Varieties of Cosmopolitanism: Cultural, Constitutional, Contestatory – and Social?

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Abstract *This chapter engages with the history of the idea and contemporary varieties of cosmopolitanism. My argument is that the history and contemporary use of cosmopolitanism need to be combined to assess the theoretical and practical plausibility of the concept. Concerning the history of cosmopolitanism, I argue that the idea oscillates between advocates and sceptical voices. In the contemporary political and social world, cosmopolitanism is a powerful analytical device for investigating current problems. I outline contemporary cosmopolitan political theory as providing normative answers to such problems. However, these normative accounts are further developed in the three varieties of culturalization, constitutionalization, and contestation. In juxtaposing these three varieties of cosmopolitanism with accounts from social theory, I establish the claim that cosmopolitan thought needs to reconsider its social dimensions. I conclude by discussing the theme of cosmopolitan consciousness-raising as solidarity as an appropriate direction for further cosmopolitan thought in the globalized and digitalized constellation.*

Introduction

Cosmopolitanism is, of course, not a new idea. The notion of cosmopolitanism commonly refers to the idea that everyone is not only a citizen of a particular state but also a citizen of the world.[1] The Cynic philosopher Diogenes famously declared himself a *kosmopolitês* – a citizen of the world – when asked where he came from (Diogenes Laertius, 1925: VI 63). Since then cosmopolitanism has denoted some sense of allegiance beyond the city, community, or state, to a shared humanity. Through its

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long history, the idea of cosmopolitanism has taken many shapes and meanings. As with all ideas, its content has differed over space, time, and context. In what could be called a cosmopolitan revival over the past thirty years, the rather old idea of cosmopolitanism has been significantly rejuvenated in various strands of Philosophy and Cultural Studies, as well as in political and social theory. Therefore, it is important to invoke precise conceptions when utilizing the idea of cosmopolitanism today. My contention is that it is an important intellectual and practical task to include engagements with the history of (Western-)political thought as it sheds light on the cosmopolitan tradition. Of course, we can find other traditions of cosmopolitan thought in other areas and periods of the globe (Gehrmann, 2016; Park & Han 2014; Xiang, 2023: 28–70). However, to get this actualizing question off the ground, I will start from the classical texts in the Western tradition. Hence, this contribution takes Niesen's (2006: 247–248) approach to varieties of cosmopolitanism seriously in not merely searching for commonalities between distant political philosophies but rather in also pointing out cracks and breaks in their arguments. This engagement between the history of the idea, normative arguments, and contemporary usages gives us some indication of the theoretical value and the empirical purchase of cosmopolitanism today.

In this contribution, I oscillate between historical inquiry and more practical contemporary conceptualizations in order to discuss some varieties of cosmopolitanism as they appear in contemporary political theory. Historical and philosophical inquiry delineate the content and form of an idea. Practical engagement with the idea of cosmopolitanism tells us where to look and where to find cosmopolitanism today. I argue that these places can be found especially where the developments of a globalized social world intersect with highly mediatized and high-paced cultural and material interactions. In a postdigital world, that is a world in which we can neither step outside nor behind the mechanisms, processes, and effects of a digitally mediated lifeworld, the idea of cosmopolitanism becomes particularly relevant. Felix Stalder (2018) similarly describes this as the "digital condition". Today, cosmopolitanism as a guiding idea navigates individuals and social groups in the face of challenges in the globalized and digitalized world. Cosmopolitanism should foster practices which create consciousness and raise awareness above and below common political and social bonds. This contribution lays the basis for this claim.

After presenting some existing approaches in contemporary cosmopolitan political theory, my conceptualization includes varieties of cosmopolitanism which may be conceptualized as cultural, constitutional, and contestatory approaches. However, I do not claim that this categorization is exhaustive. Rather, I take it to be indicative of how political theory and philosophy conceives cosmopolitan ideas and translates them into our own contemporary historical and political situation. This approach flows into my argument: While contemporary cosmopolitan political theory can account for the cultural, constitutional, and contestatory dimensions of

interactions beyond the (nation-)state, these approaches tend to lose sight of the groundedness of cosmopolitanism in social relations and social practices. Hence, I argue that cosmopolitanism is best understood when theorists and practitioners alike take the necessarily social dimensions of cosmopolitanism into account.

This contribution is constructed in the following steps: Firstly, I revisit some central historical sources of cosmopolitan thought and facilitate a juxtaposition with sceptical voices. Secondly, I turn to a brief description of some of the prevalent problems of our own (political) world and turn to contemporary cosmopolitan political theory as providing basic concepts of justice and culture. Thirdly, and most importantly, I outline three persistent contemporary varieties of cosmopolitanism. *Culturalization* refers to the place of the cosmopolitan individual in a globalized world. *Constitutionalization* rethinks the basic conditions of democratic states in an ever-evolving constellation of states. *Contestation* challenges cosmopolitanism within a (radical-) democratic framework in order to unsettle the ground of global interrelations. These three varieties of cosmopolitanism are all valuable in their own right. However, I show that the social dimensions of cosmopolitanism tend to fade away. Therefore, I juxtapose the political theory and philosophy of cosmopolitanism with social theories of cosmopolitanism. Finally, I outline a form of cosmopolitanism in social relations and in social practices that is compatible with the predicaments of our globalized world which is increasingly mediated via digitalized means.

1. Oscillations between Cosmopolitan Thought and Sceptical Appreciations

Intellectual histories of the idea of cosmopolitanism typically place a high emphasis on two historically disjointed eras, namely, Stoic philosophy in Antiquity and philosophical and cultural thought in the Enlightenment (cf. Kleingeld & Brown, 2019). Diogenes' founding moment of cosmopolitanism remains inspiring because it is uncompromising, resolute and, as Gebh (2013: 66–67) has put it, even "shameless." Besides the above-mentioned provocative statement by Diogenes who declared himself as a citizen of the world, reference to Stoic cosmopolitanism is especially important (Nussbaum, 2019: 19–63). Nussbaum's reconstruction of Stoic cosmopolitanism, especially that of Cicero, oscillates between an appreciation of Cicero's appeal to duties of justices and a criticism of his alleged restrictions of material aid to national compatriots. Nussbaum (2019) claims that Stoic cosmopolitanism harbours an immensely important insight, that of the quasi-natural rights of every individual, whereas it fails in accounting for ways to implement these rights.

