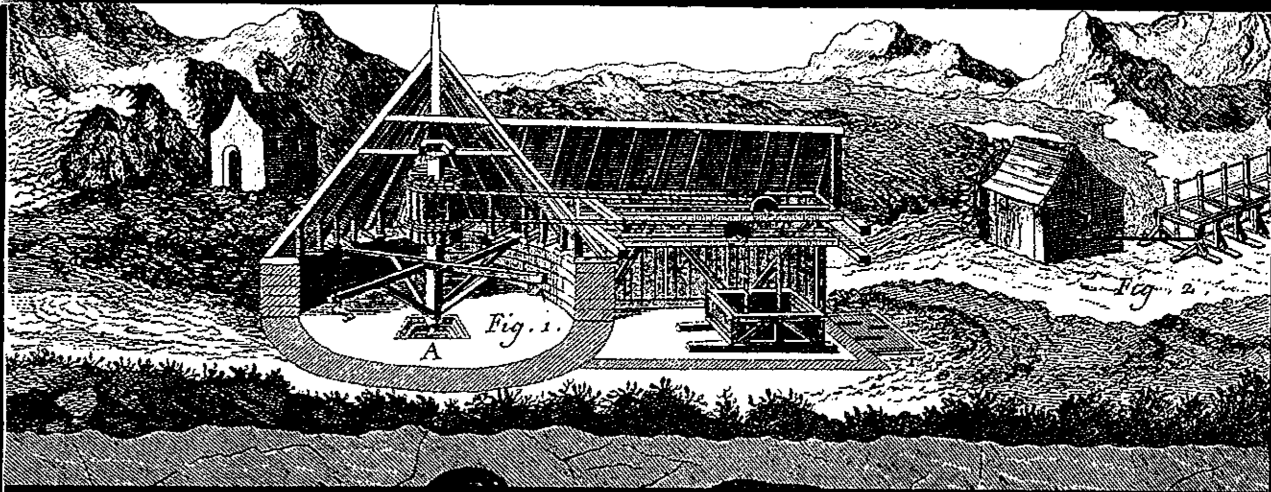

Identities, Affiliations, and Allegiances

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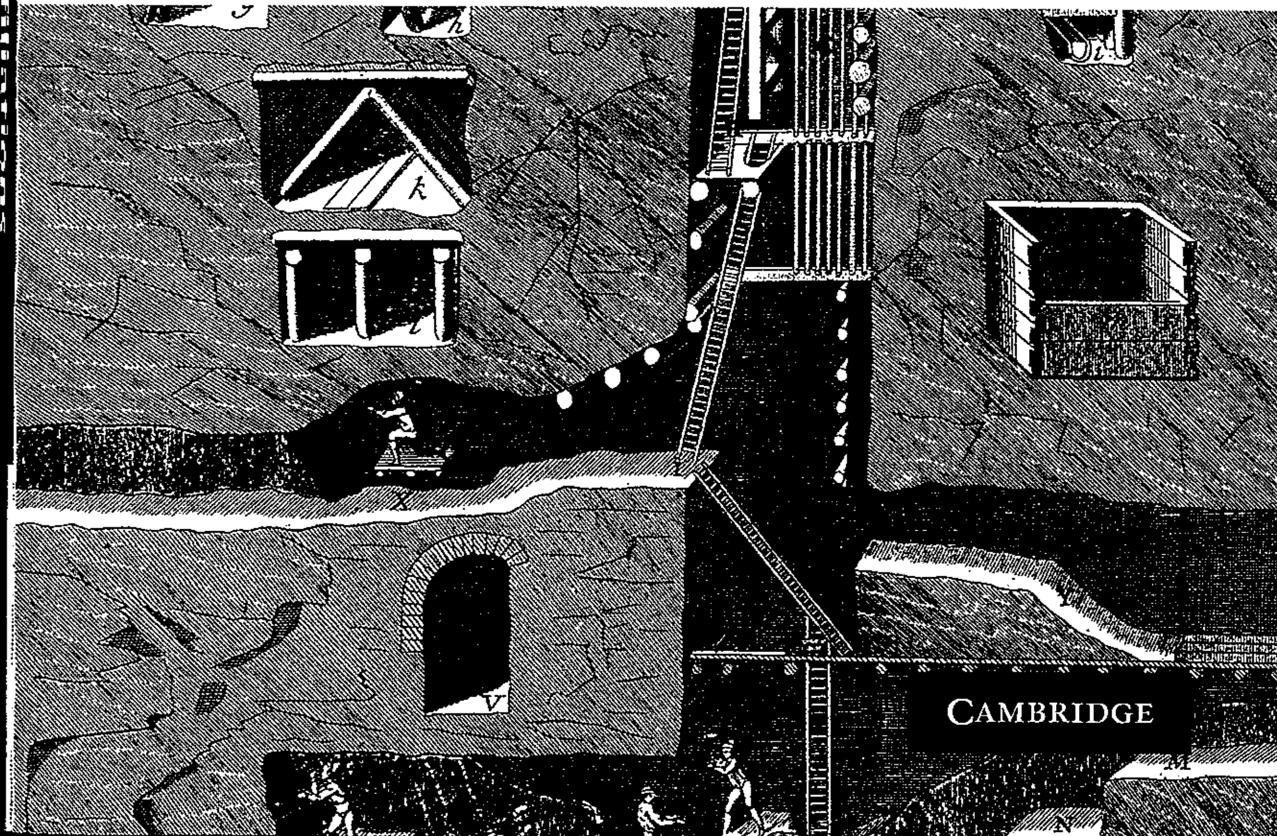

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12 Social solidarity as a problem for cosmopolitan democracy

Craig Calhoun

The idea of a melting pot was proposed as a description of the United States in the early twentieth century. An era of high immigration had brought together speakers of different languages, followers of different religions, people raised in different cultures. But, said the playwright who coined the phrase, in America all would be remade in a new common culture. Each would be free to pursue a new individual destiny.[1]

By the 1970s, some worried patriots were writing of "the rise of the unmeltable ethnics" (Novak 1973). And some happier patriots were celebrating the salad bowl instead of the melting pot, mixture without loss of distinction. In other words, America remained diverse and maintaining cultural distinctions and ethnic solidarities – rather than melting them away in the assimilationist pot – had become a positive goal.

