

**The Necessity and Limits of Cosmopolitanism:  
Local Democracy in a Global Context<sup>1</sup>**

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A certain attenuated cosmopolitanism had taken place of the old home feeling.  
--Thomas Carlyle, 1857

Among the great struggles of man—good/evil, reason/unreason, etc.—  
there is also this mighty conflict between the fantasy of Home and the  
fantasy of Away, the dream of roots and the mirage of the journey.  
--Salmon Rushdie, 2000

When Marx and Engels wrote of how capitalism stripped away the traditional bonds among people leaving only a “callous cash nexus,” they were quoting one of the most important English social thinkers and reformers of their day, Thomas Carlyle. Carlyle ultimately followed Coleridge to a kind of conservatism and turned to the Church of England rather than the communist international. He wrote sympathetically of Chartism, however, and with remarkable early insight about mechanization. Indeed, he coined the term, “industrialism”. Yet he is little remembered today (and when remembered, primarily as a literary figure and an influence on Dickens).<sup>2</sup> This is partly because conservatives stopped offering and praising critiques of capitalism while marxists forgot how much of their own critique they drew from conservatives. The eclipse of the link between left and right wing critics of capitalism has come with a corresponding loss of attention to the central theme they shared, capitalism’s transformation of direct social relations into relations mediated impersonally by money.

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<sup>1</sup> Paper presented to the UNESCO/ISSC conference, “Identity and Difference in the Global Era,” Candido Mendes University, Rio de Janeiro, 20-23 May 2001. An earlier version of this paper was presented to the International Studies Association, 23 February 2001; I am grateful for comments on that occasion from Michael Kennedy, Laura MacDonald, Thomas McCarthy, and Kathryn Sikkink. Another version was presented as the keynote address to the conference on Local Democracy and Globalization at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2-3 March 2001, where again I received useful comments.

Certainly analysts of reification in the tradition of Lukacs focused on the new kinds of mediation introduced by capitalism; much has been written about the "system" of abstract relationships constituted by capitalism. But much less attention has been focused on the concrete forms of solidarity that join people to each other. It is on these that I want to focus. Taking another radical text for a starting point, since the French revolution there has been a great focus on the first two terms in the slogan "liberté, égalité, fraternité" and much less on the third.

Yet, I want to suggest, solidarity remains important. I shall use this term rather than fraternity not only to avoid sexism but to open up a wider sociological concern for the multiple forms within which cohesion and mutual commitment may be constructed rather than implicitly to emphasize one (or one metaphorical image). Classical social theory placed these questions at its core—famously in Durkheim's *The Division of Labor in Society*—but also in Tocqueville's concern for the social and cultural underpinnings of democracy. Attention to solidarity is especially timely today for both practical and theoretical reasons. Practical reasons because the globalization of capital, media, and migration all challenge local bases of solidarity. Theoretical reasons because the leading efforts to think through the prospects for democracy have chosen to follow capital in "going global" rather than to contest the ways in which globalization is being constructed at more local levels. Many of these theoretical efforts may loosely be lumped together under the label "cosmopolitan democracy" (including, I think, Jurgen Habermas's pursuit of constitutional patriotism as well as the projects of David Held, Mary Kaldor, Martha Nussbaum, Ulrich Beck, and a variety of others). Let me make clear that I wish to join in support for cosmopolitanism, but I want to question both tacit acceptance of the dominant mainly economic global imaginary and the frequent opposition of a good image of the global to a negative image of the local as mere resistance. Part of the issue is that an opposition between liberalism and communitarianism has become dominant among political theorists and has divided those who would focus on the cosmopolitan from those who would pay attention to solidarity.

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<sup>2</sup> See Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society 1780-1950* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1958) ch. 4 for a useful critical appreciation of Carlyle.

To foreshadow, I will first suggest that much cosmopolitanism misrecognizes its own social foundations, assuming these to be universal when in fact they are representative of particular social locations. Cosmopolitanism is, too often, the class consciousness of frequent travelers. Second, I will argue that appeals to universal similarities and universalistic moral obligations are too thin a basis to support either cosmopolitanism or democracy. Rather, advancing both connections across lines of cultural and social difference and collective self-government depends importantly on local solidarities. Indeed, we should not see local culture, tradition, and community as the enemies of or other to cosmopolitan democracy; we should conceptualize the latter with much more recognition of the importance of particularistic alliances and senses of mutual dependence and commitment. Third, I will offer a sketch of an approach to social solidarity that would recognize its many dimensions and variable character, including variation in the extent to which particular forms of solidarity are open to collective choice by their participants. In particular, I will emphasize thinking of the public sphere as itself an arena for the construction of social solidarity and the making of shared culture, a world that is literally "between us".

#### **I. The Class Consciousness of Frequent Travelers**

Nineteenth century thinkers, like Thomas Carlyle, were often ambivalent about cosmopolitanism. Like him, they worried that it was somehow an "attenuated" solidarity by comparison to those rooted in more specific local cultures and communities. Today, cosmopolitanism has considerable rhetorical advantage. It seems hard not to want to be a 'citizen of the world'. Certainly, at least in academic circles, it is hard to imagine preferring to be known as parochial. But, we should ask, what does it mean to be a "citizen of the world"? Through what institutions is this "citizenship" effectively expressed? Is it mediated through various particular, more local solidarities or is it direct? Does it present a new, expanded category of identification as better than older, narrower ones (as the nation has frequently been opposed to the province or village) or does it pursue better relations among a diverse range of traditions and communities?

My questioning is meant not as an attack on cosmopolitanism, thus, but as a challenge to the dominant ways in which it has been conceptualized, and a plea for the importance of the local and particular—not least as a basis for democracy, no less

important for being necessarily incomplete. Whatever its failings, "the old home feeling" helped to produce a sense of mutual obligations and what Edward Thompson echoed an old tradition in calling a "moral economy". A thoroughgoing cosmopolitanism might indeed bring concern for the fate of all humanity to the fore, but a more attenuated cosmopolitanism is likely to leave us lacking the old sources of solidarity without adequate new ones. And cosmopolitanism without the strengthening of local democracy is likely to be a very elite affair.

We are sometimes misled by the proliferation of a kind of 'consumerist cosmopolitanism'. Once more closed and clearly local taste cultures have indeed opened up. If the MacDonalidization of taste is to be decried, so is the ready availability of a good Indian dinner in the American South, or of Mexican food in Norway, Indonesian in Holland, and Ethiopian in Britain. Better to decry none, yet to recognize that this tells us little about whether to expect democracy on global scale, successful accommodation of immigrants at home, or respect for human rights across the board. Food, tourism, music, literature, and clothes are all easy faces of cosmopolitanism. They are indeed broadening, literally after a fashion, but they are not hard tests for the relationship between local solidarity and international civil society.

Nonetheless, the idea of a cosmopolitan, postnational, and potentially democratic politics has gained a good deal of currency lately.<sup>3</sup> Unbridled global capitalism has limited appeal. Too many states still wage war or take on projects like ethnic cleansing that an international public might constrain or at least condemn. Transnational flows of people, weapons, drugs and diseases all suggest need for regulation. But, are the available global institutions up to the task? To the extent they are, or new ones are created, will cosmopolitan institutions be liberal and democratic?