In the Enlightenment period, cosmopolitanism refers to two central strands: cultural and moral. The cultural strand is perhaps most famously articulated in the

entry to Diderot and D'Alembert's *Encyclopedia* project. Here Diderot defines the "cosmopolitan" as:

> "This name is sometimes used jokingly to mean a man who has no fixed domicile, or a man who is not a stranger anywhere. It comes from κόσμος world and πόλις city. When an ancient philosopher was asked where he was from, he replied: I am cosmopolitan, that is, a citizen of the universe. I prefer, said another, my family to myself, my country to my family, and the human race to my country." (Diderot, 1754: 297)

Apart from the tongue-in-cheek tone of this definition, it stands out that Diderot's definition is clearly addressed to mean individuals – which is elaborated in the second half of the definition in paraphrasing Diogenes. However, reference to the polis, city, or country is not further elaborated. Cultivating higher than individual allegiances is the hallmark of Diderot's definition. Diderot highlights the role of the Philosophes in the cultural development of the time and reforms of rethinking itself (Adams, 2011: 74). However, even though Diderot paraphrases Diogenes' original cosmopolitan claim, that of being a citizen of the world, this political dimension is superseded by the cultural dimension, that of nowhere-being-a-stranger which refers to self-identification, cultural learnedness, and versatility (cf. Rosenfeld, 2002). Enlightenment cosmopolitanism includes border-crossing (Jacob, 2008: 4) as a cultural technique.

It is another French philosopher, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who picks up critically on the idea of the cosmopolitan individual. Juxtaposing the citizen of a small republic and a citizen of the world, Rousseau claims that "cosmopolites" are those who justify "[…] their love of fatherland by their love of mankind, boast of loving everyone so that they might have the right to love no one" (Rousseau, 1997: 158). Rousseau's charge against cosmopolitanism is that it is essentially an apolitical virtue, as he deplores commerce and travel as cultural conformity (Jacob, 2006: 126–127; Rosenblatt, 2008: 61). Cosmopolitan values, at least for Rousseau, do not seem to fit into small-scale democratic life.

The moral strand of cosmopolitanism in the Enlightenment period is centrally expressed in Immanuel Kant's political theory. In various late political writings, Kant emphasizes the moral place of the individual in the world in order to argue for a strong notion of moral and political autonomy that can only be realized through republics in a concert of free republican states (Kant, 1991; Kleingeld, 2012). Especially in his essay on Perpetual Peace, Kant argues that republican orders are the condition for peace; that a federation of states shall govern international affairs; and that every individual has a right to universal hospitality (Kant, 1991: 98–108).

Cosmopolitan right, which is possibly the main conceptual innovation developed by Kant concerning international affairs, is not merely a right of subsistence,

a negative duty that individuals have against foreign states not to perish in the face of peril. Moreover, cosmopolitan right also grounds the basis for the development of a more just cooperation. Under globalizing conditions of the public sphere, violations of justice are felt everywhere (Kant, 1991: 108). For Kant, cosmopolitan right is a mediating force in the enduring process of establishing more just political orders: "The idea of cosmopolitan right is (…) not fantastic and overstrained; it is a necessary complement to the unwritten code of political and international right, transforming it into a universal right of humanity" (Kant, 1991: 108).

As in the case of the thinkers across the river Rhine, a critical appreciation of Kant's conceptualization promptly followed. Among these critical appreciations is the political philosophy and theory of the state by G.W.F. Hegel. In his sweeping and foundational text *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (1820), Hegel criticizes the political form of cosmopolitanism:

> "*A human being counts as such because he is a human being*, not because he is a Jew, Catholic, Protestant, German, Italian, etc. This consciousness [of the individual – S.P.], which is the aim of thought, is of infinite importance, and it is inadequate only if it adopts a fixed position – for example, as cosmopolitanism – in opposition to the concrete life of the state." (Hegel 1991: §209A; 240; emphasis in the original)

Hegel is committed to a universal humanism, according to which human beings' individual worth or dignity is independent of their origin or identity. However, the political form of cosmopolitanism is not capable of promoting this end. Yet, Hegel's statement is aimed against world-statism and not primarily a republican account of cosmopolitan right, as discussed above.

The critical appreciations, represented here by Rousseau and Hegel, challenge cosmopolitanism productively. Rousseau alleges that cosmopolitans are selfish creatures and Hegel claims that the political form of cosmopolitanism is empty or merely formalistic. However, both Rousseau and Hegel wonder about the normative and social conditions under which individuals can live together in political communities and orders. This challenge persists and is helpful to delineate the usefulness of cosmopolitanism. Then again, oscillating between proponents and critics of cosmopolitanism helps to clarify some baselines. Cosmopolitanism contains at the minimum some version of three components. Firstly, it contains a self-identification or motivation which does not merely lie with one's nation or tribe but also with some reference to the whole of humanity. Secondly, it contains at least some cultural openness and, furthermore, cultural learnedness or versatility. Thirdly, it contains normative reference to the individual as the unit of moral concern.

2. Some Problems of our (Political) World and Contemporary Cosmopolitan Political Theory

After this brief historical and critical exposition, we are in a place to turn to the contemporary history of the idea of cosmopolitanism. I start with a practical, that is more empirical, description of some aspects of our current political world and contrast this with efforts in contemporary cosmopolitan political theory. This method of contextualizing an historical time in contrast to normative political thought is common to the cosmopolitan approach to politics and social life.

