. New York: Harper Colophon Books. Emphasis as in the original.

⁵⁵Rushdie, Salman. 1995. *Shame*. 86. London: Vintage Books.

Looking a bit closer at the self, and having relinquished its solidity, identity and substantiality, we may conceive the self at any given point in time as a “hybrid”. Many ideas and streams of thought can be suggestive here: Lacan’s concept of the Other as primary for the constitution of the self, Bhabha’s notion of cultural hybridity, postcolonial, postmodern fiction that celebrates hybridity, Lévinas’ notion of human desire for otherness, Derrida’s deconstruction of self and identity. The boundaries of the self are so porous that its becoming is constantly shifting between worlds – at least potentially. Is this porous self more than a hybrid, but a real multiple?⁵⁶ While this possibility need not be rejected outright, what we need to acknowledge here is the porosity and hybridity of the self, in varying degrees, taking inspiration from postcolonial literature and theories – a perspective that looks beyond a narrow fetishism of identity. Regarding the celebration of the crisscrossing of cultures and selves in *The Satanic Verses* (1988), Rushdie says that this controversial novel is a celebration of “hybridity, impurity, intermingling, the transformation that comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, songs”. It extols the mongrel self and fears the “absolutism of the Pure”, which in history has “wrought havoc” and asserts that we are “mere mixed-up human beings . . . black and brown and white, leaking into one another. . .”⁵⁷ However, if anything, *The Satanic Verses* is thoroughly ambivalent about the transformational potential of the hybrid self and also of the notions of good and evil. Of its two heroes, Saladin Chamcha, who longs for a metamorphosed English self, the evil one with the horns, is finally back home in his native village, having stopped “acting” and bidding farewell to “His old English life, its bizarreries, its evils. . .”⁵⁸ On the other hand, Gibreel Farishta, the one with the halo, the one who played gods on the silver screen, finally frees himself by pulling the trigger upon himself. Another of Rushdie’s narrator-protagonists, Moraes Zogoiby in the *The Moor’s Last Sigh* (1995), is more positive about the transformational potential of the hybrid self. He ponders as he migrates to Spain: “I was a nobody from nowhere, like no-one,

⁵⁶An extreme possibility in the rejection of the solid identity of the self is to posit it as a real multiple. (See: Bloom, Paul. 2008. First Person Plural. *The Atlantic* November. <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200811/multiple-personalities>; Braude, Stephen. 1991. *First Person Plural: Multiple Personality and the Philosophy of Mind*. London: Routledge; Clark, Stephen R.L. 1991. How Many Selves Make Me? In *Human Beings*, ed. David Cockburn, 213–233. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Elster, Jon, ed. 1995. *The Multiple Self*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press; Rowman, John and Mick Cooper, eds. 1999. *The Plural Self: Multiplicity in Everyday Life*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.) We have favored a hybrid self over a multiple self in this discussion for the sake of allowing the self a dimension of unity and identity, which is in no way “unitary”, homogenous or stable. We have used the “hybrid self” proposal to bring to light the ambivalences of the cosmopolitan self. Of course, we have also noted the phenomenological difficulty of a transparent, solid self identity.

⁵⁷Rushdie, Salman. 1991b. In Good Faith. In *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981–1991*, ed. Salman Rushdie, 393–414: 394. New Delhi: Penguin Books India.

⁵⁸Rushdie, Salman. 1992. *The Satanic Verses*. 534. Dover, DE: The Consortium.

belonging to nothing. . . All my ties had loosened. I had reached an anti-Jerusalem: not a home, but an away. A place that did not bind, but dissolved."⁵⁹

Rushdie's writings are stamped with a fear of identity fetish and with the unremitting exaltation of hybrid identities, porosity of selves, existential ambiguity, postmodern fragmentation and impurity. We find this disapproval of identity fetish in *Midnight's Children* (1981) and its graphic description of the transformation of Saleem Sinai's sister, the Brass Monkey, into Jamila Singer, the nightingale and symbol of the land of the pure; in Saleem's disbelief on seeing the processions of college-goers in his new home "demanding more-rules-not-less", unlike students elsewhere; in Saleem's parents resolution to become a "new people" in the land of the pure; in the face of Saleem's own personal fact of being "forever tainted with Bombayness", with his mind "full of all sorts of religions apart from Allah's";⁶⁰ and, similarly, in the soliloquies of the narrator of *Shame*: ". . . something puritan and violent sat on their foreheads and it was frightening to walk amongst their disillusion in the heat".⁶¹

It is not only the fetish of a pure identity of the individual that Rushdie attacks. He also targets a fascist nationalistic euphoria over cultural revival, mono-culturalism and the parochial call for group identity. Undoubtedly, he holds essentialist identity notions suspect. Saleem Sinai, the prototype of independent India, dialogues with himself: "Who what am I? . . . I am the sum total of everything that went before me, of all I have been seen done, of everything done-to-me. . . everyone of the now-six-hundred-million-plus of us, contains a similar multitude. . . to understand me, you'll have to swallow a world."⁶² We can hear a lamentation for the gradual loss of India's pluralistic fabric in the following passage:

Not even an Indian was safe in Indian country; not if he was the wrong sort of Indian, anyway – wearing the wrong sort of head-dress, speaking the wrong language, dancing the wrong dances, worshipping the wrong gods, traveling in the wrong company . . . there was no room for a man who didn't want to belong to a tribe, who dreamed of moving beyond; of peeling off his skin and revealing his secret identity . . . the flayed and naked unity of the flesh.⁶³

An anti-foundationalist, anti-essentialist understanding of the human self and nation is helpful in giving expression to a transformational understanding of identity that is more meaningfully cosmopolitan than a substantive and solid notion of identity. Solidity of identity militates against change, movement and open acceptance. Idolatry of identity is inherently violent, constantly prone to scathing moral comparisons between the self and other, leading to a self-righteous desire to punish the villainous other or at least keep her in a moral underground, cast off from the self's

⁵⁹Rushdie, Salman. 2006a. *The Moor's Last Sigh*. 388. London: Vintage Books.

⁶⁰Rushdie, Salman. 2006b. *Midnight's Children*. 431. London: Vintage Books.

⁶¹Rushdie, Salman. 1995. op. cit. 118.

⁶²Rushdie, Salman. 2006b. op. cit. 535.

⁶³Rushdie, Salman. 2006a. op. cit. 414.

care and responsibility. A loose sense of hybrid, porous identity is helpful in imagining the other within and catching a glimpse of the self, torn and fractured, bereft of identity and certainty, in the visage of the other, however different she is from the self's porous collection of an uncertain, fabricated unity. A consciously eclectic identity is humble, realistic, transformational and capable of multiple loyalties, like Rushdie's Moor, who could rise above family loyalty and "make a non-negotiable refusal" to his father's bomb proposal.⁶⁴ An uncertainty or ambivalence about any strong moralistic polarization of good and bad is instrumental in avoiding an overtly judgmental posturing of the self vis-à-vis the other. Although the self is already plural, fragmented, unsure, and a bundle of strong and weak leanings, taking advantage of this existential predicament is another matter – which means that there is no ontological certainty about the self's nature as such. It is a phenomenological eye, an intuitive understanding of experience that is instructive of the self's cosmopolitan blending, its ability to inhabit the other's world through making itself in part like the other, and neither a rational ordering of experience nor a rationalization of the phenomenological facts can achieve this. Responding to the moral impulse of inhabiting the other's world is non-rational, asymmetric and destabilizing of order and of calculations of gain and loss which evoke any exterior principle or norm. Such a transformational possibility is hidden within the self as one of its primarily constructive possibilities of sociality. There really can be an at-homeness about not being at home anywhere, and the lessons of this "not-at-home" need to be learned from the disarming power of ontological ambiguity.

7 Global Versus Local Cosmopolitanisms

As we have noted at the outset, there are varieties of cosmopolitanisms and accounting for these myriad cultural attempts to inhabit the other's world, of becoming a citizen of the world (of the available world) in the political idiom, does the cosmopolitan project immense good. If fetishizing identity is perilous, the apocalyptic effects of the fetishizing of cosmopolitanism as a simple uniform reified transnationalism also need to be recognized. This point has been argued strongly by those who have described "vernacular cosmopolitanism", an idea that speaks of the hybridity of cultures and of the interplay between the global and the local. Sheldon Pollock notes:

... "indigenous" cultures are produced in the course of long term translocal interactions by the very same processes that produce the global itself. The local/global dualism, therefore, needs to be historicized out of existence, both because nothing is globally self-identical and because the local is always "newly different differences," while each becomes the other in constantly new ways.⁶⁵

⁶⁴Ibid. 336.

⁶⁵Pollock, Sheldon. 1998. The Cosmopolitan Vernacular. *The Journal of Asian Studies* 57/1: 6–38: 34.

However, Pollock's point is more subtle. It is a long drawn process of interaction, emulation and differentiation that creates communities. Claims to indigeneness are unfounded, often based on ignorance of the sources of the indigenous. But Pollock's argument does not simply support the hybridity of cultures or the cosmopolitan flow of ideas across cultural spheres. His account of vernacular cosmopolitanism is not an "exemplification of 'hybridity' in its usual connotations of *mélange* or mongrelization – a banal concept and a dangerous one, implying an amalgamation of unalloyed, pure forms, whether vernacular or cosmopolitan, that have never existed."⁶⁶ In his study of Sanskritic cosmopolitanism and vernacular cosmopolitanism in the southern states of India, he never postulates an origin of the interaction between the cosmopolitan and the local. Instead of hybridity across pure forms, he speaks of hybridity *ad infinitum*: "a tactical reversal of domination – a resistance-through-appropriation", by which he means the very process of pre-modern vernacularization.⁶⁷

As Homi Bhabha notes, a "postcolonial translation of the relation between the patriotic and the cosmopolitan, the home and the world" articulates a "border – narrower than the human horizon"; "[T]his space that somehow stops short (not falls short) of the transcendent human universal, and for that very reason provides an ethical entitlement to, and enactment of, the sense of community."⁶⁸ As in Lévinas, Bhabha yearns not for a "world made whole" but for an otherness that prompts us in our ontological ambiguity to cross boundaries and recognize the insufficiencies in the self. For him, occupying the space of the "unsatisfied" means "hybridization of identity as an effect of the articulation of an 'unexpected transformation' in the very structure of selfhood".⁶⁹ Bhabha sees that this is the only way of facing up to the paradox of the located self and of the self in flight, the inward and the outward self. Elsewhere he observes that the postcolonial perspective "resists the attempt at holistic forms of social explanation" and insists on a "hybrid location of cultural value – the transnational as the translational".⁷⁰ But there is not to be a fetishizing of "hybridity" either. It is by no means a uniform, universalizable, totalizable phenomenon. Rather, hybridity is brought to the fore in the sustained encounter with the truly other, as the experience of migrants shows. It is a product of interactions of the self and other; not any *a priori* structure of the self as such, which is, as we have noted above, bereft of substance. Hence,

What is striking about the "new" internationalism is that the move from the specific to the general, from the material to the metaphoric, is not a smooth passage of transition and transcendence. The "middle passage" of contemporary culture . . . is a process of displacement and disjunction that does not totalize experience.⁷¹

⁶⁶Pollock, Sheldon. 2000. Cosmopolitan and Vernacular in History. *Public Culture* 12/3: 591–626: 597.

⁶⁷Ibid. 625.

⁶⁸Bhabha, Homi K. 2000. op. cit. 42.

⁶⁹Ibid. 47.

⁷⁰Bhabha, Homi K. 1995. *The Location of Culture*. 173. London: Routledge.

⁷¹Ibid. 5.

8 Making Sense of the Porous Self

If our identity is so radically porous, is there no room at all for coherence or unity within the self? The self experiences the ambivalence of an inward and an outward drive within itself. We experience any coherence only within these opposing poles of inwardness and outwardness. The outward pull towards otherness would not occur if our inward pull, including our relation to all that is homely, were so radically substantial and natural. As the outward pull of the self demonstrates, this is not the case, and so there is no ground for reifying the culture-person relation. Hence the world of such a self is not a “uni-verse” of meaning but rather a “multi-verse” of incredible variety. The self is potentially capable of being at ease with another world different from its immediate surroundings because its identity, which is not an essence, is porous, permeable, and in Bhabha’s idiom, “a borderline experience”. The inescapability of embeddedness is only another form of the notion of facticity, givenness and thrownness found in the existentialist writers. The mere fact of human dynamism inherent in our ability to reconstitute the self in response to changes in our environment shows, not an accidental survival instinct, but one of our constitutional ambivalences, a truly cosmopolitan impulse.

Does such a conception militate against all efforts to conceive normative frameworks for cosmopolitan practices? In the foregoing discussion, we have only touched upon the ambivalence of the cosmopolitan self and this self’s potential power to inhabit the other’s world. As such, this conception strives to integrate different cosmopolitanisms, which a typically totalized cosmopolitan political framework would not envisage. In any case, what is visualized here is a respect for difference, in response to the ambivalent instability of identity within the self. Hence, a totalized systemic framework of cosmopolitanism may not be the ideal we are after. Moreover, this is the lesson of a serious evaluation of modernity. However, the cosmopolitanisms we have tried to articulate are potentially valuable when thinking about the various faces and shades of the cosmopolitan ideal, including its normative political practices. Derrida speaks of “cities of refuge or asylum” in his *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness* (2001), while trying to think normatively about the cosmopolitan ideal. The result is a national institution with a cosmopolitan ethos. Likewise, in any attempt to think normatively about cosmopolitanism, what governing systems of nations may start with is to deliberate and spell out their own brand of cosmopolitanism. More than a normative totality of cosmopolitanism, the cosmopolitan respect for difference could be profitably taken up as an educational subject for citizens. If patriotic goals are consciously integrated elements of the educational agenda of nations, a cosmopolitan ethos could equally be such an agenda. This observation should be viewed alongside the need for highlighting the vernacular cosmopolitan ideals of communities. Education, popular culture and international advocacy rather than norms per se could be rethought from the angle of respect for difference. Homogenizing and essentializing of political ideals, whether it be multiculturalism, secularism or communitarianism, could turn out to be a counterproductive strategy, as ideals, unless constantly revisited and revised and unless

their aporetic nature is constantly borne in mind, have a perennial tendency to overstretch their own positive pole and make themselves pure presences, as Derrida has successfully shown.

9 Conclusion: Porosity of Boundaries

What if the self is ambivalent, porous and hybrid? What if we are potentially capable of inhabiting the other's world? What if we are constitutionally blessed with both the inward and the outward throws? What if we exist in between these poles of the self? Is not the world drastically limited for each individual? What is the potential of this laying bare of the in-betweenness of the self? The finitude of the world, its limit vis-à-vis the individual, is neither a fact that is settled nor a fact that is unchangeable. In fact, "facts" of the current times are themselves seen to lose identity and focus. The continuity of the human environment is increasingly being destabilized by our contemporary truth. A world that was fiction yesterday is a world that is fact today. We now have porous national boundaries, and transactions among peoples of different nations, cultures, languages, religions and races have increased. Pockets of the world with homogenous human populations are now brimming with multiplicity, but it is not certain whether attitudes and comportments towards the "other" have thereby changed. The creative potential of the self's moral impulse is yet to be exploited. Communication and the information revolution, trade, travel, technology and television have made the real the virtual, but the reality of the virtual other, the cry of the distant other, is still falling on deaf ears. Our world is now porous through and through. This is not a way of settling the issue of the desirability of the direction towards which the wind of change is blowing, but we now have the door open for increased mixtures, hybridities and the morphing of the self in gleeful eclectic élan. Cosmopolitanism is defilement of purity's dubious shine, profanation of the *santum sanctorium* of identity, pollution of the waters of separation, contamination of the ego's secession from the other, breaking into the narcissistic vanity of the self, inhabiting the other under its skin. Conceit of wholeness and contentment of the ego is called into question. Cosmopolitanism is secularizing the self's sacredness. Not that nothing is thus left sacred. What is sacred is the self's ability to transcend and enter the other's world. The sacrilege of the "I" is the sanctity of the moral self.

The grandeur of the whole and the big deludes us. There is still nostalgia for the grand narratives of all-pervading reason. Where is there space for the little, the non-central before the dazzling splendor of transnational cosmopolitanism? Reality, however, is different; totality is a myth, the ultimate utopia, which sustains the little and the non-central. What gives meaning to the illusory "whole" is the "little". Hence, let us have the little cosmopolitanisms first, the many vernacular, situated cosmopolitanisms that could change the world. The danger is the forgetting of the little in search of the illusory whole. Alongside the rise of globalism, there is also the reclaiming of particular identities. Fear of the erasure of these particulars by the "all

conquering whole” could be inviting the demons of parochialism. India, which takes pride in a heritage of tolerance and in over sixty continuous years of democratic process despite all odds, is increasingly becoming intolerant of difference. A recent spate of bombings, attacks on Christians in Orissa, the assault against north Indians in Mumbai, the conscious legitimizing of cultural homogeneity under the ideological umbrella of Hindutva and recurrent invoking of linguistic, religious, ethnic and caste chauvinism have posed strong challenges to the resilience of the founding principles of the republic. Moreover, festering, shrouded caste prejudices play spoilsport on India’s little cosmopolitan triumphs. Similar defeats of cosmopolitanism in the many countries of the world would only further help the defeat of the already besieged cosmopolitan ideal. Rushdie speaks of white racial prejudice in his second homeland, Britain, in two essays – “The New Empire within Britain” (1982) and “*Home Front*” (1984) – of the volume *Imaginary Homelands*.⁷² This prejudice, according to him, has invaded every institution and most white British hearts, leading to stereotyping of various minorities, and to perceiving them according to these fabricated images. However, Rushdie makes this interesting cosmopolitan point in the essay “*Home Front*”: “We live in ideas. Through images we seek to comprehend our world. And through images we sometimes seek to subjugate and dominate others. But picture-making, imagining, can also be a process of celebration, even of liberation. New images can chase out the old.”⁷³ This blessed project of changing cultural images surely is a cosmopolitanism that cannot be called merely “little”.

Finally, we have overlooked the problem of violence in this understanding of cosmopolitanism as celebration of difference in response to the porosity of self and the world. The problem of violence is conspicuous by its absence in our treatment. Is this not overtly simplistic or too benign and oblivious of “ground realities”? This is truly a question of significance. But has violence been curbed or disarmed through the normative, calculative application of juridical reason, nationally or internationally? Have modernity’s achievements like law and the rationalization of the public space successfully healed human wounds? Has not the delimiting of unconditional principles, the very law-making process itself, prevented the realization of the unconditional, and thus disfigured ideas unrecognizably? Has not the systemic approach to internationalism, the normative application of calculative rationality, created a reasonable alibi for the enactment of inhuman violence even in recent times? There still is incredulity towards the grand narrative of majestic reason. There is thus the suspicion of the grand project of cosmopolitanism as “another modernity”, until the little cosmopolitanisms are endorsed and made “actionable”. Until then, is it now the season of “the anarchy of the Good”?⁷⁴

⁷²Rushdie, Salman. 1991c. The New Empire Within Britain. In *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981–1991*, ed. Salman Rushdie, 129–138. New Delhi: Penguin Books India; Rushdie, Salman. 1991d. Home Front. In *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981–1991*, ed. Salman Rushdie, 143–147. New Delhi: Penguin Books India.

⁷³Rushdie, Salman. 1991d. op. cit. 147.

⁷⁴Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1981. op. cit. 75.

Reconciling Global Duties with Special Responsibilities: Towards a Dialogical Ethics

An Verlinden

1 Issues in Global Justice: The Clash between Global and Special Obligations

Debates about ethical obligations in global contexts are a very old theme within moral and political philosophy. Reaching back to ancient Greece and Rome, two different traditions can be discerned: on the one hand a particularist, republican tradition, rooted in the Greek city-states that emphasizes the role and importance of communities in defining what responsibilities should be taken up; on the other hand a universalist, liberal tradition, stressing cosmopolitan rights irrespective of birth or descent.¹ The tension between those two traditions is the tension between the right of a *collective* community (with its own particularities) on the one hand and the right of *individuals* (as equal to any other individual) on the other.² I call this the tension between *Partiality* and *Impartiality*. In the following paragraphs, I will analyze these two perspectives and argue that both of them have their proper place in any reasonable and realistic consideration of global justice questions. The trouble is how to combine both in a coherent way.

Within analytic philosophy, discussions on partiality and impartiality are virtually always coupled with the debate on particularism and universalism. However, these conceptual pairs do not always have to go hand in hand with each other.³ For the sake of clarity and in order to be as explicit as possible about their underlying presuppositions, I start with a brief explanation of all the concepts involved.

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¹Bader, Veit. 2005. The Ethics of Immigration. *Constellations* 12/3: 331–361.

²Teitelbaum, Michael S. 1980. Right Versus Right: Immigration and Refugee Policy in the United States. *Foreign Affairs* 50/1: 21–59.

³Universalism can (and often does) result in impartiality, though it does not need to. We can imagine for instance a universal rule to be partial. Particularism, on the other hand, can be formulated in such a way that it involves a qualified “reasonable” partiality, taking into account more impartial considerations of equality.

According to universalism, there is one universally applicable morality or one single general characterization of what makes an action right (or wrong) for anyone at any time. Universalism considers persons as abstract individuals, independent of local connections or relations in the way that Rawls envisages participants in his “original position”.⁴ Examples of such universalist moral theories are utilitarianism, Kantian deontology and other duty-oriented approaches, and some forms of virtue ethics.⁵

Particularism, on the other hand, argues that morality is always embedded in particular relations and particular social and historical facts about persons.⁶ A moral subject’s identity is at least partly defined by its social relationships and the associational obligations, commitments or special ties that go along with these relationships. Since moral reasoning starts from those commitments, we have responsibilities to some people that we do not have to others.⁷ Often, those attachments and obligations are seen as mutual: we expect other members also to give special weight to our interests. Particularistic moral theories range from liberal-democratic or moderate patriotism and liberal nationalism, to theories that propose social-democratic welfare-states, and on to extreme forms of nationalism and patriotism.⁸

Universalism is often linked to impartiality in that it argues that moral reasoning should not accord special or biased preference to one’s own goals and interests and that moral subjects may not display favoritism or partiality towards those to whom they happen to be in some way specially related.⁹ On the contrary, for impartialists every moral agent is to count equally.¹⁰ In this way, the strong cosmopolitan doctrine that all people globally have equal moral status would be an example of an impartial theory.

Particularism, on the other hand, is often described as implying partiality in moral reasoning, meaning that it is (at least sometimes) morally permissible to give extra moral weight to those with whom one has some special relationship or personal tie. Therefore, special obligations, which are shaped by our personal values, biases, inclinations or by the particular situation in which we find ourselves, can override general obligations in deciding what to do.¹¹ Not all partialists are *equally* partial: for some, favoring one’s own projects and interests is morally *permissible*, while

⁴Rawls, John. 1971. *A Theory of Justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. See also Miller, David. 1988. The Ethical Significance of Nationality. *Ethics* 98/4: 647–662.

⁵For a particularist and communitarian form of virtue ethics, see van Hooft, Stan. 2006. *Understanding Virtue Ethics*. Chesham: Acumen.

⁶This is not to say that the moral domain is completely particularistic. Particularists argue that there can be some universalist principles that apply to all human beings, but they do not *exhaust* the moral domain.

⁷Miller, David. 1988. op. cit.

⁸Bader, Veit. 2005. op. cit.

⁹Warnock, Geoffrey James. 1971. *The Object of Morality*. London: Methuen.

¹⁰Nagel, Thomas. 1991. *Equality and Partiality*. New York: Oxford University Press.

¹¹Goodin, Robert. 1988. What is So Special about Our Fellow Countrymen? *Ethics* 98/4: 663–686.

others argue that favoritism is morally *justifiable*, and still others state that it is even morally *required*. Purely partial theories consider special relationships and their partiality to be intrinsically valuable and therefore concentrate on the importance of reciprocal duties and responsibilities of people belonging to a specific community.¹² Partialist political theories generally argue for entitlements by referring to the way in which nation-states are supposed to reflect a common cultural identity, whether it is based on a common history and other historical commonalities such as language, religion, ethnicity, culture and territory, or on a common political project

Conditions of moral reasoning or deliberation ⇒ Justification of moral obligations ↓		PARTIALITY	IMPARTIALITY
		Favoritism in moral deliberation is permissible (bias condition)	Equal consideration of all interests as a requirement (equity condition)
		Point of reference: special relations with particular others	Point of reference: global relations with humankind
Universalism	Boundaries between people do not matter morally	Global biased approach Moderate Cosmopolitanism Global justice/redistribution Justice = global equality	Global equitable approach Strong Cosmopolitanism Global justice/redistribution Justice = global equity
	Point of reference: global duties-obligations stemming from a universal moral standard		
Particularism	Boundaries between people do matter morally	Community-based biased approach Strong Communitarianism Strong communal sovereignty Justice = charity/mutual aid	Community-based equitable approach Liberal Nationalism Communal sovereignty Justice = realizing a human minimum
	Point of reference: special, "embedded" duties-obligations, stemming from specific moral standards		

Fig. 1 Different normative arguments in global justice debates

¹²Which does not mean that partialists claim that there are no obligations at all towards “outsiders”.

or “imagined community”.¹³ Strong nationalism and patriotism are fully partialist institutional theories.

Summarizing these theoretical insights in a diagram (see Fig. 1) allows us to see the inextricable complexity of any normative consideration of global justice. The conflicting moral claims of individuals on the one hand and of communities on the other explain why the debate advances with difficulty. The two extreme positions are occupied by proponents of strong communitarianism and of strong cosmopolitanism respectively. But both extremes, and all positions in between, can be defended by combining different normative perspectives.

Whether one starts from the universalism-particularism classification or from the partiality-impartiality dichotomy, the basic tension that comes to the surface is that between the claims of individuals, appealing to their (natural or human) rights, and those of collectives or communities sharing a specific common history and therefore being entitled to self-determination and self-preservation as a group.

2 Dismantling the Clash: Towards a Contextual Approach

It is now generally acknowledged that both claims should be taken into due consideration. Indeed, most moral principles do have a universalizing tendency, while institutions, cultures and practices are susceptible to particularizing tendencies. Practical judgment is based both on considerations of impartial (cosmopolitan) global duties that are owed to all human beings *qua* human beings, and on considerations of special, associative duties (priority for the “near and dear”) that stem from our cultural, social, and political embeddedness.¹⁴ But where does one start? And what should one do when different claims compete? Should we design priority rules or should we opt for balancing strategies or weighing procedures? Difficult questions come to the fore, and no definite answers are available. Human practical judgment is just too complex to be captured under an ideal, harmonious and comprehensive theory that could serve as a standard guide for action.¹⁵ Only contextualized normative analysis informed by empirical descriptions and institutional realities

¹³Nagel, Thomas. 2005. The Problem of Global Justice. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 33/2: 113–147.

¹⁴The terms “special” and “general” duties are borrowed from Herbert Lionel Adolphus Hart. 1955. Are There Any Natural Rights? *Philosophical Review* 64: 175–191.

¹⁵Bader, following Raz and Habermas, makes a very instructive classification of practical reason into (1) moral arguments, (2) prudential arguments, (3) realist arguments and (4) ethical-political arguments. I think Bader’s moral arguments reveal the impartial component of our practical judgment, while his ethical-political arguments refer to the partial tendencies within it. Prudential and realist arguments are captured within a realistic normative approach. See Bader, Veit. 1995. Citizenship and Exclusion. *Radical Democracy, Community, and Justice*. Or, What is Wrong with Communitarianism? *Political Theory* 23/2: 211–246; Bader, Veit. 2005. op. cit.

can offer plausible answers.¹⁶ Contextual approaches are defended by a number of authors, including communitarians,¹⁷ pragmatists,¹⁸ and liberal egalitarians.¹⁹

An interesting contextual approach to trying to overcome the clashes between individual and collective rights is offered by the distinction between reasonable partiality and reasonable impartiality. This distinction is inspired by Thomas Nagel's analysis of reasonableness in moral practice. In *Equality and Partiality*, Nagel extends his previous insights from *The View From Nowhere* to political philosophy.²⁰ He argues that the main task for this discipline is to reconcile the conflict between the perspective of the collectivity (demands of "equality") and that of the individual ("partiality" of individual interests). This conflict is due to the inherent duality of human nature: human beings are fundamentally divided ethically between the demands required by the personal standpoint and those required by the impersonal, objective standpoint. Thus, our moral reasoning is characterized by particular, agent-relative first-person justificatory frameworks and impersonal, agent-neutral third-person perspectives. The first-person moral perspective allows each individual person to determine her role in whatever is happening (individual autonomy). The third-person moral perspective, on the other hand, requires that decisions should be ultimately tested from an external, egalitarian point of view, irrespective of one's own particular position.²¹ Nagel sees these two perspectives as containing independent categories of value that are irreducible to each other. Our impartial concerns always contend with our partial concerns for ourselves, for the people with whom we have a special connection and for the projects to which we feel committed. But how do we integrate these sharply conflicting concerns? Since both positions impose rational demands on people, practical reason should be targeted at accommodating

¹⁶I agree with Bader and Saharso that a contextual turn is prompted by (1) the reality of moral pluralism, (2) the in- or at least under-determinacy of practical judgements and interpretation and (3) the complexity of practical reason and judgement. See Bader, Veit and Sawitri Saharso. 2004. Introduction: Contextualized Morality and Ethno-religious Diversity. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*. 7/2: 7–115.

¹⁷Walzer, Michael. 1983. *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality*. Oxford: Blackwell; Walzer, Michael. 1994. *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad*. Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press; MacIntyre, Alasdair. 1988. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press.

¹⁸Dewey, John. 1922. *Human Nature and Conduct. An Introduction to Social Psychology*. New York: Modern Library; Dewey, John. 1939. *Theory of Valuation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; Barber, Benjamin R. 1989. *The Conquest of Politics: Liberal Philosophy in Democratic Times*. Princeton: Princeton University Press; Putnam, Hilary. 1992. *Renewing Philosophy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; Shapiro, Ian. 1999. *Democratic Justice*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

¹⁹Carens, Joseph. 2000. *Culture, Citizenship and Community*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Bader, Veit. 1995. op. cit.

²⁰Nagel, Thomas. 1986. *The View From Nowhere*. New York: Oxford University Press; Nagel, Thomas. 1991. *Equality and Partiality*. New York: Oxford University Press.

²¹Nagel, Thomas. 1979. *Mortal Questions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

the two standpoints in one way or another. Nagel jumps from moral to political theory to resolve the tension and resorts to a two-tiered strategy, introducing the concept of “impartiality of higher order”, based on a Kantian contractualist approach. He argues that political institutions should help reconcile the conflict between partiality and impartiality by satisfying the requirements of impartiality through collective action, so that individuals are left free to live their own lives in relative freedom from the direct demands of others. Individuals, then, might be able both to satisfy impartial demands through support of these institutions and to have a somewhat independent private life. Notwithstanding the fact that Nagel himself remains quite pessimistic about the feasibility of such a social order,²² a similar two-tiered strategy can be found in other theories.²³

Debates in global justice often seem to reflect Nagel’s split-level view on moral reasoning and moral life, assuming that both partial, agent-relative claims and impartial, agent-neutral claims have to be justified “reasonably”. Most proponents of such a mixed reasonableness-approach argue for a qualified partiality, but disagree about the key issue of how exactly partiality can be reasonably justified. The contextual approaches that have been defined thus far have stimulated a welcome evolution from pure ideal theories to more sophisticated practical proposals of balancing the different normative considerations involved. Nevertheless, they are not fully satisfying for at least three different reasons. First of all, these approaches are still firmly rooted in the old, stringent distinction between communitarian particularism on the one hand and cosmopolitan universalism on the other. The terminology used, as well as the argumentative framework exposed, do not succeed in avoiding the either/or logic and classifying tendency that characterizes much of Anglo-American philosophy.²⁴ A painful impasse is the unavoidable result. While there is a concern to develop insights that have practical relevance, the focus is still on the theoretical dilemma between either universal values or communitarian attachments. As a consequence, the often very sophisticated arguments are all part of a foundationalist logic: ultimately, there is no other option than formulating some kind of priority rule, in order to classify the values and principles under consideration into a hierarchical order, prioritizing either a thin universal conception of moral identity or a thick particularistic one. Second, and related to the first point, most discussions on global justice are too abstract to be of any practical guidance for people. Because it works with theoretical or ideal conceptions such as the “community” or “the autonomous individual”, it is difficult to deduce what should be done in real life situations that never fully match the model. An exclusive focus on the institutional level would

²²In Nagel’s view, trying to lessen the tension between the personal and the impersonal standpoint is the central problem of political philosophy. Two important other problems arise out of it – the problem of legitimation and that of utopianism – which lead him to the universalizability test, in which he seems not to believe so strongly after all. See Nagel, Thomas. 1991. Op. cit. 48–49, 129.

²³For example, Fishkin, James S. 1982. *The Limits of Obligation*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

²⁴For example: the distinction between idealist and realist theories, between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism, between deontological and utilitarian approaches.

illustrate this high degree of abstraction. Of course, this is a crucial and necessary aspect, but it is not sufficiently comprehensive to grasp all the normative challenges within global justice issues. Along with the question of how institutional agents should behave towards the needy, there are also the numerous dilemmas which individual agents are confronted with in their encounters with others (either as a private person or group, or as a professional). Third, most existing approaches – certainly those who are committed to liberal values and principles – have difficulties in providing a convincing account of special obligations as moral obligations, i.e. obligations that are not just ethically praiseworthy, but instead required as a matter of duty.²⁵ For these reasons, they fail to justify a core issue within the numerous debates on global justice, namely why partiality, such as giving priority for co-nationals, should have equal moral standing with the liberal egalitarian value of the equal moral worth of all individuals. That is why I think the current debates could benefit from an additional perspective that is capable of offering a hermeneutical depth and an added value to the insights so far. To that purpose, I refer to a specific – perhaps not the most obvious, but certainly a very inspiring – continental tradition based on the thoughts of some contemporary philosophers situated within the Judaic tradition. This approach is called *Dialogism*.

The following paragraphs can be little more than a modest suggestion rather than a full argument to enrich our current normative conceptions and analyzes about global justice and how to deal with it. I start with a brief recapitulation of the basic dilemma that lies at the heart of global justice debates and will then move forward to an explanation of how this basic dilemma can be alleviated by seeking recourse to a Judaic-inspired conception of Dialogism.

²⁵Some authors, e.g. Bader, refer to the concept of *mediating* duties. A similar account is that of Robert Goodin, who claims that all special duties are *derived* from general duties. Richard Miller differentiates between equal *respect* for the basic needs of others and equal *concern* for them and argues that general duties are limited by the demands of the worthwhile goals with which people identify. Others, e.g. David Miller, defend priority to compatriots by making an *analogy* between families and nations. Yael Tamir justifies her national liberalism by stating that “we are affiliated and therefore morally obligated”, rather than the other way around. For her, feelings of *communal membership* provide individuals with a reason to attend first to the needs and interest of their fellows. See Bader, Veit. 2005. Reasonable Impartiality and Priority for Compatriots: A Criticism of Liberal Nationalism’s Main Flaws. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 8/1–2: 83–103; Goodin, Robert. 1988. op. cit.; Miller, David. 1995. *On Nationality*. Oxford: Clarendon Press; Miller, Richard W. 1998. Cosmopolitan Respect and Patriotic Concern. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 27/3: 202–222; Tamir, Yael. 1993. *Liberal Nationalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. However, it remains doubtful whether these authors really succeed in proving the moral relevance of special obligations, because (1) the arguments for privileging one’s own national culture or giving priority to one’s own national community are not consistent with liberal principles, (2) some make use of very idealized conceptions of community, nationality or cultural identity that do not correspond with actual circumstances, and (3) some arguments seem to have a more empirical, instrumental or pragmatic character (e.g. our global obligations can best be implemented through, and thus mediated by, special – national – obligations) rather than an inherent moral one.

3 The Clash Reconsidered: A Continental Approach

As indicated above, a crucial question within the philosophical debate on global justice concerns: *How to balance impartial general obligations with partial special obligations, given the world we live in.* The outline of the different answers given to this question all seem to reach back to the pioneering work of Thomas Nagel. Nagel provides a non-reductionist analytical theory, based on his view on the internally complex and conflict-ridden character of human nature. As explained in Section 2, Nagel judges the human self as fundamentally divided ethically between the demands of the personal point of view with its personal aims, interests and desires, as well as strong personal allegiances to particular communities and the demands of the impersonal point of view for impartiality and equality. The first-person moral perspective is predominant in deontological ethics and is focused on the question: *What should I do?* The third-person moral perspective, on the other hand, is predominant in consequentialism and is oriented towards the question: *What ought to happen ultimately, all things considered?* Although Nagel argues that, at least on the political level, the natural demand for egalitarian impartiality has to come to terms with a recognition of the legitimate claims of personal life, there is in his view no morally satisfactory resolution to this conflict. The best we can strive for realistically in relation to global justice is a minimally decent level of international assistance and a more human form of global social democracy.

Nagel rightly counts as an important reference for the debates on global justice. Nevertheless, he loses sight of a crucial aspect of human morality, namely the independent, inherent value of *second-person* relationships.²⁶ Certain moral issues which Nagel incorporates in the first-person perspective seem not to belong there. He describes the first-person perspective as a person's special concern (1) for herself, (2) for people with whom she has a special connection and (3) for the projects to which she feels committed. Nevertheless, Nagel's flat explanation of deontological reasons in terms of first-person moral reasons is insufficient: there is a substantial difference between an agent's concern for himself and his concern for those close to him. The moral values involved in an agent's concern for her friends and family are not only different from those involved in an impartial concern for every human being, they are also different from those involved in a first-person concern for the subject's own projects and hobbies. In the first-person perspective, the agent is the only concerned person at stake and therefore the only source of value, which is not the case with special moral reasons for friends and family.²⁷ The latter can be described as a commitment which is not just a first-person act that relates to oneself but a second-person act directed to another identifiable person who thereby acquires

²⁶Boltuc, Peter. 2005. Is There an Inherent Moral Value in The Second-Person Relationships? In *Inherent and Instrumental Value*, ed. G. John Abbarno, 153–178. University Press of America.

²⁷Nagel seems to grasp this problem only partially. For instance, he acknowledges 'claims of immediacy', which make distress at a distance different from distress in the same room, as an example of special obligations, but he judges it to be only visible from the first-personal point of view. See Nagel, Thomas. 1979. op. cit.

a strong claim to special treatment. This perspective, however, is left out by Nagel's bi-polar model of ethics.