Now, nearly a hundred years after the phrase was popularized in the Teddy Roosevelt era, the melting pot has returned as an ideal – perhaps it would be better to say a fantasy, an imaginary solution to problems people do not want to tackle in really concrete ways. It appears not only in straightforward talk of the importance of assimilation in the United States; it appears also in a new global form, in talk of cosmopolitanism, world culture, and global citizenship. It is given expression also in the image of a post-racial society, as though racial mixture and intermarriage were quickly and easily producing the solution to racism without actually ever having to confront it. In the United States this is symbolized by the golfer Tiger Woods – who claims to be simultaneously Caucasian, Black, Indian, and Asian.[2] On the one hand, mixed-race identities are important

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[1] Zangwill (1908). The phrase had much older roots. Emerson, for example, referred in 1845 to racial and cultural mixture through the metaphor of "the smelting pot"; there were still earlier anticipations in Crevecoeur.

[2] Before Tiger Woods the iconic representation of racial mixture as an attractive vision of the future was a 1993 *Time* magazine cover morphing several pictures seeming to reveal different racial identities into each other.

and should not be dismissed in favor of ethnic essentialism. On the other hand, it is a worrying illusion to think that problems of race will simply fade away because of intermarriage.

Illusion also mars the otherwise attractive global ideology of cosmopolitan democracy. Imagining a world without nationalism, a world in which ethnicity is simply a consumer taste, a world in which each individual simply and directly inhabits the whole, is like imagining the melting pot in which all immigrant ethnicities vanish into the formation of a new kind of individual. In each case this produces an ideology especially attractive to some. It neglects the reasons why many others need and reproduce ethnic or national distinctions. And, perhaps most importantly, it obscures the issues of inequality that make ethnically unmarked national identities accessible mainly to elites and make being a comfortable citizen of the world contingent on having the right passports, credit cards, and cultural credentials.

One's locating memberships may come from nuclear family, lateral kinship, longer lineage, local community, employment, religion, nation, or social movements that themselves may be local or transnational. One of these may seem a trump card against others, or conflicts between them may pose dilemmas and cause anxiety. Loyalty to all humanity may loom large, or seem pale and abstract, or never really be conceptualized. Even the cosmopolitans most eager to declare themselves rootless depend in part on belonging to larger groups – not just the human race, but the nations that supply passports, the customers of chic gyms and hotels, the expatriate aid workers in the midst of emergencies, and the participants in multinational conferences.

Everyone belongs, though some people belong to some groups with more intensity and often less choice than others belong to any. Such belonging matters not only as a subjective state of mind – not only insofar as it feels either good or bad to individuals. It matters also as a feature of social organization. It joins people together in social relations and informs their actions. Without it, the world would be a far more chaotic place. Outright coercion or more formal organizations could replace it only to a degree, with considerable added cost, and with the loss of the informal but powerful social glue that comes from the embeddedness of self in the habituated reproduction of interactive social fields. Belonging is a crucial basis for the willingness to kill and be killed in wars and civil conflicts. It is also a resource for minimizing them.

But – and this is the theme of my chapter – belonging is a problem for those who imagine a more benign and cosmopolitan global order as an extension of liberal, individualist democracy. It is a problem on the one hand because intense membership commitments and claims to group

rights can threaten individual liberties. It is a problem equally – though this is less often noted – because liberalism has so little to say about belonging and so little capacity to recognize its importance. This either distances it from the real world or makes it reliant on tacit assumptions of national citizenship. Liberal cosmopolitanism is prone to exaggerate the availability of universal citizenship not marked by ethnicity or other asymmetrically available solidarities. However, some forms of belonging may be crucial to the realization of the sorts of multilayered, multilateral polities that might allow cosmopolitanism to flourish more as democracy than as empire.

I. Pluralism

Many advocates of liberal cosmopolitanism treat nationalism, religion, and at least strong versions of ethnicity as the "bad others" to cosmopolitanism. They neglect social solidarity in favor of analyses framed in terms of individuals and the universal, and they underestimate the implications of inequality – including the inequality that empowers some to approach the world effectively as individuals, neglecting the social bases of their own efficacy, while others are all too aware of the limits of their individual capacity and are clearly in need of collective support in relation to the challenges the world throws at them.

The roots of this lie deep in the history of liberalism, including not only individualism and rationalism but the historical relationship of liberalism to the growth of the state and Enlightenment struggles against religion and tradition. While some liberals have favored only a minimalist state, political liberalism has in general been more statist. Partly for this reason, political liberals have been ambivalent about intermediate associations. They approve of mediating memberships when understood as Tocqueville's voluntary associations, but see them as conservative even in Montesquieu, let alone in Burke, where they appear less fully based on choice. Burke saw local and immediate relationships as necessary supports for broader public solidarities including both patriotism and humanism. "To be attached to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ as it were) of public affections. It is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country, and to mankind" (Burke 1790: 50). Most liberals have been wary of such positions, and even of contentions that loyalties to local communities or ethnic groups deserve positive standing rather than merely tolerance. The widespread, if often poorly joined, liberal/communitarian debates since the 1980s have not resolved this so much as reproduced the opposition between those who

think of citizenship in terms of the relationship of individuals to states and those who contend that various sorts of social groups have political claims. Recent debates about cosmopolitan global citizenship have transposed the question to the transnational scale.