2.1 Understanding the Globalized and Digitally Mediated World

Many everyday and extraordinary activities are border-crossing or transnational in very mundane ways. Crossing borders, for example in Europe, is a nearly unfelt experience – at least for European citizens – under the freedom of movement regime provided by the European Union. For some, travelling to foreign places, for example, is an extraordinary and yet habitual task. Online tools such as maps and translation tools help to navigate our movements in previously unknown places. For others it is common to use their second or even third language in their workplace. The news often includes events in faraway places about which you nevertheless may strongly care. These mundane examples speak to the transnational experience many people are accustomed to. By now, many of these everyday activities are mediated via digital media and technologies. We are thinking here of social media as well as online news outlets (Cicchelli & Octobre, 2018; Lietz & Lenehan, 2022).

However, we do not tend to engage in these practices because we consciously think of these actions as 'cosmopolitan': We think of these practices as being part of common and increasingly widespread practices under the conditions of a globalized world and multicultural societies. For example, unfortunately only a few have thought of the COVID-19 pandemic as a cosmopolitan event as it rather displayed a re-nationalization of politics that needs to be avoided in the future from the point of view of the cosmopolitan imagination (cf. Delanty, 2021: 19; Chernilo, 2021). On the contrary, with scarce resources of medical supplies a new phenomenon of "vaccine nationalism" arose (Bollyky & Bown, 2020). Another example is the somewhat involuntary participation in the (global) economy of global supply chains. The interdependence on the global supply chain only ever becomes superficially visible when it is prominently disrupted, as was the case with the Evergreen Ever Given cargo ship in the Suez Canal (Safi, 2021) or the pirate attacks by the Houthis in late 2023 and early 2024 (Al-Ansi, 2024; Stigant, 2023). This is to name only a few instances where postdigital proliferation refers to material, and thus, real and/or natural phenomena. Postdigital proliferation transmits information globally almost at light speed and makes events known and accessible in an instant. Many times, occurrences of

this kind are turned into events of a global scale through their multiplicated reach via digital dissemination.

Politically and organizationally speaking, the world can barely keep up with what is going on elsewhere. It is commonplace to claim that political problems cannot (primarily) be solved on the national level. But the political will to organize beyond the national level is often disrupted by nationalistic or regressive forces. Hence, acknowledging that global problems cannot be solved solely by national means remains a rhetorical nicety, but not exactly the political and social reality. Two further impasses add to this conundrum: Firstly, in the social sciences, approaches – both normative and empirical – often undertake their studies through a lens of "methodological nationalism" (Beck, 2007; Beck & Grande, 2010; Dumitru, 2014; Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002). Nation-states are, then, taken to be the 'natural' form of the political and social world (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002: 302, 304). Methodological nationalism refers to implicit or explicit assumptions that place (nation-)states as units of analysis at the front and centre of social scientific or philosophical engagement. For example, GDP is used as the benchmark to evaluate economic growth, which is measured for nation-states regardless of regional differences within a country.

Beck (2007) has argued that social theory takes societies to equate with nation-states, whereas others have recently argued that methodological nationalism is also prevalent in mainstream approaches to contemporary political philosophy on issues of social and global justice (Dumitru, 2021; Sager, 2021). In a globalized world, this methodology seems increasingly outdated while cosmopolitanism at least partially seems to offer alternative ways of describing and theorizing the world.

Secondly, in political practice, we may speak of something which may be described as an "organizational localism." Federal and supranational political decisions need to be made on-the-ground locally; there are very few binding or enforcing mechanisms beyond the state. We may think of the problematic and lack of implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement to tackle anthropogenic global warming as an example of this. Whereas the concert of states pledged to act, this kind of international agreement lacks proper enforcement and implementation mechanisms to achieve the aims that were set. Beck has coined a somewhat useful phrase of "global risk" for conditions that need to be tackled beyond, above, and below the nation-state level: "Global risks tear down national boundaries and jumble together the native with the foreign. The distant other is becoming the inclusive other. Everyday life is becoming cosmopolitan" (Beck, 2007: 287).

Taking these two contradictions into account should lead us to rethink the empirical and methodological necessity of taking on a cosmopolitanism perspective in relation to our current political and social world. What is necessary is a cosmopolitan outlook on the social conditions of our time.

2.2 Contemporary Cosmopolitan Political Theory as a Reaction to the (Political) World

The academic interest in the idea of cosmopolitanism was rejuvenated in the wake of the revival of political philosophy after John Rawls' publication of *A Theory of Justice* (1999 [1971]). As Katrina Forrester (2019: x-xii; 140–161) argues, everyone undertaking research on political thought in general and in normative political theory in particular is somewhat in the shadow of Rawls and his social contractual type of theory-building. This includes the investigation of the normative basis of global developments and contemporary research on cosmopolitanism. Key authors in the subsequent debates, such as Charles Beitz, Thomas Pogge or David Held, are considered Rawlsians (cf. Beitz 1999; Pogge 1989; 1992). The academic engagement with cosmopolitanism is rich and cannot be condensed in a few words. If pressed, a cosmopolitan would state that she is not only a citizen of her particular nation-state or place of origin but a citizen of the world. Cosmopolitanism is a plea for a global egalitarianism modelled after Kant's practical philosophy (Brock, 2011; 2013; 2017). The philosophy of cosmopolitanism can be accounted for as providing normative outlooks. Furthermore, in the philosophical literature, a distinction between ethical and political dimensions can be made. While ethical approaches only take the role of the individual and her relation to the world into consideration, the political approach almost always issues proposals for a just transnational and global institutional design (cf. Caney, 2006).

