

Cosmopolitanism Reconsidered

@Seyla Benhabib*

Eugene Meyer Professor of Political Science and Philosophy, Emerita, Yale University

Senior Research Fellow, Columbia Law School

I was recently invited to join writing for *the Oxford Handbook of Cosmopolitanism* edited by Dipesh Chakrabarty and other colleagues. What struck me was not just the interdisciplinary character of this future collection, but the branching out to other cultures and continents and to areas beyond sociology and mass culture for example. Cosmopolitanism has been a topic in my work for the last three decades but in contrast to this more welcoming and positive attitude toward cosmopolitanism which Chakrabarty and his colleagues adopt, the last decades have been characterized by a disillusionment with cosmopolitanism – and above all, by the rhetorical attacks of populist thinkers against cosmopolitanism.

Before proceeding let me say that for me cosmopolitanism has three distinct dimensions. 1. First it is a moral position that espouses the equal dignity and worth of human beings across borders and nations and communities; 2. It is a meta-theoretical position which sees cultures as interacting with one another throughout

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human history and borrowing and learning from one another- a topic most aptly written about by Anthony Appiah in his various works; 3. It has a legal dimension in that it defends that each human being ought to be treated as a person entitled to certain universal rights. Cosmopolitans consider that human beings are entitled to basic rights- increasingly codified in the various human rights treaties since WWII- as human beings and not because they are citizens of bounded communities. Each of these premises requires independent clarification and discussion for sure but in this lecture, I want to situate cosmopolitanism as it has gotten caught in the cross-fire of contemporary currents in culture, politics and the law. I want to identify and argue against a drift toward liberal nationalism among major thinkers; I also want to defend a certain Kantian cosmopolitanism against post-colonial and post-modern criticisms. There is much to be learned from both positions so my goal is not to polemicize but to stage a contentious dialogue among major currents of our times.

THE CHANGING FORTUNES OF COSMOPOLITANISM

The intense interest in cosmopolitanism in the social and political sciences, cultural and legal studies dates back to the last two decades of the 20th century. With the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the unification of Germany, and the extension of European Union to east and central European Countries, formerly under Communist rule, the Kantian cosmopolitan ideal (Kant 1795 and 2006) of

uniting diverse countries under the rule of law, respect for human rights and a free market economy seemed to come alive (See Held 1994 and 2010; Archibugi, Held and Köhler 1998; Pogge 1992; Habermas 2001 and 2006; Beck 2007; Kleingeld 1998; 2012 and 2019 [2002]; Delanty 2009).

During the same period, thinkers who looked upon the Eurocentrism of this cosmopolitan revival with some skepticism defended an alternative they named “cosmopolitics.” (Cheah and Robbins 1998; Apter 2018). As Peng Cheah observed: “... studies of various global phenomena such as transcultural encounters, mass migration and population transfers between East and West, First and Third Worlds, North and South, the rise of global financial and business networks, the formation of transnational advocacy networks, and the proliferation of transnational human rights instruments,” seemed to embody a different form of “non-ethnocentric cosmopolitanism,” (Cheah 2006: 18) which could be better described by *cosmopolitics*. (Cf. Benhabib 2011: 1-19)

Yet the upshot of these transcultural encounters, mass migrations, diasporas, colonization and decolonization, all being sucked now into the financial and communicational vortex created by globalization, resulted neither in perpetual peace, as Kant would have wished, nor in “non-ethnocentric cosmopolitanism,” as Cheah and other cultural critics hoped for (Cheah 2006:18). Rather, the conflict between religions, cultures, and public institutions arising from these encounters

became most visible with the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the subsequent global rise of Islamicist movements. Focusing on struggles around the meaning of secularism, the wearing of the hijab by Muslim girls, multicultural demands, and Europe's refugee crisis, Étienne Balibar observes that, "Contemporary cosmopolitics is a particularly ambiguous form of politics; it consists exclusively of conflicts between universalities without ready-made solutions." (Balibar 2018:22)

By the beginning of the new century, cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitics had fallen on hard times. As the optimism about the spread of international human rights law waned in the wake of the endless "wars against terror" and "humanitarian interventions;" as the many crises of the European Union led to disillusionment with the European project (Habermas 2009), and democratization in eastern and central Europe stalled, giving rise to "illiberal democracies," the exit of United Kingdom from the European Union in January 2020 put the nail in the coffin of cosmopolitan dreams. A slow and persistent rise of authoritarianism, not only in Hungary and Poland, but also in Turkey, Brazil, India and the United States began to unfold.

