

1. Introduction

Cosmopolitanism is based on the idea that people from a wide variety of cultures, belief systems and morals can interact with each other, have a right to justice and respect, and should be able to cooperate equally in the fields of culture, science, economics, and politics.¹ It is also important for people in a cosmopolitan world to be aware of the various forms of injustice that exist around the world. Hence, a central aim of this book is to demonstrate the necessity of developing a cosmopolitan theory of justice that integrates transcultural perspectives in order to promote the humanistic ideals of mutual respect and cooperation, solidarity, equality, and freedom.

First, in order to develop a cosmopolitan theory of justice, as the name implies, we need to outline the meaning of justice. It is crucial today to rethink justice from the perspective of the Global South in order to include all human beings in the debate on justice. For justice was and is an ethos that promotes moral equality and the democratization of institutions, supports human rights, and advances emancipation. In recent years, there have been protests in several Arab Muslim countries. In Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria, people mobilized in the streets to demand “an end to authoritarian rule and government corruption, as well as greater equality.”² Thus, social and political movements have influenced and transformed the socio-political system in North Africa. Islamic-oriented political governments have emerged that promise justice and use Islam in the political agenda as a means to bring it about. However, these Islamic political regimes will not last longer than previous dictatorial regimes, if they fail to deliver justice as promised and to put an end to corruption.

The pursuit of justice must therefore be examined with regard to the religious, cultural, and socio-political contexts in order to develop a philosophical approach that promotes more context-sensitive notions of political democracy, freedom, emancipation of thought vis-à-vis orthodoxy and fundamentalism, human rights and justice in the face of discrimination and racism.

Second, it is important to conceptualize a cosmopolitan theory of justice from a transcultural perspective that facilitates dialogue between the Global South and the

1 Kleingeld and Brown 2006.

2 Esposito, John L., Tamara Sonn and John O. Voll 2016: 21.

Global North. The social and political developments in the Global South have implications for the transnational socio-political context. One of these effects is the increasing migration, which leads to the encounter of people with different cultural, ethical, and religious backgrounds. This requires that everyone be open to the recognition of others. Based on the idea of making the globe a place of peaceful coexistence, we need to cultivate the attitudes of openness, diversity, and pluralism rather than indifference, egocentrism and selfishness.

Another reason for a transcultural approach is that the debate about justice has been dominated by European and Anglo-Saxon philosophy in recent decades. The dominance in the justice debate by the Western tradition of thought leads to a narrow focus of what justice consists of. This discourse considers itself as superior and seeks to instruct the Global South on what justice is and what it requires, while the readers in the Global South are relegated to the position as listeners and are supposed to apply what has been theorized in the Global North.

Thus, the construction of the debate in Western tradition leads to a hegemonic conception of justice. Conversely, justice from a transcultural approach, means avoiding hierarchies within the debate between the Global North and the Global South. It demands engaging in a more cooperative and reciprocal debate about justice.

In this context, theorizing justice from a transcultural approach challenges the idea of universality of provincially developed justice theory for the entire globe. The justice discourse as developed in the Western discourse cannot be universal, because it does not take into account the notions of justice prevalent in the Global South, which are informed by different cultural and socio-political experiences: These include the absence of women's rights in many countries, social injustices political dictatorships, a strong religious tradition, patriarchy, and a poor educational system, as well as the economic exploitation by the Global North. In this sense, a transcultural concept of justice allows for a transnational understanding of the different types of injustices that occur in the Global South and the actions needed to achieve a debate on justice by considering socio-cultural differences.

In addition, gender justice has largely been theorized with regards to the experiences and living-conditions within the Global North, disregarding transcultural perspectives. In this regard, a transcultural approach helps to avoid the stereotypes, misinterpretations, and misrepresentations that have been developed about other thoughts and cultural traditions. It challenges the stereotype that women from the Global South cannot claim their rights and accept their socially inferior position to men. A transcultural dialogue on gender justice is essential for the enforcement of women's rights by bringing women from the Global South and the Global North closer together to assert their rights. To put it simply, a one-sided perspective on justice may lead to the construction of a hegemonic discourse of justice that continues to allow the Global North to dominate the Global South. This hegemonic jus-

time debate, as it has developed, is being challenged in the current debates on justice. Hence, recent research addresses the concept of justice from a transcultural approach that incorporates intellectual debates from both the Global South and the Global North.³

Consequently, a transcultural dialogue on justice is needed, directed against identitarian trends, such as the emerging nationalism, and religious fundamentalism, all of which lead to a deadlock.⁴ Additionally, the debate on justice based on a transcultural approach rail against “a domestic, statist or nationalist notion of justice.”⁵ Justice in the domestic sphere is conceived of as independent from the transnational concerns of humanity and their struggle against the different forms of injustice and discrimination of our present time, such as climate change, poverty, violence, sexism, neo-colonialism, racism, Islamophobia, and antisemitism (to cite only a few). Domestic justice is rather concerned with national institutions of one country, one nation, and one society. Essentially, theorizing on domestic justice, which is only focused on national issues, can generate a philosophy of greed, selfishness, and materialism, as every nation is concerned with its economic and political privileges over other nations. This runs the risk of strengthening power relations between humans, nations, and cultures rather than challenging these transnational injustices, and leads to the Global North always having the primacy to theorize about justice, to influence and represent the ideals of human rights, democracy, and civilization, and to dominate the entire world.⁶

What one needs in this present time of emerging pandemic hate is to rethink our normative perceptions and thought. One needs to expound more on diversity, tolerance, and humanism. Theorizing on justice based on a transcultural approach between the Global North and the Global South requires a strategy of philosophical and cultural dialogue in order to overcome our centrism manifest in our thought – and to experience, explore, and understand other, different approaches of thought.

This research explores such a transcultural approach to justice in order to bring together different philosophical traditions and provide insight into alternative notions of justice. It connects different schools of thought and different disciplines. The research foregrounds and examines different approaches to justice in the context of Arabo-Islamic thought. It aims to promote a humanistic ethos for the transnational sphere of human interaction. This is to fulfill the cosmopolitan promise of peaceful cooperation and solidarity as well as tolerance and justice between humans around the globe.

3 Dhouib and Dübgen 2016; Dhouib (ed.) 2016; Dübgen 2020.

4 Dübgen 2020: 893.

5 Flikschuh 2013.

6 Forst 2013: 43.