In contemporary cosmopolitan political theory, a plethora of distinctions may be found. For example, Samuel Scheffler has proposed making a distinction between cosmopolitanism as a doctrine that concerns justice or as something which concerns culture and a conception of the self (Scheffler, 1999). Scheffler thus makes the distinction between cosmopolitanism about justice and cosmopolitanism about culture. In some sense this distinction is peculiar because "justice" may refer to a number of things here: moral principles, political processes or even institutions. Scheffler (2008: 68), on the other hand, has also stated that cosmopolitanism is not a "determined political philosophy". Scheffler (1999: 256) remains influenced by Rawls's theory of justice, which is reflected in his definition of cosmopolitanism about justice: "Cosmopolitanism about justice is opposed to any view that posits principled restrictions on the scope of an adequate conception of justice. In other words, it opposes any view which holds, as a matter of principle, that the norms of justice apply primarily within bounded groups comprising of some subset of the global population." As Scheffler argues this definition articulates a strong version of cosmopolitanism about justice. A weak version assumes that principles of social and domestic justice rank higher than principles of global justice.

Scheffler's (1999: 257) argument about culture more or less coincides with the direction of ethical cosmopolitanism: "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 in a determinate cultural group whose boundaries are reasonably clear and whose stability and cohesion are reasonably secure". This cultural form of cosmopolitanism is further elaborated in Scheffler's engagement with the cultures of a community. His argument is that culture is a concept about change: Only when cultures are open to change, may they be sustained over time (Scheffler, 2007).

Gillian Brock sees a two-by-two distinction at work in contemporary varieties of cosmopolitanism: Firstly, 'identity' vs. 'responsibility' cosmopolitanism; and secondly, 'moral' vs. 'institutional' cosmopolitanism (Brock, 2013: 690). The identity approach in cosmopolitan thought points out that every human being is a member of the global community. "Belonging to a particular culture", according to this view, "is not an essential ingredient for personal identity or living a flourishing life" (Brock, 2013: 690). The consensus in moral cosmopolitanism is that every human being is of equal moral concern, as the person is the ultimate unit of equal moral concern: Not a social group or entire communities, as communitarianism would have it. Institutional cosmopolitanism then asks for the feasibility and possibilities of the implementation of cosmopolitan moral concern in the system of global governance. In a further step, she recollects various approaches to cosmopolitan justice, which range from utilitarianism to Kantian rights-based approaches to contractarianism (cf. Brock, 2013: 691). Furthermore, in cosmopolitan thought it is highly debated whether universal and particular commitments can be reconciled (cf. Brock, 2013: 694–695). These remarks make it clear that cosmopolitanism is not a single unified and coherent set of ideas.

Finally, Simon Caney (2009: 388) proposes the differentiation between ethical, political, and juridicial cosmopolitanism. Ethical cosmopolitanism overlaps with what Scheffler has described as cosmopolitanism about culture. Political cosmopolitanism is an approach to identify viable supra-state political institutions and discusses whether there should be an overlapping system of multi-level governance. Juridical cosmopolitanism is concerned with identifying and then applying the 'right' criteria and scope of principles of distributive justice. Juridical cosmopolitanism is – similarly to Scheffler's account of cosmopolitanism about justice – concerned with a correct construction of principles of justice and an achievable implementation in legal institutions.

3. Varieties of Cosmopolitanism: Cultural, Constitutional, Contestatory

So far, I have outlined the historical tradition of cosmopolitanism in an oscillating mode between proponents and some critical appreciations. Furthermore, I gave a sketch of the global nature of some of the most pervasive political problems the

world is facing. The postdigital constellation is marked by the existence of the internet and digital social media as a deeply pervasive social fact. We cannot imagine a world in which digitality does not play a role anymore and, tendentially, most social interactions are mediated through the use of digital media. In this constellation, politics in the current global political climate is also very often influenced and mediated through digital media.

So far, I have argued that contemporary cosmopolitan political theory may be seen as a normative project that looks to provide answers to the changing landscape of global political problems. The aim of this section is now to turn to three important strands in Political Theory which seek to refine cosmopolitanism. The following approaches cut through the individual, moral, and institutional categorizations of cosmopolitanism provided above. In this sense, the varieties of cosmopolitanism already constitute a step forward. There are three varieties of cosmopolitanism which I will introduce as indicative. Culturalization refers to the place of the cosmopolitan individual in a globalized world. Constitutionalization rethinks the basic conditions of democratic states in an ever-evolving constellation between states. Contestation challenges cosmopolitanism within a (radical-) democratic framework to shake the ground of global interrelations. The conceptualization of cosmopolitanism which I sketch below does not claim to be exhaustive. Rather I take it to be indicative of the need to reconstruct cosmopolitanism from the ground up, in order to live up to the challenges of a globally and digitally mediated world.

3.1 Cosmopolitanism of Lifestyles: Culturalization

The legal and political philosopher Jeremy Waldron (1992: 752) situates the concept of cosmopolitanism within the context of the communitarianism-liberalism debate in political philosophy. This debate reiterates questions concerning the relation of the individual on the one side, and community, societies, and states on the other side. Typically, cosmopolitanism is associated with the liberal side of this debate. For Waldron, cosmopolitanism is a cultural term because it is essentially non-political and not codified in law. However, note that this is a rather peculiar setting for Waldron's discussion of cosmopolitanism. One could assume that Waldron (2018), as a legal theorist, is interested in the legitimacy of concepts used and their potential application in codified law. Waldron does indeed seem to be aware of this conundrum.

