

**Gillian Brock, ed.** *Cosmopolitanism versus Non-Cosmopolitanism: Critiques, Defenses, Reconceptualizations*. Oxford University Press 2013. 352 pp. \$96.00 USD (Hardcover ISBN 9780199678426).

In coordinating and editing this volume, Gillian Brock deserves commendation for providing the reader with more than just a collection of disconnected papers. This book presents the productive debate of a symposium rather than the assortment of a conference, and in doing so it makes major strides in developing the notion of cosmopolitanism itself.

For example, Thomas Pogge's concluding chapter addresses the chapters presented earlier of Michael Blake, Andrea Sangiovanni, Saladin Meckled-Garcia, and Samuel Freeman (all included in this volume). The first three pieces—those of Blake, Sangiovanni, and Meckled Garcia—could be paired fruitfully with Pogge's for a graduate class or upper level seminar as the latter's responses are quite incisive.

Michael Blake, in his 'We are All Cosmopolitans Now', argues that the basic premise of cosmopolitanism is noncontroversial, yet his canvassing of the history of the notion offers a helpful introduction to the concept. Drawing from Pogge's definition of cosmopolitanism as a human moral global egalitarianism, offered in *World Poverty and Human Rights*, he asserts that few people could be called noncosmopolitan at this point in history. Instead, 'we are now arguing about what treating people as moral equals would actually look like' (52). For example, political theorists disagree about the extent to which global institutions are radically alterable or subject to moral scrutiny.

Pogge responds to this, apparently anodyne, conclusion by pointing out that a commitment to global moral egalitarianism 'is surprisingly demanding' (297). He believes that we may have come to a point in history where moral objectivity is socially expected at the level of the country or local government, but no such global institutions based on unselfish (unstatist) moral objectivity exist, and international decision-making is still by and large motivated by national interests and/or corporate greed.

Sangiovanni, in 'On the Relation Between Moral and Distributive Equality', aims to drive a wedge between the mere assertion of moral equality and arguments for the necessity of the equal distribution of goods. He considers the argument from the moral arbitrariness of birth (luck egalitarianism), responding to Kok-Chor Tan and Pablo Gilabert, arguing that the equal moral worth of humans does not nullify the historical and familial relations that establish proprietary obligations. Deeming his position 'relationist', he argues that general conceptions of moral equality are open to various accounts of non-discriminatory differences in treatment.

Pogge responds by again showing the demanding nature of moral equality: any account of distributive justice, including accounts of inequality, should ultimately be grounded in respect for it. Without defeating reasons, of which there are many, we expect moral equality to roughly entail some version of distributive equality. Additionally, he argues that moral equality has implications not only for material relations, but for procedural and developmental arrangements as well.

Pogge next argues against both consequentialist and monist versions of cosmopolitanism. (Monism is the position that different *iudicanda* (entities subject to moral assessment) are similarly evaluated.) Monism is false, he argues, because we evaluate different *iudicanda* differently. To the consequentialist position, he offers the objection of differing contexts. Simply knowing the conse

quences, for example, that given a specific decision one person will die and one person will get \$100 dollars is insufficient to adjudicate the permissibility of the decision: '[I]s the agent killing a human being for a \$100 payment; is he failing to save a person in distress in order not to lose or spoil an object worth \$100; is he declining to make a donation to an organization that saves distant strangers; is he refusing to be blackmailed by a person threatening suicide?' (304). Referring to Sangiovanni, his point is that even if individuals make legitimate moral decisions in the context of their relationships, institutions must be committed to a stronger form of moral equality in order to be just.

In 'Is There Really a "Global Human Rights Deficit?"' Meckled-Garcia presents the plausible position that human rights violations must involve 'an action (or omission)' whether personal or collective, not simply the effect of an institutional order (112). In cases without a directed wrongdoing, the authority most responsible for the flawed system is responsible. Referring obliquely to Pogge, Meckled-Garcia goes on to argue that the current global economic order is not analogous to a slaveholding society. Instead, '[t]he poverty-inducing effects of the global economic order are due to accumulated actions in themselves not unreasonable or describable as "imposing poverty"'. (118). He proposes what he calls 'International Cosmopolitanism', which entails that international actors are obligated, by duties of care not justice, to promote agreements that lessen all explicit human rights violations.