As a consequence, I agree with those who argue that Nagel's split-level conception of morality needs some important refinement.²⁸ There is a third category of moral reasons that are generated by direct personal relationships and which are not reducible to first-person or third-person moral reasons. Indeed, *my* special relationship to *my* child creates special moral reasons and obligations involving a kind of partiality to care about certain people more than others.²⁹ Christine Korsgaard has captured this under her notion of "intersubjectivism", arguing that not all reasons for action are agent-relative or agent-neutral and, thus, that the distinction between both is not exhaustive.³⁰

Different common-sense or intuitive explanations have been given for special moral obligations or associative duties.³¹ Generally a distinction is made between two main arguments, one saying that special obligations arise out of some kind of interaction we have had with the person to whom we feel responsible (e.g. having made a promise, being indebted, or having to make a reparation); the other asserting that they arise out of the nature of the relationship we have with the beneficiary (e.g. being their friend, sister, neighbor, client, being a member of a certain group, etc.). Samuel Scheffler distinguishes between reductionist accounts of special relationships in which the source of special responsibilities lies in a voluntary act or some kind of contract – which makes them reducible to the first or third-person perspective – and non-reductionist accounts. He defends the latter by arguing that the source of special relationships lies in the relationships themselves rather than in the particular interactions between participants.³² Relationships give rise to special

²⁸Boltuc, Peter. 2005. op. cit.; Cottingham, John. 1986. Partiality, Favoritism and Morality. *Philosophical Quarterly* 36: 357–373; Darwall, Stephen. December 2005. "Responsibility within Relations". Paper read at a conference on Impartiality and Partiality in Ethics, The University of Reading, Philosophy Department.

²⁹John Cottingham makes a very instructive distinction between (1) *agent-related partiality*, legitimating preference for one's own plans and projects, (2) *self-directed partiality*, legitimating preference for one's own personal welfare (which is difficult to justify, but appears to be deeply ingrained into our psychological make-up) and (3) *philophilic partiality*, legitimating according special weight to loved ones (which is of central structural importance for the welfare of every individual). Any ethical blueprint which eliminates those three kinds of partiality would be self-defeating in Cottingham's view. While the first two kinds of partiality can be captured under Nagel's first-person perspective, the latter refers to the second-person perspective. See Cottingham, John. 1986. op. cit.

³⁰Korsgaard, Christine. 1996. The Reasons We Can Share: An Attack on the Distinction Between Agent-Relative and Agent Neutral Values. In *Creating the Kingdom of Ends*, ed. Christine Korsgaard, 275–310. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

³¹Kolodny, Niko. 2002. Do Associative Duties Matter? *Journal of Political Philosophy* 10/3: 250–266.

³²Scheffler, Samuel. 1997. Relationships and Responsibilities. *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 26/3: 189–209. Scheffler emphasizes that his non-reductionist account only states a *sufficient* but not a *necessary* condition for special responsibilities and therefore does not deny that promises or other kinds of voluntary interactions can also give rise to special obligations.

responsibilities when one has reason to value the relation in a non-instrumental way (irrespective of whether or not one actually values the relationship). Although the strength and the content of special responsibilities depend on the nature of the relationship, they always involve a duty to give some priority to certain of the interests of those to whom the responsibilities are owed.

The claim that people can prioritize relations with certain others over those with generalized others, brings us back to the crucial question of whether special duties (e.g. towards co-nationals) are indeed moral duties. A moral justification for the second-person perspective that would demonstrate its inherent moral value is difficult to find in the existing literature on global justice.³³ Therefore, I draw upon the ideas of some contemporary philosophers who work within a Judaic philosophical framework³⁴ and offer a hermeneutical grounding for second-person moral values. According to the hermeneutical argument, proximity between persons establishes direct, personal ties between them which have inherent moral value. To explain this argument in depth, I will focus on the ideas of Martin Buber (1878–1965) and Emmanuel Lévinas (1906–1995). Both Buber, who theorizes the “I-Thou relation”, and Lévinas, who appeals to the “epiphany of the face of the other”, represent a very particular philosophy, privileging the dialogical face-to-face relationships of human beings.

In his magnum opus *Ich und Du*, dating from 1923, Buber describes two radically different kinds of relationships that constitute human existence.³⁵ They categorize the modes of consciousness, interaction and being through which individuals engage

³³Some useful attempts have been made by Christine Korsgaard and Stephen Darwall, although the essential (meta-ethical) question of what the sources are of the basic intuition of personal responsibility arising from human closeness, is left unanswered by their writings. The question why the empathic distress experienced in the encounter with other persons is a source of normative responsibilities, remains open. See Korsgaard, Christine. 1996. op. cit.; Darwall, Stephen. December 2005. op. cit.; Darwall, Stephen. 2006. *The Second-Person Standpoint: Respect, Morality, and Accountability*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

³⁴I describe the Judaic tradition as the philosophical tradition that is inspired by the texts, traditions and experiences of the Jewish people. Although it shares the same concerns as general (Western) philosophy, it distinguishes itself by its steady recourse to the resources of the tradition and its critical receptivity and creative appropriation of external ideas and values. The Judaic philosophical tradition is characterized by the confidence of its practitioners – even under the worst circumstances of oppression and persecution – in the conceptual vitality and continually renewed relevance of its insights and values. The Judaic heritage is also of particular importance for the ethical treatment of migrants: many times in the Hebrew Bible, readers are challenged to remember that “we were strangers in the land of Egypt”, and therefore are assigned to be kind to the stranger in their midst. Unfortunately, the teachings of the Torah were not applied to them when they themselves became strangers and wanderers in the Diaspora for nearly 2000 years, after the destruction of the Jewish State in the year 70 C.E.

³⁵The insights described in this article are derived from the main works of Buber and Lévinas. Buber, Martin. 1983. *Ich und Du*. 11th ed. Heidelberg: Schneider; Buber, Martin. 1997. *Das Dialogische Prinzip*. Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider Verlag; Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1947. *De l'existence à l'existant*. Paris: Editions de la Revue Fontaine; Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1961. *Totalité et Infini. Essai sur l'extériorité*. La Haye: Nijhoff; Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1965. *Alterité et Transcendance*. Montpellier: Fata Morgana.

with each other and with reality. The first mode of being is the monological I-It relation: the everyday relation of a human being towards the things surrounding him. In the I-It relation, the I qualifies and conceptualizes things and people in mental representations. The other is not seen as an independent person, nor as a partner, but as an object. Therefore, this relation can be described as a subject-object relation – a monological relation with oneself, using other objects to serve one’s own interests.

Lévinas’ theory of “totality” echoes this conception of the I-It relation. In his first magnum opus *Totalité et Infini*, Lévinas formulates a severe critique of the Western ontological philosophical tradition since Descartes, which he reproaches with being exclusively preoccupied with totality – a tendency to think in terms of identities in order to grasp or comprehend Being (the meaning of existence). Traditional Western philosophy is a subject-philosophy that tries to think, capture, interpret and organize reality starting from the ego. Therefore, Lévinas calls it an “egology”, a narcissistic philosophy that asserts the primacy of the “self”, the “Same”, the “subject” or “Being”. In Western philosophy the I is defined as a *conatus essendi*: an individual being that is persistently concerned with its own existence and that obstinately tries to maintain itself.³⁶ This implies that the I approaches the other person from an “interested” position: it tries to reduce the Other to the categories of the Same (*la primauté du Même*). The I is thus a totalizing I that uses, appropriates and domesticates the other in order to fulfill its own needs and desires. The conception of ontology as totality and egology, Lévinas argues, is pernicious for intersubjectivity. It admits no outside, no “otherwise than being”, no transcendence and no exteriority. Therefore, totality should be completed by the notion of “infinity”. Infinity, as opposed to totality, maintains a separation between the Other and the Same. Moreover, while totality is theoretical, infinity is moral.³⁷

Buber calls the second kind of relationship – that which constitutes inherent moral value – the I-Thou relation. This relation is described as a direct one – a relation of immediacy between two personal beings, not bounded or mediated by any external elements (e.g. preconceptions or reserve) or frameworks of reference. Human beings enter into this relation with their innermost and whole being, so that real encounter in full authenticity and uniqueness can happen: the other does not

³⁶Burggraeve, Roger. 1999. Violence and the Vulnerable Face of the Other: The Vision of Emmanuel Lévinas on Moral Evil and Our Responsibility. *Journal of Social Philosophy* 30: 29–45. Lévinas has taken the expression *conatus essendi* from Spinoza, who described it as persistence in self-assertion: “each thing, in so far as it is in itself, endeavours [conatur] to persevere in its being” (Baruch de Spinoza, *Ethics*, ed. and tr. G.H.R. Parkinson. 2000. Oxford: University Press. 171.) For Spinoza, the *conatus* is the first and unique basis of virtue (Ibid. 230) and is in itself an expression of the power of God. Lévinas uses the term *conatus essendi* in a more general sense. For him, it is the ‘law of being’ – the drive of being to preserve itself or otherwise: the sheer desire or effort to exist. (See Tamra Wright et al. 1988. “The Paradox of Morality: An Interview with Emmanuel Lévinas”. In *The Provocation of Lévinas: Re-thinking the Other*, eds. Robert Bernasconi and David Woods, 172–175. New York and London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.) In opposition to Spinoza, Lévinas does not identify the *conatus* with God. On the contrary, God is reflected in the face of the radical Other, who inhibits the *conatus*.

³⁷Emmanuel Lévinas. 1961. op. cit.

appear as an *It*, or a *He* or *She* – a loose bundle of named qualities – but is immediately tied to the I. Buber uses developmental psychology to argue that everyone, starting from a very young age, has a natural relation of immediacy towards persons around him – an openness or readiness towards others which soon becomes a mutual relation of tenderness. Therefore, reciprocity or the potential for it is central to the I-Thou relation. Buber describes the I-Thou relation in terms of encounter, meeting, dialogue and exchange. Nevertheless, he emphasizes that this relation has no specific structure or content. The specificity of the dialogical relation is to be found in the very nature of the relation. With the establishment of an I-Thou relation, a new entity is created: a common space which Buber calls the “Interhuman” (*das Zwischen*) – a space that did not exist before and that gives meaning to the lives of the persons involved. This meaningfulness lies within the experience itself of the I-Thou relationship, within the moral praxis of mutual action, beyond any further explanation. As such, the I-Thou relation becomes an unquestionable source of value that provides meaningfulness to our lives. So morality and moral value are inter-personal matters: they require morally meaningful others. Lévinas asserted something similar when he defended ethics, as clearly distinguished from ontology, as first philosophy.³⁸

With his introduction of infinity as a surplus to totality, Lévinas aims to offer an analysis of human relations that preserves them from the violence of the totality concept (which has even been a philosophical justification for totalitarianism). Ontology, as first philosophy, is a philosophy of power, since it reduces the other to the same and thereby deprives individuals of their uniqueness in favor of their inclusion in a system of thought or any other totality. Although Lévinas, deeply influenced by Husserl and German idealism in general, assumes that philosophy begins with the reflections upon the self or the subject, he wants to show that it does not end with the self. The very nature of the self requires a response to something that lies beyond it: the Other as an expression of infinity. The very idea of the self implies that of the not-self. Here ethics comes to the fore: ethics is the calling into question of the “same” and of egology, and it is brought about by the Other. Ethics begins with the appearing of the other person through his or her face. A correct understanding of the relation between totality and infinity, between the Same and the Other, between Being and “Otherwise than Being”, involves clarifying *how* they actually do relate to each other.

Lévinas asserts that our common sense or everyday perception of human existence concerns the conception of the *conatus essendi*. However, on closer inspection, this characterization seems to lose sight of something that is already at work in our very “effort of existing”, our concern with our own existence, or *l'intéressement*, all of which have a totalizing tendency. There is already a “scruple” at work in the effort of existing itself – a scruple that shows up through an encounter with the face

³⁸Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1984. *Ethique comme philosophie première*. In *Justifications de l'éthique*, Actes du 19e Congrès de l'Association des Sociétés de Philosophie de langue française (6–9 septembre 1982), ed. Gilbert Hottois, 41–51. Bruxelles. Translated as Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1989. *Ethics as First Philosophy*. In *The Lévinas reader*, ed. Seán Hand, 75–87. Oxford: Blackwell.

of the other.³⁹ This scruple is not caused by the encounter. Rather, it is awakened in the *conatus* by that encounter. It is through the encounter with the face of the other, which presents itself as a “vulnerable nudity”, that I realize that my effort of existing is brutal and that it strives to grasp the other in an image and to imprison him in my autonomous being. This scruple comes to me as a disturbing and uncomfortable feeling. At the very moment that I am seduced by the naked face of the other to reduce him to his countenance, I simultaneously realize that what *can* happen actually *must not* happen.⁴⁰ I discover that I do not need to totalize, that I can choose not to follow my natural self-interest. Through the confrontation with the face of the other, I realize that I am not just *Being* (a *conatus essendi*), but also *Otherwise than Being* – I can rise beyond myself to choose for the good, for unselfishness. Here lies the ethical significance of the face of the other: in his countenance as a face, the otherness of the other embodies a moral imperative. It awakens a moral demand for responsibility that is manifested corporeally, in the nakedness and the vulnerability of the face.

Lévinas’ very evocative description of what Buber calls the I-Thou relation, makes clear why he thinks ethics – not ontology – is the first philosophy. Ethics, says Lévinas, begins in front of the face of the other: the very presence of another human being creates moral reasons for all those who face him. The primacy of ethics over ontology can be explained by the fact that the ethical relation provides a more adequate description of human existence. It makes clear that the Other is already present in the Same. Even stronger: the Other always precedes the existence of the self and calls upon me to take up responsibility for him (to choose the good). The Other, as an exteriority, is constitutive of subjectivity since the subject is constituted through the encounter with the other. Therefore, the subject (the I) is not for-itself, but always for-the-other: I am exposed to the other before I can thematize or objectify him.

Both Buber and Lévinas have given a hermeneutical explanation for the second-person perspective as a source of normativity. Nevertheless, they do not reduce human existence to these I-Thou relations. For Buber, both the I-Thou and the I-It relation are necessary for human existence. After all, it is impossible to avoid all reification of other human beings. We encounter other human beings not only in close, intimate relationships, but we interact with them also in many instrumental ways in which they appear to us in the third-person perspective. The I-Thou encounter will inevitably collapse into the world of It, and Thou will become a He or She – an object for consciousness, characterized by the third-person perspective.

³⁹Lévinas calls it *la mauvaise conscience*.

⁴⁰Lévinas explains this by returning to the image of the face: the appearance of the face is at the same time a vulnerability, because it “invites” or “challenges” the I to reduce the other to that countenance, and a withdrawal or retreat, because it escapes the gaze of the I and will always remain irreducible, separate, or “other” – the epiphany of the face will always escape any fully-fledged representation or adequate reproduction. Therefore, the otherness (*altérité*) of the other is an expression of infinity, it transcends the totalizing “I”.

So the world of It is a precondition for situations in which human beings may establish second-person relationships. Lévinas asserts something similar in his analysis of the subject as being both more and otherwise than a *conatus essendi*.

Buber and Lévinas have been of major importance for the recognition of the sociality or intersubjectivity of human existence and the moral relevance of otherness and difference. Accordingly, they offer an important complement to Nagel's bi-polar analytical framework. Despite the fact that the character of *Thou* (Buber) or the *Other* (Lévinas) is difficult to grasp in the language of analytical philosophy, the descriptions of the dialogical I-Thou relation (Buber) and the face-to-face relation (Lévinas) offer an independent, hermeneutic justification of the moral value of second-person relationships. Moreover, both authors claim that *only* second-person relationships have inherent moral value: only the proximity of others and the immediacy of relationships with others provide meaningfulness to our lives (Buber) and are thus the true basis of ethical normativity (Lévinas). Therefore, the second-person perspective is the source of all normativity. Inherent non-instrumental moral value can come only from the perspective entrenched within interpersonal ties. This results in a very strong claim: Nagel's two perspectives are insufficient to establish any humanistic values, including the special value of human life and dignity. However, since both Buber and Lévinas agree that we cannot escape the world of It (Buber) or totality (Lévinas), one could argue that Nagel's first and third-person perspective are only valuable insofar as they produce second-person relationships. The first-person perspective leads to solitude and isolation, since the ego is the only source of reference, while the third-person perspective (the world of It) only enables interpersonal relationships that are of a reified character. The second-person relation lies between those two opposites: it does not require – in fact it even forbids – a full identification with others (i.e. seeing them from a first-person perspective), while at the same time it does not allow us to perceive others primarily as objects from a third-person perspective. The second-person relation is in its core one of mutual responsibility, accountability or answerability to another.⁴¹

But this “in-between” position seems to give moral experience a very intimate character. Indeed, Buber says that the meaning revealed in the relationship of mutual action belongs to “this world of ours”, by which he means that meaningfulness is not something transcendental. It is an immanent or inherent value of our world. Meaning, for Buber, cannot be transmitted in general rules. It can only be proven by each human being in the singularity of his being and the singularity of his life. Does this mean that the moral particularism⁴² defended by both Buber and Lévinas also ends up in partiality (since the I-Thou relation is always limited in scope)? If mutual

⁴¹ Stephen Darwall adds that this relation of responsibility arises out of respect for our dignity as human beings. See Darwall, Stephen. December 2005. op. cit.

⁴² It is clear that both Buber's and Lévinas' philosophies defend an ethical particularism, since for them relations between persons are part of the basic subject-matter of ethics, so that fundamental principles may be attached directly to these relations. For Buber and Lévinas, agents are already encumbered with a variety of ties and commitments to particular other agents and they begin their ethical reasoning from those commitments.

sensibility as moral responsibility is the essential feature of the human condition, then how can ethics survive in a world in which impersonal claims of distributive justice are also made? Indeed, how can special responsibilities out of second-person relationships be set within the context of our overall moral outlook and positioned against other pertinent values? In other words, how does particularism fit with the universality and impartiality of the general duties we also seem to have and which need to be balanced in one way or another? Again, we are confronted with the basic dilemma between special and general obligations. Can the hermeneutical argument provide a satisfactory answer to this dilemma?

4 Special and General Obligations

Both Buber and Lévinas try to capture the tension between special and general obligations by developing a particularistic account that is compatible with universal claims and impartial considerations. For both, morality is fundamentally a social or relational matter, characterized by recognition of the inappropriable otherness (alterity) of the other. But more than Lévinas – who strongly emphasizes the radical otherness of the other – Buber puts emphasis on the relation or the encounter itself. He states: “in the beginning is the relation”.⁴³ As a consequence, he seeks the essence of human existence in the unity of humankind through the mutuality of the I-Thou relation. I and Thou meet each other within a symmetrical relation, through which the I can become a real I (its real self) and vice versa. So for Buber, it is only through the reciprocity and mutuality of relations between individuals that these individuals can develop themselves as real persons – as truly moral actors who can realize the good out of an emphatic faculty. Nevertheless, this does not mean that Buber considers the I-Thou relation as a relation that can only exist in the personal or intimate sphere. Personal and emotional feelings by themselves do not constitute interpersonal life. I-Thou relations take place not only in the direct meeting of concrete individuals (I-Thou) but also in the “we” of community. This is what Buber calls the “essential we”, which occurs when independent people come together in direct reciprocal relationships to one another – when thoroughly responsive persons learn to really listen to one another. Through the essential we, people can escape from the impersonal “one” of the nameless, faceless crowd and be part of a genuine community, characterized by the spirit of mutuality and reciprocity. So, for Buber, the second-person perspective not only refers to personal relationships, but also to the structures of society. However, the structure of modern society makes genuine dialogue difficult because “community” is often defined in political terms – as an abstract organic social structure – in which people relate to each other only instrumentally and which stands in anarchic relations with other communities. For this

⁴³Martin, Buber. 1983. op. cit. 22.

reason, Buber calls for a social restructuring of society into a “community of communities” or a union of communities in which individual groups will be given the greatest possible autonomy and yet will enjoy the greatest possible interrelationship with each other.

Lévinas remains more explicitly suspicious of the seemingly intimate character of the second-person perspective. He refuses any strong reciprocity or mutuality, since it is potentially destructive of difference. It can ultimately re-establish the other as an *alter ego*. Instead, he wants to preserve the reality of the radical difference between I and Thou, by emphasizing not the relation itself (as Buber does), but the orientation towards the other.⁴⁴ For this reason, Lévinas conceives dialogue not so much as a meeting of equals, but as a radical asymmetry: a thou-me, rather than an I-thou relation. Because of this radical asymmetry we are not allowed to make any claim of intimacy with the other. On the contrary, the radical alterity of the other introduces transcendence into the heart of immanence.⁴⁵ It is precisely this transcendence, illustrated by Lévinas’ concept of “Illeity” (*Illéité*) or the divine Other as the “Third”, that is necessary if we want to move beyond the private relationships of individual persons towards communal life within societies. Lévinas speaks of a second step, an expansion of the prior asymmetrical relation with the other towards the Third, the other par excellence. The encounter with the concrete other needs to pass beyond itself towards the divine Other or the Third. The realm of the Third is not the world of It, but the objective world of subjects in community and society. It is the Third that commands through the concrete other. The Third exists and finds its expression in the voice which speaks the ethical imperative. Therefore, it is the ground of dialogue – dialogue which is not so much an encounter as a radical call to responsibility. It is in the face-to-face relations of people that a trace of the divine Other is revealed in the form of a “transcendence into the heart of immanence”.⁴⁶ It is Lévinas’ turn towards the Third that makes his philosophy pre-eminently a philosophy of radical difference and irrefutable responsibility, whereas Buber’s philosophy is more one of equality arising out of deep respect and care for the other. The summarizing table below tries to capture the central concepts of (and the differences between) Nagel’s account and the Judaic account of human morality, each in its own specific terminology.

⁴⁴Lévinas stresses the *orientation towards* the other, out of the *separation* between the same and the other which is an inherent condition of Being.

⁴⁵Although Buber refers to an “eternal Thou” or God (i.e. the Thou that by its nature cannot become It) he does *not* move towards a conception of transcendence. On the contrary, Buber says that God, the Thou who sustains the I-Thou relation eternally, cannot be sought. He can only be *met*. He reveals himself in “this world of ours”, through the authentic relationships with our fellowmen: “In every Thou we address the eternal Thou”. Buber, Martin. 1983.

⁴⁶Lévinas, Emmanuel. 1961. op. cit. 188.

Lévinas' movement towards the Third and Buber's concept of the "essential we" are of major importance since they allow us to link the asymmetry of the face-to-face relation to the question of justice. With the entry of the Third and the essential we, the I is established in a community and becomes an other for the others, so that reciprocal relationships with the "generalized other" become possible. The society of "I and Thou" and the "Third" is thus a further elaboration of the basic I-Thou relation. This results in a very strong ethical demand, because it forces us to make the transition from the moral face-to-face relation between "I" and "the Other" to the moral relation between "the third-person" (the stranger or the foreigner with whom there is no personal bond) and "I and the Other" to whom the third-person appeals. In other words, starting from a limited or restricted responsibility (to be understood as generosity), we can move towards a general, asymmetrical responsibility (to be understood as doing justice towards the abstract other). Therefore, justice is comprehensible out of proximity: the source of a sense of justice is the asymmetric responsibility for, and relationship to, the other.

These insights are of particular importance for the central dilemma of balancing special obligations against general obligations. In the current world, the claims of the particular other must be balanced against the nameless needs of myriad others. Although the world of the impersonal Third and the essential we is a political one – the world of governments, institutions, tribunals, schools, and so on, Lévinas and Buber show that in this world, the voice of the particular must be heard. Moreover, since they start from the primacy of ethics, they argue that ethics comes before policy: the voice of particularity, of the proximity between persons within a face-to-face relation must not only be heard, it must also temper the impartial demands of justice. Impartial concern for justice has to be tempered by and held in check by the particularity of the other. Therefore, we cannot hide behind institutional rules or political programs. Justice should not look for its justification in universal principles applied equally to all, but upon the priority of the other for whom I am responsible in his incommensurability. This means that there is nothing outside of the ambit of the responsibility of the one for the other. Ultimately, our responsibility for the other is endless. Of course, the problem of balancing particular care for the concrete other with justice can never be fully solved. There will always be conflicts. But Lévinas and Buber have articulated how the basic nature of morality is to be found not within the realm of impartial justice, but in the silent, fragile "here I am" of the other that creates an intersubjectivity to be understood as an infinite responsibility for the other (see Fig. 2).

⁴⁷Because both Buber and Lévinas emphasize the sociality or intersubjectivity of human existence, they do not develop a separate first-person perspective in their philosophical framework. For them, the subject is always "already in the relation", although it cannot detach itself completely from the material world, which is characterized by the tendency to reduce and reify the other to the same.

Nagel	Buber	Lévinas
Third-person perspective	I-It	Totality (Egology – La Primauté du Même)
Second-person perspective (missing in Nagel)	I-Thou	Face-to-face relation (Epiphany of the face)
	Relation	Separation
	Mutuality out of symmetry	(weak) reciprocity out of asymmetry
	Encounter with/turning towards the other	Orientation towards the other
	Essence of human existence = Unity	Essence of human existence = radical otherness
	“Essential we” occurs in a genuine (dialogical) community	The Third commands through the face-to-face relation
	Care, Respect	Endless Responsibility
First-person perspective	The I of the I-It ⁴⁷	The totalizing I within traditional Western philosophy

Fig. 2 Conceptions of human morality

5 Concluding Remarks

This paper started with a basic dilemma present in global justice debates: the dilemma of special, associative duties versus global, cosmopolitan duties. How can we conceive of both and how can we balance them, assuming that both have moral significance?

Very constructive proposals have been launched within the reasonable partiality versus reasonable impartiality debate. However, they are not wholly satisfactory: besides their foundationalist orientation towards either cosmopolitanism or communitarianism and their high degree of abstraction, they do not offer a convincing argument about the moral justification of special duties. They remain silent about why exactly special relationships are a source of normativity.

Therefore, I turned to a specific philosophical tradition, focusing on the insights of Martin Buber and Emmanuel Lévinas in an effort to find a hermeneutical answer to the above question. The Judaic-inspired *Dialogical* perspective offers a justification for the inherent moral value of special relations by referring to the second-person perspective – an intriguing addition to Nagel’s split-level conception

of human nature. From a dialogical perspective, the moral point of view par excellence is not the impersonal third-person perspective, as most analytical approaches generally contend. On the contrary, for Lévinas and Buber, the third-person perspective is a stifling perspective, because it is blind to the particularity and otherness of the other. It sees persons as abstract individuals, without any morally relevant specifics or singularities. Instead, they define the moral point of view as the second-person perspective. The moral value of the second-person perspective is not to be found in the instrumental/pragmatic function that these kinds of relationships fulfill, nor in the nature of these relations as such, but in the experiential features of these relations such as the orientation towards the other and the openness and susceptibility to the “call” that stems from the other. Therefore, the second-person perspective is defined in terms of dialogue, encounter, engagement, responsiveness, and intersubjectivity. I think this is a convincing way of arguing for the moral relevance of special relations. But Buber and Lévinas go further and argue that the second-person “I-Thou” relation is the *only* source of normativity. This position raises the question of whether the Judaic-inspired relational account of morality comes dangerously close to embracing partiality. Here again, the question of balancing special duties against global duties comes to the fore.

Lévinas’ conception of the Third and Buber’s account of the essential we offer an alternative model to balance special obligations against general obligations. For them, the second-person perspective does not allow retreating into a closed, biased communitarian spirit in which impartial considerations of justice have no place. Quite the reverse, Lévinas’ movement towards the divine Other and Buber’s essential we link the question of impartial justice with the particularity of the face-to-face relationship in a way that does not betray the fundamental sociality of human morality. Whereas approaches that think in analytical terms and make sharp dichotomies refer to a fundamental point of reference in human moral reasoning (either first-person partiality rooted in particularism, or third-person impartiality rooted in universalism), Lévinas and Buber refer to a much more fundamental issue, that of the *primacy of ethics*. The primacy of ethics, which is first and foremost a second-person and relational affair, does not put the ultimate point of reference in the individual, but rather in the sociality or connectedness of people – in a “third space”, a *Zwischen* or *Interhuman* in which the Third (the concern for the “generalized other”) becomes visible in the concrete encounter with the face of the particular other. Thus, ethical responsiveness cannot be restricted to the “near and dear”, but extends quite endlessly towards all interhuman relations irrespective of geographical or psychological distance. Both special and general obligations are intrinsically connected through the “third space” created by the second-person perspective. In fact, the third-person perspective is an elaboration of the initial second-person perspective, which means that those living far away from us are as much “others” as are those who are close to us. The other is always fundamentally Other, irrespective of distance.

While Dialogism does not oppose institutional arrangements in order to meet the impartial demands of justice, the Judaic emphasis on the primacy of ethics prevents people from hiding behind any institutional rule or general arrangement. Because

justice is only comprehensible in the context of proximity, political and institutional arrangements cannot be detached from life as lived. This works in two directions. First, institutional redistributive arrangements must not abstract from, or become independent of, the interpersonal sphere of truly lived communal relations of fellowship and association in which people and groups stand over against each other in dialogical relations. In working towards justice, the voice of the particular, the ethical voice, must always remain present. Second, the existence of institutions as such does not imply that we can escape our irrefutable and endless responsibility. One cannot withdraw from personal responsibility by hiding behind institutions. Realizing justice is only possible through intersubjectivity, through the concrete face-to-face dialogue with the other. Here Lévinas and Buber warn against any purely impersonal, abstract way of dealing with the question of justice – a warning against any absolutist interpretation of impartiality.

This warning is not without relevance for the debate on global justice. Today, these debates focus on the institutional level of state policies. Including the horizontal dimension of the “Interhuman” in our considerations on global justice, which is what Dialogism urges us to do, would mean a recognition of, and commitment to, the subjectivity and inter-relatedness of people worldwide and a readiness to be attentive and responsive to the anonymous voices of those who are unknown to us. Dialogism shows the ethical importance of incorporating a genuine I-Thou dialogue into “our” relations with “them” whom we do not know. This could be done by creating transnational dialogical spaces and a climate of hospitality, in which communities encounter each other on an equal footing, thereby breaking through the vertical, hierarchical logic which dominates global justice debates today.

To conclude, we could say that both Buber and Lévinas have given strong hermeneutical arguments for why starting from a centerless or impartial conception of the world – a “view from nowhere” as Nagel had described it – is not the best way to capture the moral value of proximity and special moral relationships, nor the most appropriate way to consider the demands of impartial justice. However, this does not mean that we need to start from an opposite partial perspective. Instead, an agent-centered or agent-relative approach is perfectly captured under a particularist framework. A particularist framework leaves room for the personal point of view of the I in the world of It, and also leaves scope for considerations of impartial global justice without losing sight of the inherent particular nature of that justice.

Having said this, one could ask whether the Judaic-inspired framework really adds any value. I do not want to defend Dialogism as an alternative to current, mostly analytical approaches within the global justice debate. Dialogism cannot be demonstrated or proven in a clear argumentative way, as analytical approaches would require. Instead, it offers a valuable complement in the sense of a very tangible, experiential articulation of the moral importance of special obligations and their intrinsic relation to the requirements of impartial justice. While it does not work with clearly defined theoretical concepts, or aim at objective, impersonal knowledge, its hermeneutical richness does offer a deeper understanding of what is

essentially at stake within the debate on global justice and does present clearer practical guidance for concrete decision-making. By their appeal to the priority of ethics and the centrality of the particular, Buber and Lévinas have offered a strong intellectual argument for a universe of ideas in which hatred or indifference for the other becomes less possible. They have described human subjectivity as an intersubjectivity, as an openness to the other person, an unwilling recognition of her humanity and even an un-repayable indebtedness to her, prior to any rational decision. Therefore, the Judaic-inspired framework offered by Buber and Lévinas is a source of tolerance for difference and otherness. Indeed, it is the Judaic tradition that poses the ultimate imperative in the form of the injunction to treat strangers like the home-born and to open our hearts to them. In this way, the Judaic perspective offers a significant practical contribution to enlarging the moral horizons of Western liberal nation-states and opens up a new, pioneering way of thinking about justice and responsibility in this global era.

The Cosmopolitan Stranger

Vince P. Marotta

1 Introduction

This chapter contributes to a critical discussion of cosmopolitanism by examining the affinities between the cosmopolitan subject and the stranger in sociological thought. The similarities between these two social actors manifest themselves in the cosmopolitan outlook/disposition espoused in contemporary versions of cosmopolitanism. Drawing on the work of Georg Simmel and Zygmunt Bauman the chapter outlines the major characteristics of the stranger and, through an investigation of various cosmopolitan thinkers, we delineate a cosmopolitan world-view. This comparison leads to my central thesis that a new social type has emerged which can be categorized as the cosmopolitan stranger. The paper demonstrates how cosmopolitan strangers develop a more perceptive, broader and keener insight than those confined to either a particular or universal perspective. As a consequence of this enlightened view, these new social actors undermine binary logic and the essentialism underpinning “standpoint epistemology”. The chapter begins with an investigation of the stranger in sociology, and then provides a brief examination of the major attributes of the cosmopolitan outlook. Following this we identify the underlying commonalities between the sociological stranger and cosmopolitanism as a mode of being in the world. The concluding section makes several critical points: it highlights the unrealism of the realist position within contemporary cosmopolitan thought, it critically evaluates the idea of openness and the passive other embedded in the discourse of the cosmopolitan stranger and finally it addresses the “fallacy of the possible middle” underlying the cosmopolitan position.

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2 The Sociological Stranger

The sociological literature on “the stranger” usually recognizes the authority of the German sociologist Georg Simmel in formulating a sociology of strangerhood. Occasionally this literature provides a reformulation of the stranger through specific social types. For example, the Simmelian stranger has been the basis for Park’s “marginal man”¹ Wood’s² and Schutz’s³ “the newcomer”, Siu’s⁴ “the sojourner” and Stonequist’s⁵ notion of the “cosmopolitan individual” or “the international mind”. Recent revisionist literature draws on, but moves beyond the Simmelian stranger and its presuppositions. The category of the stranger has thus experienced a renaissance in contemporary social theory. Recent work has consistently shown the importance of the stranger in understanding the human condition and cross-cultural interaction. The stranger has become the paradigmatic figure for contemporary society,⁶ a society that, depending on one’s theoretical and conceptual framework, has increasingly become categorized as “high modern”, “second modernity” or “post-modern”. The stranger also raises a hermeneutical problematic and thus can shed light on the sociology of knowledge.⁷ In these studies a descriptive account of the stranger is juxtaposed with an analytical approach in which the category of the stranger becomes an object of critical inquiry. The following section continues the latter tradition.

3 The Stranger and Strangeness

In order to foster conceptual clarity a theoretical excursion into the distinction between the stranger and strangeness is needed. As will be shown later, this has implications for our interpretation of the cosmopolitan outlook. Discussions on the stranger have implicitly or explicitly adopted a psychoanalytic, existential, sociological and spatial analysis. Occasionally the distinctions between these approaches

¹Park, Robert. 1974 (1937). *Cultural Conflict and the Marginal Man*. In *The Collected Papers of Robert Ezra Park*: Vol. I, 372–376. New York: Arno Press.

²Wood, Mary. 1934. *The Stranger: A Study in Social Relationships*. New York: Columbia University Press.

³Schutz, Alfred. 1944. The Stranger: An Essay in Social Psychology. *American Journal of Sociology* 49/6: 499–507.

⁴Siu, Paul. 1952. The sojourner. *American Journal of Sociology* 58/1: 34–44.

⁵Stonequist, Everett. 1937. *The Marginal Man: A Study of Personality and Culture Conflict*. New York: Russel & Russel.

⁶See Harman, Lesley D. 1988. *The Modern Stranger: On Language and Membership*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. See also Stichweh, Robert. 1997. The Stranger – on the Sociology of Indifference. *Thesis Eleven* 51: 1–16; Tabboni, Simonetta. 1995. The Stranger and Modernity: From Equality of Rights to Recognition of Difference. *Thesis Eleven* 43: 17–27.

⁷See Dessewfy, Tibor. 1996. Strangerhood Without Boundaries: An Essay in the Sociology of Knowledge. *Poetics Today* 17/4: 599–615; Jansen, Sue C. 1980. The Stranger as Seer or Voyeur: A Dilemma of the Peep-Show Theory of Knowledge. *Qualitative Sociology* 2/3: 22–55.

have been ignored and have lead to conceptual confusion.⁸ This chapter concentrates on the sociological and spatial dimensions because these dimensions bring into sharper focus the similarities between the cosmopolitan subject and the sociological stranger.

The idea of strangeness has been associated with a spatial process that describes the proximity and distance between social actors.⁹ Strangeness therefore exists when those who are physically close are socially and culturally distant. A more nuanced understanding of strangeness is possible if we approach it in terms of a continuum. The intensity of strangeness may depend on where one lies on the proximity and distance continuum. A sense of strangeness is heightened closer to the distance point but diminishes as one nears the proximity end. On the other hand, the stranger as a social type describes individuals who are socially, culturally or racially different from the host or dominant group. In postcolonial, cultural and feminist studies this difference is synonymous with the experience of otherness. Strangeness and being constituted as a sociological stranger may overlap as in the case of recent African immigrants who are visibly different. However, this may not always be the case. Different strangers can be placed on different points on the continuum while the experience of strangeness may not coincide with being constructed as a stranger. For instance, young people may experience strangeness in the presence of their parents while not being categorized by the broader society as sociological strangers. They are physically close to their parents if they reside in the same house but may feel socially and emotionally detached from their parents' values and ideas. In this manifestation strangeness becomes synonymous with feelings of alienation. Conversely, long established Southern European immigrants in Australia such as Greeks and Italians show a high level of economic, political and social "integration" into the host society and may be plotted closer to the social proximity end than recent refugees from African nations.

4 The In-between Stranger

The work of Georg Simmel¹⁰ and Zygmunt Bauman¹¹ provide the most perceptive and original accounts of the sociological stranger. Both Simmel and Bauman conceptualize strangers as "non-members". They are the cultural outsiders who, in

⁸See Marotta, Vince. 2000. The Stranger and Social Theory. *Thesis Eleven*, 62: 121–134 for an extended analysis of this problem.

⁹Simmel, Georg. 1964. The Stranger. In *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, ed. Kurt Wolff, 402–408. New York: The Free Press.

¹⁰Simmel, Georg. 1964. The Quantitative Aspect of the Group/The Stranger. In *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, ed. Kurt Wolff, 87–174 & 402–408. New York: The Free Press.