However, for Waldron, cosmopolitanism primarily concerns lifestyles in our contemporary social world. Waldron develops an outlook on "cosmopolitan culture" for multicultural societies which necessarily need to place a high emphasis on individual and minority rights (Waldron, 2003). As part of cosmopolitan culture Waldron mentions metropoles, cities, and urban centres, like New York, Paris, or Mumbai. A further illustration is made in reference to trade, tourism, and migra-

tion. Waldron highlights that cities, trade, and tourism are representative practices of the human condition. We mingle and interact with each other:

> "Humans are curious and adventurous animals: they travel, they migrate, they trade, they fight, and they plunder. And they report back what they have found out about the ways in which others live (and trade and fight etc.). They bring back tales of exotic customs as well as the exotic goods they have purchased or stolen." (Waldron, 2000: 232)

Of course, Waldron does not tell merely a feel-good story for the professors at the coastal shores and metropoles of the United States. Rather, I would say, he makes a point about the human condition which he views as basically cosmopolitan. Waldron does not claim that this cosmopolitan culture is equally accessible for everyone all of the time. Cosmopolitanism, for Waldron, is a matter of acting locally in national or parochial sets of legislation. Law is universally binding even though jurisdictions and realms of application are bounded or limited (Waldron, 2018). What I take Waldon to say is that he urges us to take other cultures seriously in the debates of politics and law and to take parochial legislation for what it is: parochial. Laws are not eternally valid and individuals, societies, and legal systems alike must be open for cultural and global change. However, this is quite a curious perspective from a legal and political philosopher.

Additionally, it is quite a pressing question how this cosmopolitanism of lifestyles and culturalization could be updated in the age of digital and social media. Digital media makes the world more accessible and opens more possibilities of engagement with far and distant places, cultures, and influences. Waldron certainly applauds this. However, cosmopolitanism in digital spaces is not immune from malign influences. This is reason enough to look further into practices of cosmopolitanism, as I do below.

3.2 Cosmopolitanism of Norms: Constitutionalization

Seyla Benhabib and Jürgen Habermas exemplify what I deem to be a constitutional cosmopolitanism. Habermas is highly indebted to the Kantian project of cosmopolitan right. In his indispensable contributions to political theory, Habermas (1996) has developed a discourse theory of democracy and justice. In a series of contributions in the past thirty years, Habermas has argued for an active imagination of the "postnational constellation" and for a deepening of European democratic integration (Habermas, 2001; 2008; 2011; 2014). Throughout all of his contributions Habermas has argued that a constitutionalization of democratic norms beyond the nation-state is necessary.

In a similar vein, Seyla Benhabib (2006) has forcefully argued that "cosmopolitan norms" are emerging out of a reflection on and the working-through of the mass atrocities committed in the 20th century. Both Habermas and Benhabib view the constitutionalization of cosmopolitanism as political processes concerning citizens in their respective lifeworlds. Benhabib (2006: 15–16) argues that we are in a historical situation where a transition from "international" to "cosmopolitan norms" is taking place making the empirical observation that "cosmopolitan norms" arise out of global civil society. Benhabib (2006: 16) claims: "Cosmopolitan norms of justice, whatever the conditions of their legal origination, accrue to individuals as moral and legal persons in a worldwide civil society."

Benhabib has a strong normative and cosmopolitan commitment to the individual as "person" and moral agent who is a member in processes of justification. This process is open-ended and has the condition of membership in a political community (Benhabib, 2006: 18). Benhabib argues that cosmopolitanism is a project of "mediation" of the paradox of "bounded communities" (Benhabib, 2006: 18–20). I take this approach to be implicitly committed to a Hegelian view of mediating politics and universalism. She discusses the complex relation of moral universalism versus ethical particularism: "I will insist on the necessary disjunction as well as the necessary mediation between the moral and the ethical, the moral and political. (…) Cosmopolitanism is then a philosophical project of mediations, not of reductions or of totalizations" (Benhabib, 2006: 20).

This quote fits nicely into a short comment on the status of the universal in Hegel's thought: "For Hegel, the universal constitutes itself as the universal by abstracting from and negating difference; every claim to universality is thus linked to a moment of exclusion. […] but […] Hegel juxtaposed the abstract to the concrete universal, and maintained that one could aspire to a form of universality that did not simply dismiss the moment of constitutive otherness" (Benhabib, 2006: 161). I am not claiming that Benhabib has Hegel in mind when arguing for cosmopolitan norms, rather she argues that they are a "Kantian legacy of cosmopolitanism", but it speaks volumes that she turns to Hegelian language when arguing for the applicability and feasibility of such norms. Benhabib argues in reference to the ontological status of cosmopolitan norms in a "postmetaphysical universe" that

> "such norms and principles are morally constructive: they create a universe of meaning, values, and social relations that had not existed before by changing the normative constituents and evaluative principles of the world of 'objective spirit', to use Hegelian language." (Benhabib, 2006: 72)

On a democratic-theoretical level, Benhabib glosses the notion of "democratic iterations" to argue that continuous struggles, as never fully concluded processes, strengthen the ideals of democracy and cosmopolitan norms (cf. Benhabib, 2006:

47–51; 67–74). Benhabib defines democratic iterations as "linguistic, legal, cultural, and political repetitions-in-transformation, invocations that are also revocations. They not only change established understandings but also transform what passes as the valid or established view of authoritative precedent" (Benhabib, 2006: 48). Benhabib uses contemporary challenges of norms – such as the French headscarf case or the German dual citizenship case – where constitutional norms are democratically challenged on a moral-universal basis. This kind of challenge comes from the sphere of civil society to create change in the legal and democratic spheres. System and lifeworld are not fully separated. Democratic iterations, according to Benhabib, transform the constitutional state from within on the grounds of potentially cosmopolitan norms. Below, I will return to Benhabib and Habermas and their conceptualizations of cosmopolitan solidarity.

3.3 Cosmopolitanism of Conflicts: Contestation

Étienne Balibar and James D. Ingram exemplify a (radical-)democratic approach to cosmopolitanism. Both develop cosmopolitanism in such a way as to incorporate conflict, struggle, and contestation more directly. Cosmopolitanism, for both, is a locally practised politics of the universal. Reference to the universal here means that claims are proposed to be recognized as valid – at least in the form of making the claim to equality or dignity – in order to respect basic human capacities. Balibar invites us to critically rethink the basics of politics, democracy, and universalism. His interventions are wide-ranging but a common thread through his works is a democratization of cosmopolitanism (Balibar 2002; 2004; 2012; 2018). James Ingram's contribution to the theory of cosmopolitanism lies in the politicization of cosmopolitan thought. By referring to the tradition of radical democracy, Ingram conceptualizes "radical cosmopolitics" as a politicization and universalization of norms from below (Ingram 2013; 2016). Cosmopolitanism needs to be articulated and enacted locally and cosmopolitan agents are part of contemporary struggles (Ingram, 2016: 76).

