

The State Made Me Do It: How Anti-cosmopolitanism is Created by the State*

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ANTI-COSMOPOLITANS hold that our obligations towards compatriots greatly outweigh (and in some cases eclipse) duties towards foreigners, and that our relationship with the latter is of a sort that does not include strong redistributive obligations as a matter of justice.¹ Often they base this claim on motivational limitations, maintaining that most people are unable to make such sacrifices to people with whom they share only their humanity—a claim that is often echoed in mainstream political debates. However, the relationships in which people are involved, which greatly influence the extent of their willingness to give up resources to others, are created and maintained by state policies and societal institutions² to a large degree. This is especially true of relationships between co-nationals, which are shaped and upheld by nation-building policies, media, and collective acts. These processes influence our relationship with non-compatriots significantly as well, however, and thus, they help form and fix the motivational limitations that constrain us in meeting redistributive obligations towards poor foreigners.

But if we are *making* people unable to sacrifice resources to poor foreigners, can we reasonably claim that they are not required by justice to do so? Parting from the usual cosmopolitan route, I accept the anti-cosmopolitan premises about human motivation and justice, and claim that *even if* we accept these, we have good reasons to deny the conclusions. Hence, we cannot conclude that people are unable to fulfil strong redistributive duties towards foreigners, but

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¹I use the terms ‘foreigners’, ‘non-compatriots’, and ‘people with whom one shares only a cosmopolitan identity’ interchangeably, and the same is the case for their opposites.

²This includes both political institutions and other influential societal actors such as the media.

only that they cannot do so under the policies currently pursued, which makes for an unstable foundation for decisive conclusions about justice. Furthermore, I outline how alternative, more cosmopolitan policies could plausibly deepen the relationship between non-compatriots, making them capable of meeting strong redistributive obligations towards each other. I conclude, finally, that anti-cosmopolitans should accept such cosmopolitan policies as well or recast their argument.

I approach these matters by first presenting the national anti-cosmopolitan argument in a reconstructed, generalised version of its specific variants in an attempt to clarify the argumentative core of the individual premises, allowing for a more focused analysis. I then substantiate that the argument can be rediscovered in different anti-cosmopolitan theories. Next, I examine what relationships between co-nationals consist in, and how they are created and upheld, after which I look into the negative consequences of this construction upon relations with foreigners. Finally, I sketch different policies by which we could cultivate a stronger relationship between non-compatriots, and show that these are compatible with the premises of the anti-cosmopolitan argument.

I. THE ANTI-COSMOPOLITAN CHALLENGE

Anti-cosmopolitanism is a relatively broad category, and to clarify what I am aiming at, I will divide the theories into ones in which the key arguments centre on the *state* and its special features ('statist anti-cosmopolitanism')³ and ones in which the argumentative focus is on relationships of *national* identity ('national anti-cosmopolitanism').⁴ I bring in this distinction to clarify that the focus of this article is not anti-cosmopolitanism in general, but specific assumptions on which the national variant is based.⁵ Undoubtedly, it is not a watershed division, and most theorists employ both statist and nationalist arguments. Much criticism has been levelled against the former type— and much of it convincingly.⁶ My focus in this article, however, will be on the latter type. These theories base the disanalogy between the national and global spheres on certain hypotheses about communal identity and individual motivation. I will try to depict the argumentative chain (henceforth 'the argument') more formally below. This depiction should not be understood as an exact replica of a specific national anti-cosmopolitan argument, but rather as a reconstruction that seeks to capture something central to, and generally held within, this line of thought. By depicting the anti-cosmopolitan ideas in a more abstract way I hope to bring out more clearly

³For example: Blake 2001; Nagel 2005.

⁴D. Miller 1995; 2007. R. W. Miller 1998. Canovan 2000.

⁵Ypi (2012) similarly distinguishes between 'cultural-conventionalist' and 'political-institutionalist' associative relations.

⁶For example: Julius 2006; Abizadeh 2007; Caney 2008; Midtgaard 2012.

how general assumptions converge. Additionally, it opens up broader possibilities for analysing and evaluating the content of the individual premises in specific anti-cosmopolitan theories, not least by highlighting which argumentative steps are implicit or ambivalently described.

Some of the labels I use are not original anti-cosmopolitan formulations but rather general classifications used to describe a common structure. To clarify, a *fundamental relationship* is one that people understand as playing a central role in a good human life, and one that plays a large part in determining whether or not people's lives are successful, and which should, thus, be treated as an end in itself.⁷ A *peripheral relationship* is one that does not live up to these criteria. Finally, when referring to strong redistributive obligations I mean duties to bring one's co-participants in a relationship to more than just above a basic minimum (that is, as recommended by defenders of a high sufficiency threshold, global prioritarianism, or global egalitarianism). How the concepts and the general argument are fleshed out specifically varies between theorists, but the underlying structure is the same:

- (1) *Ceteris paribus*, people can be brought to meet strong redistributive obligations towards others with whom they have a fundamental relationship, but cannot be brought to meet such obligations towards those with whom they have only a peripheral relationship.
- (2) For most people, sharing a national identity constitutes a fundamental relationship while sharing a cosmopolitan identity constitutes a peripheral relationship.
- (3) Thus, *ceteris paribus*, most people (a) can be brought to meet strong redistributive obligations towards people with whom they share a national identity, but (b) cannot be brought to meet such obligations towards people with whom they share only a cosmopolitan identity [(1) and (2)].
- (4) For all persons, if a person cannot be brought to do something, then justice does not require that she does it.
- (5) Thus, *ceteris paribus*, most people are not required by justice to meet strong redistributive obligations towards people with whom they share only a cosmopolitan identity [(3b) and (4)].⁸

⁷National anti-cosmopolitans often call this intrinsic value, but as Korsgaard (1983) has pointed out, this might mean one of two things: having value in itself independent of its relations to other properties (as opposed to an *extrinsic* good), or being something that one might pursue as an end in itself (what she calls a *final* good), and not as a means to achieving some other good (an *instrumental* good). I take D. Miller (1995; 2007) and other national anti-cosmopolitans as claiming not that fundamental relationships are good in themselves (that is, whether or not people actually get value from them), but that they are intrinsically valuable in the 'final' sense, and so I use the term treated as an end, instead of intrinsic.

