

Cosmopolitanism and Cultural Practice: Towards a Systematic Place of Kant’s Religion

Áron Telegdi-Csetri
New Europe College, Bucharest
telegdi_a@yahoo.com

Throughout the whole of Kant’s cosmopolitanism – a guiding principle underlying his entire system – as defined in his idea of “philosophy in a cosmopolitan sense”, there lies a fundamental ambiguity, one that we might call the cosmopolitical problem: on the one hand, the word “cosmopolitanism” comports a political meaning, on the other, it seems nothing more than a moral stance in Kant. Trying to address this problem, departing from a reconstruction of a Kantian definition of politics, we arrive at a more specific sense of the cosmo-political, namely, the idea of the Kingdom of Virtue, as presented in his Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason. Besides the consequences of this idea upon Kant’s cosmopolitan principle, we can also observe how it gives sense to his idea of culture – more specifically, of cultural difference – as the bearer of a specifically political freedom, namely, the right to differ. Returning to the idea of the Kingdom of Virtue, we conclude that it suggests an alternative approach to cosmopolitanism. Thus understood, cosmopolitanism operates through – culturally developed – mentalities, not through common deliberation, i.e., politics proper, but it still remains the par excellence scene of the cosmo-political.

COSMOPOLITANISM OR COSMOPOLITICS?

In today's understanding, we talk about globalization and about one of the latest types of response to its challenges, in terms of cosmopolitanism, and as a result – as the complexity implied by the sheer mass issues within the topic suggests – the word takes on a great diversity of meanings; this may be visible in the growing number of sub-fields and research approaches that address it. It is, however, less than self-evident what exactly is common to all these meanings – what, in fact, is the idea behind the wording.

At the same time, Kant is regarded as the arch-cosmopolitan among the modern philosophers, equaled perhaps, in antiquity, only by the Stoics or by Socrates himself. Still more controversially than in the case of the cosmopolitan trend's guiding idea, he is simultaneously seen as the proponent of most of the contemporary types of cosmopolitanism, in most of their given forms, serving as a comfortable point of departure that may either be endorsed or criticized, being in the end reaffirmed, saved, corrected or refuted altogether. At the two extremes, his universalism is quoted as an argument for a – global – moral individualism under an empiricist paradigm (Korsgaard, 1996) – purporting the most general humanist plea – or his alleged racism is taken to undermine his teleological (historically optimistic, providential) thought through promoting inequality – a rather serious blow for cosmopolitanism.

This might be due to the fact that Kant's cosmopolitanism is indeed a multilayered system: as the renowned German professor Otfried Höffe (2007) brilliantly lists, Kant's cosmopolitanism is the very fundamental orientation of his thought, unfolding through a complex web of intertwined cosmopolitan perspectives, having no less than seven thematic cosmopolitan focuses, that is, seven systematically distinct senses of cosmopolitanism. The list reads: knowledge, morality, education, history, the order of nature, local legal order and federal/global legal order. If we so much as hope to understand Kant's cosmopolitanism, we must not lose sight of this complexity.

Kant's cosmopolitanism in its complexity

There is no space here to engage in a discussion of the specific meanings, or the systematic relatedness of these senses of the term. Still, their simple presence may stress an insight of interpretive importance: Kant's cosmopolitanism is a process, unfolding in a strategic manner along his intellectual biography, being at the heart of all the thematic elaborations of his philosophy. To put it in other words, cosmopolitanism gives sense to Kant's philosophy as a whole, being more than a rich fountain for cosmopolitan philosophies – it is the systemic cornerstone that makes Kantian philosophy possible at all.

Obviously, taking a meta-theoretical perspective on the theory of cosmopolitanism unfolding in Kant's philosophy, one may always ask, as one does: whose cosmopolitanism? That is, does a claim to cosmopolitanism suffice to in fact being cosmopolitan? Or is any claimed cosmopolitanism essentially flawed by the identity – the cultural embedding – of the person proposing it? As we shall see, – beyond his cosmopolitan identity evident from his biography – Kant does have a quite thematic sense for cultural difference, being well armed against this type of specifically external attack – one that we may describe as the post-modern critique. More exactly, he thinks that the rights of cultural difference – the grounds on which such a critique may be formulated – have a common origin with the very intercultural validity of his cosmopolitan claim. Through such an argument, he preempts external attacks, and reinforces cosmopolitanism in his own terms.