Balibar's various contributions to cosmopolitan thought interrogate how communities, universalism, and the global are related. Balibar utilizes the term cosmopolitanism to highlight the clash between universalism and particularism, between universal claims and particular communities. To articulate these tensions Balibar's engagements can be structured under two headings: (world-)citizenship and borders.

Citizenship is a key concept in politics. With citizenship comes membership, rights, and duties for individuals within a specific political unit. As a citizen you are typically allowed to take part in elections, both passively and actively, and you enjoy basic political and social rights. So far, so straightforward. What is sometimes forgotten is that being a citizen of a state also subjects everyone to its laws. The citizen is always already also a subject (Balibar, 1991). Being subjected to external

decisions leaves citizens vulnerable, which is an unavoidable double bind in democratic states. This too is the case when we turn to the idea of world-citizenship. Here, however, Balibar reminds us that individuals and inhabitants of this planet are subjected to severe external global forces without equal political or social rights on the global level. Balibar also reminds us that Kant's conception of the cosmopolitan (Weltbürger) in cosmopolitan right is a counterpart to the cosmopolitanism of commerce: "This world citizen was not an imaginary member of a civitas or a polis without boundaries, whose limits would coincide with the expansion of the universe; on the contrary, he was a being in relationship who circulated (or not) between territories and states" (Balibar, 2015: 71). Balibar, thus, credits Kant with not merely imagining an additional legal or political category but also of reminding us that humans are border-crossing entities oscillating between customs, communities, and even polities.

Just like citizenship, borders are an equally defining political category. In his essay "World Borders, Political Borders", Balibar (2002) discusses the notion of borders for our contemporary political life. Balibar's essay addresses the relationship between centre and periphery in political orders and the "discursive implications" of political thinking about borders, membership, and sovereignty. Border demarcation is a central political problem that marks borders, territory, and sovereignty and produces them from within itself (Balibar, 2002: 74). Balibar understands borders as points of crystallization between politics and popular sovereignty. Contesting where borders of a political unit are drawn, decides who is included and excluded. This membership, then, decides rights and duties in this political unit. Borders are a deciding factor of demos. Democratizing borders, that is laying open the political question involved in demarcating the 'who' of a political unit, is a crucial question in our contemporary political world. Balibar, thus, helps to pose these questions.

James D. Ingram provides a conceptualization of cosmopolitanism as politics of radical universalism. Ingram urges us to rethink cosmopolitanism and universal values to include where they came from and "above all, how they can be put in practice" (Ingram, 2016: 67). Ingram's version is inherently political – similar to Balibar and even more so than Habermas and Benhabib – and places a high emphasis on individuals and groups as agents of universal politics. Ingram argues that it is not the content of cosmopolitanism that fails to be convincing but, rather, it is the form through which cosmopolitan values, echoing Hegel's argument against the political form of cosmopolitanism, are implemented. Ingram distinguishes "top-down" from "bottom-up" approaches. In favouring an approach from below, Ingram emphasizes the role of contestation. Ingram's claim is that "cosmopolitanism must be contestatory" (Ingram, 2016: 68).

Contestation, as challenging the status quo and political mainstream, should be the form which cosmopolitanism takes to realize its universal claims. For example, as a challenge to the methodological nationalism of ordinary politics or as a chal-

lenge to preconceived notions of belonging. Ingram's version of contestatory cosmopolitanism builds on Walter Mignolo's (2000) understanding of cosmopolitanism as project and design (Ingram, 2016: 72). Mignolo and Ingram agree when they point out that modern cosmopolitanism never fully detaches itself from dominating logics of empire or global capitalism. Building on Mignolo, Ingram develops an account of cosmopolitanism which challenges mainstream conceptions and liberal visions of politics. This challenging and conflictual feature is a hallmark of new and radical cosmopolitanism, as Robin Celikates points out. These cosmopolitanisms are

> "always situated, rooted in particular contexts, experiences and practices, which, however, are not conceptualized as standing in tension with the universalist aspirations of the cosmopolitan ideal but are seen as necessary mediations for the articulation of these aspirations." (Celikates, 2020: 217)

Radical approaches to cosmopolitanism are, therefore, based on conflicts and contestation. This approach highlights the political dimension of cosmopolitanism. This approach is not merely moral, as the historical examples discussed above mostly draw on, and not merely individual, as for example the cultural varieties. Moreover, the radical contestatory approach is based in collective engagement with the negative dimension of the status quo of the world. Ingram (2016: 73) argues: "Rather than a politics of implementing or instituting cosmopolitan goals that have been theoretically arrived at in advance, such a contestatory cosmopolitanism would consist of a politics by which particular forms of exclusion, domination, exploitation and marginalization are challenged by those who suffer them."

This definition of contestatory cosmopolitanism shifts the focus towards criticizing and changing the status quo. It is thus a negativistic account, whereas cosmopolitanism is typically perceived as too lofty or positive. However, this contestatory approach seems more realistic as it also connects to deep implicit insights of modern politics, at least in the terms Balibar utilizes, namely the concept of "equaliberty" (Balibar, 2014: 35–65). This portmanteau combines equality and liberty or freedom. Balibar describes with it the two basic and interlinked claims of modern politics since the French Revolution. Equaliberty, according to Balibar, refers to the basic claims of freedom and equality which individuals as citizens issue vis-à-vis a state. Ingram (2016: 74) picks up on this radically political notion to point out how conflict and cosmopolitanism are related: "(…) struggles are universal to the extent (which will never be total) that they participate in the general struggle for equal freedom which has animated emancipatory politics through modern times."