The notion of cosmopolitanism gains currency also from the flourishing of multiculturalism—and the opposition of those who consider themselves multiculturally

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<sup>3</sup> For a sampling, see Daniele Archibugi and David Held, eds., *Cosmopolitan Democracy: an Agenda for a New World Order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); Daniele Archibugi, David Held, and Martin Köhler, eds., *Re-Imagining Political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998). David Held's argument in *Democracy and the Global Order* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995) is perhaps the best sustained theoretical account of what such a cosmopolitan politics might look like, and how it might differ from an international politics dominated by nation-states.

modern feel to those rooted in monocultural traditions. The latter, say the former, are locals with limited perspective, if not outright racists. It is easier to sneer at the far right, but too much claiming of ethnic solidarity by minorities also falls afoul of cosmopolitanism. It is no accident either that the case against Salman Rushdie began to be formulated among diasporic Asians in Britain or that cosmopolitan theory is notably ambivalent towards them. Integrationist white liberals in the United States are similarly unsure what to make of what some of them see as “reverse racism” on the part of blacks striving to maintain local communities. Debates over English as a common language reveal related ambivalence towards Hispanics and others. Cosmopolitanism seems to be more about transcending cultural specificity and differences of local institutions than about defending them. The claims of ethnicity and nationhood appear primarily as problems, and are analyzed in terms of a prejudicial opposition between cosmopolitan liberalism and communitarianism.

The current enthusiasm for global citizenship and cosmopolitanism reflects not just a sense of its inherent moral worth but the challenge of an increasingly global capitalism. It is perhaps no accident that the first cited usage under “cosmopolitan” in the Oxford English Dictionary comes from John Stuart Mill’s *Political Economy* in 1848: “Capital is becoming more and more cosmopolitan”.<sup>4</sup> Cosmopolitan, after all, means “belonging to all parts of the world; not restricted to any one country or its inhabitants.” As the quotation from Mill reminds us, the latest wave of globalization was not required to demonstrate that capital fit this bill. Indeed, as Marx and Engels wrote in the *Communist Manifesto* “the bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. ... All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. ... In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more

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<sup>4</sup> This is a point made also by Bruce Robbins in *Secular Vocations: Intellectuals, Professionalism, Culture* (London: Verso, 1993), p. 182. See also his “The Village of the Liberal

impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.”<sup>5</sup> This is progress, of a sort, but not an altogether happy story. “The bourgeoisie,” Marx and Engels go on, “by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation. ... It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.”

My purpose here is not to celebrate Marx and Engels for their insight, remarkable as it is. They were, after all, fallible prognosticators. Not much later in the *Communist Manifesto* they reported that modern subjection to capital had already stripped workers of “every trace of national character”.<sup>6</sup> World War I came as a cruel lesson to their followers and nationalism remains an issue today. My point, rather, is to take a little of the shine of novelty off the idea of cosmopolitanism.

Cosmopolitanism was the project of empires, and as an intellectual and a personal style—and indeed a legal arrangement—it flourished in imperial capitals and trading cities. Cosmopolitanism is the project of capitalism, and it flourishes in the top management of multinational corporations and even more in the consulting firms that serve them. In both cases, cosmopolitanism has often joined elites while ordinary people lived in local communities. This is not simply because common folk were less sympathetic to diversity—a self-serving notion of elites. It is also because the class structuring of public life excluded many workers and others from a bourgeois public sphere. The public sphere of eighteenth century London, for example, was in many ways more open to artisans and worker-intellectuals than that of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>7</sup>

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Managerial Class” pp. 15-32 in V. Dharwadker, ed.: *Cosmopolitan Geographies: New Locations in Literature and Culture* (New York: Routledge 2001).

<sup>5</sup> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, pp. 477-519 in *Collected Works* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1976), p. 488.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 494.

<sup>7</sup> See Kevin Gilmartin, *Print Politics: The Press and Radical Opposition in Early Nineteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Perhaps even more importantly, cosmopolitanism was crucially if not absolutely always an attribute of life in cities. To be a cosmopolitan was to be comfortable out in public in a setting of diversity.<sup>8</sup> This meant, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, an urban public. Both imperial and commercial cities brought together people who were not similar to each other, and nurtured modes of interrelationship. Members of this public were informed about events they did not witness by newspapers, but their dealings with each other were mainly face-to-face. One of the striking changes of the 19<sup>th</sup> and especially 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was a displacement of cosmopolitanism from cities to international travel and mass media. International travel, moreover, meant something different to those who traveled for business or diplomacy and those who served in armies fighting wars to expand or control the cosmopolis. If diplomacy was war by other means, it was also war by other classes who paid less dearly for it.

Broadcast media in particular link individuals directly into a very large "super-public" rather than creating spatially concentrated publics. Within this large arena, individuals can feel a sense of intimacy with public figures they have never seen in person, let alone met, but whose faces appear nightly in their living rooms and whose voices are as soothingly familiar as those of close friends. The broadcast media audience is extremely diverse, but these media do little to link members of the audience to one another. The situation is, thus, different from that of urban newspapers in their heyday. Where urban newspapers once informed and sometimes galvanized heterogeneous but spatially concentrated urban publics, broadcast media neither create nor serve particular publics in which directly interpersonal discourse readily shape the social appropriation of news or other information. They are in too large a degree one-way means of communication; they reach people for the most part in spatially and socially dispersed, privatized settings. They provide an informational environment, but do not foster public discourse. New media including the Internet change this to some extent; whether they shift the balance radically is uncertain. They clearly open up access to a broader world to those in a wide range of localities. Virtual community is a splendid supplement to face-

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<sup>8</sup> Richard Sennett cites (and builds on) a French usage of 1738: "a cosmopolite ... is a man who moves comfortably in diversity; he is comfortable in situations which have no links or parallels to what is familiar to him," *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: Knopf, 1977), p. 17.

to-face community and a very thin substitute for it.<sup>9</sup> Then there is the matter of inequality of access. The digital divide is, of course, a reflection of other basic social divisions.

Deep inequalities in the political economy of empire and of capitalism mean that some people labored and labor to support others in the pursuit of global relations and acquisition. Cosmopolitanism did not and does not in itself speak to these systemic inequalities, and more than did the rights of bourgeois man that Marx criticized in the 1840s. If there is to be a major redistribution of wealth, or a challenge to the way the means of production are controlled in global capitalism, it is not likely to be guided by cosmopolitanism as such. Of course, it may well depend on cosmopolitan solidarities among workers or other groups.

The juxtaposition of empire and capitalism should remind us, moreover, that the rise of the modern world system marked a historical turn against empire. Capitalist globalization has been married to the dominance of nation-states in politics.<sup>10</sup> Capitalist cosmopolitans indeed have traversed the globe, from early modern merchants to today's world bank officials and venture capitalists. They forged relations that crossed the borders of nation-states. But they relied on states and a global order of states to maintain property rights and other conditions of production and trade. Their passports bore stamps of many countries, but they were still passports and good cosmopolitans knew which ones got them past inspectors at borders and airports. Not least of all, cosmopolitanism offered only weak defense against reactionary nationalism. This was clearly declass   so far as most cosmopolitans were concerned. But Berlin in the 1930s was a very cosmopolitan city. If having cosmopolitan elites were a guarantee of respect for civil or human rights, then Hitler would never have ruled Germany, Chile would have been spared Pinochet, and neither the Guomintang nor the Communists would have come to power in China.