The apparent abstraction of liberal citizenship has recurrently raised questions about the motivational basis for universal political participation. These questions are renewed in the context of European integration, as Habermas (1998: 117), for example, asks "whether there exists a functional equivalent for the fusion of the nation of citizens with the ethnic nation." And indeed, from Fichte forward, theories of the ethnic nation sought to account for both the moral and the motivational identification of individuals with the state. But civic liberalism and ethnic nationalism were not the only possible political positions. Various sorts of pluralist arguments have flourished in different contexts, from Gierke and Tönnies, through Proudhon and Durkheim at least on occasion, Maitland and G. D. H. Cole, to Horace Kallen and Randolph Bourne in the United States. Kallen and Bourne, in fact, opened critical analysis of the hegemony of the white, Anglo-Protestant American elite (see the discussion in Smith 1997 and Kaufmann 2001).

American debates over immigration and assimilation predate independence, often as debates about the peopling of specific colonies, and have shaped both images of America and practical policies throughout the history of the United States. The dominant American ideology – common among scholars as well as the broader population – has always suggested that the "first new nation" was precisely not an ethnic nation. Tom Paine famously held that "Europe, not England is the parent country of America." British – and indeed, specifically, English – history has loomed large in US school curricula. But both "consensus" historians (e.g. Higham 1986 [1955]) and later social scientists (e.g. Greenfeld 1992; Lipset 1996) have commonly seen nativist movements as aberrations, recurrently overcome, and the main pattern as an idealized mixture of backgrounds that transcends ethnicity. This view perhaps grasps an element of truth in its contrasts to Europe, but it has been very uncritically held. From the beginning, it failed to confront both the fundamental challenge of racial domination and the continuing hegemony of an elite constituted in part through ethnicity. Long described as WASP, this perspective has broadened, but not entirely disappeared, and continues to be reproduced in common experiences of education, religion, and culture as well as networks of social relations. Recurrently, the ideal of the post-ethnic nation has also confronted waves of nativist sentiment and political agitation. And finally, the assertion of ethnic identities and the positive valuing of difference also have a long tradition, and one that has made uncomfortable those who would see the struggle as only between assimilationists or cosmopolitans and nativists or racists. W. E. B. DuBois (1994 [1903]: 2–3) wrote famously of the double-consciousness of those for whom an ascriptive racial identity must always compete with an inclusive national identity. Yet, in *The Souls of Black Folk*, he advocated no simple choice. "One ever feels his two-ness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder." The American Negro may long "to merge his double-self into a better and truer self." But "in this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He would not Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He would not bleach his Negro soul in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American."

Various sorts of "both/and" identities are pervasive in the modern world. They are brought to the fore by international migration, by European integration, and by the claims of multiple states on common cultural traditions and identities, like China and Taiwan. Islam and Christianity are both religions that produce common identities crossing national divisions. Gender, race, and even engagement in social movements can produce "both/and" identities. Neither universalism nor essentialist nativism or nationalism deals well with these multiplicities and overlaps, and indeed it is common for universalists to imagine all claims to group solidarity on the model of nativist closure – and for nativists and nationalists to imagine all suggestions that multiple identities matter as "rootless cosmopolitan" challenges to the integral whole. Celebration of multiple identities has recently come into vogue – for example, as multiculturalism – and has produced both universalist and particularist responses. See for example Habermas' (1998: 203–38) response to Charles Taylor's (1994) "politics of recognition" and Huntington's (2004b) polemic against excessive Latin immigration to the United States.

Or consider Salman Rushdie as an example. Rushdie (1991: 394) says he writes love songs "to our mongrel selves," and even if his books are as much of India as many Westerners will know, he refuses to be simply Indian, lives in England, and travels enough to show those who would stop him in the name of religious purity that they have failed. Indeed, one might think it is hard for anyone to be "simply Indian," so deeply plural and cross-cutting are the identities of the subcontinent. Yet there are other Indians living in England whose very sense of being is bound

up with being Indian. And as Tariq Modood (2004) notes, many who immigrated from India before partition became Pakistanis without ever living in that country, and then in the dominant British politics of identity became "Asian" and then more commonly "Muslim." "Indian" now distinguishes mainly Hindu Britons. There are also angry Englishmen determined to make sure that neither Indians nor Muslims ever feel they belong unequivocally to England's green and pleasant land. Of course, there are also Indians in India for whom England is only ancient history and India itself somewhat abstract, but for whom village or caste is a central location. There are at least as many for whom a militantly Hindu account of being Indian is fundamentally compelling. And there are still other Indians for whom the Communist Party (or rather, one of them) is still vital and transcends ethnicity and nationality, and others who love mathematics partly because it seems a universal language as well as a good source of that other universal, money. And in England, when asked their national identity, those of Indian descent face the same puzzle as others: is the right answer English, British, or just possibly European?

Feeling that one belongs to something larger and more permanent than oneself is either a wonderful or a terrible thing. It is an inspiration for heroism and the composition of sublime works of music and art. It is a motivation for morality and a solace amidst suffering. Conversely, it is sometimes the source of a claustrophobic sense of being trapped or a crushing weight of responsibility. It makes some people silently quell doubts and support dangerous policies of nationalist leaders, and makes others feel an obligation to speak out. It is also the only way in which many people are able to feel that they belong in the world.