Balibar and Ingram both politicize and democratize cosmopolitanism through their contestatory approach to cosmopolitanism. However, this approach comes at a price. A radically democratizing cosmopolitanism needs to give up on constitutionalizing hopes and rather acknowledge that contestation cannot be fully institu-

tionalized. Celikates (2020: 217) formulates this issue in the following way: "As contestatory practices can never be fully institutionalized, and as institutions cannot be replaced by contestation, which requires some form of background stabilization, there is an irreducible tension between the contestatory and the institutional." Constitutions – local, cosmopolitan, and otherwise – try to institutionalize values into a fixed set of norms. Practices of contestation can even take place in the digital realm. As Celikates (2015: 166–172) has pointed out, digital contestation transforms the public sphere significantly. Contestation, in this realm, becomes a border-crossing and challenging activity. Unforeseen actors may become actors with democratic agency.

Contestation, however, as a mechanism and form, cannot be institutionalized fully because it would, then, lose its challenging form. In our case, contestatory cosmopolitanism would lose the ability to challenge the status quo and would lose its edge to criticize past and present injustice. Contestatory cosmopolitanism, as a practice, is the sting which makes the demands of a radical universalism felt in the complacency towards the status quo.

4. The Cosmos in the Social?

Political philosophers seem to have issues when the social world does not look like their thought experiments. In rather general terms, one could say that there is a lack of empirical grounding apparent in many philosophical reflections on cosmopolitanism. While this claim certainly holds with respect to mainstream contemporary cosmopolitan political theory, the authors of the presented varieties of cosmopolitanism in the previous section seek to avoid this approach towards the social world. In the previous section, I outlined three varieties of cosmopolitanism which cut across previous mainstream definitions of cosmopolitanism. Therefore, this chapter continues the plea for the political theory and philosophy of cosmopolitanism to take the social world seriously.

In doing so, I take up the baton of the contemporary social theory of cosmopolitanism (cf. Beck, 2003, 2006; Calhoun, 2002, 2008; Delanty, 2009). Social theories are distinguished from political philosophy insofar that the unit of analysis is different. Political philosophy questions values, norms, and ideas and how they are implemented consciously by individuals. Social theory typically asks how individuals, groups, and systems cooperate, interact, or intervene with one another. Political philosophy and social theory are, of course, kindred spirits but tend to speak past each other. I take this to be the case for cosmopolitan thought as well. Mainstream political philosophy of cosmopolitanism, as discussed in section 2, outlines how cosmopolitans should behave or how a more cosmopolitan global system could be designed. The varieties of cosmopolitanism, as discussed in section 3, ask about the cultural and political dimensions of cosmopolitanism. However, social theories

of cosmopolitanism can also illuminate the social dimensions, backgrounds and settings in which cosmopolitanism might seem appealing to individual and social groups.

Delanty outlines what he calls a critical cosmopolitanism. This social theory of cosmopolitanism, according to Delanty, resides in "social mechanisms and dynamics that can exist in any society at any time in history where world openness has a resonance. […] Cosmopolitanism concerns processes of self-transformation in which new cultural forms take shape and where new spaces of discourse open up leading to a transformation in the social world" (Delanty, 2006: 43–44). The anthropologist Ulf Hannerz (2007: 79–83) distinguishes between top-down and bottom-up cosmopolitanism as well. The top-down version is mostly associated with the political philosophy and neighbouring conceptions of global governance. Bottom-up versions are harder to grasp. It is fair to assess that an anthropology of bottom-up cosmopolitanism consists of an analysis of the locality of social movements and civic involvement with a potentially global reach. Hannerz (2007: 84) concludes: "The anthropology of cosmopolitanism is thus likely to be one of inquiry into emergent experiences, commitments, and relationships; and also a study of its opposites, critics, and adversaries in debate and in life."

Along these lines, cultural theorist and sociologist Stuart Hall (2008) has contextualized cosmopolitanism in the conditions of capitalist globalization. Hall argues that speaking of interconnectedness and interdependencies in the era of globalization veils massive inequalities. Hall goes on to emphasize and highlight the role of diasporic identities and cultures in rethinking the legacies of cosmopolitanism. Hall conceptualizes a cosmopolitanism from below as well when people, such as migrants or refugees, become cosmopolitans by accident: "It bears down on people who have no choice as to whether or not to become cosmopolitans. They have to learn to live in two countries, to speak a new language and make a life in another place, not by choice but as a condition of survival" (Hall, 2008: 347). Newcomers to different countries and cultures necessarily reflect on their social surroundings and tend to relearn what it means to find a home in the world. In this sense, migrants and detached business elites strangely seem to be alike, as Hall (2008: 347) points out: "They have to acquire the same cosmopolitan skills of adaptation and innovation which an entrepreneur requires – but from a different place." With the conceptualizations of cosmopolitanism from below as provided by Hannerz and Hall we can appreciate a grounded version of a cosmopolitanism of culture. It is, then, not merely a matter of picking and choosing a lifestyle to follow but rather a matter of making ends meet under the external conditions of the globalized and digitalized world.

5. Cosmopolitan Consciousness-Raising as Solidarity

Political philosophy needs to confront social reality in its conceptualization of cosmopolitanism. It should be clear by now that the conceptual resources of cosmopolitanism are endless. By going through different taxonomies, I have shown that there are various ways to conceptualize the individual's moral standing vis-à-vis others, states, and the world. Cosmopolitanism is imagined on all kinds of levels and with all kinds of aims in the minds of authors. My conceptualization of cosmopolitanism, with its reconstruction of varieties of cultural, constitutional, and contestatory approaches, cuts across common associations of individual, moral, and institutional cosmopolitanism. Each of the introduced approaches goes a step further towards a fuller understanding of cosmopolitanism.