What is of yet greater interest though, is the fact that Kant also has a sense for politics. As Volker Gerhardt (1995) has shown in great detail, in the text of *Towards Perpetual Peace* (henceforth: *Perpetual Peace*) we can find the nucleus of a genuine political philosophy, understood as the theory of the free self-determination of a community, coextensive with the free self-determination of its members.

Still, it seems that throughout most of the work, it is the first unit of “cosmopolitanism” that predominates, namely, the cosmos: it is always only cosmopolitanism that is at stake, and not cosmopolitics, always only the way philosophy is expressive of a cosmic involvement, and not how it is political throughout this involvement. At the extreme, conceiving philosophy in a vulgar-Platonic manner as the science of eternal Forms, and not of perishable cities, being cosmic, but not political, it could be argued that politics is even contrary to cosmopolitanism, pertaining to the particular against the universal, and hence cosmopolitanism in a political sense – cosmopolitics – is an oxymoron. This would make Kant’s cosmopolitanism either apolitical, or his political thought not cosmopolitan. We should avoid both extremes.

Philosophy in a cosmopolitan sense

As Höffe shows, the core meaning of cosmopolitanism for Kant is apolitical, and namely, it is moral, as we shall explain. This meaning is to be found in Kant’s formulation of what genuine philosophy is, as contrasted with mere philosophical theory, namely, in the idea of “philosophy in a cosmopolitan sense”, or in a word-to-word translation, in the “cosmic concept of philosophy” (Weltbegriff der Philosophie). The title of the 2010 Kant Congress, this idea is explained as a specifically practical orientation towards the world as a whole, as against a merely theoretical, one might say, metaphysical – cosmotheoros – orientation, characteristic of academic philosophy (Schulbegriff der Philosophie). According to Kant, one should not see a conflict between the two models of philosophy; school philosophy also has its, relative, legitimacy.

The problem is, rather, to understand the practical orientation implied in the Weltbegriff. This is explained by Kant as an orientation that “considers the world as a means of exercising goodwill for the world”. We must note, at the same time, that it is a moral orientation, that does not rely on given institutions, not a political one; it expresses the very moral being of man seen in his personhood. The introduction of the cosmopolitan concept of philosophy as a fundamental idea, has a radical consequence on the understanding of Kantian philosophy, indeed of the Kantian subject. It shifts the worldliness of theoretical philosophy – known for readers of Kant who understand him as an epistemologist, for whom the “world” in Kant means a subjectively constituted horizon of object-constitution – to the “outside”, constituting in parallel the idea of personhood as a formal principle, on the “inside”. Through this shift, it normatively projects Reason into Nature, obliging knowledge to relate to Reason’s essential ends, not just in a theoretical, but in a very palpably practical manner, even with a duty to teach and set an example for this wisdom.

Thus, Kant sets the cosmopolitan orientation at the heart of philosophy; still, he does this in a way that is merely morally normative, not touching on any sense of simultaneously singular and collective self-determination – the criterion of political phenomenon. Indeed, his formulation of the Weltbegriff in the *Logic*, its late reformulation in the *Opus postumum* and its integration with Reason’s ends – the ends expressed in the *Architectonic* from the *Critique of Pure Reason* – suggest a comprehensive power unequalled in his system by any other concept. It seems, hence, that his system succeeded in its systematic endeavor, displaying philosophy in its cosmopolitan sense all along.

Here we should halt. It is paradoxical to be cosmopolitan in an apolitical manner – it is hardly better than the wishful thinking of mere goodwill. One cannot propose a philosophy with a cosmopolitan purpose and not care whether it is politically possible to pursue its goals! If Kant’s cosmopolitanism is more than mere wishful thinking, he must have an explanation of how it is political.