This is not true of everyone. Some of us are happy eating at Parisian cafes, basking on Bahian beaches, and attending conferences in New Haven without thinking much of national identity. Some hear Wagner without thinking of Germany or view Diego Rivera as simply a great artist not a great Mexican. But if we imagine that cosmopolitan inhabitation of the globe as a series of attractively heterogeneous sites is readily available to everyone, we deeply misunderstand the actual and very hierarchical structures of globalization.

Philosophers have long proposed both ideal social orders and ethical precepts for individual action based on the assumption that individuals could helpfully be abstracted from their concrete social contexts, at least for the purposes of theory. The motivations for such arguments have been honorable – that existing social contexts endow much that is both evil and mutable with the force and justification of apparent necessity, and that any starting point for understanding persons other than their

radical equality in essential humanness and freedom opens the door to treating people as fundamentally unequal. Such theories, grounded in the abstract universality of individual human persons, may provide insights. They are, however, fundamentally unsound as guides to the world in which human beings must take action. They lead not only to a tyranny of the abstract ought over real moral possibilities, and to deep misunderstandings of both human life and social inequality, but also to political programs that, however benign and egalitarian their intentions, tend to reproduce problematic power relations.

Among the instances of these problems is the overeager expectation that the world could happily be remade through ethical, political, sociopsychological, and cultural orientations that emphasize individual freedom and appropriations of the larger world while requiring no strong commitment to intervening solidarities. This reveals a certain blindness in cosmopolitan theory, blindness toward the sociological conditions for cosmopolitanism itself and toward the reasons why national, ethnic, and other groups remain important to most of the world's people. Cosmopolitanism – however attractive in some ways – is compromised by its formulation in liberal individualist terms that block appreciation of the importance of social solidarity. Nussbaum, for example, discerns two opposing traditions in thinking about political community and the good citizen. "One is based upon the emotions; the other urges their removal" (2001: 367). While each in its own way pursues freedom and equality, the first relies too much on compassion for her taste. "The former aims at equal support for basic needs and hopes through this to promote equal opportunities for free choice and self-realization; the other starts from the fact of internal freedom – a fact that no misfortune can remove – and finds in this fact a source of political equality." But surely this is a false opposition. Instead of adjudicating between the two sides in this debate, perhaps we should ask how to escape from it.

II. The social bases of cosmopolitanism

"To belong or not to belong," asks Ulrich Beck, "that is the cosmopolitan question" (2003: 45). Indeed perhaps it is, but if so, one of the most crucial things it reveals about cosmopolitanism is that some people are empowered to ask the question with much more freedom and confidence than others. Another is the extent to which cosmopolitanism is conceptualized as the absence of particularism rather than as a positive form of belonging.

Oddly, Beck asks the question in a chapter devoted to "the analysis of global inequality." His agenda is to focus our attention on the "big inequalities" between rich and poor nations. These, he suggests, dwarf inequalities within nations. There is much to this, though it oversimplifies empirical patterns of inequality. Beck is certainly right that "It is surprising how the big inequalities which are suffered by humanity can be continuously legitimized through a silent complicity between the state authority and the state-obsessed social sciences by means of a form of organized non-perception" (2003: 50). But what he does not consider is the extent to which participation in a superficially multinational cosmopolitan elite is basic to the reproduction of that nonperception. The elites of "poor" countries who participate in global civil society, multilateral agencies, and transnational business corporations not only make money their compatriots can barely imagine but make possible the cosmopolitan illusion held by elites from rich countries. This is the illusion that their relationships with fellow cosmopolitans truly transcend nation and culture and place. Cosmopolitan elites too often misrecognize transnational class formation as the escape from belonging.

Elsewhere, I have analyzed the "class consciousness of frequent travelers" that underwrites this misrecognition (Calhoun 2003a). I mean to call attention not just to the elite occupational status of those who form the archetypal image of the cosmopolitans, but to the grounding certain material privileges give to the intellectual position. "Good" passports and easy access to visas, international credit cards and membership in airline clubs, invitations from conference organizers and organizational contacts all facilitate a kind of inhabitation (if not necessarily citizenship) of the world as an apparent whole. To be sure, diasporas provide for other circuits of international connectivity, drawing on ethnic and kin connections rather than the more bureaucratically formalized ones of businesspeople, academics, and aid workers. But though these are real, they face significantly different contextual pressures.

Post-9/11 restrictions on visas – let alone immigration – reveal the differences between those bearing European and American passports and most others in the world. The former hardly notice the change and move nearly as freely as before. The latter find their international mobility sharply impeded and sometimes blocked. Or else they find it to be forced – as for example thousands who have made lives and put down roots in America are deported each year, sometimes, especially for children born in the United States, to "homes" they barely know or even have never inhabited. European intellectuals like Giorgio Agamben might cancel lecture engagements to protest the exercise of "biopower" by a US administration eager to print, scan, and type any visitor. But

his cosmopolitan challenge to a regrettable national regime – however legitimate – is altogether different from the unchosen circumstances of those who migrated to make a better life, did so, and had it snatched from them.[3]

The global border-control regime thus encourages a sense of natural cosmopolitanism for some and reminds others of their nationality (and often of religion and ethnicity as well). However cosmopolitan their initial intentions or self-understandings, these Asians, Africans, and Latin Americans are reminded by the ascriptions and restrictions with which they are confronted that at least certain sorts of cosmopolitanism are not for them. Normative cosmopolitans can (and do) assert that this is not the way the world should be, and that borders should be more open. But they need also to take care not to deny the legitimacy of any anti-cosmopolitan responses people may have to this regime of borders, including not just resentment but renewed identification with nations and even projects of national development that hold out the prospect of enabling them to join the ranks of those with good passports.