For authoritarian populist movements, cosmopolitanism became the arch-enemy. In their eyes, cosmopolitan elites allied themselves with the defense of international law, global human rights, and refugee NGO's. (Benhabib 2023) They

disregarded their nations' histories and the injustices they suffered, pleading instead for open or at least porous borders (Carens 1987); they became indifferent to the sullyng of national cultures by alien values and mores, celebrating the creolization, multiplication and fragmentation of national cultures.

The COVID-19 pandemic made populist fears even more vivid: a virus without borders threatened life and health, economics and well-being. As vaccine nationalism spread and nations began to put up walls and draw up their bridges, a pandemic that required a global and truly cosmopolitan and cosmopolitical response, only resulted in the half-hearted attempts by governments to grant and subsidize the efforts of pharma-giants such as Pfizer, Merck, Johnson and Johnson. Suddenly in 2020, our world seemed to have shrunk because the virus was everywhere; at the same time, we were all quarantined in our private spaces. Media giants such as Google, Facebook, Amazon, Instagram and Twitter dominated communication and information, while real public squares were emptied out. Instead of global solidarity we regressed back to national isolationism and selfishness.

Major thinkers who had defended cosmopolitanism at one point now bid farewell to it. Étienne Balibar believes that contemporary cosmopolitics does not “prefigure the realization of a philosophical cosmopolitanism,” but neither does it purely and simply do away with the possibility of “taking it as a point of

reference...” (Balibar 2018, 22) Emily Apter, following Balibar, summarizes these misgivings as follows: “The cultural model of cosmopolitanism was...equally obsolete, resting as it did on ... a detachment theory of the subject divested of the primordial claims of ontological nationalism, as well as on a *pre-comprehended notion of the human* and the cultivation of the old humanisms within the disciplinary humanities.” (Apter 2018. My emphasis)

Whereas in the French context, to which both Balibar and Apter are indebted, the critique of cosmopolitan humanism owed much to the work of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, Martha Nussbaum, one of the early defenders of cosmopolitanism in the English-speaking world, in her recent work named the cosmopolitan tradition “a noble but flawed ideal.” I would like to consider Nussbaum’s argument at some length.

In *The Cosmopolitan Tradition. A Noble but Flawed Ideal*, Nussbaum begins with a masterful reconstruction of the philosophical ethics of cosmopolitanism among both the Stoics and the Cynics and in both the Roman and Greek traditions. She observes that, “Taken by itself, this vision need not involve politics: it is a moral ideal. In the thought of many of the tradition’s exemplars, however, the idea of equal human dignity does ground a distinctive set of obligations for international and national politics. The idea of respect for humanity has been at the root of much of the international human rights movement, and it has played a

formative role in many national legal and constitutional traditions.” (Nusbaum, 2019:.3)

Nusbaum then traces the evolution of cosmopolitan ideas from Cicero to Grotius and to Adam Smith, assuming that there is not much that is distinctive in Kantian cosmopolitanism from these other positions. But my disagreement is not with her historical reconstruction of cosmopolitan ideals. Rather, it is with the emphasis on the place of the nation and, in particular, her dismissiveness toward international law. I see an evolution in Nussbaum’s position from cosmopolitanism to patriotism and to a defense of what she calls a “global political liberalism” (Nussbaum, 2019, 209) but which, I think, should properly be called “liberal nationalism.”

According to Nussbaum, “national sovereignty” is being eroded in the contemporary world (Nussbaum 2019: 207); it is even being “leached away” (Nussbaum 2019: 218) by multinational private institutions but also by NGO’s, and “in favor of an international realm that is not decently accountable to people in each nation through their own political choices and self-given laws.” (Nussbaum 2019: 219) For Nussbaum, “nations are vehicles for human autonomy and the accountability of law to people.” (Nussbaum 2019: 140; 218; 236)