I claim, in line with Höffe, that he does, however, in a paradoxical sense. He does not have a different explanation than just this, the very idea of philosophy in a cosmopolitan sense, but in a more detailed understanding of the idea. In the most general sense, philosophy is cosmo-

politics, this being rendered possible by what Gerhardt calls the division of labor between philosophy and politics. Understanding the two fields as complementary, Gerhardt explains how they play a shared role in the progress of society. To put it shortly, philosophy standing for morals and politics for power, it turns out – let me paraphrase – that politics is the morality of the particular (reminiscent of Herder), and morality is the politics of the cosmopolitan.

But until being able to provide arguments for this idea, we need to ask a preliminary question: is there any other sense of cosmopolitan politics in Kant that is neither paraphrased, nor banal?

How the subsequent senses of cosmopolitanism are non-political

I shall not try to argue for or against the political character of epistemology, moral philosophy, the philosophy of education, of history, of natural teleology in Kant, all of them being understood in a cosmopolitan sense by Höffe. I take them to be fitted for their own systematic places, hence that they need not be political in themselves – perhaps working towards an indirectly political meaning in a more holistic, systematic way – insofar the whole of Kant's cosmopolitanism can be shown to be itself political. Still, we can find two inter-related topics – the understanding of law, under the heading of Right in Kant, and that of peace, as discussed in Perpetual Peace – that could be understood as both cosmopolitan and genuinely political at the same time.

Kantian law, on the one hand, is universalistic. Thus – as Thomas Pogge has argued at the Kant Congress – there is no reason why it should not be seen as valid at the global level – that is, as valid in a cosmopolitan sense, under his view. This is also not necessarily counter-Kantian, insofar as he himself claims, at certain places, international right to be coercively binding for member states of the peace federation. However, he does not conflate international right with cosmopolitan right, and sees the latter as regulating the relationship between states and foreign individuals – and there is no reason to alter his ordering. Thus, universal right remains a commandment for each state, international right, for the league of states, and cosmopolitan right for states and individuals in their extra-state relationship. Moreover, there is no easy way to show how this construction should be directly expressive of a co-genesis of a cosmopolitan subject together with a cosmopolitan legal order – the criterion for political existence set by Gerhardt. It is, to be sure, political at the state level and cosmopolitan at the global one, but the mediation is not clear and hardly arguable.

Peace, on the other hand, is an absolute concept. It signals the definitive exit from the state of nature at the level of states, highlighting the beginning – and perhaps the permanence – of a rational ordering of international relations that puts an end to the anarchical state of nature signaled by war. In its absolute status, peace functions as an active utopia that sets a goal to any political progress, should it be what it ought to be – progress of a genuine kind, progress in morality.

But should it, really? Kant never gives a rational explanation that it should – he only talks in hypotheticals. The teleological explanation is there, to be sure, claiming it to be Nature's goal to move humanity to its final end – to the perfection of morality. However, it is on moral grounds, that we should assume that goal, to put it shortly: it is our duty, to assume progress as naturally necessary, and it is a non-provable claim. In the same manner, the constitution of a peace federation, the democratization of states, and the coming to being of cosmopolitan right are all morally grounded presumptions – with no reason to be except for moral faith.

How cosmopolitanism is political in its goal

However, as Katrin Flikschuh (2009) shows – against Korsgaard and in line with Höffe – , morality cannot be understood by reference only to individuals and their rationality. In the final equation, a third term is needed, to absorb the under-determination of rationality

expressed in individuals and their – even shared – goal-setting. This third term proves to be the human species, viewed not biologically, but as a system of free individuals along space and time.

I take a system of free individuals to be exactly what Gerhardt expects a political community to be – the commonly self-determining whole of simultaneously self-determining persons. Hence, it is the meta-temporal and trans-spatial whole of all humans that serves as the goal of human action – not just abstract humanity in my person, but my own allegiance to humanity as an act of freedom.