I don't want to paint too strong a picture. Cosmopolitanism is not responsible for empire or capitalism or fascism or communism. Nor does any of this make

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<sup>9</sup> See discussion in Calhoun, "Community without Propinquity Revisited: Communications Technology and the Transformation of the Urban Public Sphere," *Sociological Inquiry*, vol. 68 (1998) #3, pp. 373-397.

<sup>10</sup> This is a central point of Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System*, vol. 1 (New York: Academic Press, 1974).



cosmopolitanism a bad thing. On the contrary, I think it is generally a good and attractive approach to life in a globally interconnected world. The point is that we need to be clear about what work we can reasonably expect cosmopolitanism to do and what is beyond it. In fighting reactionary rightist racism and nationalism, for example, local democracy may be more important than global cosmopolitanism. The two are not contradictory; I hope they can be mutually reinforcing. But they are not the same thing. And in order for them to flourish together it is important not only that local democrats recognize the importance of globalization and the virtues of other cultures, but that cosmopolitans recognize the value of local communities and traditions. The 'catch' to proposing this last recognition is that it flies in the face of capitalist destruction of those communities and violation of those traditions. It is also impeded by the affinity of cosmopolitanism to rationalist liberal individualism.

Generally speaking, to say "cosmopolitan" has been to say anything *but* "democratic". The tolerance of diversity in cosmopolitan imperial cities reflects among other things precisely the absence of a need to organize self-rule.<sup>11</sup> The cosmopolitanism of capital has presented one international agenda with the force of necessity rather than the opportunity for collective choice. For the most part, our public discourse is conceived within a social imaginary in which the idea of nation is still basic, defining not only a new sense of local which is not local at all but national, but also defining the global often as the international. This takes attention away from the extent to which transnational corporations organize apparently international relations. These corporations themselves, like nations, depend on the social imaginary to be construed as natural, normal. In this social imaginary, cosmopolitanism appears mainly in the guise of adaptation to the institutional order of power relations and capital.

Cosmopolitanism presents itself simply as global citizenship. It offers a claim to being without determinate social basis that is reminiscent of Mannheim's idea of the free-floating intellectual. But the view from nowhere or everywhere is perhaps more located than this. Cosmopolitanism reflects an elite perspective on the world (though what

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<sup>11</sup> I have argued this at somewhat greater length in both *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993) and *Critical Social Theory: Culture, History, and the Challenge of Diversity* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1995).

academic theory does not?). It is worth recalling the extent to which the top ranks of capitalist corporations and the NGOs that support them—from the World Bank to organizations setting accountancy standards—provide exemplars of cosmopolitanism. Even the ideas of cosmopolitan democracy and humanitarian activism, though, reflect the kind of awareness of the world that is made possible by the proliferation of non-governmental organizations working to solve environmental and humanitarian problems, and by the growth of media attention to those problems. These are important—indeed vital—concerns. Nonetheless, the concerns, the media, and the NGOs need to be grasped reflexively as the basis for an intellectual perspective. It is a perspective, for example, that makes nationalism appear one-sidedly as negative. This is determined first perhaps by the prominence of ethnonationalist violence in recent humanitarian crises, but also by the tensions between states and international NGOs. It is also shaped by specifically European versions of transnationalism. Both nationalism and questions of whether states should be strengthened would look different from an African vantage point. Similarly, the development of the ‘emergency’ as a basic category for understanding the world opens our eyes to important issues, but also structures the way we see them.

## II. The Political Theory of Cosmopolitan Democracy

Contemporary cosmopolitanism is the latest effort to revitalize liberalism. It has much to recommend it. Aside from world peace and more diverse ethnic restaurants, there is the promise to attend to one of the great lacunae of more traditional liberalism. This is the assumption of nationality as the basis for membership in states, even though this implies a seemingly illiberal reliance on inheritance and ascription rather than choice, and an exclusiveness hard to justify on liberal terms.

Political theory has surprisingly often avoided addressing the problems of political belonging in a serious, analytic way by presuming that nations exist as the prepolitical bases of state-level politics. I do not mean that political theorists are nationalists in their political preferences, but rather that their way of framing analytic problems is shaped by the rhetoric of nationalism and the ways in which this has become basic to the modern social imaginary.<sup>12</sup> ‘Let us imagine a society,’ theoretical

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<sup>12</sup> On the predominance of nationalist understandings in conceptions of ‘society,’ see Calhoun, ‘Nationalism, Political Community, and the Representation of Society: Or, Why Feeling at Home

deliberations characteristically begin, 'and then consider what form of government would be just for it.' Nationalism provides this singular and bounded notion of society with its intuitive meaning.

Even so Kantian, methodologically individualistic, and generally non-nationalist a theorist as Rawls exemplifies the standard procedure, seeking in *A Theory of Justice* to understand what kind of society individuals behind the veil of ignorance would choose—but presuming that they would imagine this society on the model of a nation-state. Rawls modifies his arguments in considering international affairs in *Political Liberalism* and *The Law of Peoples*, but continues to assume something like the nation-state as the natural form of society. As he unhelpfully and unrealistically writes:

...we have assumed that a democratic society, like any political society, is to be viewed as a complete and closed social system. It is complete in that it is self-sufficient and has a place for all the main purposes of human life. It is also closed, in that entry into it is only by birth and exit from it is only by death.<sup>13</sup>

Rawls is aware of migration, war, and global media, of course. But he imagines questions of international justice to be just as that phrase and much diplomatic practice implies: questions “between peoples”, each of which should be understood as unitary. Note also the absence of attention to local or other constituent communities within this conception of society. Individuals and the whole society have a kind of primacy over any other possible groupings. This is the logic of nationalism.

This is precisely what cosmopolitanism contests, and rightly so. Indeed, one of the reasons given for the very term is that it is less likely than ‘international’ to be confused with exclusively intergovernmental relations.<sup>14</sup> Advocates of cosmopolitanism argue that people belong to a range of polities of which nation-states are only one, and that the range of significant relationships formed across state borders is growing. Their goal is to extend citizenship rights and responsibilities to the full range of associations

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Is Not a Substitute for Public Space,” *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 2 No. 2, pp. 217-31.

<sup>13</sup> John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), p. 41.

<sup>14</sup> Daniele Archibugi, “Principles of Cosmopolitan Democracy,” pp. 198-228 in D. Archibugi, D. Held, and M. Köhler, eds., *Re-imagining Political Community* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998) p. 216.

thus created. In David Held's words, "people would come, thus, to enjoy multiple citizenships—political membership in the diverse political communities which significantly affected them. They would be citizens of their immediate political communities, and of the wider regional and global networks which impacted upon their lives."<sup>15</sup> Though it is unclear how this might work out in practice, this challenge to the presumption of nationality as the basis for citizenship is one of the most important contributions of cosmopolitanism.