I will characterize *Liberal nationalism* as the claim that without well-protected borders there can be no democratic self-governance. There must be a centralized agent of some kind that takes responsibility for protecting a country's natural and material assets, and that ensures continuity of its public culture and democratic values. Immigration and transnational movements across borders are permitted, but the regulation of their quantity and quality remain sovereign privileges. Countries may admit more or less numbers of refugees and respect the claims of asylum seekers; they have the right to regulate access to their labor markets and to turn away certain strangers. Furthermore, the rights of strangers who are admitted to such societies are regulated through the sovereign determination of legislatures. Although liberal nationalists consider it desirable that their legislatures should act in accordance with international law, what counts in the first place, is "our" law, "our" precedents, and "our" values. The liberal nationalist position has a formidable array of adherents, among others: John Rawls, Michael Walzer, Thomas Nagel and David Miller, and I would say Martha Nussbaum belongs in this group although she thinks her position is a "materialist global political liberalism based on the idea of human capability and functioning." (Nussbaum 2019:209)

The weakness of the liberal nationalist position is that it neglects international law constraints on the sovereignty of the demos by constructing state

sovereignty as if it were solely defined by the self-assertion of the demos. Under conditions of economic, technological and epidemiological pressure, the two halves of liberal nationalism often come apart and liberalism is readily sacrificed to nationalism. We see this very clearly in the rise of contemporary populist movements throughout liberal democracies who consider migrant and refugee rights to be secondary, and in many cases, damaging, to national interests and self-assertion.

Thus Martha Nussbaum stipulates that while nations have a right to defend both their security and their national political culture, they ought not to give the “the nod to any preferred religion or ethnicity.” (Nussbaum 2019: 231) People should not be denied entry “for reasons of ethnicity or religion.” Yet clearly, this condition comes into conflict with the desire of nations “to hold immigration ... low in order to preserve national homogeneity...” (Nussbaum 2019: 231). How can Nussbaum square the circle and reconcile these two principles: nations’ desire to preserve their national cultures and yet not to give preference to any religion or ethnicity over others? Are non-discrimination in matters of immigration and unchecked national sovereignty reconcilable? Is it a matter of balancing the *numbers* of immigrants? Is it a matter of admitting the *right kind* of migrants? Or is it a matter of instituting guest-worker programs rather than permitting migrants and refugees with long-term settlement rights? (See Hathaway and Foster 2014; see

Benhabib 2004 and 2020) Surely these are difficult questions and cosmopolitan theorists of migration disagree among themselves in their answers. (See Carens 2014; Caney 2005; Fine and Ypi 2019) David Miller's description of this project as a form of "liberal nationalism" (Miller 2016) is more consistent philosophically than Nussbaum's vacillations between liberal principles and national preferences.

In this recent book, Nussbaum also dismisses international human rights law as being "weak and inefficacious" (Nussbaum 2019: 14) and maintains that "the role of international agreements is moral and expressive more than legal... International law does not, and probably should not, change domestic law directly." (Nussbaum 2019:15) Noting that there may be conflicts between her earlier defense of women's global human rights and these rather cursory dismissals of the role of international law in bringing about the kind of global political liberalism that she espouses, Nussbaum writes: "CEDAW accomplished little directly. It is also a deeply flawed document, skirting around some of the most important issues, such as access to artificial contraception and counting women's work as work in national income courts." (Nussbaum: 2019, 221) This may be so, but surely, working towards a global political liberalism will require both the cultivation of transnational women's movements and the revision of human rights documents. CEDAW has been criticized by Third World Feminist activists for prioritizing the careerist advancement of First World women by focusing on

workplace anti-discrimination and anti-harassment issues to the detriment of social and economic rights such those pertaining to women's health, childcare and women's poverty. Political liberals, such as Charles Beitz have criticized CEDAW precisely for transgressing the line between faith and politics by advocating a specific vision of gender equality within the family. Defenders of political liberalism in the Rawlsian sense who maintain that the line between public political reason and religious faith should be respected, may argue that matters of conscience should be left up to the private conscience of the individual, rather than being codified in international human rights documents. Clearly, Nussbaum's position is much more radical than that of many Rawlsian political liberals for whom the policing of the boundary between religion and politics, is primary; she is closer in her critique of CEDAW to Third World Activists who also require the valorization of women's domestic labor. Why then dismiss the significance of international human rights law in giving voice and facilitating transformations towards a more cosmopolitan vision of human dignity across borders? Why relegate the international realm to the task of "moral persuasion" alone?