¹¹Bauman, Zygmunt. 1988–1989. Strangers: The Social Construction of Universality and Particularity. *Telos* 78: 7–42; Bauman, Zygmunt. 1995. *Life in Fragments: Essays in Postmodern Morality*. Oxford: Blackwell; and Bauman, Zygmunt. 1995. Making and Unmaking of Strangers. *Thesis Eleven* 43: 1–16.

most cases, are excluded and marginalized from what is usually represented as the “in-group” or “native group”. The experiences of the stranger, at least for Simmel, are epitomized in the life of Jews, gypsies, merchants and wanderers. Under this conception the stranger reinforces cultural and social boundaries and the binary opposition between “us” and “them”. The category of the stranger is utilized by Simmel and Bauman to describe both the relationship between Self (host/dominant group) and Other (non-members who are cultural and racially different), and to highlight the impact that cross-cultural contact has on the stranger’s intellectual or cognitive disposition.

What we also find in their work is a conception of the stranger who is neither a friend nor enemy: Simmel at times associates the stranger with a “third party” who “indicates transition, conciliation, and abandonment of absolute contrast.”¹² Simmel alternates between a conception of the stranger which reinforces binary thinking and one which undermines it.

Similarly, Bauman argues that while strangers reinforce boundaries they also threaten the boundaries that modernity needs in order to impose stability, conformism and predictability on an unpredictable and fluid social world. In Bauman’s words, strangers “befog and eclipse the boundary lines which ought to be clearly seen.”¹³ The stranger represents “ambivalent people” who are, as it were, neither close nor distant. They are “neither friends nor foe... [and] they cause confusion and anxiety.”¹⁴ Strangers make social, cultural and physical boundaries porous and unstable; rather than reinforcing boundaries, “ambivalent people” make them problematic. The stranger in this formulation epitomizes an in-between ambivalent position. These in-betweens or insiders-outsiders threaten the insider/host’s identity; the hybrid stranger disturbs the pre-existing social and cultural boundaries which the host takes for granted. Bauman, echoing Simmel’s ideas, calls these strangers the “third element” or “the true hybrids” that cannot be classified and are unclassifiable.¹⁵

These strangers may attempt to assimilate into the host group but they find it difficult to do so because they do not share the native’s assumptions or world-view. They become essentially a person who questions nearly everything that is taken-for-granted by the host. This discrepancy results in a hermeneutical problem in which in-between strangers cannot assume that their interpretation of the new cultural pattern coincides with that of the natives. It is this interpretative gap which constitutes them as strangers.¹⁶

In-between strangers, who are physically close but socially distant, raise epistemological issues because they highlight the misunderstanding between Self and Other or between two culturally different life-worlds. This unresolved hermeneutic

¹²Simmel, Georg. 1964. *The Quantitative Aspect of the Group*. op. cit. 145.

¹³Bauman, Zygmunt. 1997. *Postmodernity and Its Discontents*. 17. Cambridge: Polity Press.

¹⁴Bauman, Zygmunt. 1990. *Thinking Sociologically*. 55. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.

¹⁵Bauman, Zygmunt. 1991. *Modernity and Ambivalence*. 58. Cambridge: Polity Press.

¹⁶Bauman, Zygmunt. 1995. op. cit. 126.

problem – the meeting with strangers – results in uncertainty, in particular uncertainty about how to read and respond to social situations. Consequently, the in-between stranger does not have complete access to the cultural and language code of the host. While this causes anxiety and stress, it also provides the ground for a different understanding of the host's world.

What is pertinent here is not that misunderstanding occurs between the host and the stranger, but that the process of strangeness or the experience of nearness and distance promotes an interpretative view of the world that is inaccessible to either the host group or those confined to their local perspectives. The position of strangers encourages a critical and “objective” stance towards the host and one's own culture. The belief that strangers perceive the host's practices, customs and values from a less subjective perspective than the host allows them to critically reflect on those practices, customs and values. As a consequence of this experience strangers are also able to reevaluate and reflect upon their own group's traditions and world-view. Their exposure to the otherness of the host self allows them to reassess their “home” culture as less stable and fixed. What was once given is now contingent. This intellectual mobility provides strangers with the ability to transcend conventional and “situated” knowledge and, by implication, the in-between, third position permits strangers to see things more clearly than, or differently from, those who occupy opposing cultural perspectives.

For Simmel, strangers are also objective, but this objectivity is not associated with the neutrality or value-free process that characterizes positivism. Strangers dialectically adopt a frame of mind which could be classified as a “subjective objectivity” which entails being both remote and near, detached and involved, indifferent and concerned.¹⁷ Strangers have a “bird's-eye view” and are not immersed in the particularities of the opposing parties or cultural groups. This “bird's-eye view” allow strangers to adopt and therefore understand the particular views of both parties, but be adequately detached from them to identify underlying common or universal interests.

Over the twentieth century the sociological literature on marginal individuals or outsiders has reinforced the epistemological advantage of being a social and cultural in-between subject. In the early part of the twentieth century the Chicago sociologist Robert Park was at the forefront in theorizing and linking cultural and racial hybridity to the idea of the stranger.¹⁸ He observes that the hybrid self “becomes, relatively to his cultural milieu, the individual with the wider horizon, the keener intelligence, the more detached and rational viewpoint.”¹⁹ Hybrid subjects adopt a cosmopolitan disposition because they are less nationalistic and thus “look across national boundaries.”²⁰ This alternative epistemology and perspective is not

¹⁷Simmel, Georg. 1964. *The Stranger*. op. cit. 404.

¹⁸Marotta, Vince. 2006. Civilisation, Culture and the Hybrid Self in the Work of Robert Ezra Park. *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 27/4: 413–433.

¹⁹Park, Robert. 1974 (1937). *Cultural Conflict and the Marginal Man*. op. cit. 376.

²⁰Park, Robert. 1974 (1934). *Race Relations and Certain Frontiers*. In *The Collected Papers of Robert Ezra Park*: Vol. I. 117–137; 137. New York: Arno Press.

available to those immersed in the world-view of either the established or the outsider; either the native or the foreigner. In these accounts, distance and proximity become general features of our interpretation of the world.²¹

5 Cosmopolitanism and the In-Between Stranger

Before we address the similarities between the cosmopolitan subject and the characteristics of the stranger outlined in the preceding discussion, a brief examination of cosmopolitanism is necessary. Scholars have documented the problems with formulating a definitive definition of cosmopolitanism. Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen adopt a multi-perspective approach to understanding the concept and assert that “No single conceptualization is adequate”²² while others argue that to characterize cosmopolitanism according to a set of values and principles is an unc cosmopolitan act.²³ Nonetheless, Vertovec and Cohen do argue that cosmopolitanism can be observed in six ways: as a socio-cultural condition, as a philosophy or world-view, as a perspective which advocates transnational institutions, as an approach which highlights the multiple construction of the political subject, as an attitude or disposition which is open and engaging with otherness, and finally as a propensity to be flexible, reflective and to move between cultures without residing within them. Although these characteristics offer a good starting point, Vertovec and Cohen do not explicitly examine the extent to which these dimensions are interrelated. Are these characteristics mutually exclusive? Is one dimension of cosmopolitanism more likely to encourage another? For example, can the cosmopolitan disposition develop or emerge in a socio-cultural condition that is not cosmopolitan? These questions cannot be adequately addressed here, but they do demonstrate the need for greater clarity and conceptualization when it comes to understanding the multiple and complex nature of cosmopolitanism. The focus of this chapter, however, is on cosmopolitanism as an intellectual disposition or outlook because it is here that the literature on cosmopolitanism and the stranger merge.

In the mid eighteenth century the French philosopher Diderot connected the idea of the stranger to cosmopolitanism when he stated that cosmopolitans are “strangers nowhere in the world.”²⁴ The classical sociological literature on the stranger makes a cursory reference to cosmopolitanism when it addresses the characteristics of the stranger. For example, Park associates the hybrid self with the stranger and in turn

²¹ Schutz, Alfred. 1944. op. cit.

²² Vertovec, Stephen and Robin Cohen. 2003. Introduction: Conceiving Cosmopolitanism. In *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context, and Practice*, eds. Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, 1–24; 3. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

²³ Pollock, Sheldon, Homi K. Bhabha, Carol H. Breckenridge, and Dipesh Chakrabarty. 2002. Cosmopolitanisms. In *Cosmopolitanism*, eds. Carol A. Breckenridge, Sheldon Pollock, Homi K. Bhabha, and Dipesh Chakrabarty, 1–14; 1. Durham: Duke University Press.

²⁴ Cited in Jacob, Margaret C. 2006. *Strangers Nowhere in the World: The Rise of Cosmopolitanism in Early Modern Europe*. 1. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

with cosmopolitan sentiments. Stonequist, as was mentioned earlier, makes a passing reference to the “cosmopolitan individual” in his assessment of the marginal man concept and its association with Simmel’s stranger. The cultural anthropologist Ulf Hannerz²⁵ also implies that there is an underlying strangeness which constitutes cosmopolitans because they are one of us (proximity) while also being different (distance). Nonetheless, the literature which does discuss the stranger and cosmopolitanism confines itself to a discussion of how a cosmopolitan outlook encourages openness and an ethical stance towards strangers or fosters a society or urban spaces where strangeness becomes universal.²⁶ In other words, the cosmopolitan and the stranger are conceived as separate social actors with little in common.

Even though recent scholarship overlooks or underestimates the connection between the cosmopolitan subject and the stranger, there have been exceptions. Chan Kwok Bun²⁷ notes that cosmopolitan encounters are encounters with strangers and makes references to Simmel’s stranger and Park’s “marginal man” as a means by which these cross-cultural encounters can be understood. Ossewaarde²⁸ argues that the activities of cosmopolitanism result in the inclusion of strangers, but he also maintains that cosmopolitans enter local communities as strangers who have special knowledge, qualifications and social status acquired outside the local group. He suggests that, like Simmel’s strangers, cosmopolitans are objective because they are able to distance themselves from local loyalties.²⁹ These writers make important tentative steps towards the formulation, conceptualization and understanding of the cosmopolitan stranger. These positive steps however are countered by Ossewaarde’s and Chan’s misinterpretation of Simmel’s stranger and the type of “objectivity” that this stranger promotes. Ossewaarde³⁰ and Chan³¹ argue that Simmel’s stranger is one who arrives today and leaves tomorrow when Simmel actually states that the stranger is “the person who comes today and stays tomorrow.”³² It is the fact that strangers remain that places them in an ambivalent position. In addition, Simmel’s understanding of objectivity – as was shown above – is as

²⁵Hannerz, Ulf. 1990. Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture. *Theory, Culture and Society* 7/2: 237–251, 248.

²⁶See Appiah, Kwame Anthony. 2007. *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. London: Penguin; Iveson, Kurt. 2005. Strangers in the Cosmopolis. In *Cosmopolitan Urbanism*, eds. Jon Binnie, Julian Holloway, Steve Millington, and Craig Young. 70–86. London: Routledge; Ossewaarde, Marinus. 2007. Cosmopolitanism and the Society of Strangers. *Current Sociology* 55/3: 367–388.

²⁷Chan, Kwok Bun. 2003. Imagining/Desiring Cosmopolitanism. *Global Change, Peace and Security* 15/2: 139–155, 154.

²⁸Ossewaarde. 2007. op. cit. 371.

²⁹Ibid. 374.

³⁰Ibid. 372.

³¹Chan. 2003. op. cit. 148.

³²Simmel, Georg. 1964. The Stranger. op. cit. 402.

much about detachment as involvement. Both Ossewaarde and Chan³³ understate Simmel's ambivalent description of objectivity and provide an incomplete account of Simmel's stranger. These oversights make the existing comparison between the cosmopolitan subject and the stranger unconvincing. The next section addresses these omissions by providing a more detailed and fuller assessment of the affinities between the cosmopolitan self and the in-between stranger.

6 The Cosmopolitan Stranger

Cosmopolitanism as a state of mind or a mode of being in the world can be found in the work of Hannerz, Waldron, Beck and Turner.³⁴ These writers provide the most coherent description of a cosmopolitan subjectivity and have attempted to think beyond the confines of their disciplines by both articulating and adopting a cosmopolitan outlook. A classic statement on the cosmopolitan mind is expressed by Hannerz in his paper on cosmopolitans and locals. It was originally written as a conference paper in 1987 and later published in 1990 in the journal *Theory, Culture and Society*. Hannerz observes that cosmopolitanism as a state of mind refers to a mode of managing meaning which includes being open and involved with otherness.³⁵ Such a mode of being in the world fosters the development of a cosmopolitan subject who is autonomous, masterful and expansive. The cosmopolitan subject "surrenders" to other cultures, but this capitulation is not associated with a commitment to others.³⁶ Engagement with others becomes an "aesthetic stance of openness toward divergent cultural experiences" and consequently it comprehends other cultures as works of art.³⁷ Reminiscent of the "free floating, unattached intellectual"³⁸ the cosmopolitan adopts a "culture of critical discourse" which is reflective, questioning and devoted to the mastery of explicit and less ambiguous knowledge.³⁹ Cosmopolitans are those at home in a homeless world. This rootlessness is the

³³Chan, 2002. op. cit. 148.

³⁴Hannerz, Ulf, 1990. op.cit; Waldron, John. 1992. Minority Cultures and the Cosmopolitan Alternative. *Michigan Journal of Law Reform* 25: 751–793; Beck, Ulrich. 2001. The Cosmopolitan Society and Its Enemies. *Theory, Culture & Society*. 19/1–2: 17–44; Beck, Ulrich. 2004. Cosmopolitan Realism: On the Distinction Between Cosmopolitanism in Philosophy and the Social Sciences. *Global Networks* 4/2: 131–156; Turner, Bryan S. 2001. Cosmopolitan Virtue: On Religion in a Global Age. *European Journal of Social Theory* 4/2: 131–152; Turner, Bryan S. 2002. Cosmopolitan Virtue, Globalization and Patriotism. *Theory, Culture & Society* 19/1–2: 45–63.

³⁵Hannerz, Ulf. 1990. op. cit. 230.

³⁶Ibid. 240.

³⁷Ibid. 237.

³⁸Gouldner, Alvin. 1979. *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class*. London: Macmillan; Mannheim, Karl. 1993. The Sociology of Intellectuals. *Theory, Culture & Society* 10/3: 69–80; Pels, Dick. 1999. Privileged Nomads: On Strangeness of Intellectuals and the Intellectuality of Strangers. *Theory, Culture and Society* 16/1: 63–86.

³⁹Hannerz, Ulf. 1990. op. cit. 246–247.

precondition for developing a “wider vision” because cosmopolitans reside in “no man’s land”. Cosmopolitan subjects adopt detached inquiry, they straddle the universal and particular and they “eschew binaries in favor of subject positions that strive towards the flexible.”⁴⁰

The rootlessness of the cosmopolitan self has been effectively captured by John Waldron in his critique of identity politics in the USA.⁴¹ Waldron examines the communitarian’s critique of cosmopolitan subjectivity, especially their claims that the cosmopolitan self is nomadic, and that this self undermines the fixed and stable identities that constitute the modern subject. The outcome, according to the communitarians, is a lack of commitment and responsibility towards others. Waldron rejects these assertions because they are a misrepresentation of the “cosmopolitan self” and they seem to hark back to, and be nostalgic for, *Gemeinschaft* relations. These relations no longer reflect the “real communities” to which most of us belong. As examples of these “real communities”, Waldron designates the international community of scholars, the scientific community, the human rights community, the artistic community and the feminist movement.⁴² Waldron concludes that we need these global communities which incorporate diverse opinions and ideas to generate common solutions to common problems.⁴³ It is only those who are “citizens of the world”, or what he occasionally categorizes as the “cosmopolitan self”, who can contribute to resolving global problems. Similar to the in-between stranger – who is not confined by particular identities – the cosmopolitan self has greater allegiance to international communities and organizations than to local cultures and communities.

The “communitarian position” espoused by such scholars as Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael J. Sandel, Charles Taylor and Michael Walzer, suggests Waldron, assumes that “the social world divides up neatly into particular distinct cultures...and secondly, the assumption that what everyone needs is just *one* of these identities – a single coherent culture – to give shape and meaning to life.”⁴⁴ In contrast, Waldron asserts that the cosmopolitan self is more “authentic” than the communitarian subject. Waldron’s use of “authentic” here does not imply a return to essentialism. Rather, he believes that the cosmopolitan self accurately reflects contemporary multiple, playful and hybrid identities. The cosmopolitan self, concludes Waldron, is a “richer, more honest, and more authentic response to the world in which we live than a retreat into the confined sphere of a particular community.”⁴⁵ The cosmopolitan

⁴⁰Heydt-Stevenson, Jillian and Jeffrey N. Cox. 2005. Introduction: Are Those Who Are ‘Strangers Nowhere in the World’ at Home Anywhere: Thinking About Romantic Cosmopolitanism. *European Romantic Review* 16/2: 129–140, 131, 134–135.

⁴¹Waldron, John. 1992. op. cit.

⁴²Ibid. 777.

⁴³Ibid. 776.

⁴⁴Ibid. 782.

⁴⁵Ibid. 788.

self, according to this formulation, is a manager who juggles several commitments and attachments. However, Waldron acknowledges that although this may lead to conflict and fragmentation for the cosmopolitan self, it may also involve a sense of continuity. While the cosmopolitan self can move beyond group loyalties, local identities are not neglected. Similar to the idea of the in-between stranger, the cosmopolitan subject can adopt a universal stance while incorporating and understanding local identities.

The work of Beck and Turner continues this connection between the cosmopolitan temperament and characteristics such as in-betweenness, reflexivity, distance, openness, and a critical viewpoint. Beck develops a cosmopolitan sociology based on a dialogic imagination in which the coexistence of rival ways of life is incorporated into the experiences of individuals. As a consequence of incorporating difference into one's life, one is better able to compare, reflect, criticize and understand these contradictions. The dialogic imagination is said to foster a meaningful engagement with the otherness of the other. Beck believes that this imagination is implicit in Kant's version of cosmopolitanism in which one is a "citizen of the world". The dialogic imagination contrasts with a national or mono-logic perspective. In the latter, individuals are unable to critically reflect on their action, adopt binary thinking and are likely to exclude the otherness of the other in their ethical judgments.

The dialogic imagination explores the creative contradictions of cultures within and between imagined communities and adopts a methodology which rejects the either-or principle or binary thinking because conceiving the world in terms of binaries reinforces power relations between the dominant self and the subordinate other. Beck also addresses the idea of "rooted cosmopolitanism" in which one is both simultaneously local and global. Unlike the cosmopolitanism associated with mobile elites, Beck argues that "rooted cosmopolitanism" promotes an ethical engagement with otherness.

Beck notes that we need rethink how we understand and approach our global world. What we need is an epistemological shift which will allow us to be *open* to pluralism and difference. The dialogical imagination encourages this epistemological shift by appealing to a "higher amorality" which encompasses an ethical position that denies the superiority of one's own morality while being open to contrary beliefs. A dialogical imagination also involves a politics that is critical of the essentializing nature of nationalism. The cosmopolitan perspective, for Beck, thus fosters a subjectivity which is transcultural, hybrid, transnational and transgressive. This subjectivity develops a critique of our existing western society whose intellectual foundations are mono-dimensional, essentialist and binary.

On the other hand, Turner's conception of the cosmopolitan subject is based on his idea of "cosmopolitan virtue". Social actors who evince cosmopolitan virtue adopt a mode or attitude to the world that involves an ironic distance. This entails being skeptical of grand narratives, distancing oneself from one's local culture, respecting and caring for other cultural values, especially indigenous cultures, accommodating cultural hybridization and having a universal commitment

to dialogue across cultures.⁴⁶ This cosmopolitan mentality encourages “thin social relationships” such as those based on email friendships and electronic networks.⁴⁷

Beck’s and Turner’s cosmopolitan disposition echoes the characteristics of the sociological stranger and its connection to strangeness. First, both social actors adopt an epistemic distancing while also encompassing the movement between particularism and universalism which is evident in Turner’s idea of patriotic cosmopolitanism⁴⁸ and Beck’s rooted cosmopolitanism. The cosmopolitan disposition allows one the ability to be both socially and ethically close and distant. Second, the cosmopolitan outlook echoes the “subjective objectivity” of Simmel’s stranger because it develops an intellectual attitude to the world that is not available to those confined to a particular or universal position. Turner concludes that the cosmopolitan ironic stance is skeptical of grand narratives, while Beck and Waldron argue that rooted cosmopolitanism transcends a universalist cosmopolitanism. The third position – which the cosmopolitan stranger occupies – encourages a critical view of binary thinking and the essentialist identities it fosters. Understanding the insider experience (host or local) is only possible through proximity and distance, through self-reflexivity and through an ironic dialogical imagination.

7 A Critique of the Cosmopolitan Stranger

This final section makes four critical points on the cosmopolitan stranger and the intellectual qualities it apparently fosters. First, it examines the “unrealism” of the realist position underlying contemporary cosmopolitanism; second, it critically interrogates the claim that the cosmopolitan stranger can initiate cross-cultural dialogue and be open to the other; third, informed by the previous critical discussion, the section argues that the discourse of the cosmopolitan stranger constructs the other as a passive observer in cross-cultural encounters; and finally, drawing on Mehta’s work,⁴⁹ we analyze the “fallacy of the possible middle” which is inherent in the idea of the cosmopolitan stranger.

Early critics of ethical cosmopolitanism argued that the moral community of humankind posited by universalist cosmopolitan theorists did not reflect or mirror the reality of the human condition.⁵⁰ The charge of utopian idealism led to accusations that universal cosmopolitanism would undermine international and human security because the practices it advocated would divide more than they would

⁴⁶Turner, Bryan S. 2001. op. cit. 148–150.

⁴⁷Ibid. 148.

⁴⁸Turner, Bryan S. 2002. op. cit. 59.

⁴⁹Mehta, Pratap Bhanu. 2000. Cosmopolitanism and the Circle of Reason. *Political Theory* 28/5: 619–639.

⁵⁰Lu, Catherine. 2000. The One and Many Faces of Cosmopolitanism. *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 8/2: 244–267, 246.

unite.⁵¹ Aware of these charges of unrealism and utopian idealism, contemporary discussions of the cosmopolitan subject are couched in realist terms. In other words, the writers under consideration speak of the cosmopolitan self as if it reflects or mirrors existing subjectivities. For example, when Waldron speaks of an “authentic cosmopolitan subject” he assumes that it mirrors existing patterns of social interaction and current multiple and hybrid identities. Nonetheless, Waldron moves from description to prescription when he argues that the existence of a cosmopolitan self is essential for a vibrant and sound individual. It is “the possibility of such conflict, and variety and open texture of character that make it possible...[and] indispensable,” argues Waldron, for “a healthy personality.”⁵² Not only does the cosmopolitan self reflect reality, but it becomes the grounds for psychological and social well-being.

Turner, on the other hand, argues that contemporary societies are characterized by a “system of global cultures” where “postmodern or cosmopolitan citizenship” have “cool loyalties” and “thin social relationships”. This type of societal configuration encourages the emergence of ironic cosmopolitan personalities. Although Turner’s discussion of the cosmopolitan self is descriptive in places, one would have to question the existence of such a self, especially one who can combine all the qualities of cosmopolitan virtue. Turner provides little empirical evidence to support the description of the ironic cosmopolitan self. Further, if such personalities do exist to what extent are they able to juggle the various demands placed upon them? How can these social actors combine the care and respect for others, with the skepticism of grand narratives, with the detachment from locality, with the accommodation of hybridization and with a universal commitment to cross-cultural dialogue? If such a personality does exist, Turner has not clearly demonstrated how these individuals can effectively accommodate the tensions and complexities arising from these demands.

Second, if the cosmopolitan mentality and ironic disposition encourage thin relationships, as evident in computer mediated communication, then one must not assume that these are compatible with the key components of cosmopolitan virtue such as promoting caring and respectful relationships. Online communication can be the impetus for developing online friendships which extend beyond the virtual world, but it is a much more ambivalent medium than Turner suggests. The internet and online communication can be a forum for racism, sexism, terrorist organizations and pedophiles.⁵³ The analogy between a cosmopolitan orientation and online relations cannot be uncritically accepted. Cosmopolitans may encourage “thin relationships” but these thin relations may not necessarily foster the care and responsibility towards others that cosmopolitan virtue is said to promote. The point here is that the cosmopolitan subject expressed in the work of contemporary cosmopolitan theorists is inadequately informed by empirical scholarship. A

⁵¹Ibid. 247.

⁵²Waldron, John. 1992. op. cit. 791.

⁵³Waldron, John. 1992. op. cit. 791.

further example of this is Beck's claim that a dialogical and rooted cosmopolitanism will lead to ethical relations towards the other. These assertions are about what should be rather than what is. Contemporary cosmopolitan thought has made implicit attempts – through its analysis of the cosmopolitan self – to become less utopian in its account of cosmopolitanism, but this has led some scholars to make some unsubstantiated claims.

A further assertion made by cosmopolitan theorists is that openness, respect and engagement with otherness are key qualities of the cosmopolitan stranger. What is problematic here is not the "openness" but how it is manifested. Hannerz argues that a "more genuine cosmopolitanism" relates to an "aesthetic stance of openness" in which other cultures are seen "as works of art". But what actually constitutes an "aesthetic stance of openness" is left unanalyzed. If we view the other as a "work of art" we may fall into the trap of objectifying the other, thereby placing undue focus on the beauty and difference of the other rather than on their actual material conditions. Turner also draws on the idea of openness and care for the other and notes that this openness and care "can be conceptualized in terms of the psychoanalytic relationship, in which the neutral analyst has to listen carefully to what the other is saying."⁵⁴ Using the analogy of the psychoanalytic relationship to express the openness inherent in cosmopolitan virtue is fraught with danger. First, the traditional psychoanalytic relationship is a paternalistic and unequal relationship in which the other may be listened to but their ideas, emotions and values are judged by the cosmopolitan "neutral analyst". The analyst is in a privileged position to provide the correct treatment and advice to the dependent patient. The psychoanalytic relationship is also a flawed analogy because it is not based on a shared openness: the patient/other opens up to the cosmopolitan/neutral analyst, but this is not necessarily reciprocated.

The unequal relationship between the cosmopolitan self and the other is underscored by the way the discourse of the cosmopolitan stranger constructs the other as passive. Discussions on the cosmopolitan outlook focus on what the cosmopolitan self acquires in cross-cultural dialogues. What is unclear is whether the engagement with otherness has any benefits for the other. Do they also develop a cosmopolitan virtue or a dialogic imagination when they encounter the otherness of the cosmopolitan self? In the construction of cosmopolitan subjectivity the other becomes a passive observer whose only purpose is to foster the development of cosmopolitan virtue. The origin of cosmopolitan virtue, therefore, exists within the otherness of the other. Moreover, it is assumed that once the cosmopolitan stranger approaches the other the other does not resist and welcomes the engagement and dialogue with the cosmopolitan self. There is no guarantee that this will be the case. Sometimes approaching difference leads to rejection and enclosure. Difference and otherness are not open books from which we can draw information and knowledge when we need it. They are more like doors that can be opened or shut depending on the visitor. While the discourse on the cosmopolitan stranger constructs the other as a

⁵⁴Turner, Bryan S. 2001. *op. cit.* 149.

passive social actor, this passive other also becomes a source of empowerment and enlightenment for the cosmopolitan.

Finally, the sociological discourse on the stranger and its association with cosmopolitanism raises interesting questions about the politics of representation, experience and the sociology of knowledge. Is such a third position – a dwelling between the insider and outsider perspective, between the local and global, between the particular and universal – possible? The discourse on the cosmopolitan stranger implies this is possible because locals, natives, nationalists and the other are confined within their epistemological framework or prison. Cosmopolitan strangers can synthesize and have access to a “total perspective” not available to those immersed in their essentialist particular/local or global/universal frameworks. Cosmopolitan strangers are able to transcend “standpoint epistemologies”. Due to their flexibility, reflexivity and mobility they develop a “double perspective” which encourages an alternative mode of thinking unavailable to those who are fixed within their particularistic or universalistic framework. Cosmopolitan strangers have the intellectual mindset to float between the local and the global, between the particular and the universal, and thus transcend the politics of location.

While the cosmopolitan stranger is alleged to transcend standpoint epistemologies, the in-between perspective actually collapses into another standpoint. In other words, while the role of the cosmopolitan stranger can be closely associated with the stranger’s ability to be both distant and close, to be subjective and objective, and adopt an ironic stance, cosmopolitan strangers cannot be conceptualized as being devoid of what the philosopher Gadamer calls “prejudice” or fore-meanings in their interpretation of the social world. Interpreters are not completely in control of the interpretative process because they may be unaware of the prejudices and fore-meanings that constitute the interpreters’ consciousness. In Gadamer’s words, the interpreter “cannot separate in advance the productive prejudices that enable understanding from the prejudices that hinder it and lead to misunderstanding.”⁵⁵

Cosmopolitan strangers may find it difficult to be free-floating because they are embedded in the prejudices – in the hermeneutical sense – of their empirical social world. The discourse on the cosmopolitan stranger downplays the role of preexisting meanings and ignores the fact that cosmopolitan strangers are embedded. They are historical beings who are immersed in the attitudes, values and prejudices of their time and place. They do not occupy a boundless social and cultural vacuum. Cosmopolitan strangers are not ahistorical social actors who float above those who are socially and historically located. Social actors, and their understanding of the world, are formed in the context of customs, traditions and prejudices. The idea of the cosmopolitan stranger assumes that one’s historical, social and cultural position can be placed on hold when analyzing and engaging a social world which is immersed in essentialist and binary thinking.

It is the ability not only to bracket off one’s values and norms, but to think in non-essentialist and non-binary terms that allows cosmopolitan strangers an alternative

⁵⁵Gadamer, Hans Georg. 1997. *Truth and Method*. 295. New York: Continuum.

view of social reality not available to insiders and outsiders. They are in a privileged position because they can move beyond the ideology of essentialism and binary thinking evident in the world of non-cosmopolitans. On the contrary, one's cultural horizons, prejudices, "standpoints", and the ideologies which inform them, both contribute to and hinder the process of understanding.

Furthermore, the "fallacy of the possible middle" also underlines the assumption that incommensurability between cultures can be overcome and we can find a middle or common ground in which we can reason or converse with others. However, there are times when cultural practices are grounded in particular reasons and these reasons may not always be shared or made commensurable.⁵⁶ As one philosopher has argued, "fundamental moods, which the members of a culture share with each other, constitute therefore an impassable barrier to effective understanding with men and women of alien cultures."⁵⁷ These "moods" are intangible, they refer to the way a particular culture experiences and makes sense of the world. This is particularly evident, according to Perrett, in the tension between the non-individualistic dimensions of the traditional Maori view of the self with the individualistic assumptions of Pakeha liberalism.⁵⁸ Occasionally theorists of cosmopolitan subjectivity, a subjectivity which I have argued has a close affinity with the category of the in-between stranger, tend to underplay the incommensurability of cultures. This does not mean that we cannot communicate across cultures, but one can never completely overcome difference in cross-cultural dialogue because difference or what I have categorized elsewhere as "moments of sameness"⁵⁹ are important in understanding the human condition. Ironically, it is these very same moments that allow us to feel different from others. There are moments in which the need for predictability, sameness and homogeneity becomes paramount and these may be expressed through collective identities or by engaging in group practices. They can also be articulated through a narrative of the self in which we recount or reconstruct our past in terms of a continuous story. The concern is when these "moments of sameness" become the only means by which we define ourselves and become the sole bases of our perception and understanding of the world. In their eagerness to transcend an essentialist and binary mode of thought, contemporary cosmopolitan thinkers downplay these "moments of sameness" in which group and individual differences allow social actors to establish both a sense of continuity and difference.

⁵⁶Mehta, Pratap Bhanu. 2000. op. cit, 620.

⁵⁷Held, Klaus. 1995. Intercultural Understanding and the Role of Europe. *The Monist* 78/1: 5–17, 8.

⁵⁸Perrett, Roy W. 1992. Individualism, Justice, and the Maori View of the Self. In *Justice, Ethics and New Zealand Society*, eds. Graham Oddie and Roy W. Perrett, 27–40. Auckland: Oxford University Press.

⁵⁹Marotta, Vince. 2008. The Hybrid Self and the Ambivalence of Boundaries. *Social Identities* 4/3: 295–312.

8 Conclusion

The cosmopolitan ideal and cosmopolitanism in general have been a source of contestation in the social sciences and humanities and the preceding discussion has made a small contribution to this debate through its investigation of the cosmopolitan stranger. It has shown that contemporary cosmopolitan thinkers' assessment and construction of the cosmopolitan subject can be informed through an analysis of a social theory of the stranger articulated in the work of Simmel and Bauman. The idea of the in-between subject has been evident in sociological and anthropological thought for over a century and has reappeared in the work of scholars advocating a dialogical imagination, a cosmopolitan virtue and a rooted cosmopolitanism. The cosmopolitan stranger has contributed to our rethinking and reassessment of cross-cultural encounters and the emergence of a cross-cultural mode of thought, but it has also underplayed the incommensurability of cultures and the "prejudices" that are inherent in the cosmopolitan's world-view. Moreover, the literature on the cosmopolitan in-between subject is questionable because it relies on a view of the other as passive, adopts a notion of openness which is one dimensional, and uncritically accepts the myth of the in-between.

Questioning Cosmopolitan Justice

Tom Campbell

1 Introduction

The word “cosmopolitan” has a long history both as a noun and an adjective,¹ but in terms of contemporary moral and political discourse the term “cosmopolitanism” is something of a novelty,² representing a particular set of moral and political ideas to be added to the complex and fecund groupings of moral and political philosophies amongst which it has to jostle for acceptance as a distinctive and significant normative theory. As socialism is buried, communitarianism fades, neo-liberalism seems increasingly unsustainable, and human rights lose some of their gloss, how does cosmopolitanism fare as an innovative practical philosophy with a claim to be particularly germane to contemporary problems? More particularly, what does the discourse of cosmopolitan *justice* contribute to the case that cosmopolitanism is sufficiently different to merit our attention as a new approach within political philosophy, and can this contribution survive critical scrutiny?

This essay seeks to answer these questions principally in relation to that school of contemporary cosmopolitanism which operates within a largely Rawlsian framework and seeks to extend the approach to justice deployed by John Rawls within the confines of the nation-state and apply it, as Rawls did not, to global or transnational spheres. I argue that this project has the initial advantage of marking out a potentially distinctive feature of cosmopolitan theory, something which is lacking

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Thanks are due to those who made helpful points to a paper presented to the International Global Ethics Association conference on “Questioning Cosmopolitanism” at Deakin University, Melbourne on 27th June 2008, and, more particularly, to Nigel Dower and Holly Lawford-Smith, from whose insightful comments I benefited greatly

¹Kleingeld, Pauline and Eric Brown. 2006. Cosmopolitanism. In *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <http://plato.standord.edu/entries/cosmopolitanism>.

²Beitz, Charles. R. 1983. Cosmopolitan Ideals and National Sentiment. *Journal of Philosophy* 80: 591–600.

in many of the more abstract attempts to define cosmopolitanism, but I go on to question whether it is justice (in contrast, for instance, to humanity)³ that should be the prime moral basis for establishing morally acceptable institutional arrangements that affect the production and distribution of goods on a global basis. I conclude that it is a theoretical and perhaps practical mistake for cosmopolitans to put so much emphasis on what might be called the globalization of justice as distinct from the globalization of morality more generally.

2 What is Cosmopolitanism?

There is no doubt that the term cosmopolitanism has an historical pedigree that gives it some inherited standing as a political philosophy. “Cosmopolitanism” brings up on the screen elements of Stoicism, especially the talk of world citizenship that flourished with the growth of the Roman empire,⁴ an approach which was revived during the Enlightenment, in particular, the until recently neglected part of Immanuel Kant’s work on cosmopolitan right,⁵ and Adam Smith’s proposals for increasing global prosperity, which, despite the title of his most famous book,⁶ have an anti-nationalist flavor in their hostility to the more patriotic economic theory of mercantilism and a global perspective on economic development, involving the universal binding force of sympathy and a significant role for benevolence alongside the utility of properly regulated self-interest.⁷ In this literature there is talk of a world community, world citizenship, and world commerce, all of which are prominent in the discourse of contemporary versions of cosmopolitanism.

There is a continuity also in the eighteenth century use of the term “cosmopolitan” as a self-description of itinerant artists and intellectuals, who felt no particular attachment to their own country, and its similar use in today’s standard vocabulary to identify a type of person or place that manifests a multiplicity of cultures, rises above parochialism, and exhibits a civilized and tolerant outlook. Beyond academia, the word “cosmopolitan” still evokes the idea of an urban transnationalism that embraces a diversity of languages, customs and styles, riding above local horizons in a rather superior, cultured, even dilettante manner, somewhere between

³Barry, Brian. 1982. Humanity and Justice in Global Perspective. In *Nomos XXIV: Ethics, Economics and Law*, eds. J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman, 219–252. New York: New York University Press.

⁴Heater, Derek. 1996. *World Citizenship and Government: Cosmopolitan Ideas in the History of Western Thought*. New York: St Martin’s Press.

⁵Kant, Immanuel. 1994. *Political Writings*. ed. Hans Reiss, trans. H.B. Nisbet, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁶Smith, Adam. 1976. *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations (1776)*. Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Press.

⁷Smith, Adam. 1982. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759)*. Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Press.

highbrow cross-culturalism and academic tourism. While Jeremy Waldron apologizes for having associated this usage with contemporary cosmopolitan theory,⁸ this slightly antiquated use of the term has an undoubted affinity with some of the characteristic capacities of cosmopolitan theorists who look beyond their own culture, depreciate claims to intrinsic cultural superiority, and operate comfortably within a multiplicity of traditions.

However, whatever the inherited continuity of meanings in contemporary discourse, “cosmopolitan” has become “cosmopolitanism”, marking out a family of positions adopted by philosophers who focus on world issues of peace and poverty within the framework of globalization, and who have, or may be thought to have, quite radical proposals to make within the realm of supranational political and economic systems, particularly concerning what should be done about inequality, poverty and suffering – domestic and global, present and future. Cosmopolitanism engages in a universal and global approach to poverty and peace in contradistinction to those who view these problems in the more limited terms of communities, nations, clans or cultures.

Nevertheless, while cosmopolitans are a clearly identifiable and evidently important school of theorists and campaigners, cosmopolitanism has yet to reach anything like consensus on its constitutive key ideas and parameters. Efforts to establish with reasonable precision what cosmopolitanism is all about are often over-inclusive in the theoretical territory to which they stake a claim, and sometimes disappointing, and certainly questionable, with respect to the distinctiveness of the policy outcomes that are said to follow from such claims. In other words, “cosmopolitanism” has yet to achieve a plausible self-definition to save it from becoming no more than a catch-all umbrella term for those theorists who exhibit a degree of moral concern about certain global issues, particularly poverty, inequality and peace. This raises concerns about the analysis and presentation of its key ideas, concerns that need to be addressed if we are to clarify its vision, improve its rhetoric, and legitimate its moral and philosophical claims.