In this sense, *mutatis mutandis*, philosophy proves its cosmopolitan loyalty once more. The only problem is, that humanity is not constituted in reality through a moral act – it is at most signaled, or noumenally constituted. Hence, the moral act may be political in its goal, but it is not political in itself – it is just what it is, an act of good faith. This split between the act and its goal is expressed by its being merely subjective – no one can prove, deny or question the morality of an act, but myself.

This system of free individuals as pertaining to the idea of morality itself is explicitly claimed by Kant to be the correlate of my own personhood and of the world outside me. In a teleological sense – in which it is seen precisely as the end of Nature – it is the linking point of Nature and Reason, the point at which the goals of the two coincide. This is the main theme of the third Critique, as the unity of the systems of Nature and Reason, an idea already signaled in the Critique of Pure Reason.

Still, is it, as a harmonious unity of all creation, a political concept? Hannah Arendt would answer positively.

How cosmopolitan action can be political in reality

As Höffe explains, it is not just the addressed system of humanity that builds up a political community – there needs to be a systemic subject to this object that will constitute it in its proper, voluntary form. Or, in Kant's wording, it's not just the Realm of Ends – even if it is a rightful, that is, lawful realm – that constitutes the cosmopolitical community, but the Realm of Virtue, that is, the ethical realm of beings having a good will. This is the properly political cosmopolitanism Kant has to offer: the system of rational beings who voluntarily conform to the ethical community, of beings who do not need right as such, since they need no constraint to be ethical – Shangri-La.

Kant's solution for arguing for this idea in Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason (henceforth: the Religion essay) is the gesture of introducing a common good over and against the highest good explained above. It is quite obvious that this argument is only tenable in the context of the Religion essay: it is a typically non-moral idea in the Kantian context to use a common goal against individual rationality.

Also, it is the first level at which cosmopolitanism is approximated from a political perspective: it is, in the sense of virtue, a moment of common self-determination of the individual and the community to pursue a common goal – which, could not have been valid for all individuals, had it not been utterly universal, and in turn, valid for the community, had it not been completely voluntary, hence, lacking determination through constraint. Hence, cosmopolitan politics seems to need voluntary laws – just as Kant explains later in Perpetual Peace! With the clarification of the idea of a voluntary community, light is shed on the most controversial issue of Kant's peace theory, namely, on the question of a federative (state-like, hence enforceable) or league-like (voluntary, hence always renounceable) international order.

Let us hypothesize that any particular political formation – be it in the form of a party, a state, a culture or a church – may only be cosmopolitan in an imperfect sense, in spite of the usual claims of all political formations for universality – this only amounts to their subjective universality, an aesthetic category, as the third Critique would name it. Political formations

may be cosmopolitan, at least in their goal, to the extent to which they are the carriers of humanity's moral tradition, and exactly through this universal content. They may indeed become truly cosmopolitan only insofar they become communities of virtue, lacking constraint, something quite impossible for the parties, cultures, churches and states as we know them. This is due to their sheer difference that places them in a state of competition and strife, and of institutionalization for their own reinforcement – hence of self-constraint – under the conditions of strife. The only situation rendering the lack of constraint imaginable is exactly the total and therewith natural – not imposed – isolation of the mythical mountain city.

The relevant question remaining concerning this issue is whether Kant still attributes any cosmopolitan worth to political and cultural forms. Let us remember that Kant's teleological argument unfolds in its best-known instance as the rational hope for the emancipation of mankind exemplified by the enthusiasm of observers – of citizens of other nations than the French – concerning the positive goals of the French Revolution. Insofar as philosophy needs to be historical – and the teleological argument implicitly makes philosophy historical, since it is arguing on historically contingent grounds – the historically given forms of politics and culture should also be philosophically important. Thus, there is a sense in which particular political-cultural entities should have a cosmopolitan value, namely, in the sense of a universal interpretation of history, with a cosmopolitan purpose – as the Kantian wording of Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose already shows it.