⁸In a recent book, Gilibert (2012, pp. 141–2) undertakes a similar analysis. He departs from mine, however, by not accepting the premises of the argument (specifically, the equivalent to my (4)).

The conclusion in (3b) of the argument might be understood in two ways: (A) people cannot be brought to meet strong redistributive obligations towards non-compatriots given the very *nature* of cosmopolitan identity—that is, regardless of the level of globalisation and interdependence, the policies we pursue, and the institutional setup; or (B) people cannot *currently* be brought to meet such obligations towards non-compatriots given that they *currently* only share a peripheral relationship. National anti-cosmopolitans are generally ambiguous in how they understand and consider this step in the argument. However, the different uses make a significant difference. Thus, if we understand (3) in the *strong* sense (A), it clearly supports the conclusion in (5).

But, as I aim to show, this version of (3) is unsupported and ignores important facts about national and cosmopolitan relationships—namely, that we create and uphold these relationships to a significant degree through societal institutions and state policies. This, I will claim, renders the strong reading of (3) implausible, and thus, the conclusion in (5) does *not* follow. If, on the other hand, we understand (3) in the weak sense (B), it is unclear whether the conclusion in (5) follows. Given their current inability to meet strong redistributive obligations towards non-compatriots, they might not currently be required by justice to do so (cf. (4)). But, if people can overcome these motivational inabilities (e.g., if we make certain institutional or educational changes that enable this), justice might require that they do this and that we make the appropriate changes. This question seems especially pertinent if we are, in fact, fixating people’s motivational capacities through societal institutions and policies. National anti-cosmopolitans, however, do not seem open to the possibility that justice may require changing people’s motivational capabilities.

Addressing the above arguments, and in the light of the ambiguity between the two readings of (3), I will argue that, even if we accept (1)—the anti-cosmopolitan premise that people can only be brought to meet strong redistributive obligations towards fellow members of a community sharing a fundamental relationship—and (2)—that for most people national identity is fundamental and cosmopolitan identity is peripheral—this conclusion ignores important facts about how this situation is created. As we will see, this has significant consequences for the anti-cosmopolitan argument. More specifically, I will show that state institutions play a significant role in crafting, shaping, and maintaining national identities, and also have considerable influence on *how* fundamental such relationships are perceived to be. More importantly, they play a significant role in shaping the peripheral status of cosmopolitan identity through these nation-building policies. Because of this, we ought only to understand the conclusion in (3) in the weak sense—that people are *currently* unable to meet strong redistributive obligations towards compatriots. But this means that, even if we accept (4)—that people are not required to follow principles of justice if they cannot be brought to do so—this does not mean that (5) is true—that they are not required to meet strong redistributive obligations

towards non-compatriots. For if they are only *currently* incapable of meeting such obligations, justice might require that we attempt to change this fact.

To strengthen my analysis, I will first show how the theorists that I have labelled national anti-cosmopolitans fit the general structure of the argument depicted above. I will delve into one variant more thoroughly (David Miller's) before briefly showing how other variants match the argument.

II. VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF ANTI-COSMOPOLITANISM

The argument constitutes an abstract and disentangled version of the ideas and assumptions that underlie nationalist anti-cosmopolitan theories. The more specific content of the individual steps varies, however. Using the model of the argument, I will give an outline of one such variation below, and briefly describe other examples of its use. The version I wish to sketch is David Miller's theorising on relations of nationality. My depiction will focus only on the assumptions that are relevant to my discussion.

A. DAVID MILLER'S INTRINSICALLY VALUABLE NATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

For Miller, certain human relationships are *intrinsically valuable* (or, more precisely, should be treated as an end (see fn 6)), meaning that “[p]eople’s lives go better just by virtue of being involved in this kind of relationship”.⁹ Special obligations flow from such relationships (‘ground-level special duties’), and these are central to the very character and value of the relationship.¹⁰ Intrinsically valuable relationships, thus, involve meeting rather extensive obligations when needed, since this is essential to their conservation. In my terms, such relationships might be called *fundamental*. On the other hand, relationships that do *not* have this intrinsic nature mark off communities in which only peripheral identities are shared. Such peripheral relationships are unable to support extensive redistributive obligations.¹¹ Thus, Miller endorses the first premise of the argument—that people can be brought to meet extensive redistributive obligations towards people with whom they have a fundamental relationship, but not towards those with whom they have only a peripheral relationship.

The way people think about their nationality reveals that they conceive of it as having intrinsic quality and, thus, as constituting a fundamental relationship.¹²

⁹Miller 2007, p. 35.

¹⁰I take Miller's (2007) view as being in accordance with my notion of fundamental relationship, in that “being involved in such a relationship” is not independent of how people conceive of it. Rather, it is *understanding* this relationship as playing a central role in their lives that makes it intrinsically valuable to people.

¹¹They “could not underpin political values like social justice or deliberative democracy” (Miller 2007, p. 40).

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 38.

Thus, national identity would not have the same character to people if it did not entail strong redistributive duties.¹³ The reasons that sharing a national identity has this fundamental character are: the multiple ways it affects one's life chances; the possibilities a national community create for furthering one's cultural beliefs, and steering and shaping society in accordance with such beliefs; and the sense of belonging that it conveys. Thus, in an important sense, national identity makes us who we are.¹⁴ Cosmopolitan identity, on the contrary, does not have this strong, political significance, and even if we may one day find ourselves in a world in which it does, we are still far from that reality.¹⁵ Consequently, Miller's view conforms to the second premise in the argument—that sharing a national identity constitutes a fundamental relationship, while sharing a cosmopolitan identity constitutes a peripheral relationship.