One example of this analytical weakness is to be found in the taxonomy of cosmopolitanism presented by Kok-Chor Tan who identifies the core of cosmopolitanism in a commitment to “the equal moral worth of individuals” or “the equal moral standing of individuals”, a commitment that is detached from the particular ways of implementing that moral equality in practice.⁹ His recent book opens with the statement that “Cosmopolitanism, as a normative idea, takes the individual to be the ultimate unit of moral concern and to be entitled to equal consideration regardless of nationality and citizenship”.¹⁰ In this affirmation of equality of moral status, Tan follows Thomas Pogge for whom the central of three elements “shared by all

⁸Waldron, Jeremy. 2000. What is Cosmopolitan? *Journal of Political Philosophy* 8/2: 227–243, 228.

⁹Tan, Kok-Chor. 2004. *Justice Without Borders: Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism, and Patriotism*. 10. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹⁰Ibid, 1.

cosmopolitan positions” is that “[t]he status of ultimate unit of concern attaches to every human being *equally*”.¹¹

There is evidently much to be said for affirming the idea of the equal moral significance of all human beings, an affirmation which I call “the equal worth principle”.¹² Further, there is no denying the relevance of the equal worth principle to decisions about how we ought to treat each other and organize social institutions, both domestic and global. To the contrary, equal worth is the bedrock of all positions within moral philosophy that have a claim on our assent, including almost all consequentialist and deontological theories, including both utilitarianism¹³ and rights-based approaches to morality.¹⁴ Indeed, it is arguably an essential ingredient of the moral point of view as such. It follows, therefore, that a commitment to the equal moral value, status or worth of all human beings cannot be confined to cosmopolitanism, and it is misleading to suggest that it is. It is, thus, confusing to speak of “the cosmopolitan principle that individuals are the ultimate units of moral worth”,¹⁵ since this could be attributed to almost any moral theory.¹⁶ It is conceptual imperialism to lay claim to the equal worth principle as a defining feature of cosmopolitan theory, and to do so is sufficient to prompt a degree of skepticism about the distinctiveness and novelty of the cosmopolitan approach.

It can be argued that we are not dealing here with moral groundings or presuppositions, shared or otherwise, but with competing political and social policies, where the difference lies not so much at the level of fundamental moral principles as with the practical recommendations that are associated with competing ideologies. Perhaps cosmopolitanism is to be distinguished in terms of its substantive recommendations, such as moving towards world government or reducing the legitimacy of the nation state, rather than its moral presuppositions. Yet, this is not what Tan and

¹¹Pogge, Thomas. 1992. Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty. *Ethics* 103/1: 48–75, 48f: “Three elements are shared by all cosmopolitan positions. First *individualism*: The ultimate units of concern are *human beings*, or *persons* – rather than, say, family lines, tribes, or ethnic, cultural, or religious communities, nations, or states. The latter may be units of concern only indirectly, in virtue of their individual members or citizens. Second *universality*: The status of ultimate unit of concern attaches to *every* human being *equally* – not merely to some subset, such as men, aristocrats, Aryans, whites or Muslims. Third *generality*: This special status has global force. Persons are ultimate units of concern *for everyone* – not only for their compatriots, fellow religionists, or such, like.” In a more recent essay, these three elements are reduced to one: “The central [normative] idea guiding [a cosmopolitan’s] moral assessments and prescriptions is that of including all human beings as equal”. He then goes on to distinguish different types of cosmopolitanism as understanding and employing this “central idea” in different ways. See Pogge, Thomas. 2007 (1993). *Cosmopolitanism*. In *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*, ed. Robert E. Goodin, Philip Pettit, and Thomas Pogge, 2nd ed, Vol. 1, 312–329, 312. Oxford: Blackwell.

¹²See Campbell, Tom. 2004. The Equal Worth Project. In *Globalisation and Equality*, ed. Keith Horton and Haig Patapan, 23–48. London: Routledge.

¹³Consider Jeremy Bentham’s famous dictum: “each to count for one and no more than one”.

¹⁴Thus, a core element in human rights theory is a rejection of discrimination and an affirmation of equal rights.

¹⁵Tan, Kok-Chor. 2004. *op. cit.* 9.

¹⁶As Tan himself sometimes seems to allow: *ibid.* 6.

Pogge hold, for both are at pains to emphasize that cosmopolitanism is about promoting equal concern for equal individuals as a basis for evaluating institutional and other social situations rather than being a description of preferred social arrangements and conduct.¹⁷ As long as the criteria for justifying social arrangements terminate in respecting or furthering the wellbeing or interests of all human beings equally, then, on their view, we have a cosmopolitan theory. Cosmopolitanism does not, therefore, require a commitment, for instance, to anything approaching global governance, or “world statism”.¹⁸ In fact, the main body of Tan’s book is directed towards demonstrating that there are forms of liberal nationalism and patriotic loyalty that are perfectly compatible with cosmopolitanism. He goes to great lengths in arguing that cosmopolitan justice has room for liberal nationalism and liberal patriotism that are more than merely instrumental to individual wellbeing, but represent independent values, albeit values that can be accommodated under the cosmopolitan label only in so far as they do not renounce the equal worth principle.

Sometimes it appears that Tan does require a cosmopolitan theory to have a certain practical content. Thus in the opening sentence of the book (quoted above) he talks of “equal consideration regardless of nationality and citizenship”, which could be taken to mean that cosmopolitanism excludes taking account of non-global loyalties, such as patriotism. However, this turns out not to be the case. What matters, Tan argues, is not the absence of nation-states and citizen partiality, but the basis on which these institutions and attitudes are evaluated. Nation-states and group loyalties are acceptable as long as they are preferred on the basis of the equal worth of all human being everywhere. Cosmopolitanism, on this view, has no problem with any type of localism (such as giving priority in our political and moral obligations to fellow citizens), as long as each individual is of equal importance in the evaluation of such practical prioritization so that collectivism remains the servant of individual well-being, the ultimate criterion for assessing the legitimacy of parochial duties. What Tan proposes is that in making our moral choices, individually and politically, we should ultimately take everyone equally into account, even although the rules we adopt and the choices we make involve in practice preferring some to others on the basis of family, tribal, or statist criteria, as when, for instance, we decide that every parent should care for their own children so that all children may be well provided for by someone. Cosmopolitanism, then, is a matter of distinguishing individualized reasons for what we do from the collectivist mechanisms for doing it. To be morally acceptable our motives in adopting a policy must be impartial as between humans (or sentient creatures). This is compatible with acting group-preferentially provided that it results in the advantage or justified disadvantage of all persons, or at least all those affected by our actions.¹⁹ An alternative reading of Tan could

¹⁷Ibid. 2-3; Pogge, Thomas. 2007 (1993). *op. cit.*

¹⁸Tan, Kok-Chor. 2004. *op. cit.* 10.

¹⁹There is a potential issue arising from the highly individualistic position adopted by Pogge and Tan with respect to other “cosmopolitans” who emphasize the idea of a global community as a morally relevant ontological factor. It is curious that anti-collectivism is a defining feature of

be that he associates equal worth with an affirmation of “the basic commitment to global equality” in substantively egalitarian terms.²⁰ However, in his overall treatment of global equality Tan makes it clear that what he means by this commitment is a moral concern with global equality rather than recommending an equality of outcomes between individuals on a global scale.²¹ This may turn out to be a very weak commitment as far as the equalization of benefits and burdens is concerned.

In this context it is interesting to reflect on the importance which self-identified cosmopolitans attach not only to bringing theories of justice to bear on global issues but in making justice morally paramount in the global domain. Tan, for instance, goes beyond seeking to add principles of justice to other moral principles, such as humanity to globally-oriented normative discourse, and argues forcefully for its superiority to other moral approaches to the alleviation of inequality. This suggests that one of the matters at stake here is the articulation of the authentic cosmopolitan position on which its claim to distinctiveness and novelty is in fact based. It may be that a prime constitutive feature of cosmopolitanism is the objective of bringing out the (perhaps) radical significance of applying the equal worth doctrine to global issues through principles of justice that have been mistakenly kept within the confines of the nation-state. In this case, we may get a better handle on cosmopolitanism if we examine what seems to be at the core of the concerns of some of its key proponents, namely the view that the circumstances and considerations of justice apply globally as well as nationally, or, more radically, that the same principles of justice apply equally in both global and national contexts, so that it is being prepared to talk of “global justice” that makes you a “cosmopolitan”. Tan himself comes close to endorsing this interpretation of “cosmopolitanism” when he says that his thesis on global justice represents “the moral force and coherence of the cosmopolitan vision”.²²

3 Cosmopolitanism and Global Justice

Having chastised cosmopolitans such as Tan for failing to come up with those features that could serve to demarcate cosmopolitanism from its ideological rivals, I turn to examine the efforts of self-identified “cosmopolitans” to justify the application of principles of justice beyond the confines of the nation state to the global sphere of international relations and worldwide institutions. The rationale for this examination is that the program underlying their concept of “global justice” might be the distinctive contribution that cosmopolitans have to offer. In particular, it may be claimed that the school of cosmopolitans is united in regarding unjustified global

cosmopolitanism when at least some cosmopolitans would see the idea of global community as central to their approach. I do not pursue this issue here.

²⁰Tan, Kok-Chor. 2004. *op. cit.* 2.

²¹*Ibid.* 7.

²²*Ibid.* 15.

inequalities as the outcome of morally illegitimate global institutional arrangements, the sort of thing that, it is claimed, justice is all about.

This hypothesis runs counter to the distinctions involved in the typologies of cosmopolitanism explicitly proffered by Pogge and Tan, in which a concern with justice characterizes a particular type of cosmopolitanism rather than cosmopolitanism as such. Thus Pogge allows for cosmopolitanisms that have to do with direct interpersonal and interstate relationships and a cosmopolitanism that involves a world state or “cosmopolis” (which he calls “legal cosmopolitanism”), with social justice cosmopolitanism being simply a type of cosmopolitanism that approaches institutional design through the equal worth principle, and does so without presupposing that a cosmopolis is the required outcome. However, once we abandon the dubious premise that only cosmopolitans adhere to the equal worth principle, and if we exclude making a commitment to a world state or “cosmopolis” the defining feature of cosmopolitanism, it remains the case that it is the application of principles of justice to global institutional design (concerning such bodies as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization) that stands out as the most promising locus of cosmopolitan distinctiveness.²³

Like Pogge, Tan draws attention to typologies of cosmopolitanism in which justice is not highlighted as a common feature. He notes, for instance, that Samuel Scheffler distinguishes between cosmopolitanism as a claim about justice and cosmopolitanism as a claim about identity and culture, the latter maintaining that cultural community is not constitutive of a person’s identity, whereas the former is concerned with extending the scope of justice beyond national citizenship and boundaries.²⁴ Tan identifies his own focus as being “a moral claim about the scope of justice”,²⁵ and gives us an indication as to his conclusion by telling us that he advocates a “strong” type of cosmopolitanism that requires a global distributive equality that goes beyond attaining a minimally adequate life for all (which he calls “weak” cosmopolitanism),²⁶ that is also a “moderate” brand of cosmopolitanism that allows for “the normative independence of certain special obligations” rather than the “extreme” form that allows for cosmopolitan obligations only.

Nevertheless, while neither Tan nor Pogge make the claim that global justice is the distinctive feature of cosmopolitanism, the importance that both theorists

²³Pogge, Thomas. 2007 (1993). op. cit. 312–314.

²⁴Scheffler, Samuel. 2001. *Boundaries and Allegiances*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Particularly chapter 7: “Conceptions of Cosmopolitanism” at p. 112: “Cosmopolitanism about justice is opposed to any view that posits principled restrictions on the scope of an adequate conception of justice. . . . Cosmopolitanism about culture and the self, meanwhile, is opposed to any suggestion that individuals’ well-being or their identity or their capacity for effective human agency normally depends on their membership of a determinate cultural group whose boundaries are reasonably clear and whose cohesion and stability are reasonably secure”. His view about what these two types of cosmopolitanism have in common is “the idea that each individual is a citizen of the world, and owes allegiance, as Martha Nussbaum has put it, ‘to the worldwide community of human beings’”.

²⁵Tan, Kok-Chor. 2004. 12.

²⁶Miller, David. 2000. *Citizenship and National Identity*. 174. Cambridge: Polity Press.

attach to the application of theories of justice to global issues suggests that there is something constitutive of cosmopolitanism at stake here. Making the idea of global justice, as they conceive it, the key implication of the equal worth principle appears to be crucial to their conception of cosmopolitanism. This fits with the tradition from which contemporary cosmopolitanism derives in that the focus on global justice places global governance, though not necessarily a world state, at the centre of its agenda. This is particularly the case with those theorists who adopt a basically Rawlsian approach to the concept of justice.

One of Rawls's core stipulations is that justice concerns the basic institutions of a society, particularly with respect to the institutions that affect the distribution of the benefits and burdens of social cooperation. To extend this conception of justice beyond specific polities into the transnational sphere involves identifying or recommending the creation of institutions with a comparable function at the global level, thus presupposing the actuality and potentiality of an interdependent world in which it makes sense to consider how the benefits and burdens arising from the cooperation that takes place within its domain are distributed, and subjecting these to moral criticism as a basis for suggesting political and economic reforms.

The application of Rawlsian justice to the world at large must be regarded as a major step, in that it presupposes the actual or potential institutionalization of a world order along the lines that is now referred to as globalization. This revives the ancient cosmopolitan idea that there is, or could be, a world community, with the emphasis, in this case, on there being a global economic "community" in the sense of an interactive economic system in which there are rules and practices that promote cooperation and conflict which bring about economic benefits and burdens that are unequally distributed. The system in question is broadly described as a world trade regime embedded in international commercial legal practice, the operations of global corporations and formal institutions such as the World Trade Organization and the World Bank.

If a focus on the globalized institutional economic order were all that the cosmopolitan concern with global justice involves then, while we might object to its narrow scope in relation to the possible subject matter of justice, there would be no reason to dispute the propriety and importance of the exercise. However, both Tan and Pogge require us to approach the moral assessment of this phenomenon through the perspective of justice as the dominant moral concept for the design of global institutions. Their enterprise consists of two stages. First, they criticize Rawls for limiting the applicability of his theory of justice to the domestic realm. Second, they draw on that theory to supply the principles of justice that they proceed to apply to the global sphere.

This analysis is posited on the belief that there is or could be in existence a pattern of relationships involving global institutions, global markets and global power relationships, that have a direct and indirect bearing on the prosperity, autonomy and wellbeing of members of all societies. The judgment is made that such institutionalized relationships as are currently in place favor the powerful at the expense of the weak and in general provide a legal, political and economic framework that unfairly disadvantages those living in less developed nations, and fails to provide

equality of opportunity or to maximize the advantages of the least well-off persons, all of which are the crucial ingredients of Rawls's theory of justice. This assumption is the principal ingredient of their explanation for world poverty. It is on this basis that cosmopolitans like Thomas Pogge, who are primarily interested in issues of world poverty, focus on justice as the essential grounding for proposed reforms of what they see as a grossly unfair global order.

4 Justice or Humanity?

The extrapolation of Rawlsian justice to global institutions brings with it an approach to globalization which perpetuates, on the world scene, some Rawlsian dogmas about justice as he deploys it in the domestic sphere, in particular the claim that justice overrides other considerations, moral and otherwise, when it comes to questions of distributing benefits and burdens. It is in this context that Tan insists that justice rather than, for instance, humanity should be adopted as the moral principle underlying the universal obligations that all of us have to those living in poverty. Thus, one way in which he contrasts the cosmopolitan position with that presented by Rawls is by pointing out that Rawls, after confining his conception of justice to the distribution of the benefits and burdens of cooperation within a sovereign state, commends a measure of assistance to meet the basic needs of non-nationals as a moral duty. Tan identifies this as a humanitarian argument²⁷ and criticizes it on the grounds that cosmopolitans endorse global justice, not global charity.

What is interesting here is the clutch of arguments Tan uses to reach the conclusion that duties of justice are to be preferred to humanitarian duties. One feature of these arguments is that they carry forward into the global sphere Rawlsian dogmas about justice which were questionable enough when stipulated as applying within a domestic political philosophy, and fit even less well when his approach is extended to the global sphere. Rawls was, of course, perfectly entitled, when developing his original and famous theory of justice, to lay down certain starting axiomatic premises, such as that "justice is the first virtue of social institutions as truth is of systems of thought",²⁸ and to confine his attention to the application of justice to basic institutional arrangements. However, these provisional starting points have become constricting dogmas of contemporary political philosophy. Whatever conceptual apparatus is appropriate to Rawls's project, the actual discourse of justice has application far beyond setting basic rights together with the institutional arrangements for the distribution of the benefits of social cooperation. Nor is it to be taken for granted that considerations of justice are always morally prior to such goals

²⁷Tan, Kok-Chor. 2004. op. cit. 65.: "Because the duty of assistance has as its goal the meeting of individuals' basic needs as well as their collective capacity for sustaining decent institutions, I will refer to this duty as a humanitarian duty. Yet Rawls also stresses that this duty of humanitarian assistance is distinct from, and does not entail, a duty of distributive justice."

²⁸Rawls, John. 1972. *A Theory of Justice*. 3. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

as relieving misery and increasing the gross national product.²⁹ In other words, Rawls's conception of justice is at once too narrow and too exalted for general use. It is too narrow a view of justice in that it misses the broad associations of justice with fairness in the generality of its manifestation and with natural desert, an affiliated concept which he explicitly rejects but draws upon in practice when testing his moral "intuitions". On the other hand, the Rawlsian conception of justice is too broad because it encompasses all the different important moral reasons for adopting certain basic institutional arrangements, whereas justice is only one of the relevant ingredients in this complex moral issue.³⁰ So while there is merit in deploying the concept of justice beyond the bounds of the nation state, and good reason to include in this a moral concern relating to transnational institutions, it is to be regretted that Rawls's parameters as to what constitutes justice are deployed in determining the scope, content and priority of global justice.³¹

The distorting impact of Rawls's conception of justice when applied beyond its allocated role in Rawls's own work, comes out in the way in which Tan develops his analysis of cosmopolitan justice, and particularly in the reasons he gives for focusing on justice in his exposition of cosmopolitanism. Tan devotes a chapter to arguing that principles of humanity are seriously deficient in dealing with global poverty. He does so by simply adopting Rawls's conclusion that what he calls "humanitarian assistance" has the limited objectives of "attaining liberal or decent institutions, securing human rights, and meeting basic needs",³² and then extending this to the view that aid given on the basis of providing relief of suffering and promotion of wellbeing for its own sake is based on secondary moral considerations. In relegating what he calls "duties of humanity" to a subordinate role he places unjustifiable restrictions on "the principle of humanity". By this I mean the principle that we ought to relieve suffering and promote well-being for their own sakes, whatever the cause of, or the responsibility for, the existence of the suffering and ill-being. Tan himself accepts that there is such a principle and that it gives rise to moral obligations but in practice confines it to the role of justifying the provision of the sort of humanitarian aid that is the direct giving of material goods to those in serious need, mainly in the context of emergencies and disasters. This, he contends, is not justice, and it is justice that really matters for issues of global redistribution.

The ostensible reasons Tan gives for this position are familiar enough, but, on examination, unsustainable. Thus, he argues that the principle of humanity tackles the symptoms of poverty not the causes. Sometimes this is put in a mild form to stress that there is a place for global justice beyond humanitarianism. Thus, he writes, "focusing on humanitarian duties as opposed to justice does not fully locate

²⁹Campbell, Tom. 2001. *Justice*. 13–15. London, Macmillan Press.

³⁰Rawls, John. 1972. op. cit. 98–101.

³¹My critique of Rawlsian style global justice favors a broader conception of justice that includes the crucial aspect of natural desert (Brock, Gillian. 2004. *Global Distributive Justice, Entitlement and Desert*. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 31: 109–138) and should not be confused with the rejection of the very idea of global justice.

³²Rawls, John. 1999. *The Law of Peoples*. 114. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

the *source* of global poverty and hence falls short of offering a complete solution to it.”³³ By itself, this implies no more than supplementing humanity with justice, a quite acceptable position in itself, but in reality he effectively displaces humanity by drawing attention to its alleged inadequacies and ignoring it in the statement of his overall position.

Tan goes on to argue that justice is more fundamental than humanity because it alone deals with the global institutions that create poverty and directs us to deal with the unfairness of the current world trade regime that causes inequality. This is a problematic argument on three grounds.³⁴ First, some of the causes of poverty can be attributed to failures of humanity. In so far as cures do require removing causes, inhumanity and injustice could both be seen as causes, the removal of which would prompt solutions. Second, while it may be argued that the sort of inequality that involves poverty for some and prosperity for others must, in the absence of moral justifications, be considered unfair, no matter what its causes, this does not make that unfairness the cause of poverty. If, on the other hand, it is an empirical claim that is being made, to the effect that global poverty is fundamentally caused by unfair terms of trade, this is a highly contentious thesis, since the causes of poverty are complex and multiple. Third, relieving the suffering of others for its own sake will inevitably involve tackling the many causes of poverty, including unbalanced trading arrangements, while not neglecting the provision of immediate relief in the case of “disasters”.

These are obvious points, but they are strangely neglected in Tan’s account. What seems to be going on is an identification of the principle of humanity with a certain type of “humanitarian aid” which involves the provision of food and shelter to persons who are the victims of famine or disaster which Tan rightly sees to be too ad hoc and limited to deal with all aspects of global inequality. However, caring for others is not exclusively directed to disasters which call for immediate material aid. Humanity is equally applicable to the redesign of institutions that cause poverty as well as the creation of institutions that seek to deal with its persistent normality.

A further argument put forward by Tan for concentrating on justice rather than humanity is that humanitarianism only takes us as far as dealing with extreme conditions, whereas global justice has to do with an ongoing commitment to global equality in a systematic and comprehensive way. Humanity, he writes, has a “limited-term commitment with a definable goal”, namely (following Rawls) “to raise developing societies to a level necessary for sustaining functioning well-ordered social institutions”, whereas justice has no cut-off point and deals with all degrees of inequality.³⁵ This argument is based on the same very limited understanding of the scope of the principle of humanity and the means that may be adopted to

³³Tan, Kok-Chor. 2004. op.cit. 19.

³⁴For a more extended treatment of these arguments, see Campbell, Tom. 2007. Poverty as a Violation of Human Rights: Inhumanity or Injustice? In *Freedom from Poverty as a Human Right: Who Owes What to the Very Poor?*, ed. Thomas Pogge, 55–74. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

³⁵Tan, Kok-Chor. 2004. 23. op. cit.

serve its goals. The principle of humanity is indeed “prioritarian” in that it requires us to deal first with the most severe forms of suffering, but there is nothing in the principle that limits itself to dealing only with suffering on a grand scale or resulting from accidents, wars and natural catastrophes. Even if we do not take the principle of humanity to include the positive promotion of wellbeing, it can certainly be taken to encompass the relief of any suffering arising from the absence of the conditions for human wellbeing. At what point the practical moral obligation to act on the principle of humanity ceases with the reduction of suffering involved does have to be addressed, but the same is true concerning the degree of unfairness and injustice that give rise to moral obligations.

Tan may have in mind that Rawls’s maximin principle has something to say about all situations of inequality (at least with respect to primary goods), and that it has no cut-off point, but this is a contingent factor within one particular theory of justice rather than a point about distributive justice in general. In actuality the discourse of distributive justice is normally highly restricted in the scope of its application. More generally, given the extent of extreme poverty in the world and the difficulties that seem to lie in the path of eradicating this poverty, it is a pragmatic mistake to play down the role of the principle of humanity on the grounds that it applies only to the elusive goal of ending extreme poverty.

It may be argued that Tan’s concern is not with suffering and deprivation but with reducing or justifying inequalities of benefits and burdens for its own sake, unrelated either to the relief of pain and other evils or the generation of pleasure and other goods. However, this does not fit with his references to the harm inflicted by the injustice of the terms of world trade and the exploitation of vulnerable peoples. Thus, in his discussion of the individualism of cosmopolitan justice, he writes that: “We are moved by global injustices in the first place because of the pain and suffering inflicted on individuals rather than by the suffering of some abstract collectivity like the state”.³⁶

A further reason given by Tan for excluding or diminishing the role of humanity is that the discourse of justice raises fundamental critical questions about property rights, such as who owns what and what rights property holders should have. Humanitarianism, it is claimed, assumes that existing ownership is broadly morally acceptable, since it involves people giving away what they rightly own to those who have no proprietary claim to what they receive, whereas the justice approach says that redistribution to the poor is a reallocation of an unjust current distribution, a handing over of what is not really theirs to those who are entitled to have it. Justice, but not humanity, he contends, makes such redistribution a right, not something for which the recipients should be grateful.

This is an astonishing claim given the many consequentialist arguments that have repeatedly been put forward within political theory to support the correct form and content of property-related rights and duties. Indeed it is more common for justice to be called into question because of its tendency to support conformity

³⁶Ibid. 36.

to existing property laws and the status quo generally, whereas the principle of humanity is characteristically used to protest the suffering which so often arises from the enforcement of property rights and prompts calls for the reform of socially unacceptable property regimes.

Overall, it would appear that Tan has simply taken on board Rawls's starting point that a theory of justice is about the design of the basic institutions of a society and inferred that considerations of humanity are effectively excluded from such matters. While he does not go along with the standard dismissive talk of humanitarianism as "mere charity", a supererogatory requirement that does not give rise to moral obligations,³⁷ he nevertheless relegates the principle of humanity to direct personal interaction (which he calls "ethics") and excludes it from "justice" which concerns institutions. Tan does accept that the principle of humanity gives rise to moral duties, but declares that these do not extend to creating institutional duties, apart from those that arise in the process of delivery of humanitarian aid. The principle of humanity is thus mistakenly excluded from what Tan and others see as the main game, namely sorting out the inequalities that arise from the unfairness of the existing global economy. This is not a defensible position. It cannot, therefore, be satisfactory to support the distinctiveness of the cosmopolitan project on the basis of its focus on justice rather than humanity.

5 Conclusion

A number of different conclusions could be drawn from the arguments outlined above. One is that the disputes involved are merely terminological and can be avoided by adopting a more expansive terminology in which "justice" is given a more general content and a more lowly status so that it is taken to encompass all moral principles relevant to the distribution of benefits and burdens without giving it or anything within its compass an overriding superiority to all other considerations. However, underlying the terminology there are important matters of moral disagreement about the moral reasons which we should bring to bear on questions of global inequality which have considerable implications about the incidence and extent of our moral duties in this regard. Whether or not we should found the morality of principled redistribution of resources on the proof that existing international institutions are unfair and requiring only those who perpetrate or benefit from that unfairness to desist and compensate for the harm they have wrongly done does not itself depend on the terminology we adopt, but it is most clearly and effectively asserted on the basis of a conceptual scheme in which there is a clear distinction between justice and humanity without necessarily giving priority to either.

Realistically, this debate should be viewed within the rhetorical context in which it is widely assumed that, even if the principle of humanity does sometimes give rise to moral obligations and is not regarded as purely supererogatory, it does not

³⁷Ibid. 20, 22–24.

have such a powerful moral force as the discourse of “justice” when it comes to the adoption and enforcement of redistributive institutions. This is particularly the case in those societies where justice is closely associated with compensating victims for harms culpably caused to them by others. Thus, obtaining assent to the proposition that the destitution of those living in extreme poverty is a matter of “justice”, perhaps because it is caused by those who establish and unjustifiably benefit from unfair trading regimes (as Pogge argues and Tan echoes) is highly effective in identifying the strength and location of the obligation to relieve that deprivation. Hence, adopting the discourse of justice as a persuasive tool has its attractions.

Yet, even in this rhetorical context, there is a practical weakness in this approach because it makes out that our obligations rest in part on some dubious factual claims. It is not clear that existing global institutions are the sole or even the prime causes of poverty or that those who have benefited from existing trading orders do so as part of a zero-sum game in which their benefits flow from other people’s losses. This suggests that it is both effective and reasonable to distinguish justice and humanity and to utilize them both as a matter of exhortation, principled decision-making and institutional design. Indeed this is precisely what cosmopolitans often say that they are doing. Cosmopolitanism, it is often said, does not wish to supplant humanitarianism but to add to it or supplement it with the dimension of justice. I have argued that in practice, however, justice is taken to displace humanity, in part, perhaps due to its perceived or asserted moral priority and political force.

One way forward here is to bring “humanity” within the scope of a broad conception of justice in which “justice” has no necessary connection with fairness or desert, although these elements may feature within an umbrella concept of justice which encompasses every consideration of moral relevance to distribution or a wider range of issues. This is, however, a theoretically unstable and practically misleading strategy. It is theoretically unstable because the same distinctions that we have examined in relation to humanity and justice inevitably arise again in some other guise and under different labels. It is practically misleading because, when it comes to public debate, justice is firmly associated with merit and desert and will be generally understood as such.³⁸ Moreover, such an approach does not assist the cosmopolitan theorist in marking out a distinctive niche for what is felt to be a fresh and progressive moral position adapted to the problems of the era of globalization.

A more satisfactory resolution to this debate is to resurrect the idea that cosmopolitanism is to be identified with radical proposals for the relocation of political responsibility to the detriment of the nation-state and the enhancement of global governance with the objective of dealing more effectively with problems of poverty and inequality. This could be associated with taking the notion of equal worth more seriously than other approaches do, thus bringing this foundational principle more into the picture. It is plausible to claim that other theorists who subscribe to the principle of equal worth do not work through to its radical consequences and give only

³⁸Campbell, Tom D. 1974. Humanity Before Justice. *The British Journal of Political Science*. 4: 1–14.

token status to the idea of equal worth, as may be seen in their unjustified acceptance of nation states and tribal perspectives.

In this case, cosmopolitanism would be claiming to represent a significant moral advance, comparable to the paradigmatic moral shift that was involved in the move from general acceptance to general rejection of such social phenomena as slavery, gender discrimination, cruelty to animals and capital punishment. Such radical progressivism could well take on board the idea that a strong principle of humanity that gives moral priority to the eradication of suffering followed by the enhancement of human wellbeing for their own sakes is to be preferred to a desert-based principle of justice in which those and only those who cause harm have an overriding duty to correct or compensate for it. In which case, while both humanity and justice may feature within the cosmopolitan moral armory, the general rule would be: “humanity before justice”.

Feasibility Constraints and the Cosmopolitan Vision: Empirical Reasons for Choosing Justice Over Humanity

Holly Lawford-Smith

1 Introduction

Whether or not it is true that “ought implies can” throughout the unrestricted set of all normative claims, it is certainly true that it does within the restricted domain of political theory. After all, such theory is supposed to be action-guiding; it paints a picture of a better world and suggests that we move toward it, whether or not it offers us concrete suggestions on how to do so. In this paper, I shall concentrate on the “can” part of a currently somewhat fashionable “ought”: cosmopolitanism. More specifically, I will limit my discussion to a certain set of cosmopolitan proposals, namely those directed at ending or ameliorating global poverty. In the first part of the paper, I divide that subset of cosmopolitan proposals into two further sets, justice and humanity, depending on how each is grounded. By “ground” I mean the moral foundation of the proposal, which gives us reasons to act in certain ways. This division will allow the empirical literature to have some influence on which is the better ground. I will say more about what it takes for a proposal to be grounded in either justice or humanity in a subsequent section. In the second part of the paper, I will make a conceptual clarification about one of the sets, before proceeding to argue against that set in favor of the other. My argument will be that we should prefer to ground cosmopolitan proposals to end global poverty in justice, because that will give them a better chance of success. In the final part of the paper I will suggest that there are reasons to be cautious about that conclusion.

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I am grateful to Tom Campbell, Bob Goodin, Nic Southwood, Daniel Star and Brett Calcott for comments on earlier drafts of this paper; and to audiences at the International Global Ethics Association 2008 and the Australasian Association of Philosophy, Australian Division 2008, for helpful questions and comments, notably Gillian Brock, Samantha Brennan, Pablo Gilabert, John Cusbert, Wolfgang Schwarz, and Daniel Star.

2 Partitioning the Space

There is certainly no shortage of proposals suggesting ways of fulfilling cosmopolitan ideals or ending global poverty. Among these are proposals to radically open borders,¹ establish an international democracy,² institute a world government,³ or more minimally, to redistribute a greater amount of wealth from richer countries to poorer.⁴ This last suggestion is *prima facie* the most feasible, because it requires no radical restructuring of the world order, and in many cases requires only “more of the same”: member countries of the United Nations already contribute a certain monetary amount towards that end. In some cases countries meet or exceed UN targets (Norway, Denmark, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Sweden),⁵ in other cases countries fall well below it (the United States, Japan).⁶ The focus of this paper will be restricted to how we might motivate a realization of those targets, whatever they need to be to end global poverty. Pogge’s estimate is that the 2,735 million people living below the \$2 a day poverty line (if we accept this standard of poverty) consume only 1.3% of the global product, and would need only 1% more to avoid poverty. Given that the richer countries, with their 955 million citizens, have about 81% of the global product, Pogge is hardly unjustified in saying that “this problem is hardly unsolvable, in spite of its magnitude”.⁷ Of course, there are still issues to be decided here, such as whether we think that conditional upon there being plentiful resources, an international difference-principle which has the worst-off at or above the level of subsistence is sufficient to end global poverty, or whether poverty is something we define relative to those best-off, in which case we will be more concerned to level the playing field before global poverty is announced solved.

In the vernacular, cosmopolitanism can be very roughly characterized as the view that we ought to think of ourselves primarily as citizens of the world, rather than

¹Carens, Joseph. 1987. Aliens and Citizens: The Case for Open Borders. *The Review of Politics* 49: 251–273.

²Held, David. 1992. Democracy: From City-States to a Cosmopolitan Order? *Political Studies* 40: 345.

³There is at least popular discussion along these lines, but as Campbell notes in his “Questioning Cosmopolitan Justice” (published in the present volume), the proposal for world government is not particularly feasible, and as such lacks prominent advocates. But see, Cabrera, Luis. 2004. *Political Theory of Global Justice: A Cosmopolitan Case for the World State*. London: Routledge.

⁴Pogge, Thomas. 2002. *World Poverty and Human Rights*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Ch. 8. Many of these proposals are also concerned with more broadly cosmopolitan ends.

⁵From the 2003 Development Assistance Committee Report, when the United Nations’ target was 0.7% of every country’s Gross National Income (GNI). Five countries met or exceeded the targets, while four were at or below one fifth or the required amount. See: Singer, Peter and Tom Gregg. 2004. *How Ethical Is Australia? An Examination of Australia’s Record as a Global Citizen*. 22. Melbourne: Black Inc.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Pogge, Thomas. 2005. World Poverty and Human Rights. 1. *Ethics and International Affairs* 19/1: 1–7.

citizens of any locality, and that we ought to take ourselves to have obligations to others in virtue of our shared humanity, rather than in virtue of something like our shared national citizenship.⁸ Simon Caney puts the point more formally, arguing that the reasons the modern welfare state provides to justify the distribution of resources, and the convictions we have about what kinds of characteristics of a person are relevant to determining their entitlements, together entail that the application of distributive justice should be global.⁹ As philosophers, we are interested in broad ways of carving up the logical space of a given issue, and this issue is no exception. In a recent overview of the global distributive justice literature, Caney argues that we can divide the set of cosmopolitan proposals according to what their moral foundations are. Some are contractarian, arguing from a globalized original position; some are rights-based, arguing for the human right to resources (there are a range of possible positions here, from rights to subsistence through rights to an equal share); and some are goal-based, arguing to avoid harm and suffering, or maximize well-being or preference-satisfaction. One reason to avoid going this way, although it is a useful *descriptive* way to partition the proposals, is that any assessment of which is the best set of proposals would involve getting caught up in meta-ethical disputes. By getting caught up in that longstanding and complicated discussion we risk never getting to the discussion we are here interested in.

Thomas Pogge partitions the space of cosmopolitan proposals by asking what the object or subject of each proposal is. Are the proposals aimed at individuals or collectives? Or the *actions* of individuals or collectives? Or institutions? Or states of the world? Selecting one of these four possibilities yields one of four different kinds of cosmopolitanism: ethical (if individuals, collectives, or actions), legal or social justice (if institutions), or monistic (if states of the world).¹⁰ Pogge himself defends a variant of cosmopolitanism aimed at institutions, and so defends a brand of social justice cosmopolitanism. It is already clear that we could take one of these ways of partitioning the space and attempt to adjudicate which set of proposals are the strongest. Obviously, how we choose to carve up the space is relative to our theoretical purposes. The more basic a partitioning we can get, the more ruling out we can do – conditional upon finding good reasons to suppose one set systematically stronger than the others. If we divide the space one hundred different ways and find good reasons to rule out three of those, that is progress, but rather minimal progress. If we find a way to divide the space roughly in half, and find good reasons to prefer one group to the other, that is substantially more progress. I want to suggest that there is a precedent in the literature for an interesting and basic partitioning along exactly those latter lines.

⁸Kleingeld, Pauline and Eric Brown. 2006. Cosmopolitanism. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/cosmopolitanism/>. Accessed 23 October 2008.

⁹Caney, Simon. 2001. Review Article: International Distributive Justice. *Political Studies* 49: 974–977; 977.

¹⁰Pogge, Thomas and David Miller. 2003. Cosmopolitanism: A Debate. *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 5: 86–91.

3 Justice Versus Humanity

Brian Barry argues that there is an important distinction between certain cosmopolitan proposals and others; namely, whether they are grounded in appeals to *justice* or appeals to *humanity*.¹¹ Richard Shapcott argues that this distinction can be informative for cosmopolitan discussions.¹² Two prominent cosmopolitan theorists align themselves firmly with one each of these. For the rest of this paper, I shall be concentrating on justice and humanity as grounds of proposals to end global poverty, and I shall be taking as representative of each of those grounds Thomas Pogge (for justice) and Tom Campbell (for humanity). Although I believe Campbell to be one of the strongest contemporary advocates of the humanity position, I am less certain of whether Pogge can be taken to be representative, or is in fact an outlier with regard to others defending the justice approach. Insofar as he is representative, then the argument I will make here should be taken to generalize across other justice-grounded positions. If he is not, then the argument here is more local, in that it comments on a prominent dispute between Pogge and Campbell, or Pogge and humanity-grounded positions. Before proceeding to define each of justice and humanity as grounds of cosmopolitan positions, and then moving on to consider which of these is best, it is important to make a methodological point quite clear. There are two distinct projects we might be interested in. One is to discover a moral truth: which of justice or humanity is the *true* ground of the moral argument towards a cosmopolitan alleviation of global poverty? The other is to discover the motivational power of each. Which of justice or humanity, as grounds, give cosmopolitan proposals to end global poverty the greatest likelihood of success? I am concerned here with answering only the second question. I ask “how *should* we ground cosmopolitan proposals?” I bracket the first question for similar reasons to why I chose to avoid Caney’s characterization of the logical space, i.e. to avoid adjudication of meta-ethical issues. This is not to say that I think the question unimportant, or that I think that the question of moral truth is *irrelevant* to the question of motivational power. It is only to say that these are not issues I will address here.