KANT'S VIEW OF PARTICULAR POLITICAL ENTITIES

At this point, we may witness a fortunate coincidence of intellectual interests. On the one hand, we may save Kant from the claimed criticism of vulgar-Platonism, which considers him metaphysically insensitive to historical forms such as cultures, as well as their differences. Obviously, Kant should prove to be cosmopolitan enough to avoid that criticism, but it should be specified how. On the other hand, we may meet the more specific interest in cosmopolitanism today, namely, the methodological interest of the social sciences, one that aims at de-territorializing its object (the socially embedded individual) and to re-conceive it in a cosmopolitan manner – needing to conceive of the life context of the individual in a cosmopolitan manner as well.

Cosmopolitanism and social science

Given that research in the social and political sciences, as well as the humanities has recently experienced a radical cosmopolitan turn – one comparable to the gender turn or the linguistic turn in its scope and implications – it seems just right to ask the question referring to cosmopolitanism together with them, involving Kant. A virtually self-standing scientific field has emerged – cosmopolitanism studies – that surpasses the limitations of individual sciences and defines itself from an autonomous perspective, if not theoretically, than at least practically. From a philosophical perspective, the importance of this event is that it not only acknowledges the fact of a global existence empirically – as our daily lives do – and it doesn't try to produce an encompassing, possibly metaphysical model for it either, but tries to create an appropriate methodology, in order to address the issue in a scientifically relevant manner.

Given also the existence of numerous theoretical and practical perspectives within the field – I am referring to cosmopolitan theories and research itineraries as multicolored as those of moral, political, legal, anthropological, architectural etc. cosmopolitanisms – I would also like to propose to locate a common ground of these territorial claims in their very possibility for a methodology. I argue, hence, that there must be a minimal criterion to assess the claim to the adjective “cosmopolitan” as referring to research fields, and therewith, that this criterion can be located in what we should call “methodological cosmopolitanism”.

As Ulrich Beck (2007) understands it, methodological cosmopolitanism – in contrast with methodological nationalism – stands for the principle of analysis, indeed of thought under which the scope of comparison of individuals – hence the horizon of society as such – is no longer limited by the nation-state as a territorially defined ultimate entity. Obviously, it is not on simply moral grounds – based on the idea that humans are equal by birth – but on political ones that this methodological expectation is stipulated: in the context of globalization, both the subject of sovereignty – formerly the nation-state – and its object – formerly the citizen – have changed. In this context, the obvious further methodological poses itself: how should we interpret the units – the subject and object – of sovereignty in order not to miss the very aim of the cosmopolitan revolution, i.e. the core concept of its methodology? Beck and others hint at a heuristic way of finding the elements usable for reconstructing this unit, however, this heuristic itself is mediated through the same concept formerly used for the critique of nation-state sovereignty: culture. Culture being the ultimate resource from which social science hopes to reconstruct any possible model for a cosmopolitan methodology, it is only self-evident to ask the cosmopolitan question regarding this resource: what is culture in its cosmopolitan function?

Also, let us remember that the one most cited historical author in cosmopolitanism is Immanuel Kant. It is unsurprising, as Axel Honneth (2010) explains, that after a period of turmoil in political and social philosophy, after the fall of great Hegelian, Marxist and liberal theories, there be a “return” to Kant. Still, the failure of all alternatives does not exactly leads to a return – rather, to the radicalization of a problematic – that of modernity – that has not properly evolved, only changed. Therefore, it is rather recommended, in my view, to re-put the question concerning cosmopolitan culture in a Kantian context, instead of seeking his legitimization for our own questions, not yet exhaustively understood within his own philosophy.

The post-modern criticism restated

Before turning to Kant himself, let us reformulate the classical post-modern criticism against modern authors, in this case, Kant. It is from a hegemonic European culture, they say, that Kant and his cosmopolitanism draw their motivation and structure, hence their claims to justice, tolerance, universality and openness – i.e. the very core of a cosmopolitan ideal – are essentially flawed. Let us be quite attentive: this type of argument always proceeds from culture to the individual, from identity to difference, from the positive to the transcendental. The short answer would sound like this: philosophical concepts are, or at least claim to be, culture-independent; but let us consider the criticism in more detail before trying to answer it more comprehensively.