Miller, thus, finds that national identity plays a fundamental role in people's lives, and that its intrinsic value spurs people to meet strong redistributive obligations. This is not the case for cosmopolitan identity, which lacks intrinsic value and therefore cannot work as the foundation for such obligations. By claiming this, Miller seems to affirm (3) in the (semi-)weak sense, by asserting only that people cannot *currently* be brought to meet duties of strong, cosmopolitan justice, but not ruling out that this may be possible (although he seems fairly sceptical). As we will see, however, his conclusions seem to rely on a stronger reading of (3).

In accordance with (4), Miller holds that people are not required by justice to do things they cannot be brought to do. He hints at this in several passages, but states it most clearly when discussing national responsibility and the circumstances of justice. First, since “for the great majority of people, national identities remain strong and politically significant”,¹⁶ they are morally responsible for the policies of their national community. In other words, since people share a relationship which has individual significance and can animate them into action, they are responsible for the policies of this community. Secondly, Miller holds that justice must reflect human nature, and should not abstract “too far from prevailing circumstances”,¹⁷ if it is to guide public policy or individual actions. Stated more clearly, theories of what is required of us by justice should be constrained by which requirements people are actually able to follow. Hence, Miller seems to be in tune with the fourth premise of the argument—that a person is not required by justice to do something she cannot be brought to do (although his explanation for going from (3) to (5) is, apart from the quotes in this section, mostly implicit).

¹³Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁴Miller 1995, pp. 25, 59. Miller 2007, pp. 21–6, 68–75, 262–5.

¹⁵Miller 2007, pp. 55, 265.

¹⁶Ibid..

¹⁷Ibid., p. 18.

As noted, Miller seems to hold a somewhat weak version of (3), claiming that people cannot *currently* be brought to meet strong redistributive duties towards those with whom they share only a cosmopolitan identity, and insinuating that we are very far from that possibility. However, he concludes that we cannot extend the special, relational obligations we have in regards to fellow-citizens towards foreigners, since we are not tied to them in the special way “that stem[s] from [our] common national identity”.¹⁸ He goes on to reject various arguments for instituting strong redistributive duties between those that share only a cosmopolitan identity (in the form of global egalitarianism), relying again on the intrinsic value of the fundamental relationship between those that share a national identity. Miller does claim, however, that there are global duties to give *everyone* the opportunity to live a “minimally decent life” that do not stem from requirements of justice,¹⁹ and in theory, meeting these could be quite demanding.²⁰ Through Miller’s description of this minimum, one gets the impression that meeting these obligations would probably entail giving more than we currently do, but not nearly enough to qualify as “meeting strong redistributive duties”.²¹ This impression is strengthened when we see that Miller rejects the idea that people could be brought to meet very demanding duties (such as those flowing from global egalitarianism), but does not consider his own humanitarian duties motivationally infeasible, thus implying that they are not very demanding.²²

To summarise, the steps in the argument can in fact be rediscovered in a more concrete form in Miller’s anti-cosmopolitan theory. As in the argument’s reconstruction of the general line of thought of national anti-cosmopolitans, Miller claims that certain human relationships have intrinsic value and that strong, reciprocal obligations are necessarily part of their content. People that share a national identity usually also share such a relationship, while people who share only a cosmopolitan identity do not, and cannot be brought to meet strong redistributive duties. Since moral theories should reflect human nature, justice does not require that people meet strong redistributive obligations towards non-compatriots, if they are unable to do so—and according to Miller, they are.

B. OTHER VARIANTS

Another anti-cosmopolitan account built on the framework of the argument is Richard W. Miller’s theory of national trust. In his article “Cosmopolitan Respect and Patriotic Concern”, he argues that relationships between co-nationals are very important and must be given special concern in order to uphold the mutual

¹⁸Ibid., p. 55.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 180–5.

²⁰As one anonymous referee has pointed out.

²¹As pointed out by Brock 2008.

²²Miller 2007, pp. 267–70.

trust upon which they are founded.²³ Thus, relationships of sharing a national identity are akin to family relationships or friendships.²⁴ If people are to motivate themselves to engage loyally and wholeheartedly in such fundamental relationships, other participants must show them special concern. To exemplify, if the richer people of a society were to donate large amounts of resources to poorer people in foreign countries, they would not be showing such special concern to their poor (but relatively rich) compatriots. Their failure to show special concern would mean that their poorer compatriots no longer would have an adequate amount of trust in the relationship, and they would “inevitably withdraw”.²⁵ While it is less clear-cut than in David Miller’s case, Richard Miller *is* a national anti-cosmopolitan in my terms since he views the co-national relationship as intimately tied to people’s desires and their sense of belonging and less to the particular attributes of the societal institutions.

While David Miller focuses on the difficulty of motivating *oneself* to help people with whom one does not share a fundamental identity, Richard Miller has his focus on the difficulty of upholding the general level of political and redistributive motivation in a national society if one sacrifices too many resources to foreigners. For Richard Miller, then, people cannot be brought to meet strong redistributive obligations towards poor foreigners, because it would be contrary to their strong interest in maintaining a well-functioning, trustful, national relationship. Thus, he reaches the conclusion in (3) based on premises very similar to those in (1) and (2).

Underlining his commitment to a (3)-like conclusion, Miller argues that there is a “psychologically inevitable limit on trust and respect”,²⁶ referring to the scope of people’s fundamental relationships. Cosmopolitan relationships cannot take this form and support strong redistributive duties, as they cannot generate the necessary trust due to limits in human psychology (i.e. human motivation)—or as he states it: “for most people, the broadest form of communal interaction corresponding to their desires and resources is participation in a national community”.²⁷ Miller, thus, seems to affirm the strong reading of (3) in the argument: that people cannot *ever* be brought to meet strong redistributive duties towards non-compatriots. He goes on to use this limitation as an argument for accepting this bias towards compatriots normatively,²⁸ and his view is, thus, in accordance with (4) and (5) of the argument—that people are not morally required to do what they cannot be brought to do, and that this means that people are not required to meet strong redistributive obligations towards non-compatriots. Thus, Richard Miller affirms the conclusions in the argument

²³Miller 1998, pp. 204, 211–4.