The cosmopolitan tension with the assumption of nation as the prepolitical basis for citizenship is domestic as well as international. As Jurgen Habermas puts it, "the nation-state owes its historical success to the fact that it substituted relations of solidarity between the citizens for the disintegrating corporative ties of early modern society. But this republican achievement is endangered when, conversely, the integrative force of the nation of citizens is traced back to the prepolitical fact of a quasi-natural people, that is, to something independent of and prior to the political opinion-and will-formation of the citizens themselves."<sup>16</sup> But pause here and notice the temporal order implied in this passage. First there were local communities, guilds, religious bodies, and other "corporative bonds". Then there was republican citizenship with its emphasis on the civic identity of each. Then this was undermined by ethnonationalism. What this misses is the extent to which each of these ways of organizing social life existed simultaneously with the others, sometimes in struggle and sometimes symbiotically. New "corporative ties" have been created, for example, notably in the labor movement and in religious communities. Conversely, there was no "pure republican" moment when ideas of nationality did not inform the image of the republic and the constitution of its boundaries.

As Habermas goes on, however, "the question arises of whether there exists a functional equivalent for the fusion of the nation of citizens with the ethnic nation."<sup>17</sup> We need not accept his idealized history or entire theoretical framework to see that this raises a basic issue. That is, for polities not constructed as ethnic nations, what makes

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<sup>15</sup> David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995), p. 233.

<sup>16</sup> *The Inclusion of the Other*, p. 115.

membership compelling? This is a question for the European Union, certainly, but also arguably for the United States itself, and for most projects of cosmopolitan citizenship. Democracy requires a sense of mutual commitment among citizens that goes beyond mere legal classification, holding a passport, or even respect for particular institutions. As Charles Taylor has argued forcefully, “self-governing societies,” have need “of a high degree of cohesion”.<sup>18</sup>

One of the challenges for cosmopolitanism is to account for how social solidarity and public discourse might develop in these various wider networks such that they could become the basis for an active citizenship. So far, most versions of cosmopolitanism share with traditional liberalism a thin conception of social life, commitment, and belonging. Actually existing cosmopolitanism exemplifies this deficit in its ‘social imaginary’. That is, it conceives of society—and issues of social belonging and social participation—in too thin and casual a manner.

The result is an emerging theory of transnational politics that suffers from an inadequate sociological foundation. As Bellamy and Castiglione write, hoping to bridge the opposition between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism, “a pure cosmopolitanism cannot generate the full range of obligations its advocates generally wish to ascribe to it. For the proper acknowledgement of ‘thin’ basic rights rests on their being specified and overlaid by a ‘thicker’ web of special obligations.”<sup>19</sup> Part of the problem is that cosmopolitanism relies heavily on a purely political conception of human beings. Such a conception has two weak points. First, it does not attend enough to all the ways in which solidarity is achieved outside of political organization, and does not adequately appreciate the bearing of these on questions of political legitimacy. Second, it does not consider the extent to which high political ideals founder on the shoals of everyday needs and desires—including quite legitimate ones. The ideal of civil society has sometimes been expressed in recent years as though it should refer to a constant

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<sup>17</sup> *The Inclusion of the Other*, p. 117. Note that Habermas tends to equate ‘nation’ with ‘ethnic nation’.

<sup>18</sup> “Modern social imaginaries,” forthcoming in *Public Culture*.

<sup>19</sup> Richard Bellamy and Dario Castiglione, “Between Cosmopolis and Community,” pp. 152-178 in D. Archibugi, D. Held, and M. Köhler, eds., *Re-Imagining Political Community* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

mobilization of all of us all the time in various sorts of voluntary organizations.<sup>20</sup> But in fact one of the things people quite reasonably want from a good political order is to be left alone some of the time—to enjoy a non-political life in civil society. In something of the same sense, Oscar Wilde famously said of socialism that it requires too many evenings. We could say of cosmopolitanism that it requires too much travel, too many dinners out at ethnic restaurants, too much volunteering with *Médécins Sans Frontiers*. Perhaps not too much or too many for academics (though I wouldn't leap to that presumption) but too much and too many to base a political order on the expectation that everyone will choose to participate.

Part of the issue is simply what people choose to do with their time and part of it is no doubt that actually existing politics have developed a less engaging face than they might have. But part of it is also surely scale. Participation rates are low in local and national politics; it is not clear that the spread of global social movements offers evidence enough for a possible reversal on the supranational scale. On the contrary, there is good reason to think that the very scale of the global ecumene will make participation even narrower and more a province of elites than in national politics. Not only does Michels' law of oligarchy apply, if perhaps not with the iron force he imagined, but the capacities to engage cosmopolitan politics—from literacy to computer literacy to familiarity with the range of acronyms—are apt to continue to be unevenly distributed. Indeed, there are less commonly noted but significant inequalities directly tied to locality. Within almost any social movement or activist NGO, as one moves from the local to the national and global in either public actions or levels of internal organization one sees a reduction in

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<sup>20</sup> This hyperTocquevillianism appears famously in Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (New York: Simon and Schuster 2000), but has in fact been central to discussions since at least the 1980s, including prominently Robert Bellah, et al., *Habits of the Heart* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1984). The embrace of a notion of civil society as centrally composed of a "voluntary sector" complimenting a capitalist market economy has of course informed public policy from America's first Bush administration with its "thousand points of light" forward. Among other features, this approach neglects the notion of a political public sphere as an institutional framework of civil society (Habermas 1989) and grants a high level of autonomy to markets and economic actors; it is notable for the absence of political economy from its theoretical bases and analyses. As one result, it introduces a sharp separation among market, government, and voluntary association (non-profit) activity that obscures the question of how social movements may challenge economic institutions, and how the public sphere may mobilize government to shape economic practices.

women's participation. Largely because so much labor of social reproduction—child care, for instance—is carried out by women, women find it harder to work outside of their localities. This is true even for social movements in which women predominate at the local level.

Cosmopolitan theory is attentive to the diversity of people's diverse social engagements and connections. But, for the most part cosmopolitans model political life on a fairly abstract notion of person as a bearer of rights and obligations.<sup>21</sup> To this some, like Held, add a crucial complement: persons inhabit not only rights and obligations, but relationships and commitments within and across groups of all sorts including the nation. This directly challenges the tendency of many communitarians to suggest not only that community is necessary and/or good, but that people normally inhabit one and only one community.<sup>22</sup> It points to the possibility—so far not realized—of a rapprochement between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism. More often, cosmopolitans have treated communitarianism as an enemy, or at least used it as a foil.

Cosmopolitanism is rooted in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century rationalism with its ethical universalism counterposed specifically to traditional religion and more generally to deeply rooted political identities. Against the force of universal reason, the claims of traditional culture and communities were deemed to have little standing. These were at best particularistic, local understandings that grasped universal truths only inaccurately and partially. At worst, they were outright errors, the darkness to which Enlightenment was opposed. Rationalism challenged more than just the mysticism of faith. The 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century wars of faith seemed to cry out for universalistic reason and a cosmopolitan outlook. Yet, this rationalism was also rich with contractarian metaphors and embedded in the social imaginary of a nascent commercial culture. It approached social life on the basis of a proto-utilitarian calculus, an idea of individual interests as the basis of judgment, and a search for the one right solution. Its emphasis on individual autonomy,

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<sup>21</sup> Amartya Sen, in *Development as Freedom* (1999), lays out an account of 'capabilities' as an alternative to the discourse of rights. This is also adopted by Martha Nussbaum in her most recent cosmopolitan arguments (2000). While this shifts emphases in some useful ways (notably from 'negative' to 'positive' liberties in Isaiah Berlin's terms), it does not offer a substantially 'thicker' conception of the person or the social nature of human life.

whatever its other merits, was deployed with a blind eye to the differences and distortions of private property. The claims of community appeared often as hindrances on individuals. They were justified mainly when community was abstracted to the level of nation, and the wealth of nations made the focus of political as well as economic attention.