As an example, let us remind of Jacques Derrida’s (2001) reconstruction of Kant’s cosmopolitanism, who complained about this not being able to accommodate foreign nationals’ claim for residence. By this, I understand the need for unconditional openness toward the “other”, towards individuals as such, reaching to their full acceptance as citizens. Obviously, this is not the case in Kant. Still, the need that it be so tells of a more profound post-modern expectation: that otherness as such should be politically embraced by the new dynamics of our global existence. Difference being interpreted, however, as cultural difference, it turns out that culture – hegemonic Western culture – is to blame for its not being accommodated.

In order to assess Kant’s ideas about culture, and a possible formulation of his defense, I recommend reading his *Anthropology*, a locus of most the major themes relating to culture, politics and history. Also, the *Anthropology* is a context rather free of the supposedly flawed aprioristic constructs, since it is not a philosophical, but educational – pragmatic – work. Our questioning concerning Kant’s cosmopolitanism – hence his understanding of difference – and its relationship to culture can find an optimal terrain within its limits.

The actual work is in fact Kant's own publication of his textbook at the basis of his Anthropology course. The course, on the other hand, has seen other, later instances of publication, becoming the testimony of the author's intellectual development.

The wording of its title, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, refers to the relevant epistemology of Kant's vision on the human sciences. It is not a moral approach, educating the student how to form his will, nor is it a theoretical one, since a philosophical anthropology for Kant amounts to an oxymoron. Its pragmatism can be expressed in its leading principle – in the idea of showing what man can and should make of itself – not as an empirical description, nor as a normative claim, but as an endeavor oriented by a pragmatically universal, i.e., open and unbiased – and in this sense already cosmopolitan! – views on culture and history, seeking examples of relevant human otherness, not facts about objective human nature.

Lurking in the background of the named leading principle we must mention the idea – present in Kant's writings on history as well – that the itinerary of the individual is socially embedded. This idea draws on the presuppositions of the teleological argument, stating that Nature's hidden plan includes the development unto perfection of each species – in the case of man, this meaning that the goal of the individual is directed towards the fulfillment of the species' *differentia specifica*: Reason. Given that the existence of the individual is temporally limited, it is only through partaking in a community having a common epistemic horizon, a tradition and an identity – i.e., through belonging to a culture – that the individual is able to rationally strive towards its goal defined by Nature. Still, I understand this to be a matter of the given, and not of ought, pertaining to the natural side of the teleological argument, not holding therefore any ethical relevance.

Pragmatically, the possibilities of the individual for development are to be observed through culture. Still, culture is not just an occurrence, a mere contingent historical form of social existence without rational contents: it is always a rational image of the rule according to which freedom is defined in the given society. As such, it is itself a unit – a quasi-subject – of sovereignty, as the given society is, not in the sense that it controls minds or people, but in the more implicit sense that it is itself an expression of freedom, holding by itself a normative claim to autonomy exactly insofar it conveys this claim towards individual subjects in an epistemic manner.

We must only observe the exact understanding in which culture is autonomy: as a way, an expression, a form of freedom, given beforehand, lived through existentially as something given. This fact reveals exactly of the inner tension of the *Anthropology*: even if culture is given, temporal, a posteriori, its contents, its claims are normative, transcendental, aprioristic. Here we do not have the space to even explain this tension in detail, let me only note that it is not easily dispensed with.

What we must retain from the *Anthropology* is the factual need – the natural-teleological necessity – for culture and its problematic relationship to freedom. Nowhere do we observe a normative approach having culture for a subject: it is always the individual that is free. Also, it is the individual that needs culture for attaining its natural goal, and if Nature wills that we have culture, it is only on the basis of our individually, morally and universally oriented approach to history that we can see this purpose – hence the idea of a universal history with a cosmopolitan purpose.

Kant's response to his critics

If we try to return to above-mentioned idea, the one that I would call the fetishism of culture – observable in multi-culturalism and postmodernism – we may restate its ideal structure using Kantian terms in the following way. Any culture is free in its own right as a special expression of freedom, hence no culture – and no philosophical theory, these being culturally

embedded – may have primacy over others. More specifically, any culture as an expression of Nature’s intention to lead the species to its perfection is equal to any other, simply because there is no third term the comparison could use as a criterion.