Campbell states that he takes justice, as a ground for cosmopolitan proposals, to be a moral value roughly akin to fairness, desert, and merit, and he takes humanity, as an alternative ground, to be a moral value roughly akin to benevolence, altruism, and caring.¹³ To illustrate more fully what is involved in each of these grounds, I will make use of the disagreement in the literature between Pogge and Campbell. Pogge has argued for the end of global poverty by appealing to a conception of justice.

¹¹ Barry, Brian. 1982. Humanity and justice in global perspective. In *Nomos XXIV: Ethics, Economics and the Law*, eds. J. R. Pennock and J. W. Chapman, 219–252. New York: New York University Press.

¹² Shapcott, Richard. 2008. Anti-Cosmopolitanism, Pluralism, and the Cosmopolitan Harm Principle. *Review of International Studies* 34: 185–205.

¹³ Campbell, Tom. 2007. Poverty as a Violation of Human Rights: Inhumanity or Injustice? In *Freedom From Poverty as a Human Right*, ed. Thomas Pogge. 55–74. Oxford: Oxford University Press (with UNESCO). See also his essay in Chapter 8.

His argument is two-fold. First of all, he argues that almost everyone is culpable for the gross injustice of the current world order. From this culpability, he argues, there derive duties of reparation or compensation. People are culpable *because* they contribute to unjust institutions, and benefit, whether directly or indirectly, from the way the world is.¹⁴ To emphasize the point: global poverty is an injustice, caused and perpetuated by the rich(er), and injured parties are entitled to remedy.

Campbell replied to Pogge that it is not those who are *culpable* who should be targeted as a means to ending global poverty.¹⁵ It is, rather, those who have the means to solve the problem.¹⁶ Pogge is lucky, because there is a coincidence between those who are culpable and those who can provide aid, i.e. those in better-off countries. But that coincidence is contingent, rather than being a conceptual result of his theory. Campbell argues that the theory fails to account for, for example, poverty as a result of natural disasters, poverty that is not the result of the culpable conduct of others. A better ground, Campbell contends, is the moral principle of humanity, which holds that there is a straightforward correlation between the existence of suffering and our moral duty to end or minimize it. *Everywhere* that there is suffering, such as that caused by the existence of poverty, there will be a duty to minimize it – and that is likely to cover more cases overall than appeal to justice and the culpable conduct of others.¹⁷ Our question, remember, is which of justice and humanity provide the most motivating ground for cosmopolitan proposals to end global poverty.

4 The Charity Interpretation of Humanity

There is one, not uncommon, way of understanding the humanity position, which makes it look extraordinarily weak. I suspect it is this reading which has made people dismissive of the approach in the past. On certain understandings of “humanity”, it is not unreasonable to think that *voluntariness* is conceptually necessary to it. After all, Campbell himself gave altruism as a close notion, and voluntariness certainly seems to be conceptually necessary to altruism. The worry is that if it is only voluntary, aid grounded in humanity is not strong enough to bring about an end to

¹⁴Pogge, Thomas. 1992. Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty. *Ethics* 103/1: 48–75: 54; and Pogge, Thomas. 1993. Cosmopolitanism. In *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*, eds. Robert Goodin and Philip Pettit. 312–331. Oxford: Blackwell.

¹⁵Campbell, Tom. 1974. Humanity Before Justice. *British Journal of Political Science* 4: 1–16; Campbell, Tom. 2006. *Rights: A Critical Introduction*. 157–170. New York: Routledge.

¹⁶See also, for a similar response: Goodin, Robert. 1985. *Protecting the Vulnerable*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

¹⁷Another way to frame this issue, rather than as a dichotomy between the backward-looking assigning of culpability and the forward-looking focus on capacities, is in terms of perfect versus imperfect duties. You might think that justice is a perfect duty, e.g. to never cause harm, while humanity is an imperfect duty, e.g. to assist others *sometimes*. That way of framing the two would have interestingly different implications.

global poverty. After all, contributions toward UN targets, and individual donations to international charities, have both failed so far to do a great deal toward solving the global problem. It is presumably uncontroversial that countries have a strong incentive to defect on commitments to voluntary contribution, and there is, currently, no international institution capable of punishing defection and thus improving “voluntary” cooperation. It is unlikely that we can solve this pressing global problem by leaving contribution completely voluntary.

And we do not get out of this problem by attempting to somehow make humanity compatible with enforcement. If it is conceptually necessary to action grounded in humanity that it be done voluntarily, then removing the aspect of voluntariness – by coercing, or introducing sanctions, for example – means that we are dealing with something other than humanity. I take it that much of the dismissal of humanity as a ground for proposals to end global poverty is based on this interpretation of humanity as voluntary or beneficent action. Given that that interpretation makes the notion insufficient to the task for which it is intended, we have two choices available to us. Either we modify the concept to humanity in a way that makes it compatible with enforcement, or we *reject* the interpretation that makes voluntariness conceptually necessary to it.¹⁸ Campbell makes the second choice.

In a recent keynote address, one of Campbell’s main conclusions was that “we must reject the view that humanity does not provide grounds for coercion”.¹⁹ Recall what the principle of humanity said – namely that where there is suffering, there is a straightforward duty (on others) to aid. While there might be nearby concepts that require aid to be voluntary, this is not one of them. The duty of humanity is perfectly able to be backed by sanctions, and indeed this is exactly what Campbell recommends.

5 Justice and Humanity as Positive and Negative Duties

From the existence of suffering in the world, the principle of humanity derives a duty to provide aid. A failure to provide such aid in spite of suffering is, then, a failure of *positive duty*. We *omit* to do something which we have a duty to do. (Or, we omitted in the past to do something that we ought to have done.) Inversely, Pogge’s formulation of the justice ground argued that the suffering caused by global poverty continues to exist because of our culpable conduct. We have a duty to stop whatever actions of ours are conceivably causing or contributing to the unjust world order that perpetuates such suffering. Failure to stop doing so is a failure of *negative duty*, the duty to refrain from harming. We *act* in a way we ought not to.

¹⁸On the imperfect duties model, there is a certain kind of voluntariness, namely the option to choose *when* the duty will be exercised. There is not, however, the option to choose *whether it will be exercised at all*, which is my concern here.

¹⁹Campbell, Tom. June 2008. Questioning Cosmopolitan Justice. International Global Ethics Association keynote address. Melbourne: Australia. (See Chapter 8.)

I have just claimed that the injustice implicit in global poverty maps onto a failure of negative duty, while the inhumanity implicit in global poverty maps onto a failure of positive duty. It is possible, but very awkward, to map these the other way around. For instance, one might argue that it is an injustice to omit to do one's duty, where one's duty is to *refrain* from acting in certain ways. Or one might omit to *change one's current trajectory*, or actions. Likewise one might argue that it is an inhumanity to *act in a way that fails to alleviate suffering*, e.g. in a choice between providing aid to two people, where *a* is suffering and *b* is flourishing, one might nonetheless provide resources to *b* rather than *a*, even when there are no countervailing reasons to do so. It is certainly possible to labor this point, but I think it is a highly unnatural way of describing the events. Even in the case where there is an action of giving *b* resources, there *remains* the fact that one had a duty of humanity to *a* in virtue of *a*'s suffering, and one failed to fulfill that duty. Likewise *mutatis mutandis*, for the injustice case. I draw this connection between the injustice and inhumanity implicit in global poverty, and negative and positive duties, in order to make the point that the injustice in question here involves *actions*, while the inhumanity in question involves *omissions*. The injustice of global poverty is the action of harming, or making others worse-off, in spite of a negative duty to refrain from so doing. The inhumanity of global poverty is the inaction of failing to provide aid or make others better-off despite a positive duty to do so. The reasons for aligning those positive and negative duties with acts and omissions respectively will become clear in the subsequent section.

6 Practical Argument Against Humanity

If I am correct in thinking there is a consonance between the injustice Pogge points to and “action”, and the inhumanity Campbell claims and “omission”, then an obvious place to look to the empirical literature for help is to work being done on the acts/omissions distinction. A moral psychology research lab recently ran a large-scale online study directed at testing the availability of three principles to conscious moral reasoning.²⁰ The “principle” that actions causing harm are morally worse than omissions causing equivalent harm was one of the three principles tested. Scenarios directed at testing that principle were coupled together, the only difference-maker being whether the scenario featured harm as a result of an act, or an omission. For example, one set of scenarios was the classic trolley problem. In the first scenario of the pair, respondents were asked to consider a person's throwing a fat man onto some railway tracks in order to stop a cart from killing three people; in the second scenario of the pair, respondents were asked to consider a person's *failing* to pull a

²⁰ Respondents were on average 37 years old, 58% were male (a slight male bias), mostly from the US, UK and Canada, and 25% had some background in moral philosophy. 591 (minus 65, for control reasons) justifications were analyzed by the research lab. Respondents were asked to rank scenarios from “forbidden” through “permissible” to “obligatory”, on a scale from 1 to 7 respectively.

lever which would stop a platform from opening up and dropping a fat man onto the tracks below, stopping a cart from killing three people.²¹

The results were that “across scenarios with different content, subjects judged action as worse than omission”. Subjects “readily provided sufficient justifications for the action principle”.²² This last point is significant. Another principle being tested by the research lab was the “contact principle”, the principle that harms involving direct contact between individuals are morally worse than harms not involving direct contact (think fistfight vs. gunfight). Usually once participants realized they were appealing to this principle, they noticed that it was fallacious and reconsidered their previous judgments. Not so with the “action principle” – 95% of all sufficient justifications cited the target principle, i.e. the “principle” that actions causing harm are morally worse than omissions with equivalent consequences. (What it is to be a “sufficient” justification is just to provide satisfactory reasons for the judgment.) What are the implications of this experiment for the question of which of humanity or justice provides a proposal to end global poverty with the greatest likelihood of success?

One implication I want to suggest is that however widely rejected in the philosophical literature the acts/omissions distinction happens to be,²³ it is nonetheless a distinction endorsed by the folk. That is the lesson the moral psychology experiment suggests.²⁴ Therefore, the distinction should be taken seriously as a constraint when thinking about which of the cosmopolitan proposals is most likely to succeed. Let me make the argument here perfectly explicit:

People take action causing harm to be morally worse than omission causing harm.

The justice approach argues that people are *acting* in a way they ought not, i.e. contributing to and benefiting from an unjust world order. The humanity approach to ending global poverty argues that people are *omitting* to do what they ought, i.e. contribute appropriately to ending suffering.²⁵

There is a correlation between the moral gravity of action or inaction, and the likelihood of remedial action.

Therefore: If given the choice between promoting a cosmopolitan proposal to end global poverty by grounding it in justice or in humanity, one should choose justice, because it is more likely to motivate action.

²¹Cushman, Fiery, Liane Young and Marc Hauser. 2006. The Role of Conscious Reasoning and Intuition in Moral Judgements: Testing Three Principles of Harm. *Psychological Science* 17: 1082–1089.

²²Ibid. 1085.

²³And it is – see e.g. Bennett, Jonathan. 1983. Positive and Negative Relevance. *American Philosophical Quarterly* 20:183–194; Singer, Peter. 1979. *Practical Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Hare, Richard Mervyn. 1981. *Moral Thinking: Its Levels, Method and Point*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

²⁴Of course, it would be desirable to have more experiments corroborate this result.

²⁵One way to block this premise is to deny the causal efficacy of Pogge’s argument. If people do not *believe* themselves to be culpable in the way he says they are, then they are unlikely to feel the guilt or shame that might motivate them to take remedial action.

There are two important questions to ask about this conclusion. The first is whether there are reasons to be cautious about concluding in univocal favor of the justice ground. The second is whether the conclusion is universal, whether it applies across all of the countries of the world. As a response to the first worry, I will present some further empirical data, this time from experiments on altruistic punishment, to suggest that there are reasons to be cautious about wholeheartedly embracing the justice approach. As a response to the second worry, I will give a conditional argument for the conclusion that the first premise does not generalize.

Before that, let me address one other issue. So far I have said nothing in support of one of the premises in the previous argument, namely premise three. I claimed that there is a correlation between the moral gravity of an action or inaction, and a likelihood of remedial action. I think this is at least *prima facie* intuitive. Note that I am only claiming *likelihood* here; while there is not a necessary correlation between the two, there is certainly a correlation. To claim a necessary correlation would be to support strict judgment internalism, which is a highly controversial and, it seems, empirically under-supported position in the literature. One response to premise three might be that it seems just as plausible to suppose that the greater the moral gravity of an action or inaction, the more debilitating the guilt, rather than its pressing toward remedial action. And if that is true, then it looks like making people culpable or blameworthy in the way that the justice ground does, rather than asking them to do something (something they might consider supererogatory, even though we think there is a moral duty toward it), might have the opposite effect than we had hoped. That may well be true; I can only suggest at this stage that one way to avoid the debilitating effect of moral guilt is to provide people with ways to discharge their duties. Pogge does this: he does not merely point the finger and claim that everyone is culpable for the grossly unjust world order; he argues that everyone is culpable and from that culpability argues that we have perfectly manageable duties of reparation. If there is something we can do to compensate for our blameworthiness, and that something is not overly-demanding, then it is reasonable to expect that we can sidestep the “guilt as debilitating and nothing more” objection. One other response we might make is to say that regardless of the strength of the connection between moral guilt and remedial action, it certainly seems that remedial action is a lot more likely when moral guilt or pressure is present, than when it is not.

7 Reasons to be Cautious About the Justice Approach

Ernst Fehr and Bettina Rockenbach set out to test whether sanctions can have a detrimental effect on human altruism. They used college students as participants,²⁶ and set up one-shot (no recurring interaction) experiments between an “investor” and a “trustee”. The experiments went roughly as follows. The investor starts the

²⁶Therefore the caveats given in the discussion over norms of fairness later in this section also obtain here.

game with ten money units. She chooses how much of this to transfer to the trustee. Whatever she transfers is automatically tripled. The trustee then chooses how much of the investor's tripled investment to transfer back to her. An equal payoff for both players is achieved when two-thirds of the tripled transfer is returned to the investor. Transfers were classed as "low" if the investor requested an equal payoff, and classed as "high" if she requested more than an equal payoff.

In a subset of these experiments, the experimenters allowed the investor to impose a sanction on the trustee, such that if less than the requested amount was back-transferred, a penalty was imposed. What is striking about Fehr and Rockenbach's results is that in cases where the requested back-transfer was classed as "high" (i.e. more than an equal share was requested), and a sanction was imposed in an attempt to secure the requested amount, trustees on average returned only 22% of the tripled investment. Contrast this result with the additional result that if investors deliberately chose to refrain from imposing the sanction when it was available, 60.1% of the tripled investment was returned on average. That means that *an average of nearly 40% of the amount received depended entirely on whether or not the sanction was imposed to secure the requested amount*. The difference between whether sanctions were imposed to secure an equal or higher payoff for the investor is also significant. If the sanction was used in order to secure the investor's own advantage over the trustee, there was not only the significant reduction in back-transfer just mentioned, but also the startling result that 46% of all trustees back-transferred *nothing*.²⁷ These results are corroborated in public goods games, where subjects punish non-contributors at a cost to themselves.²⁸ Such punishment has been found present whether strategic (increasing the likelihood of cooperation in future rounds) or not. Ernst Fehr and Simon Gächter found that with punishment, cooperation is much higher irrespective of whether interactions with current group members will recur, and highest (near full cooperation) where there is a fixed social group, i.e. repeat interaction is guaranteed.²⁹

The moral we can take from this story, and the lesson that Fehr and Rockenbach themselves draw from the experiments, is that the moral legitimacy of the sanction is a crucial factor.³⁰ The implication the experiment has for our concern is that it is crucial that we recognize the importance of people seeing the reasons for sanctions toward cosmopolitan ends as *fair* or *justified* – otherwise there is a risk of retaliation

²⁷Fehr, Ernst and Bettina Rockenbach. 2003. Detrimental Effects of Sanctions on Human Altruism. *Nature* 422: 137–140.

²⁸Ostrom, Elinor, James Walker, and Roy Gardner found that in a 25-round public goods game, individuals would fine non-contributors even though the cost to them accrued as a benefit to the group as a whole. See Ostrom, Elinor, Walker, J., and R. Gardner. 1992. Covenants With and Without a Sword: Self-Governance is Possible. *American Political Science Review* 86: 404–417.

²⁹Fehr, Ernst and Simon Gächter. 2000. Cooperation and Punishment. *American Economic Review* 90: 980–994.

³⁰Fehr, Ernst and Bettina Rockenbach. 2003. op. cit. 140. See also: Tyler, Tom. (1990) 2006. *Why People Obey the Law*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

as above. It is not only that there is a threat to voluntary contributions by individuals, but also there is a threat to their more indirect behavior, such as voting for governments which pledge appropriate donations, and supporting institutions which work toward targets such as those set by the UN.

It is important to recognize that these experiments rest on norms of fairness which are relative to context. Initially, ultimatum games³¹ were established to reject the economists' assumption that people will always behave in a self-interested manner. Experiments showed that in one-shot experiments between two people, even when there is no chance of a repeat interaction, offers of how to divide up a given resource would tend toward equal division.³² Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis have since debunked the general conclusion – usually obtained from experiments on university students – that ultimatum games result in a modal offer of 50%, citing experiments across twelve countries and four continents.³³ They found that while the previous studies had shown norms of fairness between 43–48%, their cross-cultural studies showed a range of 26–58%. Their conclusion was that two conditions impacted significantly upon behavioral variation between groups; namely, to what extent members of the group engaged in buying, selling, and working for a wage (“market integration”), and to what extent production of goods was a collective task rather than an individual one (“cooperation in production”).³⁴ These cross-cultural differences will be important in the next section.

³¹In these games, the first player is given a certain amount of money, from which she proposes some proportion to a second player. If the second player refuses the offer, both players receive nothing. Assumptions of self-interestedness predict that the first player will keep as much as possible for herself, while the second player will accept anything above zero. As it turns out, the median offer of the first player is about 50% of the total amount of money, and the second player typically rejects anything below 30%. Experimenters take this to refute the assumption of purely self-interested behavior, in favor of established norms of fairness (Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. 2006. *Social Preferences, Homo Economicus, and Zoon Politikon*. In *Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*, eds. Robert Goodin and Charles Tilly. Oxford: Oxford University Press).

³²See, for example, Colin Camerer and Richard H. Thaler. 1995. Anomalies: Ultimatums, Dictators and Manners. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9:209–219; Werner Güth and Reinhard Tietz. 1990. Ultimatum Bargaining Behavior: A Survey and Comparison of Experimental Results. *Journal of Economic Psychology* 11: 417–449; Alvin E. Roth, Vesna Prasnikar, Masahiro Okuno-Fujiwara, and Shmuel Zamir. 1991. Bargaining and Market Behavior in Jerusalem, Ljubljana, Pittsburgh and Tokyo: An Experimental Study. *American Economic Review* 81: 1068–1095.

³³These included five groups of foragers, four groups of horticulturalists, four pastoral herding groups, and two farming groups. Ethnographic details can be found in (Henrich, Joseph, Robert Boyd, Samuel Bowles, Colin Camerer, Ernst Fehr, Herbert Gintis, Richard McElreath, Michael Alvard, Abigail Barr, Jean Ensminger, Kim Hill, Francisco Gil-White, Michael Gurven, Frank Marlowe, John Q. Patton, Natalie Smith, and David Tracer. 2005. “Economic Man” in Cross-Cultural Perspective: Behavioural Experiments in 15 Small-Scale Societies. *Behavioural and Brain Sciences* 28: 795–855).

³⁴Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. 2006. op. cit. 178.

8 Generalizing the Results

Richard Nisbett has argued that we can make broad distinctions between cultures with regard to their ways of reasoning.³⁵ His main claim is that individuals from East Asian cultures (“principally the people of China, Korea and Japan”) tend, on average, to depart significantly in ways of thinking from individuals from Western cultures (“primarily Europeans, Americans, and citizens of the British Commonwealth”).³⁶ Nisbett, accompanied by his students and colleagues, has endeavored to test the differences between these two broad cultural groups with respect to science and mathematics, attention and perception, causal inference, organization of knowledge, and reasoning. After researchers noticed how differently American and Chinese newspapers reported two mass murders, they set about testing the hypothesis that American and Chinese students would respond to cases in the same way the papers did. If the hypothesis was right, Chinese students would tend to make more situational attributions, and Americans more dispositional ones. The results were as predicted, and the researchers concluded that East Asians are less susceptible, on the whole, to the fundamental attribution error.³⁷

Nisbett’s argument has been criticized as being too homogenizing of what are incredibly heterogeneous cultural groups, but also and more importantly for ignoring the fact that the differences between individuals within a group designated as “Western” may be far greater than the differences between the two groups he concentrates on. In one case, the empirical data he pointed to looked to support his hypothesis that East Asians and Westerners think differently – until it was revealed that the French, Italians and Germans also come out “East Asian” according to his established categories.³⁸ His broad conclusion however, that Westerners and East Asians think differently, has been taken as a starting point in some more recent experimental philosophy, in which a group of researchers have tested the hypothesis that members of different cultures think differently, especially in moral cases.

A group of experimental philosophers have recently tested the conjecture that members of East Asian societies are more likely to appeal to broadly utilitarian moral paradigms, because of the nature of their membership in collectivist cultures, while members of Western cultures are more likely to appeal to broadly individualist moral paradigms, because of the nature of their membership in societies focused

³⁵Nisbett, Richard. 2003. *The Geography of Thought*. New York: Free Press.

³⁶Ibid, p. xvi.

³⁷Dispositional attributions are those invoking a person’s character or innate tendencies, and situational attributions are those which appeal to context and environment. The fundamental attribution error is the tendency people have to attribute a person’s failing to the “kind” of person they are, rather than to their situation. Morris, Michael, and Kaiping Peng. 1994. Culture and Cause: American and Chinese attributions for social and physical events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 67: 949–971.

³⁸Ortner, Sherry. 2003. East Brain, West Brain. *New York Times*. <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9804E5DA163BF933A15757C0A9659C8B63>. Accessed July 18, 2008.

on individuals, steeped in heavy rights-discourse.³⁹ The subjects of their experiments were Americans of predominantly European descent, and Chinese living in the People's Republic of China. The case the subjects were asked to consider is known as “the magistrate and the mob”, and may be familiar to some readers from undergraduate courses in moral philosophy. The case is one in which a magistrate is asked to consider prosecuting an innocent man, in order to avoid racial riots in the city. Some crime has been committed, for which the majority is looking for a scapegoat from the minority culture. Prosecuting the innocent man would stop the great deal of harm which would inevitably ensue from the racial riots. It is a classic case of sacrificing the one to save the many. The experimental philosophers' hypothesis was that members of individualist cultures, used to the language of rights and from cultures founded upon liberal ideas about individuals pursuing their own ideas of the good, are more likely to appeal to categorical or deontological moral principles; while members of collectivist cultures, apparently shown to have a conception of the self wherein social relationships take priority,⁴⁰ are more likely to appeal to utilitarian moral principles, especially those that allow actions “for the good of the group”.

It turns out that Nisbett's original conjecture was vindicated, at least in these experiments. The American subjects were significantly more likely to think that the magistrate was wrong to prosecute the innocent man than the Chinese subjects were. Chinese subjects were also more likely to hold the potential rioters to be morally blameworthy.⁴¹ So it looks as if there is at least some initial evidence supporting the conjecture that members of collectivist cultures (e.g. China, Cuba, South Korea, Vietnam) are likely to be more utilitarian in their moral reasoning, while members of individualist cultures (e.g. America, Canada, Australia) are likely to be more deontological or categorical. If that conclusion is supported by further empirical research, then the following argument is valid:

1. The acts/omissions experiment suggests that justice is the best practical ground for cosmopolitan proposals to end global poverty for the US, UK and Canada
2. Justice is a deontological value, while humanity is a utilitarian value (*prima facie* plausible)
3. Members of collectivist cultures appeal to a more broadly utilitarian morality, while members of individualist cultures appeal to a more broadly deontological morality

Therefore: Justice is not likely to be the best ground for cosmopolitan proposals universally. Appropriate grounds might be relative to culture – perhaps the greatest

³⁹Peng, Kaiping, Shaun Nichols, John Doris, and Steven Stich. (Unpublished manuscript). Discussed in Doris, John, and Alexandra Plakias. 2007. How to Argue about Disagreement: Evaluative Diversity and Moral Realism. In *Moral Psychology*, Volume 2: *The Cognitive Science of Morality*, ed. Walter Sinnott-Armstrong. 323. Cambridge: MIT Press.

⁴⁰Nisbett, Richard. 2003. *op. cit.*

⁴¹Peng et al. 2007. *op. cit.*

chance of ending global poverty will come from grounding proposals given to collectivist cultures in humanity, and proposals given to individualist cultures in justice.

9 Conclusion

In this paper I have been concerned with the distinction made in cosmopolitan circles between injustice and inhumanity as the ground of our obligations to the world's poor. I have asked the practical question of how we should *present* those obligations to the folk. Experimental evidence suggests that people make a robust distinction between acts and omissions, which I have argued tracks the failures of negative and positive duty implicit in injustice and inhumanity respectively. Because people take harm caused by action to be much worse than harm caused by omission, I suggested that it is better to ground cosmopolitan proposals in justice, because the gravity of the injustice is more likely to motivate people to take action. But further experimental results give us reasons to be cautious about that conclusion. We have reason to think that the empirical results which inspired the first conclusion may be culture-specific. Thus the final conclusion of the paper is to suggest that appropriate grounds of cosmopolitan proposals to end global poverty may well be relative to culture, and this is a conclusion that has implications for policy-making and all those concerned to take feasibility constraints for political theory seriously.

Part II
Global Institutions

Do Cosmopolitan Ethics and Cosmopolitan Democracy Imply Each Other?

Carol C. Gould

1 Introduction

What is the relation between global ethics and global politics? Increasingly, we have come to acknowledge the importance of recognizing everyone everywhere as an equal and, along with that, the requirement of broadening our perspectives in order to take account of the fundamental needs and interests of distant others. But does this sort of global outlook also require us to commit ourselves to achieving cosmopolitan democracy or perhaps even world government? This question goes beyond the usual consideration of the meaning and justification of transnational forms of democracy, taken as a question within democratic theory, to address the specifically political implications of efforts to develop a truly global ethics, one that recognizes people's diversity while acknowledging their equality. In a sense, this may simply be a version of the more general question of the relation of normative ethics to political institutions. But here I will focus on the somewhat more delimited question of whether the new project of global ethics also requires a commitment to transnational forms of democracy.

One of the main ways that theorists have approached the question of the relation of global ethics to politics is by analyzing the implications of moral cosmopolitanism for conceptions of global justice. However, this does not yet address the implications of cosmopolitanism for democratic theory. Correlatively, although various theorists have presented arguments and practical designs for cosmopolitan democracy, most notably David Held and Daniele Archibugi,¹ the basis of these proposals in ethics remains rather undeveloped, though Held does advance some values that he holds support the new forms of democracy, including agency and

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¹See, for example, Held, David. 1995. *Democracy and the Global Order*. Cambridge: Polity Press; and Archibugi, Daniele. 2008. *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens: Toward Cosmopolitan Democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

consent.² This paper thus addresses the interrelations between cosmopolitanism in ethics and in politics, and to jump to the paper's conclusion in a preliminary way here, we can say that the answer to the title question about mutual implication will be, perhaps predictably, that it depends: that is, it is a function of the way both cosmopolitan ethics and democracy are interpreted. However, lest this seem to involve a mere semantic appeal to the definition of terms, we can indicate that there are in fact several interesting ways in which the two philosophical enterprises of cosmopolitan ethics and cosmopolitan democracy will be seen to mutually implicate each other, and some arguments for thinking that these two projects should move in tandem.

2 Definitions of Cosmopolitanism, Moral and Political

It will be useful to begin by considering how the notion of moral cosmopolitanism has recently been discussed. According to Thomas Pogge in *World Poverty and Human Rights*, moral cosmopolitanism is the view "that every human being has a global stature as the ultimate unit of moral concern".³ Like Pogge, I have in previous work drawn a distinction between such *moral* cosmopolitanism – interpreted in terms of recognizing the equal freedom and human rights of all people – and *political* cosmopolitanism which pertains to the design of institutions in a way that recognizes people's equality and works to realize their rights.⁴ Other writers have gone on to distinguish between moderate and strict (or extreme) cosmopolitanism or between strong and weak versions, etc., largely depending on the conception of the duties or obligations owed to compatriots and to all other human beings.⁵

In the case of some cosmopolitan theorists, however, the separation between moral and political cosmopolitanism becomes a diremption, not to be breached. This view is presented especially neatly by Kok-Chor Tan when he writes:

Moral cosmopolitanism simply says that the individual is the ultimate unit of moral worth and concern, and that how we ought to act or what kinds of institutions we ought to establish should be based on an impartial consideration of the claims of each person who would be affected by our choices. In other words, moral cosmopolitanism is not concerned directly with the question of how global institutions are to be ordered, but with the justificatory basis of these institutions. And nothing in this interpretation of cosmopolitanism necessitates the idea of a world state.⁶

²Held, David. 2004. *Global Covenant*. 170–178. Cambridge: Polity Press.

³Pogge, Thomas. 2002. *World Poverty and Human Rights*. 169. Cambridge: Polity Press.

⁴Gould, Carol C. 2004. *Globalizing Democracy and Human Rights*. 166. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁵See Scheffler, Samuel. 2001. *Boundaries and Allegiances*. New York: Oxford University Press; Miller, David. 1998. The Limits of Cosmopolitan Justice. In *International Society*, eds. David R. Mapel and Terry Nardin, 164–182. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

⁶Tan, Kok-Chor. 2004. *Justice Without Borders: Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism, and Patriotism*. 94. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

It is clear from these initial reflections that even the notion of moral cosmopolitanism, not to speak of the more general notion of cosmopolitanism itself, is contested. There is the question of whether moral cosmopolitanism concerns justification or instead operates more practically by requiring the social recognition of people's equal rights. If we conceive of cosmopolitanism simply in terms of impartial consideration of people's interests, it would seem that all or nearly all modern moral theories could themselves be classed as cosmopolitan. But this would render the notion highly general and perhaps without much interest.⁷ An alternative perspective, emerging from the Hegelian/Marxist tradition in social philosophy, would distinguish ethics from morality, and see the former as requiring attention to social practices of recognition, where norms arise from these contexts of mutual recognition.⁸

In a somewhat different vein, Pauline Kleingeld and Eric Brown, in the influential Stanford Encyclopedia article on cosmopolitanism, characterize moral cosmopolitanism in terms of specific obligations it lays on us to *help* others around the world. They write:

The most common cosmopolitanism—*moral* cosmopolitanism—does not always call itself such. But just as ancient cosmopolitanism was fundamentally a “moral” commitment to helping human beings as such, much contemporary moral philosophy insists on the duty to aid foreigners who are starving or otherwise suffering, or at least on the duty to respect and promote basic human rights and justice.⁹

Needless to say, the overarching concept of cosmopolitanism itself is highly variable. Perhaps surprisingly in view of the predominant individualist interpretation, Kleingeld and Brown emphasize what they call a commitment to *community*, whether moral or actual:

Every cosmopolitan argues for some community among all human beings, regardless of social and political affiliation. For some, what should be shared is simply moral community, which means only that living a good human life requires serving the universal community by helping human beings as such, perhaps by promoting the realization of justice and the guarantee of human rights. Others conceptualize the universal community in terms of political institutions to be shared by all, in terms of cultural expressions to be appreciated by all, or in terms of economic markets that should be open to all.¹⁰

I think the emphasis on one big community of whatever sort is a little misleading, and should be restricted to more delimited forms of social organization, as will become clear later. Yet this account already points to a certain connection to politics, in its reference to a possible “universal community in terms of political institutions to be shared by all”.

⁷As argued by Tom Campbell in Chapter 8.

⁸As explicated by Stan van Hooft in Chapter 3.

⁹Kleingeld, Pauline and Eric Brown. 2006. Cosmopolitanism. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/cosmopolitanism/>. Accessed April, 2009.

¹⁰Ibid.

Political cosmopolitanism, sometimes held to follow from moral cosmopolitanism, has also been variously interpreted. Thus this same article about cosmopolitanism continues:

Some advocate a centralized world state, some favor a federal system with a comprehensive global body of limited power, some would prefer more limited international political institutions that focus on particular concerns (e.g., war crimes, environmental preservation), and some defend a different alternative altogether.¹¹

In what follows, I will focus on what could be called “cosmopolitan ethics” rather than on the potentially more abstract notion of moral cosmopolitanism, taking the latter as limited to interpersonal moral obligations or duties. The emphasis of cosmopolitan ethics will be on a distinctively social ethics of cosmopolitanism. It is an approach that centers on the fulfillment of people’s human rights and on an inclusively egalitarian approach to people in social life. Other important dimensions of cosmopolitan ethics will emerge later, including the importance of cultivating solidarity (on a certain interpretation), but for now the focus will be on human rights and on the recognition of equal agency as normative desiderata.

It will be helpful to briefly clarify the social ontology that underlies such a cosmopolitan ethics and then go on to consider the key question as to whether such an ethics requires the introduction of cosmopolitan democracy, or at least transnational democracy. The forms of democracy evoked by cosmopolitan ethics can then be distinguished from an overarching conception of global democracy, on the one hand, and from modest appeals to bare accountability in global affairs (rather than the stronger democratic accountability) on the other. Cosmopolitan democratic forms of this sort can also be seen to be consistent with particularistic commitments to local communities on a certain interpretation. In the final section, I will briefly revisit the issue of cosmopolitan ethics and point to the sorts of normative perspectives that would reciprocally be needed if cosmopolitan or transnational democracy is to flourish.

3 Cosmopolitan Ethics: Equal Agency, Human Rights, and Social Ontology

A cosmopolitan ethics enjoins giving equal moral consideration to everyone, but I suggest that the consideration in question functions as more than a principle by which we can justify the selection of the institutions of distributive justice (contra Tan) and indeed requires more than simply the rational recognition of people’s abstract equality. Rather, as a practical ethics, it calls for a concrete recognition of people’s differentiated needs and interests. Certainly, it is possible to focus on the abstract equality and universality that this recognition itself involves, by abstracting from the variety of practices and the diverse forms of agency that people manifest

¹¹Ibid.

in their ordinary lives. Remaining in this abstract moment, cosmopolitanism can be seen to involve a mutual recognition of others as equally agential in possessing capacities for self-transformation (or self-directed change), but such transformation should be understood as taking both individual and socio-cultural forms. Further, inasmuch as the forms of such transformative action vary socially and historically (sometimes in dramatic ways), the agency involved, though equal, has to be recognized as differentiated, both individually and culturally.

For people's agency to be effective, in such a *positive freedom* account, it is not sufficient for them to be rational choosers. They require access to certain conditions, and in particular, the absence of constraining conditions and the availability of enabling conditions, including material ones. These various negative and enabling conditions of agency can in turn be specified in a set of human rights, including traditional civil and political rights, along with freedom from domination (among the negative conditions), and economic and social rights (among the enabling conditions). I would further distinguish among the set of human rights between *basic* rights required for any human action whatever, such as means of subsistence, security, and basic liberty, and those rights required for the fuller development of activity or for flourishing. The fulfillment of such basic human rights sets a realizable minimum for global justice, which in its fuller instantiations aims at the realization of those rights needed for flourishing or self-development.¹² (Indeed, global justice could be said to aim ultimately at the achievement of full equal positive freedom, where this principle is understood as requiring *prima facie* equal rights to the conditions of self-transformation. In this way, equal positive freedom as a principle of justice would serve as a regulative ideal, though one that needs to be approached by way of the more realizable, though still challenging, set of basic human rights.) It should be emphasized that such a human rights centered approach does not entail that everyone is directly responsible for realizing the human rights of everyone else, but rather that we need to devise economic, social, and political institutions that would fulfill these rights.

The equality of agents in their capacity for self-transformation constitutes a moment of abstract universality in this account, but cosmopolitan ethics also needs to be based on what may be called "concrete universality".¹³ The term concrete here refers to the specificity of the particular relations in which people stand as in part

¹²For this account of human rights and its connection to global justice, see Gould, Carol C. 2009. Approaching Global Justice through Human Rights: Elements of Theory and Practice. Forthcoming in *Distributive Justice and International Economic Law*, ed. Chi Carmody, Frank Garcia, and John Linarelli. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. See also my earlier accounts in Gould, Carol C. 1988. *Rethinking Democracy: Freedom and Social Cooperation in Politics, Economy, and Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, especially chapters 1 and 8; and *Globalizing Democracy and Human Rights*, op. cit., especially Chapters 1 and 9.

¹³For the development of this concept, see Gould, Carol C. 1973–74. The Woman Question: Philosophy of Liberation and the Liberation of Philosophy. *The Philosophical Forum* V/1-2: 5–44; and Gould, Carol C. 2004. *Globalizing Democracy and Human Rights*. op. cit. Chapter 2.

constitutive of who they are, where their agency is seen as developing through particular relations that take diverse forms socially and historically. This perspective has several implications for a social ethics of cosmopolitanism. For one thing, it takes the universality that comes to be articulated as cosmopolitan as itself an emergent property built up through the increasing multi-sidedness of people's relations to each other. In this reading, too, cosmopolitanism places weight on overcoming the constraints on people's activity that result from relations of domination and oppression, whether personal or systemic. In more general terms, it stresses people's interdependence in meeting their needs and acknowledges that people come to develop relatively more independent modes of functioning from an initial situation of dependence, starting with their dependence on parents and on their families more generally.