Like this earlier vision of cosmopolis, the current one responds to international conflict and crisis.<sup>23</sup> It offers an attractive sense of shared responsibility for developing a better society and transcending the both the interests and intolerance that have often lain behind war and other crimes against humanity. However, from the liberal rationalist tradition, contemporary cosmopolitanism also inherits suspicion of religion and rooted traditions; a powerful language of rights that is also sometimes a blinder against recognition of the embeddedness of individuals in culture and social relations; and an opposition of reason and rights to community. This last has appeared in various guises through three hundred years of contrast between allegedly inherited and constraining local community life and the ostensibly freely chosen social relationships of modern cities, markets, associational life, and more generally cosmopolis. It has been renewed in the recent professional quarrels between liberal and communitarian political theorists (and the occasional attempts of the former to ascribe to the latter complicity in all manner of illiberal political projects from restrictions on immigration to excessive celebration of ethnic minorities to economic protectionism).

In response to this, Held suggests that national communities cease to be treated as primary political communities. He does not go so far as some and claim that they should (or naturally will) cease to exist, but rather imagines them as one sort of relevant unit of political organization among many. What he favors is a cosmopolitan democratic community.

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<sup>22</sup> I have discussed this critically in "Nationalism, Political Community, and the Representation of Society," *op cit*.

<sup>23</sup> See Stephen Toulmin's analysis of the 17<sup>th</sup> century roots of the modern liberal rationalist worldview in *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (New York: Free Press, 1990). As Toulmin notes, the rationalism of Descartes and Newton may be tempered with more attention to 16<sup>th</sup> century forebears. From Erasmus, Montaigne, and others we may garner an alternative but still humane and even humanist approach emphasizing wisdom that included a sense of the limits of rationalism and a more positive grasp of human passions and attachments.



a community of all democratic communities must become an obligation for democrats, an obligation to build a transnational, common structure of political action which alone, ultimately, can support the politics of self-determination.<sup>24</sup> In such a cosmopolitan community, “people would come ... to enjoy multiple citizenships—political membership in the diverse political communities which significantly affected them.”<sup>25</sup> Sovereignty would then be “stripped away from the idea of fixed borders and territories and thought of as, in principle, malleable time-space clusters. ... it could be entrenched and drawn upon in diverse self-regulating associations, from cities to states to corporations.”<sup>26</sup> Indeed, so strong is Held’s commitment to the notion that there are a variety of kinds of associations within which people might exercise their democratic rights that he imagines “the formation of an authoritative assembly of all democratic states and agencies, a reformed General Assembly of the United Nations ...” with its operating rules to be worked out in “an international constitutional convention involving states, IGOs, NGOs, citizen groups and social movements.”<sup>27</sup>

Let me reiterate that I find much to support in this cosmopolitanism. It challenges the abandonment of globalization to neoliberalism (whether with enthusiasm or a sense of helpless pessimism) and it challenges the impulse to respond simply by defending nations or communities that experience globalization as a threat. It is unclear, however, just what social life must be like in these “malleable time-space clusters” and what it would mean for global politics to be a matter of cross-cutting membership in a host of different ‘agencies’ from communities to corporations. Multiplicity is one issue; scale is another. It is clear, moreover, that cosmopolitanism has yet to come to terms with tradition, community, ethnicity, religion, and above all nationalism. In offering a seeming “view from nowhere,” cosmopolitans offer a view from Brussels (where the postnational is identified with the strength of the European Union rather than the weakness of, say, African states) or from Davos (where the postnational is corporate).

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<sup>24</sup> *Democracy and the Global Order*, p. 232

<sup>25</sup> *Democracy and the Global Order*, p. 233.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 234.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 273-4.

The very idea of democracy suggests that it cannot be imposed from above, simply as a matter of rational plan. The power of states and global corporations and the systemic imperatives of global markets suggest that advancing democracy will require struggle. This means not only struggle against states or corporations, but struggle within them to determine the way they work as institutions, how they distribute benefits, what kinds of participation they invite. The struggle for democracy, accordingly, cannot be only a cosmopolitan struggle from social locations that transcend these domains, it must be also a local struggle within them.

Moreover, it is important that democracy grow out of the lifeworld, that theories of democracy seek to empower people not in the abstract but in the actual conditions of their lives. To empower people where they are means to empower them within communities and traditions, not in spite of them, and as members of groups not only as individuals. This does not mean accepting old definitions of all groups; there may be struggle over how groups are constituted. For example, appeals to aboriginal rights need not negate the possibility of struggle within Native American or other groups over such issues as gender bias in leadership.<sup>28</sup> What is important is that we recognize that legitimacy is not the same as motivation. We need to pay attention to the social contexts in which people are moved by commitments to each other. The cosmopolitanism that results will be variously articulated with locality, community, and tradition not simply a matter of common denominators. It will depend to a very large extent on local and particularistic border crossings and pluralisms, not universalism.

### **III. The Spectre of Bad Nationalism**

Cosmopolitan thought has a hard time with cultural particularity, local commitments, and even emotional attachments. This comes partly from its Enlightenment liberal heritage of rationalist challenge to religious and communal solidarities as 'backward'. It is reinforced powerfully by the image of "bad nationalism". For many advocates of cosmopolitanism, this image of the 'other' is definitive. Nazi Germany is paradigmatic, but more recent examples like Milosevic's Serbia and ethnic war in Rwanda and Burundi also inform the theories. At the core of each instance, as generally

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<sup>28</sup> This is a central issue in debates over group rights. See for example Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

understood, is an ethnic solidarity triumphant over civility and liberal values and ultimately turning to horrific violence. Advocates of a postnational or transnational cosmopolitanism, however, do themselves and theory no favors by equating nationalism with ethnonationalism and understanding this primarily through its most distasteful examples. Nations have often had ethnic pedigrees and employed ethnic rhetorics, but they are modern products of shared political, culture, and social participation, not mere inheritances. To treat nationalism as a relic of an earlier order, a sort of irrational expression, or a kind of moral mistake is to fail to see both the continuing power of nationalism as a discursive formation and the work—sometimes positive—that nationalist solidarities continue to do in the world. As a result, nationalism is not easily abandoned even if its myths, contents, and excesses are easily debunked.<sup>29</sup> Not only this, the attempt to equate nationalism with problematic ethnonationalism sometimes ends up leading cosmopolitans to place all “thick” understandings of culture and the cultural constitution of political practices, forms, and identities on the nationalist side of the classification. Only quite thin notions of “political culture” are retained on the attractive cosmopolitan side.<sup>30</sup> The problem here is that republicanism and democracy depend on more than narrowly political culture; they depend on richer ways of constituting life together.