We seem to have come full circle then: the historical disillusionment with the tragedies of nationalism after two World Wars, the Holocaust of European Jews and genocides committed in the non-European world, which gave rise to cosmopolitanism in the post-1945 World with the Declaration of Universal Human

Rights, have led not only to growing skepticism towards the ideal of cosmopolitanism but to the abandonment of the Kantian ideals of a federation of nations united by respect for international as well cosmopolitan law altogether (*Völkerrecht und kosmopolitisches Recht*).

FROM COSMOPOLITANISM TO COSMOPOLITICS AND BACK AGAIN

How do we move beyond this regressive re-idealization of the nation-state, on the one hand and the rejection, in Emily Apter's words of the "old humanism" on the other? (Apter 2018) Balibar's remark that contemporary cosmopolitics does not "prefigure the realization of a philosophical 'cosmopolitanism,'" but may not preclude "taking it as a point of reference" either, (Balibar 2018, 22) is a promising starting point. As Pauline Kleingeld notes (See Kleingeld 2002 [2019]) cosmopolitanism itself is a contested legacy: whether one describes Socrates as the first cosmopolitan - *kosmopolitēs* ('citizen of the world') -or reserves the term for the cynic Diogenes Laertius or Marcus Tullius Cicero, or Marcus Aurelius, (Appiah 2006) the Roman Emperor, cosmopolitanism begins with a critique of the *polis* and the *civitas* in the name of the *cosmos*, of an ordered reality whose rationality transcends the many and conflicting, and often unjust, *nomoi* (laws and customs) of the political world. This critique can take the form of a withdrawal from active engagement in politics, as it did with the Cynic Diogenes and with the Stoic Cicero, or it can lead to the development of a more universalist ethics whose

main dictum is not to commit wrong against any human being and not just against those in one's tribe, city or religion. Ancient Greek and Roman cosmopolitanisms lead to a universalism which finds its eventual expression in early Christianity. (Appiah 2006)

What critics find most objectionable in this historical tradition is the *dualist ontological hierarchy* upon which it is built: reason versus the body; will versus the appetites; polis versus cosmos; *nomoi* (law and customs) versus *physis* (nature), etc. In the evolution of western thought, these hierarchies that have defined the human, have also led to the characterization of the non-European, non-white, and non-Christian "others" encountered through colonialism, imperialism and western domination as less than human. (Sylvia Wynter 2003) The cosmopolitan tradition, which historically was also a critique of the practice of slavery among Greek city-states, when confronted with the non-European and non-Christian other in the age of empires and colonization, produces equivocations and confusions.

Let me turn here to Sylvia Wynter, who is a [Jamaican](#) novelist, dramatist, critic, philosopher, and essayist. She is a Caribbean intellectual who has taught at the Universities of West Indies, University of California at San Diego and was Chairperson of African-American Studies and Professor of Spanish and Portuguese Literature until her retirement at Stanford University. Her work combines Latin

American, Caribbean and Spanish histories and literature. She is a most articulate representative of what I have called “another cosmopolitanism.”

In her essay, “Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man. Its Overrepresentation – An Argument,” Wynter gives an alternative account of the genealogy of modernity which she summarizes as follows: “One of the major empirical effects ... would be ‘the rise of Europe’ and its construction of the “world civilization” on the one hand, and, on the other, African enslavement, Latin American conquest, and Asian subjugation” (Wynter 2003: 262) Following on the work of Afro-Caribbean intellectuals such as Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon, Wynter situates the emergence of the ideal of man as leading to a hegemonic interpretations of the human *tout court*. To unsettle to coloniality of dominant and dominating understandings of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom one must engage, she writes, “in a redescription of the human outside the terms of our present descriptive statement of the human, Man, and its overrepresentation.” (Wynter 2003: 268) Wynter’s language is dense and at times apocalyptic; we are never really told what she understands by Being in capital B, and how much Heidegger is being referenced here; nor are we told what Truth/Power/Freedom mean for her. Still, there is a lot to be learned from her alternative account of the origins of modernity and of the critique of ‘Man’ in the name of a new subjectivity. [May be refer to the Ends of Man- the Derrida essay?]