The point is not simply privilege. It is that a sense of connection to the world as a whole, and of being a competent actor on the scale of "global citizenship," is not merely a matter of the absence of more local ties. It has its own material and social conditions. Moreover, the cosmopolitan elites are hardly culture-free; they do not simply reflect the rational obligations of humanity in the abstract (even if their theories try to).

To some extent, the cosmopolitan elite culture is a product of Western dominance and the kinds of intellectual orientations it has produced. It reflects "modernity," which has its own historical provenance. "This revenant late liberalism reveals, in a more exaggerated form, a struggle at the heart of liberal theory, where a genuine desire for equality as a universal norm is tethered to a tenacious ethnocentric provincialism in matters of cultural judgment and recognition" (Pollock *et al.* 2000: 581). But the cultural particularity is not simply inheritance, and not simply a reflection of (mainly) Western modernity. It is also constructed out of the concrete conditions of cosmopolitan mobility, education, and participation in certain versions of news and other media flows. It is the culture of those who attend Harvard and the LSE, who read the *Economist* and *Le Monde*, who recognize Mozart's music as universal, and who can discuss the relative merits of Australian, French, and Chilean wines. It is also a

[3] Clifford (1992) and Brennan (1997: 16–17) both rightly raise the problems posed by using the metaphor of "travel" to think about migrant labor and displacement, a habit that has hardly disappeared, rooted perhaps in the situation of intellectuals but disturbingly inapt for many others.

culture in which secularism seems natural and religion odd, and in which respect for human rights is assumed but the notion of fundamental economic redistribution is radical and controversial. This culture has many good qualities, as well as blind spots, but nonetheless it is culture and not its absence.

Martha Nussbaum and some other "extreme" cosmopolitans present cosmopolitanism first and foremost as a kind of virtuous deracination, a liberation from the possibly illegitimate and in any case blinkering attachments of locality, ethnicity, religion, and nationality.[4] But like secularism, cosmopolitanism is a presence not an absence, an occupation of particular positions in the world, not a view from nowhere or everywhere. All actually existing cosmopolitanisms, to be more precise, reflect influences of social location and cultural tradition. The ways in which any one such location or tradition opens to understanding or valuing of others are specific and never exhaust all the possible ways. Secularism is again instructive. The parameters of specific religious traditions shape the contours of what is considered not religious, or not the domain of specific religions. The not-specifically-religious, thus, is never a simple embodiment of neutrality. What is "secular" in relation to multiple Christian denominations may not be exactly equivalent to what is secular in the context of Hindu or Muslim traditions (let alone of their intermingling and competition). So too, cosmopolitan transcendence of localism and parochialism is not well understood as simple neutrality towards or tolerance of all particularisms. It is participation in a particular, if potentially broad, process of cultural production and social interconnection that spans boundaries.

To say that the cosmopolitanism of most theories reflects the experience of business, academic, government, and civil society elites, thus, is not merely to point to some reasons why others may not so readily share it but also to suggest sources of its particular character. It is neither a freedom from culture nor a matter of pure individual choice, but a cultural position constructed on particular social bases and a choice made possible by both that culture and those bases. It is accordingly different from the transcendence of localism on other cultural and social bases. Cosmopolitanism thus has particular rather than solely universal content, and its advocates sometimes fail to recognize this. Moreover, the content and the misrecognition are connected to social bases of relative privilege.

Much thinking about ethnicity and the legitimacy of local or other particularistic attachments by self-declared cosmopolitans reflects their tacit

[4] See Scheffler (2001) on the notion of "extreme" cosmopolitanism; and Calhoun (2003b) for a discussion of different varieties of cosmopolitanism.

presumption of their own more or less elite position. I do not mean simply that they act to benefit themselves, or in other ways from bad motives. Rather, I mean that their construction of genuine benevolence is prejudiced against ethnic and other attachments because of the primacy of the perspective of elites. Any prejudice by elites in favor of others in their own ethnic groups or communities would amount to favoring the already privileged (a very anti-Rawlsian position). So the cosmopolitans are keen to rule out such self-benefiting particularism. But ethnic solidarity is not always a matter of the powerful's exclusion of others; it is often a resource for effective collective action and mutual support among the less powerful. While it is true, in other words, that in-group solidarity by those in positions of power and influence usually amounts to discrimination against less powerful or less privileged others, it is also true that solidarity serves to strengthen the weak. Indeed, those who are excluded from or allowed only weak access to dominant structures of power and discourse have especially great need to band together in order to be effective. Of course, elites also band together to protect privilege (and as Weber 1978 [1922] emphasized, exclusivity is a prominent elite weapon against the inclusive strategies of mass activists). And elites manipulate solidarities to pursue their own advantages rather than considering equally the interests of all. Nonetheless, elites are typically empowered as individuals in ways that nonelites are not.

In short, when cosmopolitan appeals to humanity as a whole are presented in individualistic terms, they are apt to privilege those with the most capacity to get what they want by individual action. However well intentioned, they typically devalue the ways in which other people depend on ethnic, national, and communal solidarities – among others – to solve practical problems in their lives. And they typically neglect the extent to which asserting that cultural difference should be valued only as a matter of individual taste undermines any attempt to redistribute benefits in the social order across culturally defined groups. They can extol multiculturalism, in other words, so long as this is defined as a harmonious arrangement in which all cultures are seen as attractive parts of a mosaic, but not when members of one cultural group organize to demand that the mosaic be altered.[5]

[5] See Okamura's (1998) analysis of Hawaii's myth of a multicultural paradise. Whatever reality this may reflect, it also enshrines an existing distribution of power and resources. It not only encourages the idea that individuals from each cultural group should be treated equally (as against, say, affirmative action); it especially inhibits self-organization by members of any group traditionally on the losing end – say, native Hawaiians – to alter the terms of the distributive game. Such organization can only appear as hostile to the idealized multicultural harmony.