However, there is such a third term, namely, autonomy. It is there to start with, as the very reason of conceiving history, and culture therein, in a universalist manner. Viewed from its perspective, culture is not contingent on history, and history on Nature, but all are contingent on the idea of the human being as a free, rational agent living under factual, determined – historical – conditions. Hence, culture acquires a negative sense beside the positive one described before: it not only expresses, but also limits the individual’s possibilities of expressing – indeed experiencing – freedom.

The correctness of such an argument is supported by Kant’s own negative use of culture in the context of universal history, as explained by Marianna Papastephanou (2002). It is not, again, a contingent fact that there exists a plurality of cultures, rather it should be seen as an expression of Nature’s wisdom against a possible forceful formation of a world state! This is the restatement of the unsocial sociability argument with reference to culture: where man wishes concord, Nature begs for discord. Since the idea of a universal history – and therewith of a kingdom of ends – is only a regulative idea – see Kleingeld (2008) –, it is not, and should not be supposed as if it were, in our power to bring about. Hence, culture could, and should also be seen as the principle of discord, and in epistemic terms, of non-understanding, of nonsense, when viewed from a cosmopolitan perspective. This is the systematically most valuable and at the same time most surprising cosmopolitan idea Kant has to offer us about culture.

Saving Kant from this point on should prove a clear-cut enterprise. Since his claims for any normative value of culture are, on the one hand, based on a teleological mode of argument, on the other, are as much negative as positive in its treatment, his stance should prove valid – or invalid, for that matter – irrespective of its cultural embedding. To put it bluntly, he takes culture into account, and in a way both more far-reaching and more profound than his critics do or expect him to do.

Since the point concerning culture has been made, and indeed in a systematically grounded manner, we should find a way to relevantly draw conclusions from it. To that end, one interesting way to rephrase the question could sound like this: one might ask whether Kant’s philosophical culture itself – claimed to be a cosmopolitan culture – has the character of a monologue or that of a dialogue. I would suggest the latter answer to be correct, but this is a question for another research.

In a more straightforward way, the line of argument sketched above has two relevant consequences. On the one hand, we can witness the return of autonomy to the discourse on culture – and insofar we wish to maintain culture as a key element in the cosmopolitan discourse, we are one step closer to a methodologically cosmopolitan social science that seeks a global scope for its analysis. On the other hand, our focus must shift from cultures as quasi-units of sovereignty to individuals as proper ones, and if we wish to maintain a Kantian cosmopolitan perspective, we must shift to individuals’ involvement in universal history. The motive of this involvement should not be sought around a universal rationality – one that we can either take for granted or we can dismiss altogether. Rationality in the individual is subjective, with only possible claims for universality, but in all its subjectivity, it revolves around a key concept, namely happiness, an idea that is informed both by morally social and by politically cultural concepts, but remains central to the Kantian analysis of the individual in its social-historical embedding. This should be the point of departure for future research that takes both individuals and cultures into account with a continued cosmopolitan intent.

Some conclusions concerning social science

Note that I do not claim the necessity of one universal reason for investigating cosmopolitan contents in global society. Rather, I assume that the universal is there through the global, and it is the performance of each individual how to relate to it – how he/she conceives of it in terms of his/her own happiness.

A noteworthy detail offers itself at this point. As Susan Meld Shell (2003) explains, Kant shifts his concept of happiness from a Stoic-Rousseauian type that emphasized the rational representation of a harmony of pleasures as the grounds for a conception of happiness, to a mature modern idea of a teleological representation of happiness as mediated by the concept of work as a transcendental principle. Due to this shift, the modern individual does not retain the pragmatic grounds of his/her autonomy – these grounds being a given representation of happiness – to itself, rather projects it outside itself into a social sphere where it gains reality through the reifying process of work as teleological action.