²⁴Ibid., p. 214.

²⁵Ibid., p. 211.

²⁶Ibid., p. 215.

²⁷Ibid., p. 219.

²⁸Ibid., p. 215.

illustrated above based on a strong reading of (3).²⁹ I will show why we have good reasons to be sceptical towards such a reading, and thus, why we should be doubtful of his conclusions as well.

Finally, the argument seems to capture and reconstruct the rudimentary theoretical ideas in several of the critical replies printed alongside and in response to Martha C. Nussbaum's "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism".³⁰ For example, Benjamin R. Barber states that "global citizenship demands of its patriots levels of abstraction and disembodiment most women and men will be unable or unwilling to muster",³¹ since cosmopolitanism offers nothing for the hearts and minds of ordinary people to latch on to. Barber then goes on to conclude that we shouldn't aim for cosmopolitanism as a political destination, but rather a form of "healthy patriotism".³² Similarly, Michael W. McConnell underlines that "[h]umanity at large . . . is too abstract to be a strong focus for the affections".³³ Related points are made by Nathan Glazer and Charles Taylor.³⁴ These theorists all seem to appeal either to a strong reading of (3) in the argument—that people cannot ever be brought to meet strong redistributive obligations towards non-compatriots—as McConnell seems to do, or affirm their commitment to the conclusion in (5) based on an unclear reading of (3), as Barber does.³⁵ I will try to show why we should doubt that people's sympathies are eternally fixed in the way that Richard Miller and some other national anti-cosmopolitans seem to claim, and why we should, thus, understand (3) in the weak sense. Furthermore, I will indicate reasons why we should be quite sceptical towards drawing the anti-cosmopolitan conclusions that David Miller draws from this weak reading.

Before attacking this question, I want to emphasise that one need not embrace the premises of the argument to accept my conclusion. Rather, by granting the premises ((1), (2), & (4)), I attempt to show that *even if* one accepts such assumptions, there are good reasons to be doubtful of the national anti-cosmopolitan conclusions. But one might, for example, adopt a Cohenite stance towards (4),³⁶ and say that even if people are unable to meet strong redistributive obligations towards people with whom they share only a cosmopolitan identity, justice might still require them to do so. Similarly, one

²⁹It must be noted that the conclusions of Miller's latest book (R. W. Miller 2010) are not anti-cosmopolitan but what he calls *quasi-cosmopolitan*. He has come to embrace the idea of relatively demanding duties towards non-compatriots. However, he still finds that relationships to co-nationals are fundamental, and that our relationship with foreigners lacks this fundamental quality (R. W. Miller 2010, ch. 2). The fact that his argument ultimately leads to quasi-cosmopolitan policies does not make scrutinising his anti-cosmopolitan premises less interesting.

³⁰Nussbaum 2002a.

³¹Barber 2002, p. 34.

³²Ibid., p. 36.

³³McConnell 2002, p. 81.

³⁴Glazer 2002, p. 62. Taylor 2002, p. 120.

³⁵In these incomplete theoretical outlines, premises of the argument can often be rediscovered, although it doesn't appear in its entirety.

³⁶See Cohen 2008.

might cast doubt on (2), and argue that people *are* able to meet stronger (if not strong) redistributive duties towards foreigners than they currently are, since they have stronger bonds towards non-compatriots than anti-cosmopolitans imagine. What is holding them back, one might add, is the current institutional structure which fails to systematise global obligations and hold people coercively responsible for meeting them.³⁷ Or, in the language of representative claims, the problem is that no one claims to represent those sharing only a cosmopolitan identity, and thus, the bonds have no democratic outlet.³⁸ Finally, one might question the assumptions made in (1) by claiming that people can, in fact, be brought to meet strong redistributive obligations towards people with whom they share only a peripheral relationship, *if* they are given strong enough reasons for doing so within an appropriate framework of debate.³⁹

I will not pursue these lines of argument, however. This does not mean that I think the assumptions made in the argument are unproblematic or immune to critique. Rather, I aim to show that rejecting one of the assumptions does not entail rejecting the central argument of this article. Rather, if one denies one or more of the assumptions made in the argument, this will simply give one further reason to accept my claims. By proceeding in this way, I aim for an ecumenically founded argument that should appeal to anti-cosmopolitans, quasi-cosmopolitans, weak cosmopolitans, and strong cosmopolitans alike.

I now turn to the second part of this article, in which its main argument against anti-cosmopolitanism will be put forward. I will show why we should understand (3) in the weak sense (and weaker still than David Miller does), and that we should be sceptical towards basing decidedly anti-cosmopolitan conclusions on these grounds. I will begin this by saying more about how we should understand the concept of sharing a national identity.

III. SHARING A NATIONAL IDENTITY

In his magnum opus from 1991, Benedict Anderson defines the nation as “an imagined political community”.⁴⁰ He goes on to explain the way in which it is imagined: “It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion”.⁴¹ This does not mean that such communities are false or unimportant, but rather that the realm in which they exist is the human consciousness. To see this, imagine that everyone (including themselves) no longer thought of the citizens of Bordeaux as French, but as members of the Bordelaise nation, and behaved accordingly. Then they

³⁷Beitz 2000, p. 683. Caney 2005, p. 175.

³⁸Saward 2008.

³⁹For example, based on ideas proposed in Habermas 1981.

⁴⁰Anderson 1991, p. 6.