III. Liberalism and belonging[6]

As a theme in liberal political theory, cosmopolitanism responds crucially to the focus of traditional liberalism on the relationship of individual persons to individual states (and sometimes to markets). Ideas of citizenship and rights reflect the attempt to construct the proper relationship between liberal subjects and sovereign states. The cosmopolitan theorists of the 1990s recognized both problems in how this constituted international relations as relations among such states, neglecting the many other ways in which individuals participated in transnational or indeed nonnational trans-state activities, and the difficulty of accounting for why specific populations of individuals belonged in specific states.[7]

Earlier liberals had often relied at least tacitly on the idea of the "nation" to give an account of why particular people belong together as the "people" of a particular state. So long as the fiction of a perfect match between nations and states was plausible, this was relatively unproblematic, though it meant that liberal theory was sociologically impoverished. To their credit, the various theorists of a new cosmopolitan liberalism recognized that it was no longer tenable to rely so uncritically on the idea of the nation.

The prioritization of the individual society came to seem increasingly untenable. It began to seem fundamental and not contingent that markets and other social relations extend across nation-state borders, that migration and cultural flows challenge nationalist notions of the integral character of cultures and political communities, that states are not able to organize or control many of the main influences on the lives of their citizens, and that the most salient inequalities are intersocietally global and thus not addressed by intrasocietal measures. Accordingly, an important project for liberals was to work out how to extend their theories of justice and political legitimacy to a global scale.

A cosmopolitan attitude appeared both as a timeless good and as a specific response to current historical circumstances. The extension of markets, media, and migration has, advocates of a new cosmopolitan liberalism argue, reduced both the efficacy of states and the adequacy of moral and political analysis that approaches one "society" at a time. At the same time, "identity politics" and multiculturalism have in the eyes

[6] The arguments taken up in this section are made at more length in Calhoun (2002, 2003b).

[7] Held (1995) is among the most important of cosmopolitan theorists, and among those most attentive to issues of membership in a variety of overlapping associations. For anthologies that sample the debate, see Archibugi and Held (1995); Cheah and Robbins (1998); Archibugi, Held, and Köhler (1999); Archibugi (2003); and Vertovec and Cohen (2003).

of many liberals been excessive and become sources of domestic divisions and illiberal appeals to special rights for different groups. Accordingly, cosmopolitan theorists argue that the "first principles" of ethical obligation and political community should stress the allegiance of each to all on the scale of humanity.

The new cosmopolitan liberals retain, however, one of the weaknesses of older forms of liberalism. They offer no strong account of social solidarity or of the role of culture in constituting human life. For the most part, they start theorizing from putatively autonomous, discrete, and cultureless individuals. We can see domestic versions of this in the widespread reduction of "identity" issues to more or less conventional analyses of interest groups, but also even in attempts to take "identity" more seriously. Amy Gutmann (2003: 13) writes:

> Whereas, the defining feature of an identity group is the mutual identification of individuals with one another around shared social markers, the defining feature of an interest group is the coalescing of individuals around a shared instrumental goal that preceded the group's formation.[8]

Gutmann tries to steer a middle ground between communitarians (who she thinks too often give identity groups – or cultural phenomena generally – unjustified priority over individuals) and more orthodox liberal political scientists (who she thinks neglect identity groups, reduce them to interest groups, or fail to recognize that individuals have rights to cultural expression). She makes many salutary points, but her attempt to distinguish identity groups from interest groups shares a curious feature with many liberal arguments: she isn't much interested in what makes a group a group. Her distinction, thus, obscures much that is important to understanding the ways in which popular mobilizations, group affiliations, and solidaristic politics work. It implies that interest groups somehow arise out of "objective" interests that are not themselves derived in part from cultural processes – and efforts at political persuasion – that lead people to understand who they are and what their interests are in certain ways and not others. Conversely, though Gutmann acknowledges communitarian arguments that individual identity is partly a product of group membership, she emphasizes those occasions when individuals are in a position to choose identity-group affiliations. Her conceptualization collapses into "identity" a variety of different sorts of group solidarity, allegiance, and affiliation. Perhaps most surprisingly, Gutmann treats "identity groups"

[8] Though Gutmann does not note it, this draws central terms from Weber's (1978 [1922]) distinction of status from class, itself shaped by pluralist responses to nineteenth-century liberalism.

almost entirely in terms of formal organizations created to take collective action on behalf of those sharing certain "identities."

Analysts whose engagements are more empirical have in recent years seen a variety of problems with loose reference to identities and to groups. Reacting against such conceptual sloppiness, and also against what they see as excesses of identity politics, Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper (2000) have compellingly criticized both overly fixed (and often simplistic) claims for "identity" and thoroughgoing constructivisms that essentially dissolve into relativism.[9] They propose various other terms – like "identifications" and "self-understandings" – for getting at the relations of individuals to either collectivities or at least ideas about collectivities. Brubaker and Cooper recognize that relations with others may be constitutive for individuals, and are mainly concerned to argue that we should analyze fields of relationships, not statically conceived group or individual identities. Nonetheless, their argument (like Brubaker 2002) focuses mainly on problems in the ways in which groups are made objects of analytic attention, not on similar problems with attention to individuals. It coincides with other less subtle arguments, encouraging deconstruction of groups even by those who do not replace these, as Brubaker and Cooper would prefer, with relational analyses of "groupness."