The relevant import of this reinterpretation of happiness in the cosmopolitan context is that it will not only be the quasi-sovereign units of meta-individual groups – cultures, religions or states – that will need to be granted attention, but also the emancipated individual in its personal performance. Linking the above information concerning happiness as mediated by work to the vision of the individual as a performing agent of a culturally embedded universal, we shall arrive at the idea of culture as something to be overcome by individual performance, this performance referring back to a social horizon on which it can be understood as work – that is, as a goal that can be represented for others from the point of view of its effect.

Without giving up culture as a medium of understanding, but considering it also in its limiting function, we may stipulate the idea of work as a principle – both subject and object – of sovereignty, carrier of a teleological content that can implicitly refer to universal teleology.

THE RETURN OF DIFFERENCE

Through the idea of a return of autonomy, we could link the issue of difference – and hence Kant's historical conception of community – to his general, moral, endeavor. The remaining issue in this sense is to explain the manner in which his view does fit with his cosmopolitanism, or simply: whether it is, besides being moral, also cosmopolitan.

Höffe's interpretation can again be of help. He claims not only that Kant's conception is moral and in this sense cosmopolitan, but moreover, that it is a place of a co-genesis of universal – cosmopolitan – cooperation among persons and peoples and of a right to difference.

Namely, it is in the context of Perpetual Peace where this happens. The free self-determination of humanity as having a cosmo-politically common origin with the free self-determination of persons, finds its analogue in this context through the free cooperation of political communities together with a preservation of their difference.

This is, also, the sense in which culture is politically important for Kant. Not as a value in itself, but in its political-dialectical function, the difference in personal and collective identities acts as a guarantee against a possible forceful, hence inauthentic unification of the globe under one imposed rule – a global despotism. It is the essential freedom pertaining to the right to difference – not difference as a carrier of freedom – that is indispensable for a cosmopolitan constitution. Simply, given the freedom of association dictated in cosmopolitanism, difference is there in it from the very beginning – there is no need for its theoretical re-grounding.

This is evident in the correct understanding of the very cosmopolitan law Kant stipulates – in the duty of hospitality. As many have overlooked – see Brown's (2010) argument against Derrida's interpretation – the limitation of cosmopolitan law to hospitality is itself a claim to freedom – namely, to the freedom of the state, in this case, not of the individual. It is the sovereignty of the state, more exactly, its right to particularity as against the universality in the person of the other, that is defended here, making cosmopolitanism translatable – in a histori-

cal perspective – as tolerance, that is, the right to cooperation within a merely negatively understood difference. However, this also means the right to idiosyncrasy, that is, the right not to cooperate within a positively understood difference.

In the background, there always lurks the issue of right as enforceable lawfulness that is presupposed by the acts of freedom that pertain to cosmopolitics. It remains to be asked, whether this is an issue that moves the discourse into a historical direction – that is, if it remains always important, if and how right is realized in all global contexts – or if it leaves it open to the aprioristic analysis. This problem takes us back to the idea of the Kingdom of Virtue, as methodologically different from the Kingdom of Ends. It seems that these two represent two alternative ways to interpret Kant’s cosmopolitanism. On the one hand – as Höffe explains – we see the social and political progress of mankind, encompassing moral progress, leading to a cosmopolitan society – this is the range of duties of right. On the other, to the same moral end, but leading to an analytically distinct result, we have the progress of the way of thinking, and its result – the Kingdom of Virtue.

Insofar as we have understood only the latter to be properly cosmo-political, we must draw a weird conclusion. In Kant, it seems, actual cosmopolitics does not happen on the terrain of politics – as we understand it today, in the sense of a free common self-determination – but on the terrain of religion! Obviously, in metaphysical terms, it is no surprise: cosmopolitics means the active allegiance to a cosmic order – that is, practiced religion. Still, the quite straightforward and analytical way Kant argues for it leaves a taste of frustration in someone who knows religion to be the terrain of secrets. Either, we must conclude, Kant must be wrong about religion – and wrong about cosmopolitics! – or, if he is right about cosmopolitics, he must have something peculiar to tell us concerning religion, too.

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