It is worth recalling once more that democracy and cosmopolitanism have not always been close fellow travelers. The current pursuit of cosmopolitan democracy flies in the face of a long history in which the cosmopolitan has thrived in market cities, imperial capitals, and court society. Historically, cosmopolitanism often flourished precisely where democracy was not an option. It thrived in Ottoman Istanbul, for example, and ancien regime Paris, and both ancient and later colonial Alexandria because

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<sup>29</sup> I have discussed nationalism as a discursive formation in *Nationalism* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1997).

<sup>30</sup> See, for example, “Struggles for Recognition in the Democratic Constitutional State,” Habermas’s surprisingly fierce response to Charles Taylor’s “The Politics of Recognition” (both in Amy Gutman, ed., *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, rev. ed., 1994). On the cosmopolitan side, see Janna Thompson’s distorting examination of “communitarian” arguments, “Community Identity and World Citizenship,” pp. 179-197 in Daniele Archibugi, David Held, and Martin Köhler, eds., *Re-*

in none of these were members of different cultures and communities invited to organize government for themselves. It was precisely when democracy became a popular passion and a political project that nationalism flourished. Nationalism—not cosmopolitanism—has been the social imaginary most compatible—one might say complicit—with democracy. Democracy, in particular, has depended on strong notions of who “the people” behind phrases like “we the people” might be, and who might make legitimate the performative declarations of constitution-making and the less verbal performances of revolution.<sup>31</sup> In this respect, its 17<sup>th</sup> century ancestors are less the liberal individualists of social contract theory than early English nationalists.

While the cosmopolitan challenge to deeply rooted traditional identities was often deployed against claims to ground national identity in ethnicity throughout the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, liberals also seized on the state apparatus to promote national integration and homogenization within nation-states. Projects of rational planning and liberal modernization were developed within the boundaries offered by nation-states—even though liberal theory could offer no good account of why those boundaries should be defended against immigrants. It is perhaps paradoxical that in their struggle against benighted local prejudice, against provincialism, that liberals were the advocates of homogenizing nationalism—for example in education policy—that now helps to underwrite the idea of the nation as a primary and self-sufficient solidarity.

Cosmopolitanism was in this sense a latent bad conscience to liberalism, a reminder that most liberals had become tacit nationalists, allowing their universalism to extend only to the borders of the countries. Implicitly, liberals had fallen into accepting the illiberal idea that inheritance—birth—rather than choice should be the basis of political identity. A liberal internationalism developed, to be sure, but it was itself rooted in liberal nationalism. Assistance offered to “less developed countries” was never extended on the basis of the same universalism as that conditioned on domestic citizenship (even if the latter too allowed great inequality and often reduced what should have been universal entitlements to acts of charity). But for the most part, liberalism

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*imagining Political Community: Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).

<sup>31</sup> See Charles Taylor, “Modern Social Imaginaries,” *Public Culture*, forthcoming.

simply accepted national identities as framing the boundaries of political communities and didn't push the point very hard.

Various crisis of the nation-state brought the issue to the fore and set the stage for the revitalization of cosmopolitanism. The crises were occasioned by acceleration of global economic restructuring in the 1990s, new transnational communications media, new flows of migrants, and proliferation of civil wars and humanitarian crises in the wake of the Cold War. The last could no longer be comprehended in terms of the Cold War, which is one reason why they often appeared in the language of ethnicity and nationalism. Among their many implications, these crises all challenged liberalism's established understandings of (or perhaps willful blind spot towards) the issues of political membership and sovereignty. They presented several problems simultaneously: (1) Why should the benefits of membership in any one polity not be available to all people? (2) On what bases might some polities legitimately intervene in the affairs of others? (3) What standing should organizations have that operate across borders without being the agents of any single state (this problem, I might add, applies as much to business corporations as to NGOs and social movements) and conversely how might states appropriately regulate them?

Enter cosmopolitanism. Borders should be abandoned as much as possible and left porous where they must be maintained. Intervention on behalf of human rights is good. NGOs and transnational social movements offer models for the future of the world. These are not bad ideas, but they are limited ideas.

Cosmopolitanism is a discourse centered in a Western view of the world.<sup>32</sup> It sets itself up commonly as a "Third Way" between rampant corporate globalization and reactionary traditionalism or nationalism. Benjamin Barber's notion of "Jihad vs. McWorld" is typical.<sup>33</sup> Such oppositions are faulty, though, and get in the way of

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<sup>32</sup> One is reminded of Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's account of human rights as the new Christianity. It makes Europeans feel entitled, he suggested, to invade countries around the world and try to subvert their traditional values, convert them, and subjugate them. Mahathir was of course defending an often abusive government as well as local culture, but a deeper question is raised.

<sup>33</sup> "Jihad and McWorld operate with equal strength in opposite directions, the one driven by parochial hatreds, the other by universalizing markets, the one re-creating ancient subnational and ethnic borders from within, the other making war on national borders from without. Yet Jihad

actually achieving some of the goals of cosmopolitan democracy. In the first place, they reflect a problematic denigration of tradition, including ethnicity and religion. This can be misleading in even a sheer factual senses, as for example Barber describes Islamism as the reaction of small and relatively homogeneous countries to capitalist globalization. The oppositions are also prejudicial. Note, for example, the tendency to treat the West as the site of both capitalist globalization and cosmopolitanism but to approach the nonWest through category of tradition.

It is worth noting that cosmopolitanism is itself a tradition, with roots in the ancient world (perhaps especially in Hellenism) and in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. More generally, the opposition to tradition (and with it to community, religion, ethnicity and the like) is based on a limited and static view. This does damage especially to the notion of ethnicity as living, creative culture. In this connection, we should also recall how recent, temporary, and never complete the apparent autonomy and closure of 'nation' was. Looked at from the standpoint of India, say, or Ethiopia, it is not at all clear whether 'nation' belongs on the side of tradition or on that of developing cosmopolitanism.

The idea of approaching autonomy in terms of national self-determination is especially troubling to cosmopolitans. First, it privileges an unchosen whole over individual choice. Second, the idea of nation typically involves a strong claim to stand alone as politically self-sufficient. Third, national self-determination may even be impossible given the contemporary geopolitical challenges to national autonomy. As David Held writes in what remains the best-developed, most thorough and thoughtful account of cosmopolitan democracy:

The idea of a community which rightly governs itself and determines its own future – an idea at the very heart of the democratic polity itself – is . . . today deeply problematic.<sup>34</sup>

Held goes on to note the importance of the fact that 'nations' are not today strong containers of the social connections of individuals—if indeed they ever were.

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and McWorld have this in common: they both make war on the sovereign nation-state and thus undermine the nation-state's democratic institutions." Benjamin Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld* (New York: Times Books, 1995), p. 6. David Held similarly opposes 'traditional' and 'global' in positioning cosmopolitanism between the two ("Opening Remarks" to the Warwick University Conference on the Future of Cosmopolitanism").

. . . 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.<sup>35</sup>

It is worth pausing to note that "immediate community" refers here to nation more than to any actual networks of local or other directly interpersonal relationships.