The desire to avoid both the relativist extreme of social constructionism and the essentialist extreme of "groupism" (assuming the unproblematic fixity and reality of groups) is commendable.[10] But the middle ground is tricky, not least because pervasive individualism will make many leap to the conclusion that individuals exist in some unproblematic sense, more real than or prior to groups, social relations, or processes of culturally mediated social construction. As Jeremy Bentham (1882 [1789]: 13) famously wrote, "the community is a fictitious body composed of the individual persons who are considered as constituting as it were its members. The interest of the community then is, what? – the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it." And from Bentham, of

[9] Brubaker (2002) has separately presented an argument for treating groupness as variable, and as more often a project than a fixed reality – notably in regard to ethnic groups and conflicts. I am in sympathy with this approach, but it need not be based on an ontological priority of individual persons and on emphasis only on their identifications. Groups – or, following Nadel (1951: chapter 7), "groupings" – are sometimes forcibly created. They may also be fluid without being strictly optional.

[10] Brubaker analyzes "groupism" mainly as a sort of social science mistake, a confusion rather than an intentional argument. It also has roots, however, in the more carefully considered positions of nineteenth-century pluralists (many arguing from legal history) and of some of their successors in fields like social anthropology. See among the former von Gierke (1934) on the real personality of groups, and among the latter M. G. Smith (1974, including the classic essay on segmentary lineage systems).

course, it is only a short step to Margaret Thatcher's famous assertion that "there is no such thing as 'society'" (which she backed up by attacking a great many social institutions).[11] Brubaker and Cooper do not propose to limit analysis to self-subsistent and asocial individuals, but it needs to be made clear that individualism is almost as problematic as groupism. Before abandoning the idea of the group, we should ask why claims to groups are especially important for some, how much difference it makes that some are ascriptively assigned to groups, and what institutional processes drive the reproduction of apparent groups. We need better ways to talk about solidarities and belonging – about the issues raised by reference to identities and groups – than the usual language provides us. And we should recognize that our vocabularies are constitutive features of the social imaginary; they shape the world, not merely refer to it (cf. Taylor 2004).

An important part of Brubaker and Cooper's agenda is to advance thinking in terms of social relationships rather than statically existing groups. They seek to show, rightly, how variable groupness ebbs and flows as an effect of shifting relations. But it is not only material relations that are at issue but also patterns of cultural creativity and reproduction. We need to address temporal processes in which forms of connection among people, ways of life, and ideas about those connections and ways of life are embedded not only in discourse and "objective" structures, but in agents' own capacities to improvise the actions of their lives. As Pierre Bourdieu suggests, habitus is inculcated through experience and shapes a trajectory through social space – we cannot understand group membership as always simply, consciously chosen, and if it is produced in part by larger webs of social relations and distributions of opportunities, it is enabling as much as constraining.[12] Rather than providing a

[11] I am sympathetic to the notion that community, for example, should be analyzed as a structure of relationships rather than being hypostatized as a group (see Calhoun 1980). However, this does not mean that there are not collectivities that have a high level of communally organized "groupness." Just in case one thinks evoking Thatcher unfair, there are plenty of libertarians (and others) prepared to claim her position on this point; see, e.g. Meek (1998). And it should be acknowledged that poststructuralists have made impressively similar claims. Thatcher's statement was originally quoted in an interview with *Women's Own* magazine (3 October 1987: 8–10).

[12] The theme is taken up in a range of Bourdieu's writings; there is a relatively clear introductory discussion in Bourdieu (1998/2001). Seyla Benhabib (2002: 4–5) is surely right that our thinking about how "injustices among groups should be redressed and how we think human diversity and pluralism should be furthered . . . is hobbled by our adherence to a reductionist sociology of culture." Her emphasis on a "narrative view of actions and cultures" is also welcome. But, without connection to a stronger account of social relations and of struggles in fields of such social relations that are organized by power as well as diversity, it remains at best incomplete.

full-fledged theory or even vocabulary for analyzing them, I shall confine myself to suggesting the importance of not losing sight of the reality and importance of substantive solidarities – groups and identities in familiar if inadequate terms – in considering political arrangements designed to offer new combinations of incorporation and differentiation and to make a world of heterogeneous values, understandings, inequalities, and power structures both more peaceful and more just. In other words, social solidarities are a problem for liberal cosmopolitan theory, as it is usually now conceived, but a necessity for an effective cosmopolitan global order.

Reliance on the assumption that nations were naturally given prepolitical bases for states had helped older liberals to paper over the difficulty of explaining why the individuals of their theories belonged in particular states (or conversely, could rightly be excluded from them). The new cosmopolitanism is generally anti-nationalist, seeing nations as part of the fading order of political life divided on lines of states. Its advocates rightly refuse to rely on this tacit nationalism. But as they offer no new account of solidarity save the obligations of each human being to all others, they give little weight to "belonging," to the notion that social relationships may be as basic as individuals, or that individuals exist only in cultural milieux – even if usually in several at the same time.

Indeed, much of the new liberal cosmopolitan thought proceeds as though belonging is a matter of social constraints from which individuals ideally ought to escape, or of temptations to favoritism they ought to resist. Claims of special loyalty or responsibility to nations, communities, or ethnic groups, thus, are subordinated or fall under suspicion of illegitimacy. To claim that one's self-definition, even one's specific version of loyalty to humanity, comes through membership and some such more particular solidarity is, in Martha Nussbaum's (1996: 5) words, a "morally questionable move of self-definition by a morally irrelevant characteristic."