In regard to the recognition of people's equal agency, moreover, such an approach counsels attention to the diversity of the forms that this agency may take and the variety of associative contexts in which people choose to realize projects and cultivate capacities. Such an approach can distinguish between what we may call a *generous* rather than a *rigorous* form of the recognition of persons, where the former involves incorporating empathy in the attitude toward others, along with a readiness to take their particular circumstances into account, rather than simply recognizing others' bare status as rights holders.¹⁴

Cosmopolitan ethics thus integrates two perspectives that are often kept apart: on the one hand, a notion of people as equal autonomous agents recognized through rational reflection in regard to their capacities for choice or transformation, and on the other hand a model of social connections (as Iris Young has put it¹⁵) and of empathic relations with others – whether caring or solidaristic – that emphasizes both the achievement of freedom through the overcoming of domination, and the emergence of more inclusive linkages with diverse others through a growing network of interrelations. Although these alternative perspectives may seem to be antagonistic modes of thought, in my view they are essentially interrelated in view of people's sociality, so that the transformations that we recognize as characteristic of their activity are embedded in a range of cultural and social relations in given historical contexts. Thus, such particular interrelations and the evolving networking of people's connections to each other, along with processes of overcoming domination and oppression, play a significant role in delineating a new scope for cosmopolitan ethics, in which fully universalistic relations of mutual recognition among people appear as a limit notion. In this approach, a generalization of reciprocal forms of recognition is normatively required and is itself presaged in elementary

¹⁴Such a notion of empathy can also be framed in terms of the enlarged consciousness or mentality that Hannah Arendt called for, although she herself distinguished this from any sort of empathy. See Arendt, Hannah. 1989. *The Life of the Mind*, one-volume edition. 257. New York: Harcourt Brace.

¹⁵Young, Iris Marion. 2006. Responsibility and Global Justice: A Social Connections Model. *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 23/1: 102–130; and Young, Iris Marion. 2004. Responsibility and Global Labor Justice. *Journal of Political Philosophy* 12/4: 365–388.

ways in people's everyday forms of interaction, in language, greetings, and in their nonverbal ways of acknowledging each other in ordinary social practices.

Turning to epistemological issues concerning the genesis of norms, we can say that the abstractly universalist principle of equal agency or equal positive freedom follows from a rational reconstruction of the capacity for change that is an ingredient in diverse forms of individual and socio-cultural activities over time. And, as suggested, it is anticipated in a preliminary form in the mundane ways that people in fact recognize each other as agents in everyday life. Beyond this, the concretely universal emphasis on the emergence of more comprehensive and less one-sided relations over time requires that people come to adopt a socially critical perspective in which they become aware of forms of oppression or exploitation. Such an approach sees openness to intercultural dialogue as contributing to a many-sided elaboration and interpretation of social and political norms over time, in a way that would replace more ideologically-based approaches.

The social ontology that underlies such a cosmopolitan ethics is one of individuals-in-relations.¹⁶ Individuals are understood as embedded in and constituted by their social relations but they are at the same time agential in possessing the ability to choose and change these relations, though this can sometimes be effective only jointly rather than through individual choices alone. In this perspective, participation in common activities defined by shared goals is an essential condition for people's self-transformative or self-developing activities. Where these common activities take institutional form (whether political, economic, or social), I propose that people have equal rights to democratic participation concerning their direction. If people are not to be dominated by others within these joint contexts of action, then they must have rights to co-determine these activities with the others who are engaged in them. It is clear too that democracy here has more than a procedural interpretation: that is, that it goes beyond forms of majority vote and free elections. Because democratic participation is a way of recognizing people's agency, it entails also substantive requirements of deliberation and receptivity toward the views of others.

4 Forms of Cosmopolitan and Transnational Democracy

If we turn to the terrain of contemporary forms of globalization and ask what guidance such a cosmopolitan ethics can provide for enhancing democracy, we can see that this approach supports a rather different conception from the prevailing options. Sometimes the possibilities for enhancing democracy in global contexts are simply denied. For if the task is understood as that of finding a single global *demos* comparable to the *demoi* that can be found within given nation-states, a theorist will not find one and so may well reject the possibility of developing any form of

¹⁶Gould, Carol C. 1978. *Marx's Social Ontology*. Chap. 1. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press; and Gould, Carol. C. *Rethinking Democracy*. 1988. op. cit. Chapters 2 and 3.

transnational or cosmopolitan democracy. Or, theorists who may be sympathetic to the critique of the power of the new institutions of global governance nonetheless may deny that democratic accountability makes sense for these institutions. They argue that because these institutions have global scope, it is impossible to gain the input of the manifold numbers of people affected by their decisions or policies. In this vein, theorists like Robert Keohane argue that we should settle instead for accountability in certain restricted senses of the term but not demand specifically *democratic* accountability for these far-reaching institutions.¹⁷ Still others may grant the possibility of extending democracy globally, but interpret this in terms of merely replicating the forms of electoral or parliamentary democracy that have been successful in the US, Europe, and Australia. The democratization literature operates under this sort of assumption, arguing for the extension of democracy as we know it to authoritarian or failed states.

Several other approaches in the existing literature deserve mention here. Global civil society theorists identify the path to greater democracy as securing representation for INGOs within global governance institutions and, in a somewhat related way, theorists of a so-called global public sphere seek new opportunities for public deliberation about global issues, with the thought that this will feed into the workings of the institutions themselves.¹⁸ This may involve deliberative polling by representative individuals, or else attempts to institute internet-based forums or the use of deliberative software to permit input by widespread publics into policy questions. Finally, strong cosmopolitan democrats or theorists of global democracy urge the expansion of transnational democratic forums such as those nascent in the European Union to other regions and in some form to the world as a whole.¹⁹ As a practical first step, theorists have proposed introducing a new parliamentary body within the United Nations that would represent all of the world's people as individuals. This has been entitled a Global People's Assembly.²⁰ Comprehensive visions of cosmopolitan democracy, as for example can be found in the work of David Held, tend to project a layered set of territorially-based jurisdictions, eventually regulated by global law.²¹ Such views may argue for the concentration of the means of coercion in a global government, hopefully subordinated to established law, where this law centers around human rights or their analogues.

Without going into depth in regard to the criticisms that can be advanced of these various approaches to the extension of democracy, we can observe that there surely

¹⁷Grant, Ruth W. and Robert O. Keohane. 2005. Accountability and Abuses of Power in World Politics. *American Political Science Review* 99/1: 29–43.

¹⁸Dryzek, John. 2006. *Deliberative Global Politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

¹⁹Tannsjo, Torbjorn. 2008. *Global Democracy: The Case for a World Government*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press; Marchetti, Raf. 2008. *Global Democracy: For and Against*. London: Routledge.

²⁰Falk, Richard and Andrew Strauss. 2000. On the Creation of a Global Peoples Assembly: Legitimacy and the Power of Popular Sovereignty. *Stanford Journal of International Law* 36: 191–220.

²¹Held, David. 1995. op. cit.

cannot be a global *demos* in the near term, because if there were, it would fail to give expression to the various cultures and deeply diverse social interests that make it up. Further, those who advocate simply proliferating traditional forms of democracy in countries where they do not currently exist may end up reifying existing borders and perpetuating the existing unjust inequalities among states, and in any case do not succeed in addressing the power of transnational institutions whose reach exceeds the boundaries of states. On the other hand, those who simply give up on democratic accountability for global governance institutions are not ambitious enough, in my view, for they fail to address the way in which the lives of people in poor countries are affected by trade and monetary restrictions, as well as by transnational corporate activity. In this way, such theorists tacitly endorse having global governance institutions continue to respond only to the powerful interests and wealthy countries that hold the preponderance of power within them. Global civil society theorists in turn tend to offer helpful but only palliative advice in calling for more representation by INGO's, while those who put trust in the emergence of a global public sphere do not explain how such public deliberation will have structural or institutional effects. Finally, cosmopolitan democracy might too readily multiply arenas for coercion beyond those already entailed by nation-states in adding layers of government above it. And in the form of global democracy by way of global government, the possibility is created for the centralization of power and of the means of coercion that perhaps would not be able to resist an authoritarian regime that succeeded in usurping power or was even elected through human error.

Despite these criticisms, I think there is certainly room for an account of transnational democracy or of what we could call "cosmopolitan democracy", but it would be one that differs in various ways from all of those above. It would have several dimensions that can be pointed to here, which pertain both to issues of scope and to matters of democratic procedure. These suggestions would follow from the account of cosmopolitan ethics presented earlier, or at least are suggested by it and harmonize with it, even if the proposed directions for democratization do not follow deductively from it in a strong sense. It would indeed be surprising if such political proposals could be deduced in that way since the features that might characterize genuinely transnational or cosmopolitan democracy are partly dependent on the empirical realities of the current social and political world. It is thus more plausible to say that the ethical framework presented earlier is itself suggestive of institutions rather than determinative of them.

The positive account of cosmopolitan democracy has several components that can be briefly laid out here. In regard to scope, these include (1) increased democratic participation in a range of political communities as well as in social and economic institutions and associations, including in those that are transnational or cross-border; (2) regional agreements on human rights along with new possibilities for regional governance organized in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity²²;

²²For a discussion of subsidiarity in relation to democratic governance and human rights, see Follesdal, Andreas. 2006. Subsidiarity, Democracy, and Human Rights in the Constitutional Treaty of Europe. *Journal of Social Philosophy* 37/1: 61–80.

(3) modes of democratic accountability for the multilateral institutions of global governance; and (4) the addition of forms of transnational representation within international organizations. In regard to democratic procedures, the desiderata that follow from cosmopolitan ethics are a heightened degree of inclusiveness, along with open methods of deliberation and coordination. I will attempt to say a bit about each of these, and indicate their roots in cosmopolitan ethics.

As previously noted, there is a very general requirement for introducing rights of democratic participation within the range of institutional forms of “common activities” in which people engage, if the domination of some by others is to be avoided within them. As collective activities oriented to shared goals, there are rights of co-determination of them by the members. Such democratic participation would pertain to existing political communities and also to the variety of other institutions that increasingly connect people with each other under globalization. This extends to requirements for democratic management in corporations (beyond the way this has been articulated in stakeholder theory), and it pertains as well to new cross-border communities and associations oriented around ecological concerns, as well as to virtual communities online. It does not entail that people have an obligation to participate in these institutions or communities, only that they have rights to do so.

Such an associative (and, to a degree, communitarian) approach has the advantage of respecting people’s rights to co-determination within existing domains of shared activity. The approach takes on a cosmopolitan aspect insofar as such democratic associations become more far-flung and more generally available than previously, and insofar as these communities become more open than previously to entry by outsiders. Clearly, this is a normatively demanding picture, which can raise difficult questions of overlapping scope and jurisdictions. I propose, however, that nothing less will in fact suffice to bring about real democracy, taken in a substantive and not only procedural sense. As Carole Pateman (following J.S. Mill) has argued, the process of participation is educative.²³ It is in the practice of it in meaningful contexts of everyday life that we can suppose that democratic attitudes will take root. Moreover, the problem of overlapping jurisdictions is not impossible to manage in substate contexts. Thus, where it is a matter only of firms or corporations, most people are centrally active only in one or at most a few of them at any given time. Further, introducing democratic participation within voluntary associations does not cause special problems precisely because of their voluntariness. In the case of political communities, however, the proposal for widespread democratization requires that the organization of new cross-border entities be governed by a principle of subsidiarity, namely, that decisions be taken at the lowest level possible. Admittedly, difficulties arise in determining the relevant level in each case, and there has to be a certain stability in these understandings. Such difficulties as these suggest the need for institutional designs that allocate the problems and issues to be dealt with to various levels of associations and governance modes and structures.

²³Pateman, Carole. 1970. *Participation and Democratic Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (especially Chapter 3).

Crucial for the success of the proliferation of cross-border democratic communities and associations proposed here would be new regional human rights frameworks (or their enforcement where they exist). Such regional human rights agreements, as is the case in nascent form within the European Union, can provide a basis for appeal against unjust majority decisions within nation-states, as well as within any emergent cross-border communities or associations within their domain. Although regional human rights conventions exist also in Africa and in the Americas, they are currently not greatly enforced. And such agreements would need to be developed and implemented in other regions as well.

Regionalization is in fact a feature of current globalizing processes. Thus we might consider endorsing new forms of regional governance as well. My own view is that this is best developed in the context of human rights agreements in the first instance, but new forms of governance or even government would be needed to solve regional problems over time, where the new governance institutions would need democratic legitimation. Such new governance forms will eventually have to extend beyond economic cooperation, which has heretofore often been in the service of wealthy or powerful elites. Likewise, any new institutions would have to avoid excessive bureaucracy in administrative functioning in ways that remain to be designed. From this perspective, too, we can wonder about the praise that Joshua Cohen and Charles Sabel lavish on administrative coordination within the EU as the main path for achieving transnational democracy.²⁴

However, the development of associative democracy and of cross-border or region-wide communities does not yet adequately address the global impacts of decisions by both nation-states and by the institutions of global governance. Thus, globalization entails that policies or decisions increasingly have effects on distantly situated people and especially on the global poor. In such contexts we can see that a rather different democratic principle comes into play. In contrast to the communitarian or associative notion of common activities discussed earlier, here we find a place for the widely referenced “all-affected” principle: that is, that all affected by a decision should be able to take part in making it. But in global contexts, it is not possible to give everyone affected a say, so we need to delimit this requirement to those importantly affected. Yet, this is still too vague. Who are the people importantly affected? Where policies or decisions impact upon people’s possibilities of fulfilling their basic human rights I propose that they should have input into the policies in question, either directly or through their representatives.²⁵ In this way, basic human rights, and notably the right to means of subsistence and to fulfilling other basic needs, serve as a delimitation of being importantly affected. This in turn would support new requirements for democratic accountability for those institutions

²⁴Cohen, Joshua and Charles Sabel. 2003. Sovereignty and Solidarity: EU and US. In *Governing Work and Welfare in a New Economy: European and American Experiments*, eds. Jonathan Zeitlin and David Trubek. 345–375. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

²⁵Gould, Carol C. *Globalizing Democracy and Human Rights*. op. cit. Chapter 9.; and Gould, Carol C. 2009. Structuring Global Democracy: Political Communities, Universal Human Rights, and Transnational Representation. *Metaphilosophy* 40/1: 24–46.

of global governance that have such decisive long-range impacts. Note that the sort of democratic input called for would be cosmopolitan in its appeal to basic human rights, and in its inclusiveness in taking into account the needs and perspectives of oppressed people or those hitherto excluded from these powerful institutions.

There are several problems raised by this proposal, however, beyond the obviously daunting issues of feasibility. One problem is that in some cases those most affected, especially the global poor, may lack the wherewithal or the time to participate; indeed, other matters may be more urgent for them. In my view, this does not count against the proposal, particularly when democracy is understood substantively as requiring us to hear from the people affected about what they take their most urgent needs to be and how they believe those needs can best be met. Interpreting this requirement as one of acquiring actual input by distant others rather than simply having powerful people imagine the circumstances of the poor or imagine the sorts of help they need (as in stakeholder theory) has the advantage of more fully recognizing the agency of those impacted upon by global policies.

The second problematic issue is that of devising new forms of input and, beyond that, modes of transnational representation, that enable people to affect policy-making processes. Standard suggestions of input via the internet, however useful, may themselves be problematic not only because of the digital divide but because online deliberations will most likely be carried out in English and through text-based applications. Video capabilities and new deliberative software currently being developed will help here, but face-to-face discussions are required as well. Wikis and open source software are significant too but cannot be the whole story. Existing forms of input into deliberations will likely need to be supplemented by new modes of representation within the institutions of global governance, initially by INGOs, and eventually by more regular and even formal processes of representation.

Beyond these various aspects of transnational democracy, whether understood in terms of cross-border communities, or in terms of openness to the deliberative contributions by distantly affected people, it may be useful to introduce – though carefully and over time – globally representative bodies like the Global People’s Assembly. But this should not overwhelm democratic decision making at more local or regional levels, and it ought to concern global common interests, especially concerning the environment, for example. It may also be that global deliberations could properly extend to the rules governing the scope of functioning of lower level bodies and the scope of their decision-making powers.²⁶ But I am wary of entrusting those matters to a fully global body, at least at this stage in the evolution of cooperation where adequate human rights safeguards are still missing. In regard to global cooperative arrangements, as in regional ones, agreement on human rights frameworks are the important first step, one that can allow the further flourishing of democratic decisions operating within them.²⁷

²⁶See also Pensky, Max. 2007. Two Cheers for Cosmopolitanism: Cosmopolitan Solidarity as Second Order Inclusion. *Journal of Social Philosophy* 38/1: 165–184.

²⁷Of course, given the constitutional circle, as it may be called, these frameworks themselves have to be introduced in democratically legitimate ways, or at least be endorsed democratically, perhaps

It should be clear that this model of transnational and cosmopolitan democracy is commensurate with the cosmopolitan ethics sketched earlier. It draws on the earlier emphases on human rights, on common activities, on interconnectedness in transnational associations, on openness or receptivity to the situation of others, and on the demand for greater inclusiveness. And it proposes to instantiate modes of recognition, central to a cosmopolitan ethics, within democratic processes themselves.

We can also now see more clearly how this approach differs from Tan's reading of the relation of moral to political cosmopolitanism. Recall that in the quote with which I began, Tan states that moral cosmopolitanism asserts that "how we ought to act or what kinds of institutions we ought to establish should be based on an impartial consideration of the claims of each person who would be affected by our choices," and that it "is not concerned directly with the question of how global institutions are to be ordered. . . and that nothing in this interpretation of cosmopolitanism necessitates the idea of a world state".²⁸ While I agree with Tan that cosmopolitanism does not require a world state, I have suggested that where others are affected in their basic human rights or where we share with them common interests and goals, we need to hear from them concerning the potential effects on them of our policies and plans and concerning the particularities of their circumstances and perspectives where possible. But this hearing from others is in fact a requirement for democratic input from them, though it may take new forms that go beyond standard democratic procedures of voting and referenda. Likewise, I would disagree with Tan about the purported lack of impact of these requirements upon institutional design, inasmuch as new models for enhancing democratic participation in transnational contexts seem to me crucial in enabling rights fulfillment and thereby global justice.

5 A Cosmopolitan Ethics for Transnational Democracy

We can conclude with a few reflections on the import of cosmopolitan democracy as sketched here for cosmopolitan ethics. In addition to the features of democratic personality that I have elaborated in earlier work,²⁹ we can highlight the importance of cultivating new forms of transnational solidarity to supplement the existing varieties that emphasize the ties that bind people within given social groups, particularly at the level of nation-states. In a similar way to Durkheim's observations with regard to the division of labor within a society,³⁰ the increased interconnections of

through consensual or supermajoritarian procedures after due deliberation at a range of levels. See Gould, Carol C. 1988. *Rethinking Democracy*. op. cit. Chapter 1.

²⁸Tan, Kok-Chor. 2004. op. cit. 94.

²⁹Gould, Carol C. 1988. *Rethinking Democracy*. op. cit. Chapter 10.

³⁰Durkheim, Emile. 1964. *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. George Simpson. New York: Free Press (especially 63–64 and 127–129).

people under globalization establish “organic” connections among people situated at some distance from each other. As a normative conception solidarity requires the development of networks of mutual aid oriented to the elimination of oppression and suffering and positively committed to the achievement of justice. It requires forms of social empathy that go beyond the individual’s empathic identification with another heretofore emphasized. Such solidarity can exist not only among individuals but among groups or associations that attend to the concrete circumstances of others and stand ready to assist these others in ways that the others themselves deem most helpful. Such solidarity is thus distinguished from mere aid or charity by its connection to action and its commitment to eliminating injustice.³¹

Solidarity networks of this sort, based on responsiveness to the needs of others, can support a cosmopolitan recognition of human rights by motivating cosmopolitans to take people’s human rights seriously, and can also help to establish and fulfill human rights through the elaboration of broader networks of people committed to justice and democratic modes of decision making. This is not a conception of general human solidarity (except perhaps as a limit notion of some sort). Rather, it is a conception of overlapping particularistic solidarity groups (where the choice of solidarity group can remain voluntary), although the *disposition* to embrace such forms of solidarity can perhaps become universal. Further, the growing interconnectedness of people affiliated through such networks – whether individually or in their associations – can conduce to the fuller recognition and establishment of universal human rights over time (though with some room left for local interpretations). These reflections return us to the two senses of universality that I have suggested need to be incorporated within a cosmopolitan ethics: both the abstract universality of human rights and the concrete universality of transnational solidarities and of democratic institution building emerging through dialogue and other forms of constructive connections among people across borders. I have argued that all these features of cosmopolitan ethics are required if we are to succeed in coming to grips with the major problems of inequalities and global poverty, oppression, and environmental degradation that mark this historical period.

³¹For further discussion, see Gould, Carol C. 2007. Transnational Solidarities. *Journal of Social Philosophy* 38/1: 146–162.

Global Institutionalism and Justice

Rekha Nath

1 Introduction

The relationship between interaction and justice has been famously affirmed by David Hume, who writes “. . .suppose that several distinct societies maintain a kind of intercourse for mutual convenience and advantage, the boundaries of justice still grow larger, in proportion to the largeness of men’s views, and the force of their mutual connections”.¹ The idea is a simple one: that the scope of our moral commitments correspondingly grows in accordance with the scope of our interaction with others. This posited relationship naturally leads to an inquiry into the sense in which “globalization” – which is to say the increasingly transnational nature of economic, social, and political interaction – influences the moral obligations that individuals have to foreigners. That is, do facts about current levels of global institutional interaction place individuals of different countries in a relationship in which they have claims of justice upon one another? I use the term “global institutionalism” to refer to accounts of global justice that draw on facts about global interaction to justify a global scope of justice.²

Despite the emergence of a few prominent defenses of global institutionalism in the past few decades, by and large the idea that global interaction has implications for our duties of justice to others has met with sharp criticism from

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¹Hume, David. 1966 (1777). *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*. 25. La Salle: Open Court.

²Two of the best known arguments for extending concerns of justice beyond state borders, those advanced by Charles Beitz and Thomas Pogge, are global institutionalist in character. See Beitz, Charles R. 1999 (1979). *Political Theory and international Relations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; and Pogge, Thomas. 2002. *World Poverty and Human Rights: Cosmopolitan responsibilities and Reforms*. Cambridge: Polity. See also Moellendorf, Darrel. 2002. *Cosmopolitan Justice*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

two opposing perspectives. On the one hand, “non-institutionalist cosmopolitans” (“non-institutionalists” for short) have shunned the thought that our duties to others worldwide ought to depend in any way on current levels of global interaction.³ According to this view, facts about global institutional interaction are *irrelevant* for the purpose of determining the nature of our duties to others. “Domestic institutionalists”, on the other hand, accept that interaction has a significant bearing on the scope of justice, but they deny that the right sort of interaction necessary to ground duties of justice is found in the global domain.⁴ As a result, the domestic institutionalist asserts that duties of justice ought to be confined to the state.⁵ My aim in this paper is to defend global institutionalism against these two main forms of criticism it faces. I do not attempt to defend any particular version thereof, but rather I seek to evaluate its tenability – vis-à-vis its critics – as a theoretical explanation by which to ground global duties of justice.

I face different tasks in addressing the respective challenges to global institutionalism posed by non-institutionalists and domestic institutionalists. The global institutionalist and non-institutionalist agree that duties of justice should not be restricted to the state, but they disagree about *why* the scope of justice ought to be global. While the non-institutionalist denies the moral import of interaction in defining the demands of justice, the global institutionalist seeks to account for the idea that certain claims of justice specifically arise as a result of widespread global interaction. Responding to the non-institutionalist thus requires an explanation of why institutional interaction matters at all for the purpose of grounding claims of justice. With regards to the domestic institutionalist view, the battleground shifts. Institutionalists of both the global and domestic variants accept that duties of justice

³The main proponent of non-institutionalism whose arguments I consider in the following is Simon Caney. See Caney, Simon. 2005. *Justice Beyond Borders*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Caney, Simon. 2007. Global Poverty and Human Rights: The Case for Positive Duties. In *Freedom from Poverty as A Human Right: Who Owes What to the Very Poor?* ed. Thomas Pogge. 275–302. Oxford: Oxford University Press. See also Arneson, Richard. 2004. Luck Egalitarianism Interpreted and Defended. *Philosophical Topics* 32/1, 2: 1–20, 18.

⁴I include the following as a representative set of domestic institutionalist views: Blake, Michael. 2002. Distributive Justice, State Coercion, and Autonomy. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 30/3: 257–296; Miller, Richard. 1998. Cosmopolitan Respect and Patriotic Concern. *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 27/3: 202–224; Nagel, Thomas. 2005. The Problem of Global Justice. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 33/2: 113–147; Sangiovanni, Andrea. 2007. Global Justice, Reciprocity, and the State. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 35/1: 3–39. Inspiring all of these views is arguably the most influential domestic institutionalist view: Rawls, John. 1999. *The Law of Peoples*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

⁵In particular, recent writings on domestic institutionalism have focused on the scope of *egalitarian* justice and thus on the question of where *inequalities* ought to be addressed. As a result, we can differentiate between a stronger or weaker version of domestic institutionalism: On the strong version, it is argued that *no* duties of justice whatsoever apply outside of the state; the weaker version, by contrast, defends the claim that only duties of egalitarian justice do not apply outside of the state. On this clarification, see Cohen, Joshua and Charles Sabel. 2006. Extra Republicanum Nulla Justitia? *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 34/2: 147–175; 150–151. They, and others, use the term “statism” for what I call “domestic institutionalism”.

obtain exclusively in certain institutional settings, but they fundamentally disagree about what particular aspect of institutional interaction conditions the scope of justice.⁶ Against domestic institutionalists, it is up to the global institutionalist to show what is normatively relevant about transnational interaction to justify expanding the scope of justice beyond state borders. I assess and ultimately reject the domestic institutionalist argument for restricting the scope of justice to the state. The global institutionalist's main task against both non-institutionalists and domestic institutionalists, then, is to convincingly show how duties of justice stem from the particular form of interaction found in the global domain.

2 Neglecting the Non-Interacting Poor

In this section and the next, I assess the non-institutionalist argument that duties of justice exist among all individuals worldwide regardless of the character or scale of global interaction. The non-institutionalist raises a number of problems with global institutionalism. First is the worry that in connecting moral obligations to interaction many poor and needy individuals worldwide who do not participate in the global order are excluded from the scope of justice. A second, related point deems global institutionalism perverse insofar as it encourages non-interaction with worse-off individuals on the part of the better-off so as to avoid incurring duties of justice. Third is the most serious attack on the global institutionalist position, which questions that claims of justice have anything whatsoever to do with interaction. I consider the first two worries about neglect of the non-interacting poor in this section, and I turn to the last of these challenges in the next section.

To begin with, the global institutionalist view is faulted for yielding too narrow a scope of justice in that it only includes participants in the global order rather than all individuals worldwide. By privileging the role of institutional interaction in generating duties, global institutionalism appears to exclude some of the world's most vulnerable individuals from the scope of moral concern. Thus, according to the global institutionalist, non-participants in global political and economic interaction like children, the unemployed, the elderly, and the disabled lack a basis for claims upon better-off foreigners for assistance. Articulating this problem, Simon Caney laments that on a global institutionalist approach "we may end up condoning situations in which some, such as inhabitants of isolated islands, avoidably live in grueling poverty and die prematurely".⁷ The global institutionalist approach of linking duties of justice exclusively to domains of interaction faces the further problem of generating "malign incentives" for well-off individuals to avoid interacting

⁶Strictly speaking, there are two potential sites of disagreement between domestic and global institutionalists. The first, philosophically less interesting disagreement plays out at the level of empirical facts concerning the state and the global domain. The second, more substantive, disagreement centers on the respective normative claims of domestic and global institutionalists regarding what form of interaction is needed to give rise to demands of justice.

⁷Caney, Simon. 2007. *op. cit.* 289, see also 283–285; Caney, Simon. 2005. *op. cit.* 114.

with worse-off foreigners through trade and the like so as to “permissibly immunize themselves from duties of justice to assist those dying of starvation, malnutrition, and so on”.⁸ According to non-institutionalism, these implications reveal a major failing of global institutionalism: that the latter cannot ground duties of justice towards those needy individuals who do not participate in the global order.

One can respond to the purported global institutionalist neglect of the globally unconnected by suggesting that this worry is irrelevant in our actual world in which individuals everywhere are inescapably enmeshed in a network of global interdependence. Regardless of individuals’ participation in the global economic order, all individuals, including those on remote islands, are subject to coercively enforced international regulations governing freedom of movement, state sovereignty, and the ownership of natural resources such that no individual actually falls outside the scope of institutionally grounded justice.⁹ Moreover, it is incorrect to characterize the unemployed and the infirm as non-participants in the global order since the assistance they can receive in their local communities depends upon the position of those communities in the global order. One does not have to be a contributor to the global order in order to be participant in it.

Caney anticipates this rejoinder about the inescapability of global interaction, and emphasizes the perversity, even if only a hypothetical possibility in our world, of individuals being able to abandon or reduce their duties to aid the badly off by selectively refusing interaction with them.¹⁰ Whether or not we can in practice cut off interaction with the global poor, it is problematic on this view that it would be permissible to do so. The force of this criticism crucially depends on the content of the duties of justice in question, a point that I have not yet addressed. On one hand, if global institutionalism claims that *all* duties towards others, including the duty to alleviate extreme deprivation, are derived from and only from institutional connection then the non-institutionalist worry is pertinent. Cast in this way, the global institutionalist position would entail neglecting the plight of individuals who suffer from malnutrition, inadequate access to clean drinking water, and easily preventable diseases even when it is well within the means of affluent but distant others to help them. On the other hand, a global institutionalist can claim that duties of distributive justice above and beyond the imperative to address absolute poverty obtain only between those who interact, while at the same time accepting that not *all* duties hinge on facts about interaction. In this way, an institutionalist might think that regardless of levels of institutional interaction all individuals worldwide have humanitarian duties to each other to ensure that everyone’s basic needs are met. On this second understanding of global institutionalism, the main

⁸Caney, Simon. 2007. op. cit. 284–285.

⁹Thomas Pogge nicely captures this sentiment in the following passage (which is also quoted by Caney in his consideration of this point): “whether the members of different societies can or cannot avoid mutually influencing one another is, though an empirical matter, surely not up to them. At this stage in world history we cannot realistically avoid international interaction”. See Pogge, Thomas. 1989. *Realizing Rawls*. 241, n3. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

¹⁰Caney, Simon. 2007. op. cit. 289; see also Caney, Simon. 2005. op. cit. 114.

disagreement between institutionalists and non-institutionalists centers on the issue of whether or not “suprahumanitarian” duties of justice apply between those who do not interact.¹¹

Let us consider, then, whether global institutionalism entails a lack of duties with reference to absolute poverty or with more onerous suprahumanitarian demands. Discussions about what is owed to others beyond attending to basic needs fulfillment is typically cashed out in terms of concern for individuals’ relative shares. Caney’s references to grueling poverty and premature death suggest that he primarily worries about the neglect of absolute, rather than of relative, deprivation suffered by individuals with whom we do not interact. Against this worry, we can observe the compatibility of a system of restricted duties of justice to address discrepancies in relative shares within domains of institutional interaction, on the one hand, and of universal humanitarian obligations to relieve the absolute deprivation of all individuals globally, on the other. Positing universal humanitarian obligations in conjunction with association-specific bounded duties of justice circumvents Caney’s worries about exclusion and malign incentives by effectively providing a safety net for all. This is not simply an *ad hoc* maneuver. Nearly all institutionalists (of both global and domestic types) explicitly note that their views about restricting the scope of justice must be understood against a backdrop of universal humanitarian duties. In grounding particular claims of justice in forms of interaction, institutionalists focus their sights only on those claims that go above and beyond the basic humanitarian imperative to eliminate absolute deprivation. The global institutionalist account, then, need not sanction a situation in which the isolated poor are left to perish by the wayside. Yet, beyond relieving absolute poverty, it further stipulates that we have other institutionally triggered duties that are exclusive to those worse-off individuals with whom we do interact (which might in practice turn out to be all individuals).

Caney objects to this type of dual system of restricted duties of justice for some individuals and universal duties of humanitarianism for all on the grounds that the universal duties are not of *justice*.¹² Such humanitarian duties, he suggests, lack enforceability in comparison to universal duties of justice and would consequently result in worse protection for the global poor. This point is questionable, as Caney provides no evidence for the assertion about the relative enforceability of duties of justice and other duties. To the contrary, we can observe that both Peter Singer and Tom Campbell who argue for global humanitarian rather than justice-based obligations, do not see these demands as less stringent nor to be taken any less seriously by potential enforcing agencies. Campbell, for example, supports global poverty eradication efforts through an UN-based and domestic government-enforced “Global Humanitarian Levy” that would involve a 2% tax on incomes and

¹¹ See Cohen, Joshua and Charles Sabel. 2006. *op. cit.* for use of the term “suprahumanitarian” in a closely related discussion.

¹² See Caney, Simon. 2007. *op. cit.* 298–299.

wealth above a certain level.¹³ By taking seriously that those suffering from absolute deprivation have humanitarian claims upon others with the capacity to alleviate their suffering regardless of institutional connections between them, Caney's worries that global institutionalism neglects the non-interacting poor and furthermore incentivizes isolating oneself from worse-off individuals are unwarranted.

3 Is Justice Linked to Interaction?

Notwithstanding global institutionalism's compatibility with protecting the claims of the poverty-stricken through humanitarian duties, the non-institutionalist further attacks the central tenet of global institutionalism that links *at least some* duties of justice to schemes of institutional interaction.¹⁴ The problem here is that even if basic needs have been universally met, individuals who happen to live in a country that is heavily integrated in the global economic order enjoy greater claims upon their co-participants of this scheme in comparison to what non-participants are owed. To illustrate this complaint in terms of a specific type of duty, we can consider how it applies to global institutionalist arguments that favor implementing a global difference principle exclusively among individuals who stand in relations of economic interdependence.¹⁵ On such an account, inequalities between those who interact through the global order would be permissible only insofar as they served the advantage of the worse-off interacting individuals worldwide. Conversely, individuals living in isolated regions of the world would not have claims to enjoy greater distributive equality with others worldwide that they would enjoy if their countries engaged in cross-border trade.¹⁶

The non-institutionalist objects that it is unfair for individuals' claims to greater equality to hinge upon such an incidental factor as their enmeshment in the global

¹³Campbell is explicit on this point: "humanity is a basis for obligation generally, and not just the sort of moral obligations that are not legally enforceable but as a basis for the moral justification of having legal obligations". See Campbell, Tom. 2007. *Poverty as a Violation of Human Rights: Inhumanity or Injustice?*. In *Freedom from Poverty as A Human Right : Who Owes What to the Very Poor?* ed. Thomas Pogge, 55–74: 67. Oxford: Oxford University Press. See also Singer, Peter. 2002. *One world : The Ethics of Globalization*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

¹⁴In his *Justice Beyond Borders*, 110–115, Caney rejects what he calls "restricted institutionalism", which is the position that *some* principles of justice apply exclusively to those bound by institutional interaction while other duties of justice apply to all (compared to "unrestricted institutionalism" on which *all* principles of justice derive from institutional interaction). Although in his "Global Poverty and Human Rights: The Case for Positive Duties", he approvingly considers the compatibility of some institutionally grounded duties of justice with other universal duties of justice.

¹⁵For arguments in favour of globalizing the difference principle see: Beitz, Charles. 1999 (1979). Part 3. op. cit.; Pogge, Thomas. 1989. Part 3. op. cit.; Moellendorf. Darrel. 2002. op. cit. Chs. 3 and 4.

¹⁶For the sake of argument, here I grant the hypothetical possibility that some individuals may fall outside of the global institutional purview.

institutional order. This challenge draws in part on the impermissibility of allowing morally arbitrary features of a person's situation to have any bearing on her entitlements.¹⁷ To illustrate this problem, it is commonly accepted that morally arbitrary factors like race and gender should not impact upon one's life prospects, and efforts are frequently taken within states to eliminate the influence of such traits on individuals' educational and economic opportunities. Global institutionalists endorse this condemnation of certain morally arbitrary factors in arguing that individuals should not suffer worse opportunities than others simply on the basis of their place of birth.¹⁸ Extending this logic one step further, the non-institutionalist argues that restricting duties of justice to individuals who happen to participate in the global order would be akin to excluding some from enjoying entitlements on the basis of traits like ethnicity or race. Caney writes that, just as ethnicity and race ought not to fix the boundaries of justice, so too "it is hard to see why economic interaction has any moral relevance from the point of view of distributive justice".¹⁹ Instead, since individuals cannot control their ability to participate in the global order, they should not be penalized for their misfortune on this front.

This objection misses its mark insofar as it glosses over important differences between factors like race and institutional membership. Indeed, it is difficult to see how a person's skin color or gender could in itself ground an entitlement to special treatment. Institutional membership, however, is a more complex case than race because institutions influence individuals in multiple ways that race does not (or perhaps more accurately in ways that race *should* not). Thus, to maintain that institutional membership is able to generate entitlements, it must be recognized that it is not institutional membership *per se* but rather facts about what institutions do to and for members that ground further duties and entitlements. I will try to explain this claim through the following example. Within a democratic state, the development of large inequalities among citizens is frequently objected to on the ground that it undermines the fairness of the political process. What is objectionable in this case is that very wealthy individuals are able to use their economic resources to bring about their desired political outcomes while the political influence of the poor is comparatively weak. Outside of a political context, this particular reason to reduce distributive inequality among some group of individuals does not apply because only a specific form of interaction triggers it. Thus, a given inequality between American citizens might be problematic whereas the same inequality would not be so if it

¹⁷That morally arbitrary factors should not influence individuals' relative positions is the central argument put forward by "luck egalitarians". See Cohen, Gerald Allan. 1989. On the Currency of Egalitarian Justice. *Ethics*: 99/4: 906–944; Dworkin, Ronald M. 2000. *Sovereign Virtue: The Theory and Practice of Equality*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; Arneson, Richard. 2004. *op. cit.*

¹⁸See Pogge, Thomas. 1989. *op. cit.* 247; see also Moellendorf, Darrel. 2002. *op. cit.* 80.

¹⁹See Caney, Simon. 2005. *op. cit.* 111.

were to obtain between an American and French citizen. Only in the first case do questions of fairness in the political process arise.²⁰

Similarly, it might be noted that in the global domain great inequalities among those linked through the global order often enable exploitative relations between the rich and the poor. This undermines the fairness of cross-border transactions among participants of the global economic order, and consequently can be thought to give rise to duties between these parties to curb the development of such inequalities. As with the previous case, the same claim for egalitarian justice does not apply to outsiders of this institutional domain insofar as the need for greater distributive equality is triggered by the specific form of interaction between those who belong to the institution. Moreover, the given inequality is not problematic in the absence of that kind of interaction – if it were then the point about interaction generating claims of distributive justice would be redundant. As long as we recognize that there are plausible reasons for an institutional structure generating bounded duties of justice that do not rely on the dubious claim that institutions themselves are entitlement-generating, then this comparison between institutional membership and other morally arbitrary factors is inapt.