It is not only nationalism that figures as a defining "other" to cosmopolitanism. It is also community, ethnicity, and religion. Indeed, part of the problem is that the "bad nationalist" image informs the whole reading of tradition and community. Religion is a particular issue in this. Communitarians generally acknowledge the importance of religion as a basis for community, whether they personally embrace faith or not. Liberals may advocate tolerance, but partly as believers in tolerance are troubled by the deep prejudices against other ways of life implicit in many religious faiths. But attitudes towards Catholicism and Islam remain litmus tests for the distinction, not least when it is extended into international affairs. Are these potentially sources for alternative and possibly better visions of modernity? Or are they illiberal challenges to a modernity that is necessarily rational-individualist in character?

#### **IV. Re-Imagining Social Solidarity**

What is needed here is a theory of social solidarity. This would give an account of why mutual obligations should be compelling. But it would also reveal that not all forms of solidarity can with equal ease be made matters of choice. Collective choice about the terms and nature of social institutions and shared life is distinctively a matter of the public sphere. But both public life itself, and society more generally, also depends on systems, categorical identities, and networks of social relations including communities.

Lacking time to develop such a theory in any fullness, let me simply sketch some distinctions among kinds of solidarity. By invoking this term, I mean to recall both Durkheim and the labor movement. That is, I mean to recall both the sociological problem of explaining different sources and forms of social cohesion and the practical problem of developing the kinds of mutual commitments that enable collective action. Solidarity, thus, should not be identified solely with either the unchosen, inherited or

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<sup>34</sup> *Democracy and the Global Order* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995), p. 17.

systemic forces that bind people to each other or the choice to identify certain others as brothers or sisters. Rather, the question of how much choice different forms of solidarity offer should arise alongside that of how strongly they join people together. Solidarity will always be constraining as well as enabling; it is falsely theorized if we imagine it can offer the latter without the former. Moreover, we should not assume that being bound together is always a matter of harmony and consensus. It is often a matter of argument and struggle; it is organized by competition as much as cooperation; it is marred by ethnic jokes as well as honored in ritual celebrations. What is key is that people treat the others to whom they are connected as necessary to their lives, not optional.

First, there are systemic or functional forms of integration, such as those of markets. These are powerful, probably the most powerful in the world today. But they present themselves as forces of necessity to which people adapt. One of the challenges of critical theory is to reduce the reification of such forces, but it remains the case that part of their power stems from the fact that they organize social life without requiring collective choices as to their overall form. International civil society can challenge and shape but not replace systemic integration. Much of international civil society actually exists to serve it: NGOs are not all activist or philanthropic organizations; they include professional associations, arbitrators, and groups seeking to standardize accountancy rules.

Secondly, there is power, especially as organized in states, but also as deployed inside business corporations (which, as Coase showed years ago, are not creatures of markets but of hierarchies).<sup>36</sup> It is important to distinguish between corporations and markets, because the former are not simply forces of necessity, dictated by efficiency or the invisible hand. Corporations are institutions which people create and inhabit. They are not an automatic response to the market but a way of organizing work and investment that is shaped by culture and choice as well as power, and potentially a setting for important solidarities that do not reduce to the economy as such. Organizations and

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<sup>35</sup> *Democracy and the Global Order*, p. 228.

<sup>36</sup> Ronald Coase, "The Nature of the Firm," *Economica* 4(1937): 386-405; Oliver E. Williamson, "Introduction," pp. 3-17 in O. E. Williamson and S. G. Winter, eds., *The Nature of the Firm: Origins, Evolution, and Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Oliver E. Williamson, *Markets and Hierarchies* (New York: Free Press, 1975).



movements in international civil society focus largely on trying to influence states and corporations. The influence may come through voting, public opinion, or boycotts and other market tactics. We should be clear, though, that the protesters outside WTO meetings do not wield comparable power to the officials of states and corporations represented inside.

Third, there are categorical identities, cultural framings of similarity among people. These include race, ethnicity, and nation but also gender and class. Their key feature is to represent people in series, as tokens of a type, as equivalents in respect of some common attribute. International social movements and NGOs rely heavily on categorical identities representing either interests or affinities. Often dispersed members provide financial support to causes with which they identify. Religions often join adherents in a sense of categorical identity. Religion, however, usually involves the combination of categorical identity with embeddedness in specific institutions, practices, and relationships.

Social relationships often a distinct and fourth kind of solidarity. There is no necessary reason for categorical identities to become communities--that is, for similarities to be matched with dense webs of interpersonal relationships. On the contrary, local communities are often precisely the settings in which these categorical identities are combined, in which social relationships establish bridges across race, religion, or other lines of categorical difference. In some cases, to be sure, categorical identities are paired with a relatively high density of network relations; they become what Harrison White calls CATNETS. This is part of what gives religious groups force in international civil society. Paying attention to the distinction is important in thinking about community, though, because the word is often used in an ambiguous way. It draws much of its emotional force and attraction from the image of a village or a neighborhood in which direct ties among people are close. When it is used, sometimes ideologically, to refer to nations or other groupings on a very large scale. But the sense of unity that unites millions of people through similarity is importantly distinct from networks of direct interpersonal relationships. Nations are no more communities in this sense than they are families, however often nationalists use either term for its rhetorical value, to promote an illusion of greater closeness than exists.

Fifth, solidarity is created in the production—and continued reproduction and modification—of common culture. This is a matter of shared practices as well as artifacts. In LeRoi Jones' memorable phrase, "hunting is not those heads on the wall". Tradition, likewise, is not the results of cultural creativity, it is the process. Living tradition is never simply inheritance, it is also creative reproduction. To be a speaker of a language is to share in this, though of course some are more influential than others. But to be a speaker of a language is also to be joined to other speakers, and not merely by a sense of categorical similarity. Common language is a basis for shared arguments, for identification and even celebration of difference. More generally, the production of shared culture offers people in local settings, and people in subordinate positions, the occasion to resist the domination of authoritative culture from above, whether this is a class-based construction of the nation, or the culture of a dominant ethnic group, or mass consumer culture.

Finally, for this list, public discourse itself is potentially a form of solidarity. It is usually treated simply as a source of opinions, and often an occasion for expressing opinions already formed in less public settings. But engaging in common arguments involves forming relationships of a sort. These are marked by the creation or modification of culture as well as the making of more or less rational decisions. That is, people's identities and understandings of the world are changed by participation in public discourse. Commonalties with others are established, not just found, and common interests are explored. But the importance of public discourse is not simply a matter of finding or developing common interests; it is also in and of itself a form of solidarity. The women's movement offers a prominent example; it transformed identities, it did not just express the interests of women whose identities were set in advance. It created both an arena of discourse among women and a stronger voice for women in discourses that were male dominated (even when they were ostensibly gender neutral). The solidarity formed among women had to do with the capacity of this discourse meaningfully to bridge concerns of private life and large-scale institutions and culture. We can also see the converse, the extent to which this gendered production of solidarity is changed as feminist public discourse is replaced by mass-marketing to women and the production of

feminism's successor as a gendered consumer identity in which liberation is reduced to freedom to purchase.

In short, there are a variety of ways in which people are joined to each other, within and across the boundaries of states and other polities. Theorists of cosmopolitan democracy are right to stress the multiplicity of connections. But we need to complement the liberal idea of rights with a stronger sense of what binds people to each other. One of the peculiarities of nation-states has been the extent to which they were able to combine elements of each of these different sorts of solidarity. They did not do so perfectly, of course. Markets flowed over their borders from the beginning, and some states were weak containers of either economic organization or power. Not all states had a populace with a strong national identity, or pursued policies able to shape a common identity among citizens. Indeed, those that repressed public discourse suffered a particular liability to fissure along the lines of ethnicity or older national identities weakly amalgamated into the new whole; the Soviet Union is a notable case. Conversely, though, the opportunity to participate in a public sphere and seek to influence the state was an important source of solidarity within it.