⁴¹Ibid.

would, in fact, no longer be French, but Bordelais. This does not imply that, because nations only exist in the mind, they are easy to change, nor does it deny the importance of national identity to individuals. It simply entails that national communities do not exist ‘out there’—they are not objective empirical entities like trees, foxes, or football player Wayne Rooney. Rather, when people share a national identity they *think of themselves* as belonging to a national community. Furthermore, they *think of others* as belonging to this community. And finally, they think of *others as thinking of themselves* as belonging to the community. This means that when speaking about her nation or being addressed as a member of a nation, a person not only *imagines* the many other people that belong to the same community as her, she also imagines that these other people imagine these same things about her and *their* other co-nationals. So, when national anti-cosmopolitans talk about sharing a national identity (as in (2) and (3)), this is what it entails: the communal imagination of a national relationship.⁴² Through such collective acts of imagination, communal identities are shaped and maintained directly by the imaginative act’s influencing the understanding people have of these relationships and the value they place upon them, but also indirectly by the imaginative act’s affecting and framing the future actions that a community may undertake, and shaping the possible ways identity might be imagined going forward.⁴³

A cosmopolitan identity may be imagined as well.⁴⁴ Such an identity would be imagined if the United States President gave a speech in which he addressed ‘people of the Earth’. We would think of ourselves as being addressed, imagine others as being addressed, and imagine others as thinking of themselves and others as being addressed. But of course, the occasions for imagining ourselves as members of a global community are rare (speeches to the entire population of the Earth are mainly held in science fiction movies), while occasions for imagining ourselves as members of a national community are plentiful (for example, in political speeches, in international sports and other competitions, and national ceremonies). Similarly, as Anderson points out, media plays an essential role in upholding identity by facilitating the simultaneous identification of a large audience and by actively engaging in the maintenance of communal identity, and many more of these avenues exist on a national scale than on a global scale. Thus, while people sharing only a cosmopolitan identity *can* imagine themselves as members of the same community, and imagine others as imagining this as well, they exercise this imaginative capacity very rarely.

To return to the argument, (3) can be remodelled as: *ceteris paribus*, most people (a) can be brought to meet strong redistributive obligations towards

⁴²David Miller explicitly affirms this (D. Miller 1995, p. 32).

⁴³See Dewsbury 2000.

⁴⁴Anderson (1991) does not discuss cosmopolitan identity directly, so the following is an extrapolation.

people with whom they *imagine* sharing a national identity, but (b) cannot be brought to meet such obligations towards people with whom they *imagine* sharing only a cosmopolitan identity. The insight that such relationships are imagined does not in itself establish that we should understand (3) in the weak sense, however. To establish this, we must delve into the following question: why have people begun to imagine the relationship with their co-nationals as fundamental, and, more importantly for this article, *why do they continue to do so?*

IV. HOW NATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS ARE MADE FUNDAMENTAL

It is rather uncontroversial to claim that the existence of nations and national identities is not the result of chance, nor is it the final *étape* of the evolution of a cultural bond that has lain dormant in the minds of inhabitants of certain geographical territories since the dawn of time. Instead, the imagined communities of most nations have been created—more or less deliberately—by state actors and societal institutions. And, in fact, *all* liberal democracies have engaged in such deliberate attempts at nation building.⁴⁵ So, in the famous words of Ernest Gellner: “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist”.⁴⁶ And in the terms of the second premise of the argument: the relationship of sharing a national identity has not always been imagined as fundamental, but has been made so by state policies and societal institutions. This is important because it shows that the fundamental quality of the relationship between co-nationals is not tied to the human condition as such. Furthermore, it shows that the fundamentality of sharing an imagined national identity can be challenged (at the very least, by reverting to a pre-industrial form of society), if such a contestation turns out to be a necessary condition for making the cosmopolitan relationship more fundamental. This further means that national identities should not be understood as passive traits that persons have or groups share but rather as things that are continually constructed and re-constructed through collective acts and political processes that shape the communal imagination.⁴⁷

One might argue, however, that even if national identity *was* created by deliberate state policies at the time of each nation-state’s genesis, this is no longer the case. However, as Will Kymlicka has pointed out, virtually all liberal democracies promote a common language and a sense of common membership, decide upon a core curriculum in education, and devise requirements for acquiring citizenship “with the intention of diffusing a particular identity based

⁴⁵See for example: Hutchinson and Smith 1994, secs II–IV; Hobsbawm 1992; Kymlicka 2001, ch. 8.

⁴⁶Gellner 1964, p. 168.

⁴⁷As emphasised by theories of people-making (e.g., Näsström 2011).

on participation in that particular culture".⁴⁸ So, to an important degree, national identity is still influenced and controlled by state institutions. To find everyday examples of such practices one does not have to look far. All over the world, children are taught a national language; they are educated in history and culture and presented with a nationalist bias in all other educational subjects; they are surrounded by statues of national heroes and streets named after poets and generals of the national golden age; they are drafted to the national army; public holidays are fitted to important events in national history, and celebrated with official, nationwide ceremonies; public service channels show their national teams competing in international sporting events, which are extensively covered by the nationally biased private media. Through all these multifarious policies of nation-building, people are provided with occasions to imagine their membership in the national community and imagine their co-nationals imagining the same, thus ensuring the existence of the imagined community of the nation. As Anderson points out, this process has been made possible by national media that have ensured extensive and (almost) instant sharing of national events and values, enabling constant instances of community-wide collective imagination. Not only state-subsidised newspapers and state television have engaged in these practices, but privately owned media, which remain heavily biased towards covering national events, partake as well.⁴⁹

Thus, even today, societal institutions reproduce and maintain the character of national identities and contribute significantly to the fundamental character of the relationship between those who share a national identity. In itself, this is not enough to render (5) implausible, since *cosmopolitan* relationships might not be created and maintained in this way. It would, however, be problematic if nation-building policies could be said to influence cosmopolitan relationships as well. This would signify that we are affecting the character of the relationship, and, thus, impinging people's ability to meet strong redistributive duties towards non-compatriots. And I believe nation-building policies can be said to have this effect.

V. HOW COSMOPOLITAN RELATIONSHIPS ARE MADE PERIPHERAL

To see how nation-building policies shape cosmopolitan relationships, let us revisit the examples mentioned above. As we have seen, these practices let people imagine the national community. When celebrating a national holiday, watching the national football team, listening to a speech by the president or prime minister, tuning in to a popular television show on a state-owned or nationally-based channel, or reading a national newspaper, we imagine ourselves doing it along with a myriad of compatriots. But we simultaneously imagine

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 349 and ch. 8.