A non-institutionalist can agree with what has been said thus far about institutions giving rise to special forms of justification. Yet they may further object to the fact that these institutions are not open for all individuals to join and for this reason stand firm in their judgment of the global institutionalist position as unjustifiably exclusionary. In this way, individuals' non-voluntary exclusion from well-off states or from participating in global trade can be construed as an unjust disadvantage to them. There are two different ways that a global institutionalist can respond to this point. First, they might claim that individuals do not have a *prima facie* moral obligation to enter these associations. That is to say, they are perfectly free to interact with others through trade relations or to avoid such forms of interaction. Yet, once such relationships are forged, certain obligations are triggered. While the choice to interact with others is morally optional, the obligations that follow from it are not. This is analogous to the case of promise-making in which we are not usually required to make promises to others, but if we do make one then we owe to the other party that we meet the obligations arising from that promise.²¹ Using this line of argument, the global institutionalist can deny the supposed injustice of excluding some individuals from an association because individuals are not morally required to interact with others in the first instance. This holds so long as the parties who choose not to interact with one another still fulfill other general duties they have –

²⁰This discussion and the example I use draw on Christopher Wellman's argument that association-specific duties can be justified in universal terms, and that there is no need to claim that certain relationships themselves have basic moral significance. See Wellman, Christopher. 2001. Relational Facts in Liberal Political Theory: Is There Magic in the Pronoun "My"? *Ethics* 110/3: 537–562. See also Scanlon, Thomas. 2000. The Diversity of Objections to Inequality. In *The Ideal of Equality*, eds. Matthew Clayton and Andrew Williams, 41–59; 44. New York: St. Martin's Press.

²¹Of course, I cannot avoid a pre-existing general duty to do something simply by not promising to do so.

such as abiding by universal humanitarian duties, for instance. As has been argued above, not all duties for distributive justice should be understood as pre-existing general duties since their requirements are directly related to the type of interaction that obtains amongst interacting parties.

A second response to the worry that exclusion from global institutions is unjustified suggests that in many instances the fact of exclusion itself reflects a form of institutional subjection.²² For instance, the system of state sovereignty, state property rights, and restrictions on free movement are coercively imposed terms that all individuals in the world are subjected to and for which they are owed justification.²³ In this way, the global institutionalist can agree with the non-institutionalist that individuals' exclusion from certain forms of associations (like from residing in well-off states and participating in advantageous cross-border trading arrangements) is unjust. However, the global institutionalist would moreover highlight that the unjust character of this exclusion stems from the fact that such exclusion constitutes a type of institutional interaction and also operates against a background of other forms of interaction. In reiterating the empirical characterization of all individuals as necessarily subject to global institutional rules, this understanding reduces the practical distance between global institutionalist and non-institutionalist accounts.

4 Against Domestic Institutionalism

Having defended global institutionalism against the non-institutionalists' main objections, I now turn to an entirely different set of difficulties that it faces. Domestic institutionalism endorses the idea that interaction plays a significant role in grounding duties of justice, but goes on to claim that *global* institutional interaction is not of the right kind to do so.²⁴ The domestic institutionalist argument that only the state generates member-specific claims of justice contains two premises.²⁵ First is the empirical claim that the state brand of institutional interaction is unique. The second, normative claim provides an explanation for why the specific form of interaction among co-citizens generates certain obligations of justice. The soundness of

²²Nancy Fraser discusses this point in her article "Abnormal Justice" (Fraser, Nancy. 2008. *Abnormal Justice. Critical Inquiry* 34: 393–422.) She writes, "Thus, sub-Saharan Africans who have been involuntarily disconnected from the global economy as a result of the rules imposed by its governance structures count as subjects of justice in relation to it, even if they are not officially recognized as participating in it". (412).

²³Pogge and Moellendorf advance this second line of argument according to which individuals are inextricably part of the global order and are thus owed special justification.

²⁴In particular, all of the domestic institutionalist accounts I discuss here focus on the specific case of limiting *egalitarian* duties of justice to the state. Of these, only one explicitly defends the stronger claim that all duties of justice apply only within the state and only humanitarian duties to address absolute deprivation apply globally (Nagel). The others (Blake and Sangiovanni) are at least open to the possibility that some non-egalitarian duties of justice might transcend state borders.

²⁵Sangiovanni, Andrea. 2007. *op. cit.* 8.

the domestic institutionalist argument, then, depends both on (1) the accuracy of the empirical characterization of the global order as relevantly different from the state, and (2) on the capacity of the particular relationship among co-citizens to ground claims of justice.

Three versions of domestic institutionalism have recently been put forward, and each of these focuses on a different element of the relationship between citizens that is thought to ground duties of distributive justice. First, according to the “coercion thesis”, citizens of the state are uniquely subject to large-scale coercion. Through its legal apparatus, the state defines its citizens’ property rights and extracts taxes from them to support various government activities, and in these ways it restricts citizens’ autonomy. Accordingly, it owes them special justification.²⁶ A second domestic institutionalist account also deems state coercion as morally significant and further emphasizes that not only are citizens *subject* to state coercion but are also its *joint authors*.²⁷ Call this the “co-authorship thesis”. Due to this twin role as subjects and authors of the state’s coercive terms, all citizens share a collective responsibility for them. Consequently, compatriots should only be coercively subject to terms that they would reasonably endorse, both as recipients of such treatment and as joint authors of the same. Third, the “reciprocity thesis” focuses on the unrivalled capacity of the state to provide its citizens with the essential goods they need to live autonomous lives.²⁸ Citizens collaborate in sustaining the state through their legal compliance and financial contributions. These collective efforts that enable the provision of important basic goods – such as security from attack, a welfare system, and a stable market and property rights system – ground duties of justice among co-citizens that do not obtain among foreigners.

For all of these accounts, the central idea is that the special relationship x in the state (coercion, co-authorship, or reciprocity) raises the need to justify the association to its members. According to both the coercion and co-authorship theses, individuals within the state have responsibilities towards one another because they impose terms upon each other. Instead of addressing the burdensome nature of the state enterprise, the reciprocity thesis focuses on the justification owed to individuals due to their compliance in a beneficial structure. The justification owed to one’s compatriots, for all three accounts, is cashed out in the familiar formulation of Rawlsian maximin reasoning that aims to yield principles of distributive justice that would be chosen in a hypothetical choice situation. From this reasoning we get the difference principle, which stipulates that the state’s basic structure must be designed to allow only those inequalities that maximize the position of the worse-off group. Having laid out the basic domestic institutionalist argument for confining duties of egalitarian justice to the state, let us take stock of the way in which it challenges global institutionalism.

²⁶Blake, Michael. 2002. op. cit.; and Miller, Richard. 1998. op. cit.

²⁷Nagel, Thomas. 2005. op. cit.

²⁸Sangiovanni, Andrea. 2007. op. cit.

According to domestic institutionalism, duties of distributive justice derive from the specific type of interaction found only in the state. Of course, domestic institutionalists recognize that a great deal of interaction exists between individuals who live in different states. But, insofar as these latter forms of association are categorically distinct from that between citizens, duties of distributive justice concerning relative shares do not obtain globally.²⁹ The domestic institutionalist position has been subject to a considerable amount of recent criticism, with regard to both its empirical and normative claims.³⁰

On the empirical front, it has been pointed out that a great deal of coercion is found in the global domain, most notably through international rules governing state sovereignty and states' property rights to the natural resources within their territories. In addition, the co-authorship condition too seems to hold in that global terms are enacted in the name of individuals worldwide and sustained through their compliance. To take one important example, international trade regulations are adopted for the purpose of improving economic efficiency and facilitating economic growth in order to benefit individuals all over the world. Satisfying the aims of these regulations depends in turn on the compliance of individuals everywhere with WTO rules and with legal decisions made through the WTO dispute settlement process and enforced through state law. Turning finally to the relationship of reciprocity, it appears that the global order directly provides some individuals with basic goods and in other instances contributes indirectly to this end by making possible states' ability to provide their own citizens with such goods. Direct provision is reflected in the case of states that are unable or unwilling to provide basic goods for their citizens in response to which organizations like the United Nations often provide assistance through peacekeeping missions or through efforts to fulfill basic needs. The indirect role of the global order in contributing to basic goods provision can be defended by observing that the basic capacity of states to provide their citizens with goods depends on a stable international system that recognizes state sovereignty and property rights.

On the basis of these empirical similarities between the relations within and across state borders, there seems to be good reason to think that the arguments of domestic institutionalists actually lend support for global duties of egalitarianism since it can be shown that relationship x exists globally. But a more important task than disputing domestic institutionalists' empirical claims is assessment of their normative claims as to whether they give us a sound explanation of how duties of justice are derived.

²⁹In this section, I focus on the scope of those duties of justice discussed by domestic institutionalists: namely, egalitarian ones.

³⁰See the following important critiques of the domestic institutionalist position: Abizadeh, Arash. 2007. Cooperation, Pervasive Impact, and Coercion: On the Scope (not Site) of Distributive Justice. *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 35/4: 318–358; Cohen, Joshua and Charles Sabel. 2006. op. cit.; Julius, A. J. 2006. Nagel's Atlas. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 34/2: 176–192; Pevnick, Ryan. 2008. Political Coercion and the Scope of Distributive Justice. *Political Studies* 56/2: 399–413; Risse, Mathias. 2006. What to Say About the State. *Social Theory and Practice* 32/4: 671–698.

Although it seems true that the three types of relations considered above give rise to the need for justification among those so connected, it is difficult to see why this justification requires *egalitarian* duties. Instead, each form of relationship might instead be thought to lend itself to a “self-enclosed” justification.³¹ For instance, take the case of state laws regulating traffic violations or the criminalization of assault. In that the goods of safe traffic and lower crime rates serve the public benefit, citizens should not regard their autonomy as unjustly violated by these regulations; indeed their autonomy is likely to be increased overall by such rules. The same point about these goods applies to the co-authorship account. We can only legitimately speak in the names of our fellow citizens when supporting state actions that are independently justifiable. Similarly with the reciprocity-based provision of basic goods, it seems that if I contribute to a collective system of goods provision, then what I am owed in return is simply access to enjoyment of those same basic goods. Reciprocity does not seem to further require that all members of the state are owed egalitarian shares above and beyond basic goods. The domestic institutionalist, then, seems to face a difficulty in showing how duties of distributive justice attach to the particular types of interaction upon which they focus.

Although I agree with the criticisms of domestic institutionalism along both of these lines (and what I go on to say is compatible with them), my strategy in questioning the domestic institutionalist scope restriction differs from them. I explore, in the next section, what precisely it is about interaction within the state that might be thought to generate duties of egalitarian justice. In doing so, I suggest that despite the important differences between the domestic institutionalist approaches, they share an underlying normative rationale. Following this, I argue that this explanation cannot support the domestic institutionalist claim that duties of justice are confined to the state.

5 For Global Institutionalism

I have claimed that in order to convincingly defend egalitarian shares as a normative requirement stemming from the special relationship among state citizens, something more is needed than the bare facts of coercion, co-authorship, and reciprocity. For each of those relations, self-enclosed justifications are available. The domestic institutionalist can respond to this difficulty by noting that egalitarian claims do not follow directly from relationship *x* within the state. Rather, these duties are derived from the fact that individuals within the state gain *different* benefits and burdens from the state association, and this differential requires justification. The basic goods provided by the state – like a health-care system, a stable property rights system, a system of education, a stable market, and a legal order – enable all of its citizens to pursue their goals and flourish in ways that would not be possible in the absence of

³¹ Pevnick uses this term in his critical discussion of the coercion thesis. See Pevnick, Ryan. 2008. op. cit. 402.

these goods.³² However, those with talent and other favorable natural abilities are enabled to derive higher returns than others in society. The ability of the talented to make comparative gains in the market depends crucially on the coercively regulated contributions of all members of society that make possible the provision of basic goods.

Two different elements underscore what the state association does to and for its citizens in affecting the distribution of goods between them. In one respect, the coercively imposed state association allows citizens to enjoy important basic goods like physical security and access to decent health-care, which are valuable things in and of themselves. In a second respect, enjoying these goods has instrumental value in enabling individuals to achieve many other ends that would not otherwise be possible. The good of education, for example, endows its holder with the ability to participate in a competitive work-force and to earn a greater income than would otherwise be possible. That the state's provision of basic goods for its citizens gives rise to egalitarian duties draws on the second capacity of these goods – to enable different relative gains between individuals – rather than the first capacity in which each citizen can be said to enjoy goods for their own sake. Construed in this way, well-off citizens within the state owe *more* than just the provision of basic goods to their worse-off compatriots. The argument for *egalitarian* obligations specifically follows from the fact that individuals who fare better than their co-citizens owe their superior position to the state apparatus made possible by their compatriots' contributions. All members of the state jointly make possible the state enterprise and consequently have claims on the basis of reciprocity to enjoy a fair share of the benefits produced by their cooperation.

In reflecting on these two aspects of state-provided goods, the domestic institutionalist emphasizes that the state is unique in providing individuals with the most basic goods they need to thrive.³³ Indeed, it is true that the state typically has an unparalleled capacity in demanding compliance from individuals to support the provision of an impressive range of valuable goods. By comparison, transnational institutions often lack coercive means and the ability to directly provide basic goods for individuals. Yet it is less clear that the state has a monopoly on the form of cooperative association that gives rise to goods that enable individuals to secure differential benefits and burdens. To illustrate, transnational institutions like the World Trade Organization indisputably play a significant instrumental role in enabling the relative gains of some individuals, which are made possible through the cooperation and compliance with rules of many other individuals worldwide. Much like in the state where individuals benefit from the state association in making use of their natural talents, individuals in the global domain too are able to benefit from their differences in talents, as well as from their state's level of economic development and resources, *due to* the global order that enables cooperation across state borders.

³²Sangiovanni, Andrea. 2007. op. cit. 25–29.

³³See Blake, Michael. 2002. op. cit. 280; and Sangiovanni, Andrea. 2007. op. cit. 34–35.

As such, regardless of whether global institutions provide basic goods, they certainly provide a number of other (non-basic) goods that enable some individuals to do much better than others. According to the underlying rationale of domestic institutionalism, the global provision of goods that allows some to make greater returns than others should give rise to egalitarian claims on the part of all those individuals worldwide who contribute to maintaining that system. Consider the following example to demonstrate this point. In the case of a wealthy American CEO, domestic institutionalists claim that he has egalitarian duties towards his worse-off compatriots because without their support of the state system he would not be able to achieve his high levels of financial success. Assume further that it can be shown that the CEO would also not be able to amass such great wealth were it not for the coercive enforcement of the international intellectual property rights regulations and trade agreements that allow him access to developing country markets. Both the contribution of his compatriots and of foreigners allows the CEO to make relative monetary gains. Consequently, it is inconsistent to maintain that the CEO has egalitarian obligations only to his compatriots. The conditions that enable his relative benefits depend on the compliance of foreigners as well as of members of his own state. In both domains, regardless of the provision of *basic* goods, we still find the provision of some goods that allow some to secure higher returns than others.

In sum, then, domestic institutionalism is unable to defend a dichotomy between what is owed within the state compared to the global domain by its own lights. In both domains, we find the underlying rationale for supporting egalitarian obligations: that cooperation results in differential benefits and burdens on the basis of luck, and this differential requires justification to members subject to the rules governing that cooperation. It may be true that the global order does not in many cases directly provide a number of intrinsically valuable goods that are necessary to live an autonomous life, like the fulfillment of basic needs, access to health-care, and a system of education. Yet the global order undoubtedly provides a wide range of goods that enable some individuals to earn much greater rewards than others. Essentially, then, domestic institutionalists must drop their focus on just those basic goods provided in the state and instead locate the duty-generating feature in those goods that enable differential benefit. But it would follow that duties of distributive justice cannot be restricted to the state.

6 Conclusion

I have tried to show in this chapter that as global interdependence increases, we must re-think what we owe to those who reside beyond the borders of our own states. In response to non-institutionalist cosmopolitans, I discussed how a global institutionalist position does not necessarily exclude individuals who are non-participants of the global order from the scope of moral concern (though in the actual world in which all individuals arguably are party to the global order, this may not prove to be an issue that needs to be reckoned with). Moreover, I disputed the idea that we

should be perfectly indifferent to facts about institutional interaction in determining the scope of justice. Instead, within domains of institutional interaction, concerns about individuals' distributive holdings arise because of their impacts on interaction, and these do not obtain in the absence of interaction. Addressing a different attack on global institutionalism, I criticized the domestic institutionalist position, which maintains a stark disparity in the moral commitments we have to compatriots and to foreigners even in the face of extensive cross-border interaction. Rather, it makes sense to think that as individuals globally come to regularly interact with one another through rule-based structures that have significant impact on their life prospects, their moral obligations to one another change correspondingly.

Reconsidering the State: Cosmopolitanism, Republicanism and Global Governance

Steven Slaughter

1 Introduction

Cosmopolitan arguments for global forms of democracy and governance have intensified in the last decade because of the increasing impact of transnational interconnections on questions of justice and the inability of states to address global problems in a consistently effective manner. However, despite cosmopolitanism being central to efforts to rethink global governance and despite possessing a strong ethical rationale, questions remain as to how cosmopolitan proposals are going to be realized in practice. This chapter criticizes David Held's praxeological articulation of cosmopolitan democracy and advocates considering the potentially productive role of the state in global governance. It contends that many forms of cosmopolitan thought are too quick to dismiss the state as a potential locus of ethical global governance and that republican arguments for redeveloping the state are an important counterpoint to cosmopolitan thought.

In this context global governance refers to the various forms of international institutions and transnational networks that enable cooperation to manage global dynamics and transnational problems. Cosmopolitan scholarship has played a central role in criticizing the ideas and interests which dominate these structures, as well as contending that these forms of governance are undermined by the continuing power and influence of nation-states in these structures.¹ This chapter is sympathetic to the ethical argument underpinning cosmopolitanism broadly understood but is sharply critical of cosmopolitan democracy as a political project. The argument begins by considering various articulations of cosmopolitan thought and the main elements of Held's cosmopolitan proposal for global democracy. Then consideration is given to some of the problems of realizing cosmopolitan proposals for global democracy in practice. Lastly, the essay focuses particular attention

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¹See Held, David. 1995. *Democracy and the Global Order*. Cambridge: Polity Press; Falk, Richard. 1995. *On Humane Governance*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

on the role the state could play in interfacing with global governance and on the republican argument that developing civically-minded citizens and responsive state institutions is essential for the realization of a more ethical and effective system of global governance.

2 Cosmopolitan Democracy

Cosmopolitanism has become a prominent line of reasoning for reforming global governance. The cosmopolitan ethical impulse is an unwavering commitment to the universal community of humanity and a sense of detachment from solely local or national affiliations.² However, contemporary cosmopolitan arguments are diverse, with a range of motivations underpinning the notion of a universal community of humanity.³ Furthermore, there are a range of differing articulations of what political and institutional forms are required to support a universal concern for humanity. The most modest form of cosmopolitanism is “moral cosmopolitanism” which advances universal normative principles of human concern which act as standards by which existing political arrangements and institutions should be justified or criticized.⁴ The prime example of this form of cosmopolitanism is evident in robust articulations of human rights. A second articulation of cosmopolitanism is usefully termed “institutional cosmopolitanism” by Thomas Pogge.⁵ This articulation aspires to enhance human rights through the restructuring of existing international bodies and the development of new institutions which provide resources to fulfill the human rights of individuals. Rather than being simply a standard by which to judge the activities of nation-states, institutional cosmopolitanism proposes a range of institutions which transcend nation-states in order to arrange global life in a way which fulfils the indispensable needs of all human beings.⁶

A third articulation of cosmopolitanism overlaps with all forms of cosmopolitan thought identified here. This is the position which could be termed “discursive cosmopolitanism”, which seeks to locate the development of cosmopolitan practices by identifying the possibility of globally inclusive forms of intercultural conversation

²Nussbaum, Martha. 1996. Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism. In *For Love of Country*, ed. Joshua Cohen. 3–22, 7. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

³Rengger, Nicholas. 2000. Political Theory and International Relations: Promised Land or Exit from Eden. *International Affairs* 76/4: 755–770, 763.

⁴Beitz, Charles. 1999. International Liberalism and Distributive Justice. *World Politics* 51: 269–296, 287. For a similar conception see Nussbaum, Martha. 1996. op. cit. 7–8.

⁵Pogge, Thomas. 2002. *World Poverty and Human Rights*. 169. Cambridge: Polity Press.

⁶For example, Pogge criticizes the way Intellectual Property Rights relating to pharmaceutical patents neglect the unwell in the developing world. He suggests redesigning these institutional arrangements so that pharmaceutical patents are rewarded to the extent they alleviate the burdens of disease and illness around the world. See Pogge, Thomas. 2005. Human Rights and Global Health: A Research Program. *Metaphilosophy* 36/1–2: 182–209.

and dialogue.⁷ While such a position may include calls for cosmopolitan democracy or cosmopolitan institutions, such calls are not necessary to the development of forms of cosmopolitan political community which recognize global pluralism but attempt to sustain thin forms of universalism in the form of ongoing “cosmopolitan conversations”.⁸ A fourth form of cosmopolitan thought is referred to as “political cosmopolitanism” which advocates the creation of universal political institutions at a global level which include all people of the world having the status of global citizens in democratic institutions which transcend the prevailing system of states.⁹ While there are many examples of such contemporary political cosmopolitan thought, the most prominent accounts are those of Daniele Archibugi, Richard Falk, Anthony McGrew, and especially, David Held. These four forms of cosmopolitanism all revolve around an identification with humanity and a moral obligation to promote universal justice, but political cosmopolitanism extends beyond this to include an account of formal global citizenship and democracy. This distinction is important because political cosmopolitanism seeks to provide the political infrastructure of a universal political community and democratic system. This entails developing global institutions where all people have an input into a single global democracy and means that the role of the nation-state becomes significantly delimited because the sovereignty of individual states is dispersed across a range of regional and global sites of governance.

Political cosmopolitanism, especially Held’s account of cosmopolitan democracy, has risen in prominence for two principle reasons. First, the context of world politics has become more amenable to political cosmopolitan ideas because of the increasing role of international organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and the World Trade Organization as well as international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and the development of an extensive system of universal human rights law under the aegis of the UN.¹⁰ The development of democracy and citizenship across states within the European Union (EU) also supports the claim that democracy beyond the state is possible. Second, accelerating globalization – understood as transplanetary interconnectedness and awareness – has enhanced the idea that humanity is sharing a common fate. Not only is this common fate evident in awareness of local vulnerability to global problems, but also in an increased awareness of injustice in other parts of the world and in some cases of complicity in these global patterns of harm.¹¹ However, while these developments open up an

⁷See Linklater, Andrew. 1997. *The Transformation of Political Community: Ethical Foundations of the Post-Westphalian Era*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

⁸Shapcott, Richard. 2002. Cosmopolitan Conversations: Justice, Dialogue and the Cosmopolitan Project. *Global Society* 16/3: 221–243.

⁹Beitz, Charles. 1999. op. cit. 287.

¹⁰Archibugi, Daniele and David Held. 1995. Editor’s Introduction. In *Cosmopolitan Democracy: An Agenda for a New World Order*, eds Daniele Archibugi and David Held. 1–16, 3. Cambridge: Polity Press.

¹¹Pogge, 2002. op. cit. 15–20.

enlarged space to consider cosmopolitan arguments, they do not achieve the globally unified institutions envisioned by those who support political cosmopolitanism. Accordingly, they provide the context from which scholars such as Held launch their justification for cosmopolitan democracy.

The starting point for Held's justification of cosmopolitan democracy is that the various processes of globalization have radically delimited the capacity of democratic nation-states to have any real control over their futures.¹² Held argues that globalization creates a series of "disjunctures", such as the globalization of the world economy, which constrain the capacity of nation-states to regulate their own fates.¹³ Held maintains that people in this context will be affected by "outside" decisions and influences and that people within the state will affect others outside of it without consulting them. Globalization frustrates the congruence between a public and the state and the only way to overcome these disjunctures is to construct global forms of democracy and citizenship and thereby include everyone in decisions that affect them. Indeed, the desire to extend democracy *across* nation-states globally is the objective at the heart of political cosmopolitanism. It is required so that individuals and not states are enabled to be the primary moral and political agents in world politics.

Held's justification for this rests not just on contemporary globalization but on a support of Kant's principle of hospitality, which affirms that a foreigner should be tolerated and not "treated as an enemy upon his arrival in another's country".¹⁴ Held extends this principle beyond conduct towards visiting foreigners to include a fundamental respect for the rights of everybody foreseeably affected by particular political decisions. Held contends that in a "highly interconnected world, 'others' include not just those found in the immediate community, but all those whose fates are interlocked in networks of economic, political and environmental interaction".¹⁵ This entails "mutual acknowledgments of, and respect for, the equal rights of others to pursue their own projects and life-plans" on a transnational and global scale.¹⁶ A cosmopolitan legal system is required in order to articulate such a universally inclusive hospitality and awareness. Consequently, democracy ought to be extended to a transnational level so that both local and global problems can be addressed in an effective and globally inclusive manner.

¹²Held, David. 1998. Democracy and Globalization. In *Re-imagining Political Community; Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy*, eds. Daniele Archibugi et al., 11–27. Cambridge: Polity Press.

¹³Held, David. 1995. op. cit. 99–140.

¹⁴Kant, Immanuel. 1983. *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*, trans. Ted Humphrey. 118–119. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company.

¹⁵Held, David. 1995. op. cit. 228.

¹⁶Ibid. 228.

The central principle of Held's proposal for political cosmopolitanism is his conception of "cosmopolitan democratic public law" – a common legal structure that is entrenched across and within a range of "diverse political communities" and "multiple citizenships".¹⁷ While Held argues for the eventual creation of "independent political authority and administrative capacity at regional and global levels" – including the formation of a global parliament and the related paraphernalia of government with structures far different from the decentralized and inchoate structures of prevailing forms of global governance,¹⁸ he does not argue for a simplistic model of hierarchical world government. Rather, he advocates a model of democracy where the sovereignty of states is dispersed regionally and globally, and where citizenship is held by all people and mediated by the principle of subsidiarity.¹⁹ As Anthony McGrew maintains, cosmopolitanism is defined by the principle of "heterarchy" which entails a "divided authority system subject to cosmopolitan democratic law" rather than hierarchy.²⁰ This legal-political framework would incorporate a cosmopolitan form of democracy which includes all people around the world in decisions that affect them. Held seeks to embed cosmopolitan practices into states from this overarching body of cosmopolitan democratic law. Moreover, states are not the only form of governance operating within cosmopolitan democracy. Cosmopolitan law would be embedded at all levels of global political life. All actors and polities – even functional organizations such as transnational corporations (TNC's) – would be shaped by cosmopolitan democratic law.

Cosmopolitan democracy would develop a firmer connection between political decision-makers and people around the world by underpinning global governance with the ethical principle "that those who are significantly affected by a global good or bad should have a say in its provision or regulation".²¹ Cosmopolitan democratic public law would enshrine the principle that people affected by a decision made elsewhere would have a formal say in the decision making process. Consequently, cosmopolitan democracy would promote an ethical standard that promotes universal concern for the welfare and voice of all individuals and proposes institutions which enable global deliberation and accountability in practical terms. In the long term this would require the development of formal global democratic structures that enable all people affected by a given process to have a say in the public policies aimed

¹⁷Ibid. 233.

¹⁸Held, David. 2004. *Global Covenant*. 113. Cambridge: Polity Press.

¹⁹Ibid. 98–101.

²⁰McGrew, Anthony. 1997. Democracy Beyond Borders? Globalization and the Reconstruction of Democratic Theory and Politics. In *The Transformation of Democracy*, ed. Anthony McGrew, 231–266; 250. Cambridge: The Open University.

²¹Held, David. 2006. Reframing Global Governance: Apocalypse Soon or Reform! *New Political Economy* 11/2: 157–176, 166.

at addressing global or regional problems.²² Consequently, cosmopolitan democracy advocates a radical restructuring of the ways international organizations and global governance operate. Governance structures would be detached from the interests of states, would become more binding on states and other actors, and would thus dramatically delimit the legal and political autonomy of the state. These structures would also promote the welfare and autonomy of all individuals and be more directly accountable to individuals.

Held is aware that the development of this model of cosmopolitan democracy is not a simple or short term task. He advocates a range of short term policies which advance cosmopolitan moral purposes and which are a longer term path to deeper cosmopolitan democratic structures. In terms of economic and social policies, Held indicates that the stance of cosmopolitan democracy would entail a social democratic understanding of social objectives which would depart from a neo-liberal stance that promotes unfettered global markets. It would also have a human security understanding of security priorities which would promote protection from the range of threats which create personal insecurity such as poverty and environmental degradation.²³ More specifically this means challenging the core ideas of the Washington Consensus on development policy with a cosmopolitan social democratic program that seeks to publicly assist the poor and marginalized by ensuring that economic globalization works in a more economically inclusive manner.²⁴ This necessitates “international regulation with efforts to reduce the economic vulnerability of the poorest countries by transforming market access, eliminating unsustainable debt, reversing the outflow of net capital assets from the South to the North, and creating new facilities for development purposes”.²⁵ In terms of legal structures, Held argues for such measures to strengthen international law and international institutions as would delimit unilateralism. He also argues that we need to reform the UN Security Council so that developing countries have a stronger voice, in addition to possibly creating a second – democratically elected – UN chamber, developing regional groupings such as the EU, extending the jurisdictions of international courts, developing new coordinating agencies for economic management, and creating an international force for peacekeeping operations.²⁶

²²Held, David. 1995. *op. cit.* 278. This also raises the clear need for procedures and rules to determine what sorts of issues are dealt with at which level of governance. Held’s response to this question is to instantiate the principle of subsidiarity and establish a boundary court that determines public issues on the basis of the number of people affected, the intensity of effect of the issue on people and the “comparative efficiency” of dealing with issues at lower levels of governance. See Held, David. 1995. *op. cit.* 236.

²³Held, David. 2006. *op. cit.* 167.

²⁴*Ibid.* 168–169.

²⁵Held, David. 2004. *op. cit.* 156.

²⁶Held, David. 1995. *op. cit.* 279; Held, David. 2004. *op. cit.* 73–88.

3 Realizing Cosmopolitan Democracy

While Held recognizes that these institutions are not easy to develop, he claims that they will provide the context necessary for the development of cosmopolitan democracy in the long term. However, questions certainly abound as to whether these short term reforms are going to be widely supported, let alone how they are going to be realized in practice. In response to Held's proposals, Anne Marie Slaughter asserts that "the more concrete and politically feasible of his recommendations seem insufficient to institute his far-reaching vision, while the larger proposals tend to be underspecified or politically unrealistic".²⁷ While this problem is not confined to the project of cosmopolitan democracy, it does point to a deeper and more profound question of which actors and institutions are going to be able to put cosmopolitan principles into practice. Who is going to advance cosmopolitanism?

This is a fundamental problem of praxeology: what agency can promote and realize this form of cosmopolitanism in practice? As Heikki Patomäki has claimed: "Held is concerned with detailed prescriptions about how global governance should be organized but has very little to say about who could (or would like to) realize his vision, under what circumstances, and with what consequences".²⁸ While international political arrangements have changed in the past and will change in the future, this does not mean that cosmopolitanism is the only possible direction of institutional or normative change. Cosmopolitan democracy does not appear to possess the political means to counteract the states and international institutions that actively support the prevailing form of neo-liberal globalization with its systematic privileging of market actors and with its deregulated and liberalized economic dynamics. Ultimately, while cosmopolitan democracy offers a compelling ethical stance in relation to realizing global justice, it is not clear where the power needed for transforming global politics is to come from or how this approach is going to generate this political power. While some cosmopolitans have argued that NGOs and global civil society offer a political base for cosmopolitan ideas, it is not clear that these actors generally operate according to cosmopolitan principles.²⁹ NGOs supportive of neo-liberalism which possess decidedly non-cosmopolitan agendas are also active in maintaining the predominance of neo-liberal ideas in public policy.³⁰ In order for cosmopolitan proposals to be a guide to political action in practice, there needs to be a fully developed account of the means by which cosmopolitan principles can be realized.

²⁷Slaughter, Anne-Marie and Thomas N. Hale. December 21, 2005. A Covenant to Make Global Governance Work. *Open Democracy* <http://www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-vision_reflections/covenant_3141.jsp> Accessed 20 May 2008.

²⁸Patomäki, Heikki. 2003. Problems of Democratizing Global Governance: Time, Space and the Emancipatory Process. *European Journal of International Relations* 9/3: 347–376, 357.

²⁹Keck, Margaret and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. 32–34. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

³⁰Sklair, Leslie. 1997. Social Movements for Global Capitalism: The Transnational Capitalist Class in Action. *Review of International Political Economy* 4/3: 514–538.

Particularly important to the issue of realizing cosmopolitan democracy is the role of the state. The state is an institution which has existed in a wide variety of forms. However, central to the modern state has been the principle and practice of sovereignty manifest in control over a delimited territory backed by a monopoly over the legitimate use of force, the possession of the legitimate right of taxation, the capacity to create domestic law and enter into international legal arrangements, as well as playing a key role in shaping its population's identity.³¹ Despite the fact that these elements of state power and the claim to exclusive rule over a particular territory were originally shaped by military competition, in recent decades we have seen a demonstrated capacity of states to develop and elaborate international institutions and embed themselves within global forms of governance. States are institutions that play a crucial role in linking power to social and moral purposes both domestically and internationally.³² While all forms of cosmopolitan thought attempt to condition the types of practices states can engage in, cosmopolitan democracy actively attempts to transcend the state as the primary form of governance.

However, I would argue that the state remains a focal point of existing forms of governance and political identity. The agency and power of the state remain crucial to the realization of normative projects in domestic and global politics. Held is largely silent on the question of how to transform the state but for cosmopolitan democracy to be a realistic program of political action it is necessary to engage with the state. There are two issues which relate to the importance of the state in currently prevailing forms of global governance and to reasons why proposals for cosmopolitan democracy need to engage with the state.

The first issue that proposals of cosmopolitan democracy need to grapple with is the institutional power of the state, especially when considering the role of the state in contemporary globalization. One of the key reasons advanced by Held to support cosmopolitan democracy is that the state is unable to effectively and ethically govern in the context of globalization. This dramatically understates the contemporary influence of the state and is problematic in two respects. First, the state is crucial to the structure of contemporary globalization – many scholars indicate that globalization is actively shaped and constituted by the neo-liberal policies of states.³³ In particular, Saskia Sassen uses the term “denationalization” to emphasize that globalization is not something that merely exists outside of the state, or

³¹Linklater, Andrew. 1998. Citizenship and Sovereignty in the Post-Westphalian European State. In *Re-imagining Political Community*, eds. Daniele Archibugi et al. 113–137, 118. Cambridge: Polity Press.

³²Eckersley, Robyn. 2004. *The Green State: Rethinking Democracy and Sovereignty*. 6. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

³³See Cerny, Phillip. 1997. Paradoxes of the Competition State: The Dynamics of Political Globalization. *Government and Opposition*. 32/2: 251–274; Gill, Stephen. 1998. European Governance and New Constitutionalism: Economic and Monetary Union and Alternatives to Democracy. *New Political Economy* 3/1: 5–26; Sassen, Saskia. 2006. *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; Sassen, Saskia. 2003. The State and Globalization. *Interventions*. 5/2 2003: 241–248.

between states, but is a political project actually *inside* many states whereby outside flows of people and resources are given rights by the state, and in doing so leads to a “partial denationalizing of what had been constructed historically as national, including the exclusive territorial authority of the state”.³⁴ Far from being a helpless bystander to globalization, states are active architects of the contemporary global flows of resources and ideas. Second, states do cooperate widely on a range of issues through international law and organizations as well as “trans-governmental networks” of governmental officials which are “increasingly important in areas like financial regulation, environmental protection, jurisprudence, and counterterrorism”.³⁵ For cosmopolitanism to be realized, these state capacities need to be engaged with and marshaled towards cosmopolitan ends. More pointedly, if cosmopolitanism is to be realized the state needs to be shifted away from the ideologies of neo-liberalism, neo-conservatism and nationalism which do influence the state in sometimes decidedly anti-cosmopolitan directions.

The second issue that proposals of cosmopolitan democracy need to consider is the strength of the national political consciousness enmeshed in the state, particularly the apparent incongruity between conceptualizations of cosmopolitan democracy and nationalism. Nationalism refers to a political and cultural identification of the people of a particular nation-state with that nation-state where the loyalty of a person to other members of their specific nation generally overrides obligations to all other communities. Nationalism is clearly more deeply ingrained and more instantiated than cosmopolitan principles. Jürgen Habermas notes that “even a worldwide consensus on human rights could not serve as the basis for a strong equivalent to the civic solidarity that emerged in the framework of the nation-state”.³⁶ Anne Marie Slaughter is even more blunt: “if we continue to define the challenges of global governance as a struggle between progressive, cosmopolitan forces and conservative, nationalist ones, then cosmopolitanism will lose”.³⁷ She goes on to say:

Instead of presenting cosmopolitanism and nationalism as an age-old dichotomy, one that all too often equates in the public mind with left and right, cosmopolitans must seek instead to *harness* nationalism in the service of cosmopolitan ideals – ideals that are themselves often embedded in national creeds.³⁸

³⁴Sassen, Saskia. 2003. *op. cit.* 242.

³⁵Slaughter, Anne-Marie and Thomas N. Hale. December 21, 2005. *op. cit.* 3; See also Neff, Stephen. 1999. *International Law and the Critique of Cosmopolitan Citizenship*. In *Cosmopolitan Citizenship*, eds. Kimberley Hutchings and Roland Dannreuther, 105–119. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

³⁶Habermas, Jürgen. 2001. *The Postnational Constellation*. 108. Cambridge: Polity Press. See also Walzer, Michael. 1994. *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad*. 2–4. Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press; and Resnick, Philip. *Global Democracy: Ideals and Reality*. In *Globalization and Europe*, ed. Roland Axtmann, 126–143; 136. London: Pinter.

³⁷Slaughter, Anne-Marie and Thomas N. Hale. December 21, 2005. *op. cit.* 2.

³⁸*Ibid.* 3.

It is important to note that some scholars of cosmopolitanism, especially discursive cosmopolitanism, recognize the ongoing importance of rethinking political community.³⁹ Reasoning which seeks to reframe nationalism is necessary if cosmopolitan ideas are to use the state to develop cosmopolitan norms and practices in domestic and international politics.