In a crucial point of the text, Wynter discusses the famous debate between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in the 16th century whether the AmerIndians conquered by the Spanish through the invasion of Central and South America have “souls” or whether they should be enslaved, exterminated or converted. (See Brunstetter 2010) In Wynter’s telling, King Ferdinand of Spain who set up the councils of jurists and theologians came up with a formula that would shift the depiction of the Amerindians, and the Aztecs in particular, from being characterized as “Enemies-of-Christ/Christ-refusers,” to being irrational because they were “savage;” while “the Negroes” would be defined as “subhuman” altogether. Confronted with the practice of human sacrifice among the Aztecs, Sepúlveda would justify their devastation and domination by the Spanish crown on the grounds that they lacked reason. Bartolomé de las Casas, by contrast, would argue that they did possess reason but were mistaken in “its right use.” (Wynter 2003: 296-297) The proper evangelist would teach the natives the right use of reason toward acknowledging Christ and thus save their soul.

Through her reconstruction of this famous episode, Wynter reaches the conclusion that, “the projected ‘space of otherness’ was now to be mapped on phenotypical and religio-cultural differences between human variations and/or population groups, while the new idea of order was to be defined in terms of degrees of rational perfection/imperfection, as degrees ostensibly ordained by the

Graeco-Christian cultural construct deployed by Sepúlveda as that of ‘the law of nature.’” (Wynter 2003: 296-97) We see here the imbrication of classical Greek thought with Christian theology in the service of construction ‘Man’ as the being endowed with reason- *zoon logon echon* – then as *animal rationale*. The thought of pagan Greece and Rome is turned into an argument to legitimize the modern state’s rise to hegemony. What this means, of course, is that the ideal of cosmopolitanism is itself hopelessly interwoven with the misuse of the ideals of rational humanity in the emergence of western modernity, western colonialism and imperialism. So, what Emily Apter has called the “old humanism” may not be salvageable after all.

There is much in this account that is valuable and we must realize that today we cannot write the history of global modernity as the emergence of western modernity alone. We need to take into account the remapping of the world that the conquest of the Americas, the drive to open Japan and China to western trade, and the “scramble for Africa” mean for the cosmopolitan project. Kant, whose views on imperialism are often misunderstood, on the one hand, in his essay on “Perpetual Peace” of 1795, criticizes European imperialism in the “Sugar Islands” (Cuba and the Caribbean Islands) and denounces attempts to forcibly open Japan and China to European trade (Kant 1795: 2016:xxx ; See also Muthu 2003); on the other hand, he develops a highly racist anthropology (McCarthy 2009) and geography (Harvey 2009). Given this confused legacy of cosmopolitanism in the

encounter with Europe's others, defenders of cosmopolitics argue that this legacy must be rejected and a different philosophical foundation must be laid.

But why do we need foundations at all? Why not accept the conflict of universalisms, as Balibar proposes? Why search to bring them under a common, and most likely hierarchical ontological, denominator? The cosmopolitical project thus gets tangled up with the crises of foundationalist philosophy and the rejection of the dualist ontology of the human.

In various works, I have defended a "cosmopolitanism without illusions" which rejects *foundationalism* but not the search for *justifications* through reason-giving in dialogic processes of communicative ethics. (Benhabib 2002; 2004; 2006; 2011; 2020) Surely, different philosophical and normative approaches to justification, such as more pragmatist ones are possible. (See Cavell 1979) But what would make the cosmopolitical project as an aspiration to a critical utopia, impossible as well as incoherent, is abandoning the task of justification altogether. This is certainly not Balibar's intention: his work on "equaliberty" is a normative defense of the ideals of equality and liberty through their *performative articulation*.

(Balibar 2014)

Put succinctly, we need *principles* and *ideals* to sustain a critical cosmopolitanism. It is not sufficient to deconstruct the "coloniality of

Being/Power/Truth/Freedom.” (Wynter) We need to move towards the reconstructive task of articulating the principle of a communicative reason that is not based on hierarchies in that it considers the speaker of every natural language as a being with whom we must potentially enter into a conversation and offer justification to if we are to enter into transactions with them. I want to leave aside here the difficult philosophical question whether this emphasis on language is itself a form of rationalism in that it excludes those who cannot speak or articulate themselves from the circle of those to whom we owe fundamental human respect. I don't believe so: communication need not be restricted to language alone and the body and materiality in general -including that of animals and plants – are ciphers of communication. I have defended an “embodied rationality” according to which every human being is a concrete other with an individual affectivity, memory and bodily presence. In the pragmatics of communication, facial gestures as well as verbal intonations and bodily movement are aspects of communication. In that sense, I do not see “offering reasons to one another” as engaging in rational validation alone but more as the attempt to reach mutual understanding – *Verständigung*. Of course, there are discourses of justification as well, but they do not need be made *the* paradigm of communication. But let me move from these questions about some issue in communicative ethics back to the question of cosmopolitanism:

Gerard Delanty observes four dimensions that have become constitutive of the contemporary cosmopolitan condition: first, the stresses of cultural difference and pluralization within the polity; second, the “interaction of global forces with local contexts,” ranging from creolization and diasporic cultures to global civil-society movements such as the women’s, ecology and anti-growth movements; third, the displacement of territorial space by transnational space, leading to a reconfiguration of inside and outside, the internal and the external; and fourth, the reinvention of political community around a new ethics and politics. (Delanty 2009:7) While the first three conditions refer to empirical processes at work in society, politics, and culture, the fourth-- namely “the reinvention of political community” -- is aspirational.

In my view, neither liberal nationalism nor a deconstruction of the legacy of western reason are adequate to this task: this new political community can best be characterized as aspiring to a “cosmopolitanism from below” in which the universalist ideals of equality and freedom, community and solidarity find new articulations through local as well as transnational iterations. This cosmopolitanism from below ought to be an example of a new understanding of community centered around the interaction of the local with the national, of the transnational with regional movements, practices, insights, and ideas. Let me be more concrete:

Just as the attack on women's reproductive freedoms and LGBTQ+ people's civil and political rights is taking place in Poland as well as in Brazil, in Hungary as well as Turkey, so too, must the resistance to such attacks be organized in local and transnational, regional as well as cosmopolitan terms.

Just as the attack on Kashmiri Muslims who are increasingly robbed of their Indian citizenship must be organized locally as well as transnationally, so too, must the struggle against the beating of a handicapped African migrant in Italy be organized transnationally as well as locally. Cosmopolitan solidarity with the other goes beyond the old dichotomies of east and west, north and south to defend "the right to have rights" (Arendt 1949 and 1979) on a global scale.

Just as the continuing deforestation of the Amazonas is an attack on the health of the planet as a whole, it is also an attack on the way of life of the native peoples of this region (Jurkevics 2022). Just as the land grab by multinational corporations as well as governments like China of hundreds of thousands of acres of land, water and other natural resources in Africa, is not only an attack on the environment, it is also an attack on peoples' democratic rights to be able to control their own land and resources. Resistance to such land grabs too will require cosmopolitan solidarity from below.

Contrary to cosmopolitical anxieties and populist denunciations, the cosmopolitan project is not over. If anything, it now has to be realized on a truly global level through movements that do not aspire to speak in the name of a single universal alone; but which construct a new imagination of a differentiated and non-identitarian humanity for whom the distinctiveness of self and other is a source of creative tension as well as struggle.

In this new articulation of cosmopolitanism, we may find pathways toward not only a global ethics and politics but to a planetary one as well. The Ancient Greek Stoics who identified the *cosmos* with reason (*nōus*), did not think of such reason in Cartesian terms, as rendering us “*maîtres et possesseurs de la Nature*” (masters and possessors of nature) (Descartes) *Nōus* was a form of mindfulness in synchrony with nature. Even for Aristotle, one of the old masters of dualist ontology, the movement of the heavens presented an image of eternity which “mind contemplating itself” could only poorly approximate. Mind and the cosmos mirrored one another.

For the much-maligned Kant too, there is an important distinction between *die Welt* (the world) und *die Erdkugel* (the globus). His political cosmopolitanism envisages the building of institutions in a world which we share with others; but one of the moments of ethical realization that leads us toward cosmopolitanism is the recognition that, because the surface of the earth is spherical we cannot extend

on it infinitely, and that sooner or later we will encounter other beings just like ourselves with whom we must learn to share this surface. (Kant 1797 [1922]:66; cf. Benhabib 2004:32-33) This “sharing with others” of the surface of the earth could form the missing link between worldly cosmopolitanism and an ecological ethics of planetary interdependence.

In conclusion, despite growing disillusionment with cosmopolitanism for some, and despite its polemical rejection by others, cosmopolitanism remains indeed “a noble ideal” (Nussbaum) with much power to illuminate our present and future.

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