⁴⁹Nossek 2004.

ourselves *not* engaging in these practices with our *non*-compatriots. Thus, in the words of Anderson, it is a key feature of the national community that it is imagined as *limited*⁵⁰—it has borders, both geographically and mentally, and imagining the community entails imagining those outside it as non-members. Thus, the relationship with foreigners is made to be viewed less as an end in itself, and in this manner is made less fundamental—and more peripheral. So, we might add, the last part of (2)—that sharing a cosmopolitan identity constitutes a peripheral relationship—is true because state institutions make it so, making this the case for (3) as well.

Another reason for reaching this conclusion is found by considering the establishment of myths and misrepresentation of history involved in nation-building. In the words of Ernest Renan: “Forgetting, and I would say even historical fallacy, are [*sic*] an essential factor in the creation of a nation”.⁵¹ This involves forgetting the historicity of nations, which, when portrayed politically, “always loom out of an immemorial past, and . . . glide into a limitless future”.⁵² Quotidian examples of this practice are easily found. Through the creation and upkeep of monuments, structures, museums, and national symbols (such as coins, flags, songs, and art in state buildings), and the education of children in national history with a heavy focus on the national golden age(s), state policies contribute to this process in a very direct manner by consolidating the myths in the consciences of its citizens. They create the back-story for the bond that Anderson describes as a “deep, horizontal comradeship”⁵³ between co-nationals.

But not only are the historical accounts that national culture is built upon more or less false,⁵⁴ they are also decidedly *non-cosmopolitan*. As we have seen, the fundamental character of the relationship between those who imagine sharing a national identity is created and maintained through societal institutions and state policies to a large degree. So when the myths of national culture (for the most part) focus on local events, portray the nation as a fundamental entity, and over-emphasise roles played by national actors and trends, it is an example of this practice. But the policy of creating national myths also assists in making cosmopolitan relationships more peripheral, by playing down the influence on national culture that has come from abroad. In this way, the nation is portrayed as though it has evolved by itself or even *in spite of* the rest of the world, and the cultural and material interaction and exchange with foreign actors, which has fundamentally determined the evolution of modern societies, is neglected. Accordingly, the creation and maintenance of national myths gives a depth to the sharing of a national identity by establishing a glorious cultural back-story, and dilutes cosmopolitan identity by ignoring the way in which world history is

⁵⁰Anderson 1991, p. 7.

⁵¹Renan 1882, p. 3, my translation.

⁵²Anderson 1991, pp. 11–2.

⁵³Anderson 1991, p. 7.

⁵⁴Which is a problem for liberal states in itself (Abizadeh 2004).

intricately interconnected, thus making cosmopolitan relationships more peripheral. This gives us further reason to understand (3) in the weak sense, since the peripheral character of cosmopolitan identity is contingent upon the creation and cultivation of such myths.

At this point, one might contend that recent developments in new social media and movements could undercut these processes, and render it more difficult or even, in time, impossible to uphold national identity through the state and societal institutions, and hence annul its effects on cosmopolitan relationships, in which case the analysis above seems less pertinent.⁵⁵ Indeed, since new social media are, by nature, less geographically bound and have greater border-crossing potential, they often create commitments that are in tension with those upheld by societal institutions and state policies.⁵⁶ We should not discard the analysis prematurely, though. Firstly, the mere fact that new social media create identities that do not correspond to national imagined communities does not show that they will not create different communities with similar problems—that is, communal identities that similarly inhibit our ability to make systematic sacrifices towards poor non-members. In this case, they would be susceptible to a critical analysis similar to the one above. Secondly, even if new social media track cosmopolitan relationships, it is not clear that they are able to render these *fundamental*, and thus that they can make large, systematic transfers between members of the community possible. If this is true, societal institutions and state policies remain the relevant tools for maintaining *fundamental* relationships—the object of analysis for this article. Finally, if it turns out that new social media and movements *are* able to create fundamental relationships between those sharing only a cosmopolitan identity this would not make the above analysis irrelevant, but would rather point to a welcome way of solving the non-cosmopolitan side-effects of nation-building. In either case, new social media and movements might change the content of the above analysis, but unless radical changes occur, the conclusions stand.

To summarise, the nation-building policies that liberal democracies employ create non-cosmopolitans in two ways. First, they afford a great number of occasions for imagining the national community and more national media to cover these occasions. This entails imagining foreigners as non-members, thus conveying a feeling of not participating in a joint venture. Second, they compose and maintain national myths, which underpin the fundamental character of national identity with a cultural back-story that emphasises the role of national actors and discounts foreign influences. This weakens the relationship between those who share only a cosmopolitan identity.

These policies cause the sharing of a cosmopolitan identity to be understood less as playing a central role in a good human life; less as something that should

⁵⁵I thank an anonymous referee for suggesting this discussion.

⁵⁶Cerulo 1997.

be treated as an end in itself; and less as determining whether or not people's lives are successful—making the relationship between those sharing a cosmopolitan identity more peripheral (according to my definition above). The identification of these processes shows why we should indeed understand (3) in the weak sense. For we can only know that people are currently unable to meet strong redistributive obligations towards non-compatriots. But since we observe these motivational shortcomings within a system in which many different state policies and societal institutions work together to create, shape, and maintain nationalist and anti-cosmopolitan sentiments and dispositions, we can hardly conclude that it must always be so. When understanding (3) in a weak(er) sense, however, it seems problematic to conclude that people are not required by justice to meet strong redistributive duties towards non-compatriots, if we are presently preventing them from overcoming their inability to do so through our choice of policies and institutions. New social media and global movements might limit the creation of anti-cosmopolitan sentiments eventually—depending on their ability to create and sustain inclusive, fundamental relationships—but in either case, national anti-cosmopolitans seem obligated to reconsider their conclusions about motivational constraints and justice.