Pogge responds to Meckled-Garcia by insisting that authorities are often politically supported by everyday citizens for the sake of self-interest. Also, he casts doubt on Meckled-Garcia's seeming belief that the economic system is itself reasonable and innocent, arguing instead that severe global poverty is a foreseeable consequence of current international relations. Also, it is unclear, to me at least, where in Meckled-Garcia's argument the line between collective action and institutional or systemic human rights violations is to be found. At one point, he seems to mark this distinction along the lines of having a shared aim, but such a distinction overlooks negligent ignorance.

Elizabeth Ashford's contribution, 'Severe Poverty as a Systemic Human Rights Violation', also responds to Meckled-Garcia's chapter, but her chapter stands alone, and I recommend it even as an assignment for a lower-division seminar, as I used it. She develops the concept of a systemic human rights violation, as opposed to the standard model, which takes human rights violations to be specific actions perpetrated by a relatively small number of assailants against a relatively small number of victims. Most fruitfully, she argues that sweatshops, for example, can only be accounted for as systemic human rights violations because the role of the violator in such a case (the manager or owner of the factory) is inessential. She develops the hypothetical situation in which the factory is managed by machines. The workers submit to harmful treatment because it is relatively better than the other options, and they will continue to submit to it until the overall social conditions improve. A similar analysis applies to people smugglers or parents who sell their children into slavery: while they appear to be the violator of the victims' human rights, their choice might be rational given the dire situation, and rectifying a human rights violation should be for the benefit of the victim, not forcing them into an overall worse situation (one in which they might die from starvation, for example).

Ashford also argues that the duties of those in rich countries to those in poor countries are in one sense perfect and in one sense imperfect. They are perfect because there are ways in which our participation in an unjust global system causes harm to the poor, and we are therefore perfectly obligated to cease participation in the system in order to cease causing harm. Nevertheless, building on and transforming the case of the harmless torturer, she argues that there are no easy means of opting

out of the unjust global system. Like the harmless torturer, we are in fact responsible for torturing, but unlike the harmless torturer, we cannot simply walk away. We must instead take resistance to the system and contribution to a more just system to be general life goals. In that sense, our duties to the global poor are imperfect, and like imperfect duties, we are afforded some choice in and discretion in the way we are to best fulfill them.

While this volume contains many important contributions to the cosmopolitan debate, due to space constraints, I will conclude by highlighting the ways in which new questions lead to more creative modes of engagement. Richard W. Miller suggests, in ‘The Cosmopolitan Controversy Needs a Mid-Life Crisis’, that instead of framing cosmopolitanism and statism as two opposing positions, it would be more beneficial to examine their common ground. Drawing from the widely accepted moral position that all human beings matter, Miller shares his ‘Principle of Mutual Concern’, which is based in a concern for the needs of others rather than in a theory of just distribution. This principle limits concern to the extent that it does not worsen the concerned person’s life. Miller also stresses that international concern includes the value of self-reliance as much as domestic concern does. Overall, Miller’s argument is that it is best to address cosmopolitanism through the question: ‘[T]o what extent are political duties to foreigners similar to or different from political duties to compatriots in their basis, impact, and demands?’ Specifically, he argues that the same account of egalitarian political goals that applies domestically also applies internationally. Miller’s spirit of reconciliation and connection-making represents the best that this book has to offer. Along the same lines, those contributions, such as Ashford’s, Pogge’s, and Blake’s, that empirically ground their philosophical analyses in relevant information about domestic and international organizations and states of affairs offer the most plausible accounts of our global moral duties and are sure to be useful for many readers.

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