The problem for cosmopolitan democracy is that this political project has weakly developed social foundations and few sources of unambiguous political power or support. In particular, the cosmopolitan project does not have apparent access to the institutional power of the state nor a hold on the political consciousness of humanity in the manner that nationalism – for good or ill – possesses. The idea here is that the state *could* be engaged in a range of issues far broader than defending neo-liberal policymaking.⁴⁰

If cosmopolitan democracy is going to develop in practice it is essential that it engages with the state. However, there are a range of questions surrounding any cosmopolitan engagement with the state. Can cosmopolitanism engage pragmatically with the state without compromising its core priority to humanity? Can nationalism and state power remain “authentic” and legitimate in the eyes of the local populace with a cosmopolitan engagement with global governance which bestows equal concern upon non-residents? However, the more fundamental question is *who* is going to convert cosmopolitan ideas into practice and how is this going to be done in the face of anti-cosmopolitan principles and social forces. The question of praxeology focuses fundamentally on what motivations are going to lead agents such as governments and citizens to act politically to decisively transform existing political structures.

4 Republicanism, The State and Global Governance

Of course the question of praxeology is a concern for all forms of political and philosophical reasoning. Articulating action-guiding ethical principles and designing appropriate institutions is more straightforward than giving a robust political account of how such principles relate to existing political structures and how these principles could be realized in practice. Nevertheless, neo-roman republican political reasoning offers an interesting counterpoint to cosmopolitanism. While republicanism has a long and contested legacy, it is a form of political reasoning which centers on developing civic ethics and institutions that are intent on establishing liberty as a public achievement within a given state. In contrast to cosmopolitanism, republicanism asserts that the state is a crucial existing foundation

³⁹See Linklater, Andrew. 1997. op. cit. This argument is also made by Robyn Eckersley. See Eckersley, Robyn. 2007. From Cosmopolitanism Nationalism to Cosmopolitan Democracy. *Review of International Studies* 13/3: 329–356.

⁴⁰Sassen, Saskia. 2003a. The Participation of States and Citizens in Global Governance. *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 10/1: 5–28, 15.

of power that should and could feasibly be directed towards public objectives by a politically engaged citizenry. That is, we ought to construct and delimit public forms of power from where citizens are currently situated rather than from the more abstract position of a *cosmopolis*.

While republicanism has been associated with “communitarian” scholars such as Michael Sandel and David Miller, who have strongly defended the importance of public participation and national forms of political community, neo-republican scholars such as Quentin Skinner and Philip Pettit have situated republican ideas closer to liberalism by arguing that republicans are intent on the liberty of the individual but that, in contrast to liberalism, this liberty can only be constituted collectively by an appropriately empowered republican state.⁴¹ Importantly, the goal of this form of republicanism is the constitution of a robust sense of individual liberty conceived as “non-domination”: a context where people “live in the presence of people but at the mercy of none”.⁴² The aspiration of republican structures and policies is to constitute individual independence either by protecting individuals and dampening down the flows of power which adversely affect them, or by augmenting the capacity of individuals to protect themselves from various forms of possible subjection.⁴³ The republican promotion of non-domination requires various types of delimited and purposive interference on the part of the state in society and economic affairs.⁴⁴ Consequently, republicanism’s conception of liberty involves an institutionalized context where citizens are free from subordination or domination from the state itself or from other interests or actors in society. Such a concept of liberty incorporates the view that the state should pursue public interests alone and avoid promoting the private or partisan interests of any section of society.

A republican state’s power is managed by checks and balances as well as by ongoing citizen oversight and public deliberation. Such oversight is provided by citizens who are motivated by an enduring culture of civic virtue and patriotism. Republicans emphasize that patriotism is a love of, and a sense of responsibility for, the civic culture and institutions of the state that make liberty possible.⁴⁵ Democratic processes are a central way to check and direct the state by providing opportunities for contestation whereby citizens can claim that public interests are not being upheld or tracked by the state. Pettit advances the idea of “contestatory democracy” where citizens have both “authorial” and “editorial” powers in relation to government.⁴⁶

⁴¹Laborde, Cécile and John Maynor. 2007. The Contribution of Republicanism to Contemporary Political Theory. In *Republicanism and Political Theory*, eds. Cécile Laborde and John Maynor, 1–28. Oxford: Blackwell. See also Pettit, Philip. 1999. *Republicanism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Skinner, Quentin. 1998. *Liberty Before Liberalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁴²Pettit, Philip. 1999. op. cit. 80.

⁴³Ibid. 129–170.

⁴⁴Dagger, Richard. 2006. Neo-republicanism and the civic economy. *Politics, Philosophy and Economics* 5/2: 151–173, 153.

⁴⁵Viroli, Maurizio. 1995. *For Love of Country*. 2. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

⁴⁶Pettit, Philip. 1999. op. cit. 296. See also Pettit, Philip. 1999b. Republican Freedom and Contestatory Democratization. In *Democracy’s Value*, eds. Ian Shapiro and Casiano

Authorial powers encompass the public selecting representatives, while editorial powers include procedures such as freedom of information provisions, a range of consultative measures that include petitions, and an ability to appeal and reshape law via an independent auditor, judicial and administrative review, or direct referenda. Richard Bellamy contends that the importance of democratic involvement in this “editing” process needs to be emphasized and argues against reading contestation in a purely legal or judicial way. Accordingly, he proposes democratic forms of public contestation such as referenda instead of judicial review.⁴⁷ While such measures avoid public deliberation over every decision, they create the possibility of public dissent in cases where the state is not pursuing public interests.

Such a political project does not automatically contradict cosmopolitan moral impulses but it does go some way to address the problems of institutional power and political consciousness that beset cosmopolitan democracy. Republicans are focused on utilizing or checking the institutional power of the state to promote public concerns and the liberty of citizens. A republican state would be accountable to its citizens in a stronger way than a liberal state. The advantage of contestatory democracy is that it places limits on electoral politics and the power of political parties and more generally disrupts the possibility of cliques having indefinite or uncontested influence over government. Consequently, republican norms and practices would probably shift the state away from neo-liberal or capitalist interests and thereby enable society to determine a broader range of possible economic and social priorities and to offer greater scope to cosmopolitan purposes. Republicanism also contains political resources for developing forms of international cooperation to support the state’s capacity to promote liberty. The institutional view of how republican states ought to work domestically influences republican support for an institutionally elaborate context beyond the state.⁴⁸ Thus while there is not an ascriptive global public in a republican sense of a palpable global culture of patriotism and civic virtue, various publics around the world could still potentially direct their respective states to develop global forms of institutional collaboration to prevent domination. Republican ideas could animate a range of international institutions which could assist republican states to promote the liberty of their citizens.⁴⁹ Indeed, within a context of globalization and interdependence these institutions become increasingly crucial.⁵⁰ In particular there is a need for republican states to develop common rules and regulations for global capitalism and other transnational dynamics. This would enable individual states to make choices that are not

Hacker-Cordón, 163–190, 296. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Pettit, Philip. 2005. Two-Dimensional Democracy, National and International. *IIJ Working Paper* (History and Theory of International Law Series) 2005/8: 1–21, 16.

⁴⁷Bellamy, Richard. 2007. Republicanism, Democracy and Constitutionalism. In *Republicanism and Political Theory*, eds. Cécile Laborde and John Maynor, 159–189. Oxford: Blackwell.

⁴⁸See Deudney, Daniel. 2007. *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory from the Polis to the Global Village*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

⁴⁹Pettit, Philip. 1999. op. cit. 152.

⁵⁰Deudney, Daniel. 2007. op. cit. 161–192.

overridden by powerful states or global market actors and that would not adversely impact upon the liberty of people in other societies.⁵¹

Republicanism also offers practical measures whereby the public interests of those within the state could be coordinated with the public interests of other states through multilateral negotiations in a context where so many social issues inherently encompass transnational dimensions. Such policymaking requires citizens to consider the liberty of people who live in other states. This will entail some states assisting other states financially to maintain an atmosphere of solidarity between states and to ensure that other states engage in programs which productively address global problems and which do not harm vulnerable members in their respective societies. To the republican such moral consideration shown for the liberty of other people does not necessitate political cosmopolitan arguments for a formal global democracy. Rather, a republican state needs to develop robust multilateral and reciprocal relationships with other states so as to enable states to articulate and substantiate their respective society's public interests with mutual respect and dialogue.

While republicanism does not necessitate a global democracy or world government, the republican conception of contestatory democracy offers grounds to address the "democratic deficit" that exists in contemporary global governance. Pettit claims that when we look at democracy purely in an electoral–representative sense, the power of international institutions over the democratic state looks disruptive, but if we look at democracy in a contestatory way we can identify avenues which extend local opportunities for citizens to constitute liberty.⁵² Appropriately designed and constrained international institutions have the capacity to enhance contestatory democracy within national contexts in two ways according to Pettit. First, by opening up the possibility that people can appeal to international bodies when states fail to uphold their internationally declared obligations, and second, by allowing the public to challenge, via NGOs for example, the decisions of international institutions – even though the public (or their representatives in most cases) do not select the officers of such institutions.⁵³ However, this proposal of allowing NGOs to challenge the decisions of international institutions could be seen to be too unstructured and ad hoc. There are real questions as to how representative NGOs are of their respective publics or whether legal challenges and remedies would constitute effective contestation. As such, republican proposals could include the possibility that official panels of citizens would interact with these institutions to make them more transparent and act as an avenue by which citizens could challenge these institutions to explain themselves when they act in accordance with very narrow sectional interests.

⁵¹This is elaborated further in Slaughter, Steven. 2005. *Liberty Beyond Neo-liberalism: A Republican Critique of Liberal Governance in a Globalizing Age*. 210–217. Houndsmills: Palgrave Press, 2005.

⁵²Pettit, Philip. 2005. op. cit. 14–15.

⁵³Ibid. 16–20.

Republicanism also seeks to build upon the political consciousness of nationalism in a way that political cosmopolitan scholars have not actively attempted. While it is true that republicanism asserts the importance of a particular political community and of forms of patriotism and political responsibility that are located in a specific country, republicans do not believe that this means that republicanism is ultimately a philosophy which defends an inward-looking state which cannot articulate interstate cooperation or ignores the interests of those living in other states. Republicans of a neo-roman variety are keen to place emphasis on patriotism and citizenship rather than nationalism, as the fundamental bedrock of political consciousness. Maurizio Viroli points out that patriotism is distinct from nationalism. According to his argument, patriotism is primarily motivated by the desire to live in a country characterized by liberty, but the “love of a particular liberty. . . is not exclusive: love of the common liberty of one’s people easily extends beyond national boundaries and translates into solidarity”.⁵⁴ So republicans would seek to shift political consciousness away from nationalism towards a culture of patriotism which incorporates a public concern for political life which is “sustained by shared memories of [a] commitment to liberty, social criticism, and resistance against oppression and corruption” rather than by ethnic or nationalistic sentiments.⁵⁵ Republicanism suggests that institutions aimed at moderating power within or beyond the state could not exist without the state and the patriotic principles which motivate individuals to situate their civic duties. While republicanism desires the universal achievement of liberty, it contends that this can only be achieved by the constructions of liberty in particular states underpinned by particular forms of patriotism and civic virtue.

The entire republican argument rests on the activity and virtue of citizens. It emphasizes the public spirited component of political life and further encourages citizens to be politically aware and engage in politics when the government directs the state infrastructure in directions that do not reflect the public interests of their state. While on one level such activity is motivated by a sense of expanded self-interest on the part of the citizen, republicans ultimately see citizens acting in a public spirited way because the institutions of the state and a culture of patriotism and public virtue make it difficult to act otherwise. The virtues required to uphold the public good according to republicans are captured in Cicero’s formulation of “prudence, justice, courage and temperance”.⁵⁶ These virtues are highly relevant to the long term and cautious view citizens of a state need to take of local and global politics. However, in the context of globalization there are other practical virtues we need to add to these. Most notably we need to expand on the virtue of justice and see

⁵⁴Viroli, Maurizio. 1995. op. cit. 12. See also White, Stuart. 2002. Republicanism, Patriotism, and Global Justice. In *Forms of Justice*, eds. Daniel A. Bell and Avner de Shalit, 251–268, 258. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

⁵⁵Viroli, Maurizio. 1995. op. cit. 13.

⁵⁶Skinner, Quentin. 1984. The Idea of Negative Liberty: Philosophical and Historical Perspectives. In *Philosophy in History*, eds. Richard Rorty et al. 193–221, 214. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

cosmopolitanism not only as a political project but as an actual virtue that citizens possess and which motivate them to uphold republican purposes. That is, we need to consider being engaged with global issues and the concerns of human beings in other countries as being necessary to realize liberty in a highly interdependent world.

Even though it is hard to reconcile republicanism with cosmopolitan democracy because of republicanism's focus on strengthening existing forms of citizenship and state, republicanism as a speculative political project is not antithetical to cosmopolitanism in a broader sense.⁵⁷ The vision of republicanism presented here combines the insights of various neo-roman scholars to argue for measures that combine the development of republics constituted by a citizenry motivated by public involvement, patriotism and civic virtue with forms of governance that transcend the state. These proposals are not completely antithetical to many of the policies and institutions proposed by cosmopolitan thinkers and could be seen as an intermediate and necessary step to cosmopolitan programs. Republicanism deals with the problem of praxeology better than cosmopolitanism because it argues that we need to first develop strong civic ethics and political deliberation *within* the state and ensure that the state is actively constituted and contested by its citizens before extending these practices to a global level. There is no doubt that more elaborate and effective global governance is required and that states need to delegate their sovereignty in order to promote the concerns of populations in other parts of the world along with the interests of their own populations, but this is wholly dependent upon people believing and acting in a manner that supports this political project. Such republican ethics and institutions could direct state capacities away from neo-liberal and capitalist agendas to promote a broader concern for liberty and social justice at home and abroad.

5 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the proponents of cosmopolitan democracy do not possess a strong conception of how this form of cosmopolitanism is going to be realized in practice. This is principally because cosmopolitan democrats like Held do not engage with the potential of the state. The state is a crucial institution that weds power to social purposes and cannot be disregarded. If cosmopolitanism ignores the state then other social forces and ideologies that do engage with the state will continue to predominate. Cosmopolitanism needs to engage with the capacity of the state in order to generate cosmopolitan social change and develop cosmopolitan forms of democracy and governance over the long term. This chapter has also contended that neo-roman republicanism is an approach which could productively guide

⁵⁷Slaughter, Steven. 2007. Cosmopolitanism and Republican Citizenship. In *Globalization and Citizenship: The Transnational Challenge*, eds. Wayne Hudson and Steven Slaughter. 85–99. London: Routledge.

citizens and the state towards public ends compatible with cosmopolitan impulses, as well as possessing its own distinct political agenda which encompasses more elaborate forms of global governance. Republicans contend that we need to develop civic virtue and republican institutions within the state in order to fully develop global forms of governance that can assertively address transnational issues and problems.

Cosmopolitan Corporate Responsibilities

Wim Vandekerckhove

1 Introduction

Despite a wide consensus among cosmopolitan thinkers that multinational corporations (MNCs) have a tremendous impact on people's lives all over the world, corporations receive little attention from these thinkers when it comes to developing "cures" for many of the global worries they regard those corporations to be contributors to. Hence we should question cosmopolitanism on whether it is "out of touch" with reality. As Andrew Kuper puts it:

Theorists of justice and development – from political philosophers to comparativists – are hardly in a position to refute the inevitable charge of being "out of touch". Most of us have not wanted to think *about* corporations (except perhaps as agents of injustice) let alone think *like* corporations.¹

One explanation for this lack of attention is offered by John Ruggie:

The place of non-state actors and movements remains poorly understood in the mainstream literature, largely because they tend to be viewed, implicitly if not explicitly, through the lenses of an "institutional substitutability" premise. That is to say, if other institutional forms at the international level do not have the potential to *replace* the territorial state they tend to be regarded as unworthy of serious consideration.²

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I received valuable comments on earlier versions of this paper from participants at the IGEA 2008 conference, and additionally from Stan van Hoof, Carol Gould, Ronald Commers, Jos Leys, and Alicja Gescinska.

¹Kuper, Andrew. 2005. Redistributing Responsibilities – The UN Global Compact with Corporation. In *Real World Justice*, eds. Andreas Follesdal and Thomas Pogge, 359–380, 361. Dordrecht: Springer. Emphasis in original.

²Ruggie, John G. 2003. Taking Embedded Liberalism Global: The Corporate Connection. In *Taming Globalization: Frontiers of Governance*, eds. David Held and Mathias Koenig-Archibugi, 93–129; 104. Cambridge: Polity Press. Emphasis in original.

Indeed, some cosmopolitan thinkers do open a door for corporate responsibilities in the realm of global justice, but nearly always as *ersatz*-governments. David Held asserts that states are not “ontologically privileged” but he does not develop a specific framework for corporate responsibilities.³ Onora O’Neill suggests that it would be simplistic to presume that non-state actors are by definition indifferent to justice, and that in the context of unjust or weak states, MNCs can and should take up political duties normally taken up by state actors.⁴ Thomas Pogge’s treatment of corporations is even poorer. Carol Gould comments that

Pogge’s account of the problems with the global economic order wrongly omits the contribution of corporations to the lack of human rights fulfillment. [H]is focus on state actors lead to an overly narrow diagnosis of the problems with globalization and the concomitant responsibility to rectify its impacts in developing countries.⁵

Hence, within cosmopolitan thinking there is an enormous void with regard to the “distribution of responsibilities”.⁶

Kuper⁷ sees three tasks in distributing responsibilities:

1. establishing the grounds for allocating responsibilities,
2. attributing responsibilities to diverse agents,
3. convincing those agents to fulfill their responsibilities.

This chapter commences these tasks but focuses exclusively on corporations, as this is clearly a void in cosmopolitan thinking today.

In the next section, I establish a ground for allocating cosmopolitan responsibilities to corporations. I develop an argument as to why corporations have cosmopolitan responsibilities that is different from the “corporations as an *ersatz*-government” argument. The section after that offers a model to group cosmopolitan responsibilities of corporations towards various actors. In the concluding section, I will show that convincing corporations to fulfill their cosmopolitan responsibilities can start from the notion of “performative contradiction”.

³Held, David. 2005. Principles of Cosmopolitan Order. In *The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism*, eds. Gillian Brock and Harry Brighouse, 10–28, 10. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁴O’Neill, Onora. 2001. Agents of Justice. In *Global Justice*, ed. Thomas Pogge, 188–203. Oxford: Blackwell.

⁵Gould, Carol. 2007. Coercion, Care, and Corporations: Omissions and Commissions in Thomas Pogge’s Political Philosophy. *Journal of Global Ethics* 3/3: 381–393; 388.

⁶Miller, David. 2005. Distributing Responsibilities. In *Global Responsibilities: Who Must Deliver on Human Rights?* ed. Andrew Kuper, 95–115. London: Routledge.

⁷Kuper, Andrew. 2005. op. cit. 373.

2 Why Corporations Have Cosmopolitan Responsibilities

The leading question in this section is: on what ground can we allocate cosmopolitan responsibilities to corporations? The answer to that must enable us to redistribute responsibilities away from the governmental myopia of current cosmopolitan thinking. In this regard it is important to note that perceiving corporations as *ersatz*-governments – as entities taking over responsibilities from weak or unjust states – does not entail a redistribution of responsibilities. Rather, it boils down to a back-up plan for a nation-state centered distribution. Obviously, cosmopolitan thinkers stuck in the state paradigm lose their focus when it comes to weak states because they then say corporations must take over state responsibilities. Thus, they promote corporations to state-like actors. This is an assertion I will not make. In what I will develop in the remainder of this chapter it must be clear that I regard corporations not as state-like actors but as collective actors with a political dimension. In my understanding of what that political dimension is, I follow Iris Young who wrote that the political involves activities

In which people organize collectively to regulate or transform some aspect of their shared social conditions, along with the communicative activities in which they try to persuade one another to join such collective action or decide in what direction they wish to take it.⁸

In that sense, the political dimension is broader than government. Thus, the corporation can be political without being an *ersatz*-government. It follows that cosmopolitan responsibilities can be allocated to it.

Martha Nussbaum, setting out ten principles for the global structure, gives an example of distinct responsibilities for states and for corporations respectively in principles three and four:

Prosperous nations have a responsibility to give a substantial portion of their GDP to poorer nations, [...] multinational corporations have responsibilities for promoting human capabilities in the regions where they operate.⁹

Of course, Nussbaum asserts that the allocation of responsibilities is both provisional (subject to change and rethinking) and ethical (there is no coercive structure to enforce these tasks). Nussbaum's capabilities approach starts with a set of basic entitlements for all people. Hence, the responsibility allocating principle for Nussbaum is the ability of particular actors to deliver on the objective of ensuring basic entitlements for all people, or of promoting human capabilities. This is a very centralized, top-down approach: responsibility for a given set of basic entitlements is allocated among a given set of actors – governments, intergovernmental bodies, civil society actors, corporations and individuals. The assumption is that the sum of all actors' abilities will cover the whole set of basic entitlements. This amounts to a

⁸Young, Iris. 2004. Responsibility and Global Labor Justice. *Journal of Political Philosophy* 12/4: 365–388, 377.

⁹Nussbaum, Martha C. 2005. Beyond the Social Contract: Capabilities and Global Justice. In *The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism*, eds. Gillian Brock and Harry Brighouse, 196–218; 214–215. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

zero-sum approach: if one actor's ability or power decreases, another's ability or power increases. However, while such a model has the advantage of clarity, it risks being unable to address the relations between the actors that are crucially involved in the realization of basic entitlements.

Accordingly, what we need is an approach that starts from relations and moves up to what honoring relational responsibilities can deliver. Along the way, we will also need a perspective that informs us as to why the relational responsibilities must be honored.

Carol Gould offers a relational approach to responsibilities with which I can work out a ground for allocating responsibilities.¹⁰ The most significant theme in Gould's social ontological approach concerns the distribution of responsibilities. Let me explain this by contrasting the social ontological approach to a natural law approach. In a natural law approach, people have rights as humans and by birth. The institutional recognition of these rights by governments – mediated, for example, through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – implies the allocation of duties to different actors in society in order to safeguard those rights. For example, the government dictates what corporations must do for individuals by law. In a social ontological approach, people make claims upon one another, which means that people have duties towards others. In a Lévinasian sense, we are taken hostage by the other; the other calls upon us and we find we have a duty towards that other.¹¹ The institutional recognition of these duties implies the granting of rights to those who make claims. The crucial difference between the two approaches is that in the social ontological approach, duties are prior to rights. From a natural law perspective, we discuss what the rights are and then who should have which duties corresponding to those rights. From a social ontological perspective, we discuss what duties we can identify as a result of the claims being made and then what would be the appropriate rights to grant those making claims. Hence, the social ontological approach is less dependent on state governments for the formulation of corporate responsibilities. Another difference between the social ontological and the natural law approach is that in the latter the dynamic of responsibility (linking duties and rights) initially is non-relational: any human being has rights by birth regardless of the relational context in which they (will) live. In the social ontological approach, the dynamic of responsibility is initiated by the particular relations within which claims are made and duties arise.

Gould's approach is a non-relativist point of view based on agential mutability or the human capacity for self-transformation. It is non-relativist because the responsibilities of corporations are constituted by the duty of corporations to deliver on the concrete expressions of human aspirations of self-transformation inscribed on shared sites. Corporate identity is a shared site of sense-making because it is a social construct. Corporate identity is a result of messages about the corporation

¹⁰Gould, Carol C. 2004. *Globalizing Democracy and Human Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹¹See the Chapter 6 by An Verlinden for more on how Lévinas approaches responsibility.

generated in anticipation of, or response to, needs and wants of both the market as well as stakeholders. In turn, human aspirations of self-transformation also find their concrete expression in response to messages of corporate identity. These aspirations are universal human strivings to develop agency, identity and human capabilities – who we are and what we can do.

Gould submits that human rights, for example, do not emerge with nation-states, but are

Claims that each makes on others, where this claiming is not simply legal or simply moral. Although these rights inhere in individuals, they arise in a social process of making moral claims on others, and we can recognize these fundamental claims as having normative validity.¹²

Following Gould's line of thinking on the social ontology of individuals-in-relation, the "claims each makes on others" are concrete expressions of human aspirations to self-transformation. With regard to the emergence of the notion of human rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948, we can say that the site of iteration of these claims was that of international relations, nation-states and intergovernmental bodies. But this historicity of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights does not pre-empt "claims that each makes on others" from continuously being made on new sites. It is my assertion that due to globalization, corporate activities are increasingly perceived as a site where human aspirations of self-transformation are made into concrete claims of "each on others" and that state-based institutionalization of the responsibilities resulting from those claims is no longer able to stabilize this dynamic.¹³

Hence, from a social ontological approach, the ground for allocating responsibilities is the fact that human aspirations for self-transformation are addressed to particular actors. Thus, the driving question for allocating responsibilities is not primarily who must do what for whom? – as O'Neill approaches it¹⁴ – but rather who is asking/claiming what from whom?

There is a second point I need to address in this section: in what sense are the corporate responsibilities resulting from human aspirations for self-transformation that are concretized and addressed to corporations, cosmopolitan responsibilities?

The short answer is that these corporate responsibilities are cosmopolitan responsibilities because human aspirations of self-transformation are cosmopolitan aspirations. The long answer is that aspirations of self-transformation are human strivings to develop agency, identity and human capabilities – who we are and what

¹²Gould, Carol C. 2007. op. cit. 387.

¹³My claim is not that without "globalization" concrete claims of "each on others" within the domain of capital-labor relationships would not exist. Such claims have always existed as well as attempts to stabilize those claims (for example, the rise of labor unions – see Touraine, Alain. 1969. *La Société Post-Industrielle*. Paris: Denoël. Rather, I assert here that the current wave of globalization has brought the tensions in the capital-labor relationship under renewed attention, urging us to reconceptualize a potential stabilization of those tensions.

¹⁴O'Neill, Onora. 2001. op. cit.

we can do – which are structured by, but not limited to, determinations of nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender, socio-economic status of parents, or place of birth. In that sense these aspirations are cosmopolitan.

Further to my answer, I submit here that within market capitalism, the legitimacy of corporate activity is constituted by implicit if not explicit claims to deliver on these strivings. I offer two arguments.

First, central to the idea of market functioning is the principle of demand and supply. Markets are blind to individual particulars such as ethnicity, religion, gender, nationality, etc. Any demand is good enough and anyone can have a go at supplying for that demand. Of course, all this is highly ideological. I do not assert in any way that what is happening in the name of this market principle is thereby justified. What I attempt to do is what Ronald Commers considers ethicists must do when they worry about global ethics: be a go-between on a normative-factual continuum.¹⁵ I argue that whoever seeks to justify their activities through this market rhetoric must also accept its implied responsibilities. Moreover, the use of money for exchange instead of barter is inevitably linked to capitalism. At the turn of the twentieth century, Georg Simmel wrote that the impersonality of money-based trade dissolves bonds based on ties of kinship or loyalty.¹⁶ In this sense money is more than a standard value and a means of exchange. Simmel pointed out how the use of money levels qualitative differences between things as well as between people. Although we may regret the abstraction and impersonality inherent in the use of money,¹⁷ the positive side – and my claim is that we should use this as an accountability principle when using money and entering market relationships¹⁸ – is that it helps to foster social differentiation and increases personal freedom.¹⁹ It is precisely this blindness principle that entails a cosmopolitan potential relevant for corporations. Corporations do not suffer from the hurdles to cosmopolitanism that nation-states suffer from, like nationality, kinship, or other sources of partiality. Their policy decisions are based on factors such as market share, competitive advantage, and the net present value of project proposals. All these are blind to the personal characteristics cosmopolitans want nation-states to be blind to. However, the profit incentive driving corporate policies can easily breach

¹⁵Commers, Ronald, M.S. 2008. Global Ethics and World Citizenship. In *Ethics in an Era of Globalization*, eds. M.S. Ronald Commers, Wim Vandekerckhove, and An Verlinden, 75–94, 89. Aldershot: Ashgate.

¹⁶Simmel, Georg. 1990. *Philosophie der Geldes*. Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot.

¹⁷See, for example, Berthoud, Gérald. 2008. Globalization Between Economism and Moralism. In *Ethics in an Era of Globalization*, eds. M.S. Ronald Commers, Wim Vandekerckhove, and An Verlinden, 27–39. Aldershot: Ashgate.

¹⁸Peter Caws allows a similar reading in Caws, Peter. 2008. Community and Society on a Transnational Scale. In *Ethics in an Era of Globalization*, eds. M.S. Ronald Commers, Wim Vandekerckhove, and An Verlinden, 133–145. Aldershot: Ashgate.

¹⁹See Coser, Lewis A. 1977. *Masters of Sociological Thought: Ideas in Historical and Social Context*. New York : Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. See also Claes, Tom. 1998. *Georg Simmel: Moraalfilosoof van de Moderniteit*. Assen: Van Gorcum.

the cosmopolitan requirements of fairness, equity, and human rights. Thus, cosmopolitan responsibilities for corporations are not constituted in the same way as cosmopolitan responsibilities for nation-states. This is consistent with my attempt not to present corporations as *ersatz*-governments. Nevertheless, the ground for allocating responsibilities to corporations and to states is one and the same, namely that human aspirations of self-transformation are iterated and turned into claims on those respective sites.

Second, MNCs and international supply chains disturb the status quo in any region affected by them. While this disturbance of valuable aspects of communal life and social security is resented, at the same time new branches of MNCs or new supplier contracts with foreign lead firms are welcomed by many in the hope that through their labor or by becoming an employee of an MNC they will realize their aspirations of self-transformation. Corporate activity is of importance as a site where cosmopolitan aspirations are concretized into a number of claims – for example, for more and non-discriminatory economic opportunities, for an increase in material wellbeing comparable to that of affluent societies, for more self-determination, for improved labor conditions, and often as an escape from disrupted families within oppressive parochial settings. One might say that these are “the hopes of globalization”. If globalization were to yield such benefits, there would be much less criticism of it.

In *China Blue*, a documentary film by Micha Peled, Jasmine – like an estimated 130 million other mostly young Chinese women – leaves her family home in rural China at sixteen to go to the city for a factory job in the garment industry.²⁰ She tells us she does so because she hopes to improve the living conditions of her family and to make them less dependent on the hard labor of farming and its unsteady income. Of course, business reality soon turns out to be very different from what Jasmine and others had expected. But my point is that since people look to business as a means to realize their self-transformative aspirations and increase their capabilities, corporations bear a positive duty to enhance these. If they fail or refuse to do so they lose their legitimacy because of “argumentative self-entrapment” – once corporations use a particular justificatory argument they cannot recall it. Thomas Risse has described this process in the context of states and governments,²¹ but there is no reason why it would not be valid in other contexts that rely on justificatory argument and communicative action. It is also an example of what Jürgen Habermas calls “performative contradiction”.²² Such a contradiction arises when corporate activities deny or annihilate the presuppositions making corporate activity possible, namely its cosmopolitan potential. In other words, the promises and values on which legal rights to deploy corporate activities are based must not be destroyed

²⁰Peled, Micha X. 2005. *China Blue*. Teddy Bear Films.

²¹Risse, Thomas. 1999. International Norms and Domestic Change: Arguing and Communicative Behavior in the Human Rights Area. *Politics and Society* 27/4: 529–559.

²²Habermas, Jürgen. 1981. *Theorie des Kommunikativen Handelns*. Vol. 1. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

or neglected through those corporate activities. The recent fierce anti-privatization protests in Bolivia, for example, show that performative contradiction does not just lead to the difficulty of the corporate CEO to “face himself in the mirror each morning” but is increasingly becoming a hard risk and bottom-line issue for corporations. This is why corporations must honor their relational responsibilities.

3 What Cosmopolitan Responsibilities Do Corporations Have?

Having established the ground for allocating responsibilities in the previous section following Gould’s social ontology approach, I now move on to Kuper’s second task, namely attributing responsibilities to corporations.²³ The model I propose for this is consistent with the relational ground for allocating responsibilities. I propose to represent the spectrum of economic activity by a four-dimensional model in which the dimensions are differentiated by type of actors with whom corporations as business organizations have relationships. The four dimensions are:

1. the supra-organizational dimension: relations between business organizations and national governments, intergovernmental bodies and NGOs. These relations structure the “playing field” for business. Business organizations enter relationships with these actors through obeying regulations, subverting them, lobbying to change them, or co-establishing them. Sometimes business-NGO partnerships result in “playing field” settings, which is why I include those relationships in this dimension.²⁴
2. the inter-organizational dimension: practices and interaction patterns between business organizations. For example: relations within a supply chain, interactions between competitors, actions by or with regard to new market entrants.
3. the intra-organizational dimension: human relations within a particular business organization. For example: employee relations, human resource policies, reward systems, corporate governance procedures.²⁵
4. the sub-organizational dimension: relations between business organizations and its consumers through the impact of the business organization’s products and services on consumption patterns, lifestyles and standards, and social cohesion.

²³Kuper, Andrew. 2005. op. cit. 373.

²⁴The Forest Stewardship Council has been described as an illustration of this. See Scherer, Andreas Georg and Guido, Palazzo. 2008. Toward A Political Conception of Corporate Responsibility: Business and Society Seen From a Habermasian Perspective. *Academy of Management Review* 32/4: 1096–1120.

²⁵This is not the same as capital-labor relationships. Our sense-making of the intra-organizational dimension already takes place through signifying concepts such as human resource management, performance management systems, corporate governance, etc. The intra-organizational dimension is but one dimension in which the tensions of the capital-labor relationship manifest themselves. These tensions are also at play in the other three dimensions.

Table 1 Cosmopolitan aspirations and cosmopolitan corporate duties

Cosmopolitan aspiration addressed to corporations	Dimension of economic activity	Cosmopolitan duties for corporations
Develop economy Achieve social inclusion Protection from external and internal cultural pressure (acquire rights to cultural and heteroglossic expression)	Supra-organizational	Appropriate lobbying ²⁶ Maintain non-discriminative policies Be culturally sensitive Assess and minimize risk to complicity in human rights abuses
Acquire transferable technological knowledge Realize process upgrading Create jobs Professionalize Gain strategic autonomy	Inter-organizational	Support technology transfer Allow process upgrade Achieve fairness in externalization of risks
Co-determine organizational policies and decisions Personal development (acquire new skills, learn new languages, improve social networking, be a professional, travel) Improve socio-economic status of family Provide children and family with “a better future”	Intra-organizational	Aim for organizational democracy ²⁷ Train/educate employees Offer employees international experiences Offer employees fair income, work-life balance, and employee benefits (health care, pension)
Participate in global heteroglossic entertainment Access global information Escape poverty Improve leisure time and activities Increase consumer choice Acquire consumption patterns that allows new economic activities (shopping hours, child care, etc.)	Sub-organizational	Avoid monopolistic strategies Lower consumer prices through efficiency Provide better access to products and services (meet time and location needs of consumers) Increase consumer choice Produce good quality products and services

Table 1 lists a number of cosmopolitan aspirations addressed to business organizations, grouped by type of actor along the four dimensions. These aspirations are cosmopolitan because they are aspirations of self-transformation; in other words, aspirations to develop one’s agency beyond the regional socio-economic status

²⁶One of the focal points of the shareholder engagement by the Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global is precisely to question investee corporations on their lobbying activities.

²⁷The signing of an International Framework Agreement by multinational corporations and global labor unions can be perceived as a step in that direction.

quo or the limiting identities imposed through nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, religion or place of birth. Moreover, business organizations have cosmopolitan responsibilities because these cosmopolitan aspirations are addressed to them as business organizations – not because states are weak.

I take “responsibility” to mean literally “being able to respond” or responsibility. What an “able” response is depends on business sector, size and organizational form and on specific labor-capital relationships. But general duties for corporations can be specified. My turn from “responsibility” to “duty” means that I regard an “able” response to be along the lines specified in the duty. I have done so in the third column of Table 1. I do not think my list here is exhaustive. There might be other cosmopolitan aspirations addressed to corporations and these might be responded to in an “able” way by fulfilling other duties. But the point of this chapter was not to be exhaustive. Rather it was to develop a framework for the iteration of cosmopolitan responsibilities for corporations. Thus I take it that specifying some aspirations, responsibilities and duties proves the validity of the framework that this chapter develops.

4 Convincing Corporations – A Start

The third task Kuper mentions in the distribution of responsibilities is to convince agents – here corporations – to fulfill the responsibilities allocated to them.²⁸ I will not go into the issue of enforcing cosmopolitan responsibilities for corporations through international law or intergovernmental treaties implemented through national legislation. While this is a very obvious route to make corporations act on their duties, it is precisely the lack of governmental force that urges us to think of other routes. Moreover, even though convincing through law might be the most effective way to change corporate behavior, it makes the notions of “convincing” and “relational responsibilities” obsolete, since it makes “compliance” the pivotal notion.

An interesting avenue for “convincing” corporate actors to fulfill the responsibilities allocated to them has already been mentioned earlier in this paper through the notions of “argumentative self-entrapment” and “performative contradiction”. These occur when an actor, through his actions, denies the assumptions that make his actions possible. Corporations neglecting their cosmopolitan responsibilities are doing exactly that. By their mere existence and by entering into necessary relations with various other actors they create expectations. It is only because they create expectations that they can act. Because some of these expectations have cosmopolitan potential in the sense I explained in this chapter, corporations, especially MNCs, present themselves implicitly if not explicitly as a proper instrument for the realization of cosmopolitan aspirations. The corporate world calls this “legitimacy to

²⁸Kuper, Andrew. 2005. *op. cit.* 373.

operate”. When Philippe Van Parijs suggests that corporate social responsibilities can be operationalized through “the spotlight and the microphone” principle what he is suggesting is that corporations must deliver on their promises because of “argumentative self-entrapment”.²⁹ Likewise, discourse on sustainability in the economic sphere can involve corporate activity in “performative contradiction”.

5 Conclusion

Responsibility comes with entering relations. Thus cosmopolitan responsibilities come with the specific ways MNCs enter relations with other actors and form relationships that are driven by cosmopolitan promises and potentials. In this sense, it is not I who allocated cosmopolitan responsibilities to corporations. I have merely specified and made explicit the responsibilities that corporations have allocated to themselves.

²⁹Van Parijs, Philippe. 2002. The spotlight and the microphone: must business be socially responsible, and can it? Chair Hoover working paper DOCH 92. Available at http://www.groupeone.be/fr/alloc_vanparijs.pdf

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