However, my contention remains that all three varieties I have sketched above tend to lose sight of its original subject: individuals in their social surroundings. Therefore, my aim in the remainder of this contribution is to highlight the social dimensions in practices and relations which ground cosmopolitanism. I ground cosmopolitanism in practices and relations which constructively seek to enlarge an individuals' consciousness through awareness and solidarity. In my approach, this does not only entail intersubjective relations between at least two individuals. What is more, I take this to mean that cosmopolitan individuals enhance their consciousness in social surroundings as well as in social structures. However, this should not lead us to think that cosmopolitanism in a socialized setting is entirely cultural either. I argue that cosmopolitan social practices and relations mediate between the local social surrounding, individual positions in the world, and broader tendencies on political or global levels.

Turning back to Habermas is a helpful step to rethink the interplay between democratic life in the "postnational" constellation. Among other things, modern democracies are defined as efforts of collective self-determination. As Habermas (2001) argues, in democratic political communities there needs to be at least some sense of civic solidarity. Habermas proposes that we imagine cosmopolitan solidarity as a kind of social mechanism for fostering solidarity beyond already practised locally bounded communities. In this sense, the task of cosmopolitan solidarity is to foster learning mechanisms through reflecting on and remembering past atrocities and injustices (cf. Habermas, 2011: 38–57, 108–112; Pensky, 2007).

However, cosmopolitan solidarity perhaps cannot produce thick civic solidaristic bonds as in the local and national cases. For a start, because there are not the same global binding mechanisms as on local or national levels. Habermas (2001: 107) addresses this tension: The "ethical-political self-understanding of citizens of a particular democratic life is missing in the inclusive community of world citizens." And he continues this theme: "Cosmopolitan consciousness could in any case take on a

more concrete form by delimitation of the temporal dimension – a stylization of the resistance of the present to the past of the nation-state." (Habermas, 2001: 184).

In my understanding, cosmopolitan consciousness should be viewed as prior to solidarity, awareness or other social mechanisms which could potentially foster and develop a more cosmopolitan outlook. However, this understanding of the potential of a more cosmopolitan consciousness is contradicted by Habermas' more constitutional and top-down view of the postnational constellation: "Civic solidarity is rooted in particular collective identities; cosmopolitan solidarity has to support itself on the moral universalism of human rights alone" (Habermas, 2001: 108). Of course, Habermas is right in insisting on the legitimizing function of human rights. Without respect for the rights and dignity of every single human being, democracy worldwide is at least damaged to some extent. However, Habermas' insistances on the normative status of human rights does not tell us enough about how cosmopolitan solidarity might be implemented on the ground in social practices.

More recently Seyla Benhabib (2023) has argued that cosmopolitan solidarity expressly needs to consider the perspective of the "Other" against counter-cosmopolitan movements such as nativism, populism, or destructive exploitation of nature. Showing solidarity with the Other, according to Benhabib (2023), creates productive tensions and struggles for the self-transformation of the self. Cosmopolitan solidarity, she explains, leaves behind old dichotomies between East and West, North and South. I tend to view her approach to cosmopolitan solidarity as a conscious-raising and awareness-creating effort for what is missing in the contemporary social and political climate. Benhabib's conceptualization of cosmopolitan solidarity goes one step towards moving cosmopolitanism from a philosophical top-down approach to a multi-sited and bottom-up approach. Benhabib, and this is a lesson learned from radical contestatory approaches, conceptualizes cosmopolitan solidarity as a bulwark against regressive forces in global politics.

This is where a socialized understanding of cosmopolitanism needs to go. Political theory and philosophy need to be aware of cosmopolitan social practices where they occur in real life: In times of globalization and digitalization, individuals and social groups can act in a cosmopolitan manner if they react in an open-minded and world-inclusive manner. This means, for example, viewing migration as a chance for intercultural learning and development rather than as a threat. Cosmopolitan hubs are not only the metropoles and city-centres, but rather also every-day places such as classrooms, workplaces, and playgrounds. Here you practise openness, awareness, and even some solidarity in first, very basic encounters. A cosmopolitan consciousness creates the cognitive and emotional capacities to approach new experiences.

This counts just as much for the realm of digital media. In the digital realm, we find an oscillation again. On the one hand, digital news outlets significantly lower barriers to information and even participation. Potentially everyone may be informed about every political, social, and cultural aspect in the world. Online

forums have in fact created spaces, especially in diasporic communities, to stay connected and to express concern (cf. Sobré-Denton, 2016; Ponzanesi, 2020). Digital diasporic communities also express a sense of cosmopolitan solidarity (Laguerre, 2021: 324–325). In general, digital solidarity can be viewed as one tool among others to foster new allegiances and create awareness for dormant issues (Srinivasan, 2017: 80–81). Swarms, digital networks, and assemblies constitute practices which seek to develop digital solidarity (Stalder, 2013). On the other hand, the destructive potential of unhinged digital social media is clear since at least the campaigns for Brexit, Trump, and Bolsonaro (Flew, 2020; Lenehan, 2022: 24–25; Strick, 2021).

Cosmopolitan consciousness is, thus, in tension with such exclusionary and nativistic movements. A cosmopolitan outlook rejects these kinds of limitations to worldviews. However, cosmopolitanism does not mean the rejection of one's own roots. On the contrary, cosmopolitan consciousness means to step outside and move beyond one's comfort zone every now and then, and when it is necessary. No one can care for everything, everywhere and at all times. But cosmopolitanism is a perspective which creates awareness, care, and concern for others on personal, local, and global levels.

To conclude, cosmopolitanism does not need to be thought of in relation to big gestures, but rather it should be further conceptualized through real and existing social practices. Cosmopolitanism is at its best when oscillating between past and present, between local and global, between general and concrete. This method helps to guide between theory and practice as reconsidering normative commitments and empirical realities. A more social understanding of cosmopolitanism is, thus, paramount to fostering our awareness of what is changing in the world, what is necessary for solidarity to arise, and what is missing on the way towards a more just future.

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