IV. Conclusion

It is impossible not to belong to social groups, social relations, or culture. The idea of individuals abstract enough to be able to choose all their "identifications" is deeply misleading. Versions of this idea are, however, widespread in liberal cosmopolitanism. They reflect the attractive illusion of escaping from social determinations into a realm of greater freedom, and from cultural particularity into greater universalism. But they are remarkably unrealistic, and so abstract as to provide little purchase on what the next steps of actual social action might be for real people who are necessarily situated in particular webs of belonging, with access to

particular others but not to humanity in general. Treating ethnicity as *essentially* (rather than partially) a choice of identifications, they neglect the omnipresence of ascription and discrimination as determinations of social identities. They neglect the huge inequalities in the supports available to individuals to enter cosmopolitan intercourse as individuals (and also the ways in which certain socially distributed supports like wealth, education, and command of the English language are understood as personal achievements or attributes). And they neglect the extent to which people are implicated in social actions that they are not entirely free to choose (as, for example, I remain an American and share responsibility for the invasion of Iraq despite my opposition to it and distaste for the current US administration). Whether blame or benefit follows from such implications, they are not altogether optional.

Efforts to transcend the limits of belonging to specific webs of relationships do not involve freedom from social determinations, but transformations of social organization and relationships. Sometimes transcendence of particular solidarities involves no neat larger whole but a patchwork quilt of new connections, like those mediated historically by trading cities and still today by diasporas. But transcending local solidarities has also been paradigmatically how the growth of nationalism has proceeded, sometimes complementing but often transforming or marginalizing more local or sectional solidarities (village, province, caste, class, or tribe). Nations usually work by presenting more encompassing identities into which various sectional ones can fit. And in this it is crucial to recognize that nations have much the same relationship to pan-national or global governance projects that localities and minorities had to the growth of national states.[13]

Will Kymlicka (2001c: 38) has argued that it is important "to view minority rights, not as a deviation from ethnocultural neutrality, but as a response to majority nation-building." In the same sense, I have suggested that it is a mistake to treat nationalism and other forms of group

[13] Scale is of course significant as a continuous variable; to say something like "at the scale of the nation-state" accordingly masks enormous diversity in the actual scale – territory, population, wealth, state capacity – of nation-states (never mind the contentious question of how states are related to nations). Part of what is meant in such statements is not, I think, precisely scale but corporate organization. And of course states are not the only corporations. It is also possible that what is meant by "scale" is sovereignty, though this is not precisely a scalar concept, though it is arguably much more quantitatively variable than the usual accounts of its categorical perfection suggest (indeed, Krasner 1999 suggests that it is virtually a myth, if a powerful one). Another categorical distinction is really a matter of scale – the limits of the organization of social life through face-to-face arrangements. These limits occasion the rise of forms of written, printed or electronic, communication, new forms of relationships among strangers, and nonlinguistic steering media.

solidarity as a deviation from cosmopolitan neutrality. In the first place, cosmopolitanism is not neutral – though cosmopolitans can try to make both global institutions and global discourse more open and more fair. In the second place, national projects respond to global projects. They are not mere inheritances from the past, but ways – certainly very often problematic ways – of taking hold of current predicaments.

The analogy between nations faced with globalization and minorities within nation-states – both immigrants and so-called national minorities – is strong. And we can learn from Kymlicka's (2001c: 162) injunction: "Fairness therefore requires an ongoing, systematic exploration of our common institutions to see whether their rules, structures and symbols disadvantage immigrants." Cosmopolitanism at its best is a fight for just such fairness in the continued development of global institutions. But the analogy is not perfect, and is not perfect precisely because most immigrants (and national minorities) make only modest claims to sovereignty. Strong Westphalian doctrines of sovereignty may always have been problematic and may now be out of date. But just as it would be hasty to imagine that we are embarking on a postnational era – when all the empirical indicators are that nationalism is resurgent precisely because of asymmetrical globalization – so it would be hasty to forget the strong claims to collective autonomy and self-determination of those who have been denied both, and the need for solidarity among those who are least empowered to realize their projects as individuals. Solidarity need not always be national, and need not always develop from traditional roots. But for many of those treated most unfairly in the world, nations and traditions are potentially important resources.

13 The continuing significance of ethnocultural identity

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Centrifugal and centripetal forces are simultaneously straining contemporary states. On the one hand, social, political, and economic forces of globalization are giving rise to novel forms of interdependence and overlapping spheres of influence and jurisdictional authority. On the other, local and regional collectivities are making demands for state resources, cultural rights, and the devolution of governing power. Some authors have questioned the normative legitimacy of one of the major political developments challenging contemporary states – namely, the granting of group-specific rights to ethnocultural minorities. In this chapter I examine critically some of the arguments that have been presented against ethnocultural group rights. I contend that ethnocultural group rights, and the conceptions of identity on which they partly depend, will and should continue to be of significance for theories of governance in the global era. My primary argument is that these rights rectify historical and existing injustices that any adequate emerging theory of governance must address. We should not replicate the mistakes of traditional theories of political organization, which neglected the special circumstances and needs of ethnocultural minorities. Moreover, ethnocultural group rights and ethnocultural identity have implications for the way we should conceptualize certain concepts, such as those of political membership and self-determination, which are key components of theories of governance.

In the first section of the chapter I discuss the nature and variety of ethnocultural group rights and the role that ethnocultural identity plays in their normative justification. I then consider and respond to some prominent objections that have been made by Martha Nussbaum against ethnocultural group rights. In the final section of the chapter, I discuss some of the general implications of ethnocultural group rights and ethnocultural identity for theories of governance.