VI. CREATING COSMOPOLITANS: STRATEGIES

Although I think it is a rather grave problem in itself for anti-cosmopolitans that their conclusions about what people are required to do is based upon malleable conditions,⁵⁷ it does not follow immediately that we should attempt to make people see their relationship with non-compatriots as (more) fundamental. For this, two further conditions must be fulfilled. First of all, we should only pursue such a policy if we think that the world would be *more just* if citizens of wealthy nations were more willing to meet strong redistributive obligations towards the poorest people in the world, thus making the latter significantly better off. Although I think that is a rather modest and straightforwardly acceptable claim (I can hardly imagine someone successfully defending the opposite position), I will not defend it here.⁵⁸ Note, however, that one could be a national anti-cosmopolitan and still accept that a world with more voluntary redistribution from rich to poor would be more just. That is to say, one might accept that a world in which more people thought of their relationship with non-compatriots as fundamental, and were thus more motivated to sacrifice resources to their benefit, would be more just, while still maintaining that this is not currently the case, and hence, that justice does not presently require these transfers.

⁵⁷Or “soft feasibility parameters” as Gilabert (2012, pp. 239–44) calls them.

⁵⁸For defenses of similar claims see: Tan 2004; Caney 2005; Pogge 2008; Gilabert 2012.

Second, sceptics might claim that creating cosmopolitan solidarity is impossible, and that the current practice of creating national solidarity is preferable to having no solidarity at all. Political theorists of different schools have identified various ways in which state policies might be altered to overcome the above mentioned deficits in cosmopolitan motivation, democracy, and understanding. These theoretical proposals have mostly been formulated in opposition to anti-cosmopolitanism, and the theorists more or less explicitly reject one or more of the premises of the argument. Now, it is beyond the scope of this article to answer the question of whether or not we should attempt to cultivate a cosmopolitan identity *all things considered*. Instead, I aim to show that the relationship between people sharing only a cosmopolitan identity could plausibly be rendered (more) fundamental, given the assumptions about human motivation and justice made by national anti-cosmopolitans ((1) and (4) in the argument), and that one might embrace cosmopolitan-creating policies, even if one grants these assumptions.⁵⁹

One influential call for greater cosmopolitan awareness has been made by Martha Nussbaum in her essay “Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism”.⁶⁰ Nussbaum argues that Western democracies should institute a form of *cosmopolitan education* instead of the current education, which is focused on patriotic virtues such as national pride and solidarity. Such an approach would entail that students in Western democracies should “learn a good deal more than they frequently do about the rest of the world in which they live . . . and their histories, problems, and comparative successes”.⁶¹ Cosmopolitan education would furthermore enable people to see national culture and practices in a new light, recognising which of these are merely local phenomena, and which are tied to the human condition as such.⁶² Being presented with such knowledge of other lives and cultures can sway our compassion and help us better imagine their situation and our similarity to them.⁶³

Note that Nussbaum thinks that *knowledge* of the destiny of others is enough to elicit strong feelings of sympathy, and thus does not seem to agree with (1). It seems, however, that one might grant (1), and still embrace cosmopolitan education, since this would arguably induce students to imagine having a fundamental relationship with poor foreigners to a greater degree. Thus, it could help overcome the problem mentioned above of a lacking sense of partaking in a joint venture with foreigners, thereby causing the relationship between people

⁵⁹There might be better ways to enable people to meet cosmopolitan duties than by creating a common identity. But, for the purpose of this article, I simply grant this assumption, since national anti-cosmopolitans believe that a common identity is indeed necessary for upholding strong redistributive duties.

⁶⁰Nussbaum 2002a.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶²*Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶³Nussbaum 2002b, pp. xii–xiv.

sharing only a cosmopolitan identity to be understood more as an end in itself. Simultaneously, understanding one's own culture as less essential and obtaining a better understanding of global interconnectedness might help counterbalance the creation of national myths, by informing people of their limited applicability to the human condition in general and of important cross-cultural influences. This plausibly might make people feel a stronger sense of sameness with foreigners, making them understand their relationship as more of an end in itself.

Cosmopolitan education might, thus, render relationships between people sharing only a cosmopolitan identity (more) fundamental. Such a change would have great ramifications for the argument, since we could no longer say that people are not required by justice to meet strong redistributive obligations towards people with whom they share only a cosmopolitan identity (that is, (5)), since this applies only if people *cannot* be brought to do so (as stated in (4)), which would no longer be true due to the now fundamental character of the relationship between those sharing only a cosmopolitan identity (compare (1)).

So, by introducing the ideas proposed by Nussbaum, we could cultivate a fundamental relationship between those that share only a cosmopolitan identity through changes in state educational policies. Cosmopolitan education even seems to be appropriate when granting key national anti-cosmopolitan premises, and, given that a world in which richer people were more willing to give up resources to poorer people would be more just, national anti-cosmopolitans are yet to show why we should not pursue this strategy.

Another approach for bridging the gap between cosmopolitan obligations and nationally limited policies has been suggested by James Bohman. He points out how processes of globalisation have made it possible for national policies to affect an indefinite number of people, but that a corresponding change in institutional arrangements has not happened.⁶⁴ Bohman calls for the establishment of a democratic community that enables citizens to challenge and reconstitute globalised politics. This means increasing the political accountability of international organisations and treaty participants, and changing the mode of inquiry of international politics to be more open, more deliberative, and more public. Along similar lines, Cécile Laborde has argued that greater cosmopolitan solidarity must be reached through increased political participation in international organisations.⁶⁵

Bohman and Laborde both seem to dispute (2) by questioning whether the relationship between people sharing only a cosmopolitan identity is, in fact, peripheral—or, more precisely, they hold that this relationship *does* play a large part in determining the success of one's life. But even if (2) were not true (as is assumed in the argument), there are reasons for wanting to increase political accountability and participation on a global scale. Thus, democratising

⁶⁴Bohman 2004, p. 342.