This is important for thinking about ethnicity. Too easily, ethnicity is rendered the 'other' to globalization. It is treated as static, or at best grudgingly resistant to modernization and cosmopolitan virtues. It is described as a matter of 'tradition' in a usage that resembles Bagehot's notion of "the hard cake of culture" rather than emphasizing the importance of passing on creations, sharing ideas and values, reproducing meanings, learning culture in directly interpersonal relations. Like all forms of traditional culture, ethnicity is changed dramatically by the introduction of mass literacy, reliance on fixed texts and authorized interpreters—not to mention newer communications technologies. In efforts to fix and stabilize tradition, the contents of ethnicity are sometimes hardened—though it is almost always the case that if ethnic cultures remain alive this hardening is challenged by new generations and new creativity.

Moreover, ethnicity is not simply an inheritance from the past of small, kin-organized communities. It developed in the context of cities, states, and migrations as a distinctive way of constructing identities and solidarities on relatively large scales to which kinship and similar relational structures of very local life were inadequate. It exists

not as a simple carry-over from an earlier world of 'pure' local identities, thus, but as a means of managing the interrelationship of the local and the translocal', the interpersonally communicated and the impersonally communicated', the social organization constructed by markets and bureaucracies and that built out of direct relationships. It combines abstract categories of identity with concrete identification within social networks. It is a way of participating in globalization—and other large-scale processes—not their opposite.

Community has always been stronger at local levels than national ones, and necessarily so. This is obscured by use of the same term to refer to the national 'political community' and to neighborhoods, towns and villages. Accounts of local democracy are strikingly underdeveloped in cosmopolitan theory. It is as though theorists assume that the problems of the nation are to be solved entirely by its transcendence in a welter of border crossings. In fact, the construction of viable local communities—and more democratic local communities—may be equally central. The nation has no monopoly on being a 'community of fate'. At the same time, the existence of communities of fate is not simply conservative. It is also, and often at the same time, in the sort of tension with dominant trends that makes it a basis for radical struggle.<sup>37</sup> This struggle, it is true, may be resistance more than proactive construction. Capitalist globalization has spawned a variety of movements seeking exemption from its dictates. But the existence of deep roots for struggle, deep roots to community, does not mean simply resistance. It means also a foundation for serious and radical struggle. This depends on roots and bonds that cannot be simply matters of immediate choice, and thus often on local community. Indeed, one of the oddities of the cosmopolitan hostility to communitarianism is neglect of the extent to which communitarian arguments are actually about sub-national communities, not nations.

Actually existing international civil society includes some level of each of the different forms of solidarity I listed. In very few cases, however, are these joined strongly to each other at a transnational level. There is community among the expatriate staffs of NGOs; there is public discourse on the Internet. But few of the categorical identities that

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<sup>37</sup> On this point, see Calhoun, "The Radicalism of Tradition: Community Strength or Venerable Disguise and Borrowed Language?" *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 88, #5, pp. 886-914.

express people's sense of themselves are matched to strong organizations of either power or community at a transnational level. What this means is that international civil society offers a weak counterweight to systemic integration and power. If hopes for cosmopolitan democracy are to be realized, they depend on developing more social solidarity.

Community strength and local involvement, though powerful bases for mobilization, do not constitute adequate bases for democracy. Democracy must depend also on the kind of public life which flourished in cities, not as the direct extension of communal bonds, but as the outgrowth of social practices which continually brought different sorts of people into contact with each other, and which gave them adequate bases for understanding each other and managing boundary crossing relations. As important as community-based mobilizations are, they must be complemented by some sort of revival of public discourse, and larger scale organizations like political parties to support it. This is in part a cultural issue, but one with crucial social structural foundations, and one linked importantly to questions about communications media, access to them, and control of them.

### **Conclusion**

One way of looking at modern history is as a race in which popular forces and solidarities are always running behind. It is a race to achieve social integration, to structure the connections among people and organize the world. Capital is out in front. States come close to catching up and state power is clearly a force to be reckoned with in its own right. Workers and ordinary citizens are always in the position of trying to catch up. As they get organized on local levels, capital and power integrate on larger scales. The integration of nation-states is an ambivalent step in this process. On the one hand, this represents a flow of organizing capacity away from local communities. On the other hand, democracy at a national level constitutes the greatest success that ordinary people have had in catching up to capital and power. Because markets and corporations increasingly transcend states, there is new catching up to do. This is why cosmopolitan democracy is appealing. But it would be a misunderstanding to see nationalism as simply a tradition to overcome, rather than a central moment in the process of expanding scale of social integration, and one with a democratic as well as an authoritarian side.

Even in Europe, it has proved hard to achieve comparable democracy, or public discourse, or labor organization on the scale of the EU than on that of member states. European transnationalism has been driven—and represented publicly—more by the claims of economic necessity—global competition—than by the pursuit of cosmopolitan democracy. The example does not suggest that cosmopolitan democracy should not be pursued—quite the contrary; it only points to how far behind it lags even in a setting where it has considerable advantages. The example of Europe should also remind us that the characteristic oppositions of global to local, universal to particularistic, cosmopolitan to traditional obscure a host of scales of social life between the village and the globe. Not only is nation rendered as local, but the importance of region is obscured. In fact, globalisation produces and reproduces regionalisation. Much transnationalism—and indeed, growing cosmopolitanism—is organized on a regional not a global level.

In different ways, both local community and nationalism have developed remarkable capacities for binding people to each other. In the former case this grows out of directly interpersonal relationships; in the latter case it is more a matter of representation. But in both cases this is reproduced in the concrete experiences of everyday life as well as in extraordinary moments. The solidarity of community and nation also offer individuals a sense of location and context vital to a strong sense of self. But community and nation also require commitments and can be limiting. This is one of the reasons for a paradox found especially among second generation immigrants (but not unique to them): the desire to preserve a community one doesn't wish to be bound by. The tension is real, and community survives only to the extent that some commitments are binding. Nationalism also makes demands on citizens—not least for military service.

Cosmopolitan democracy cannot flourish without a comparable basis in social solidarity. Citizenship must be more than an abstraction; it must be embedded in the practices of everyday life, of civil society, to flourish. It must be able to make demands. Transnational solidarity can only be based on community to a small extent—though in fact, diversity of local communities may predispose people to it. UN peace-keeping missions are only a very distant analog to national service. But humanitarian missions and volunteer service of various sorts do give people a compelling sense of transnational solidarity. These are woven into everyday life over the long term for only a small

minority of people, however. Employment in global NGOs affects more, and employment in global corporations still more. But what form of solidarity they produce remains to be studied.

Feeling at home can't be enough of a basis for life in modern global society (and in its sense of exclusive localism can't readily be recovered). Attenuated cosmopolitanism won't ground mutual commitment and responsibility. Some relationship between roots—local or other—and broader relationships and awareness needs to be found to provide the solidarity on which cosmopolitan democracy must depend.