⁶⁵Laborde 2010, pp. 52–7.

international institutions would surely augment the instances of imagining oneself as part of the same community as those with whom one shares only a cosmopolitan identity. Non-compatriots would become democratic co-deliberators, making them feel a stronger sense of togetherness and understand the relationship more as an end in itself. This would render their relationship more fundamental. Furthermore, greater democratic accountability in international institutions would, arguably, help surmount some of the more direct barriers states erect for building fundamental relationships with non-compatriots such as immigration policies, border control, citizenship laws, and linguistic differences. By lowering the barriers to bonds across borders, relationships between those that share only a cosmopolitan identity could form more easily and more substantially, and thus play a larger role in determining the success of people's lives, making them more fundamental. Anti-cosmopolitans dismiss the possibility of a fundamental relationship between those that share only a cosmopolitan identity as very far from our present reality or even impossible due to psychological limits (see the above quotes from David Miller and Richard Miller). But, if we could help people overcome their motivational difficulties by widening political participation and accountability in international organisations, their dismissal is premature.

The combination of the two strategies above has been suggested as an especially fruitful approach by some theorists—and especially through the means of state institutions. Lea Ypi, for example, has recommended a form of “statist cosmopolitanism”, meaning that cosmopolitan principles should be promoted from within the state.⁶⁶ Just as state institutions and policies are presently used for promoting national solidarity, these same institutions are especially well-suited to promote cosmopolitan solidarity. This is done by a combination of popular sovereignty and civic education. The former, Ypi argues, is indispensable in the pursuit of an adequate degree of political initiative, while the latter secures stability of the cosmopolitan ties by “progressively familiarizing citizens with cosmopolitan virtues embodied in cultural and historical practices that are, for the most part, understood and shared”.⁶⁷ Like Bohman, Ypi seems sceptical about (2), claiming that anti-cosmopolitans underestimate the impact of global inequality on the absolute levels of well-being in individual societies, and (4), claiming that anti-cosmopolitans fail to take agency and political transformation into account.⁶⁸ But, for similar reasons to the ones mentioned above, it seems plausible that Ypi's double-edged strategy would make the relationship between people sharing only a cosmopolitan identity (more) fundamental, and could be accepted by national anti-cosmopolitans.

⁶⁶Ypi 2008; 2012, chs 3 and 6.

⁶⁷Ypi 2008, p. 51. For another example of this approach, see Laborde 2002.

⁶⁸Ypi 2012, chs 5 and 6.

As we have seen, we should understand (3) in the weak sense: as meaning that people are unable to meet strong redistributive obligations towards foreigners only under the current institutional and political setup, but that it need not necessarily be so under any set of state policies. Presently, we are upholding anti-cosmopolitan affiliation through societal institutions. As I have sketched above, however, we could plausibly use similar means to cultivate a fundamental relationship between those that share only a cosmopolitan identity. If we further hold that such a world would be more just, it seems to me that we are required by justice to attempt to bring about such circumstances—given, of course, that it would not involve unreasonable moral costs. Recently, Pablo Gilabert has argued forcefully for the existence of such duties, claiming that they arise under non-ideal circumstances (e.g. in the presence of motivational problems), when the possibility of extending our capacities without great moral costs occurs.⁶⁹ Note that the argument permits such ‘dynamic duties’ (as Gilabert calls them), since they do not make requirements of people that they cannot be brought to meet (4).

It seems to me, then, that *if* one believes that the world would be more just if wealthy people willingly sacrificed more to poor foreigners, and *if* cultivating a more fundamental relationship between those sharing only a cosmopolitan identity would be a good way to reach this goal all things considered, then we have a moral duty to do so. And it seems, further, that national anti-cosmopolitans should think so too.

Now, a sceptic might agree with all of the above, but question whether we will find the political will to actually introduce these policies and institutional reforms for creating greater cosmopolitan solidarity.⁷⁰ This is a central question, not only for this article, but for political philosophy in general. Notice, however, that the different parts of the anti-cosmopolitan argument discussed in this article can be rediscovered in less abstract form in political debates about national solidarity and development aid all over the Western world. The present article does not attempt to intervene in these debates directly. Rather, it offers a different way of understanding and responding to the arguments and reasons presented by anti-cosmopolitans and mainstream politicians. As such, the ideas and analyses provided in this article give reasons to be sceptical about nationalist notions about our obligations towards non-compatriots that are often taken for granted in domestic debates, and might be used both by politicians and politically active citizens (what Ypi calls ‘the political avant-garde’⁷¹) to bring about the political will to create cosmopolitans.

⁶⁹Gilabert 2012, sec. 4.4 and ch. 7.

⁷⁰I thank an anonymous referee for demonstrating such scepticism.

⁷¹Ypi 2012, ch. 7.

VII. CONCLUSION

National anti-cosmopolitans claim (in short) that people can only be brought to meet strong redistributive obligations towards people with whom they share a fundamental identity; that the relationship between those that share only a cosmopolitan identity is not fundamental; that this makes them unable to meet strong redistributive obligations towards each other; and that this entails that justice does not require that they do so. But, as shown in the article, national community is imagined. This imagination is heavily influenced by state policies and institutions, and many of these processes also render people's feelings of affiliation with non-compatriots less fundamental. This suggests that we ought to understand people's inability to meet strong redistributive obligations towards those with whom they share only a cosmopolitan identity as something that we are reproducing through societal institutions.

On this background, claiming that people are not required to redistribute significant amounts of resources to poor foreigners because they are unable to do so seems problematic. Furthermore, as strategies that could lead people to enjoy a fundamental relationship with non-compatriots are available and do not conflict with their premises, national anti-cosmopolitans are yet to show why we should not pursue such policies instead. So, unless they want to claim that a world in which rich people were more willing to give up resources to poor foreigners would *not* be more just than the poverty-ridden one in which we currently live, national anti-cosmopolitans seem forced to recast their arguments or accept cosmopolitan conclusions.

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