

# Contradictions of Cosmopolitanism: Impacts on Diversity and Inclusion

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## Abstract

For quite too long, the West has portrayed itself as the custodian of civilization and civility worthy of emulation by the rest of the world. Such characterisation of itself explains the epoch of European colonialism and the successive Western policies that have not only exponentially underdeveloped the Global South, but also caused an intellectual and cultural inferiority complex. While this debate may not be uniquely unknown, this paper problematises the concept of cosmopolitanism, a long debated idea believed to have originated from the West that has been globalised through colonialism and the Eurocentric international system. This paper explores the dichotomous representation of cosmopolitanism *vis-à-vis* diversity and inclusion. To place the discussion in perspective, the paper addresses the issue of populism, COVID-19, racism, and refugee crisis to expose several embedded contradictions and inconsistencies. It concludes arguing for a more inclusive and transparent representation of world identities in order to have a fruition of a cosmopolitan world.

**Keywords:** Cosmopolitanism, West, diversity, inclusion, populism

## Resumen

Durante mucho tiempo, Occidente se ha presentado a sí mismo como el protector de la civilización y el civismo, digno de emulación por parte del resto del mundo. Tal caracterización de sí mismo explica la época del colonialismo europeo y las sucesivas políticas occidentales que no solo han propiciado el subdesarrollo exponencial del Sur Global, sino que también han provocado un complejo de inferioridad intelectual y cultural. Si bien este debate puede ser conocido, este ensayo problematiza el concepto de cosmopolitismo, una idea debatida durante mucho tiempo que se cree se originó en Occidente y, en consecuencia, se globalizó a través del colonialismo y el sistema internacional eurocéntrico. El artículo explora la representación dicotómica del cosmopolitismo *vis-à-vis* la diversidad y la inclusión. Para poner la discusión en perspectiva, el ensayo utiliza el tema del populismo, el COVID-19, el racismo y la crisis de refugiados para exponer las contradicciones e inconsistencias arraigadas. Concluye abogando por una representación más inclusiva y transparente de las identidades del mundo a favour de un mundo cosmopolita.

**Palabras clave:** cosmopolitismo, Occidente, diversidad, inclusión, populismo

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## Introduction

Since time immemorial, human beings have developed diverse ways of living in flocks or loosely organised communities. As 'gregarious species' humans have developed different forms of bound (family, clan, tribe, community, empire, state, etc) within and beyond their immediate vicinities. Socio-economic, political, cultural, and technological interdependence is a common value amongst humans, responsible for the mileage of growth and development visible in human societies. Conditioned by varying geographical dispensations, the dispersed human species/societies have over the ages created and maintained unique cultural value and racial/ethnic distinction. This cultural peculiarity does not preclude interdependence and intra and trans-border interactions. The exchange of ideas, cultural norms, and ethos across different human spaces has historically produced industrious people, development, cultures, and civilisations, yet it has resulted in numerous confrontations, explicating that duality of human relations. Because of the complexity associated with the idea/term of cosmopolitanism, it has remained one of the most highly contested terms that has been conceptualised and defined in diverse ways (Binnie et al, 2009).

The fact is that cosmopolitanism cannot be reduced to mere social interactions or limited by spatial intercourse, its profile is thus raised to the status of transnational, universal, and cross-border ideation that conjures inclusiveness and global cognitive trajectories. Alluding to Islam as an embodiment of cosmopolitanism, Keane (2004) argues that unlike other religions, it is driven by an ethical vision for universalising human divergence, emphasising a keen sense of common human destiny, it rejects the idea of a chosen people – which disenfranchises other, does not condone the license of the strong, and extend generosity to the weak, yet it does not particularly preach monism, and it is undoubtedly a force for cosmopolitan pluralism. In its political complexion, Kant envisions a perpetual peace world (Georg, 2012). Political cosmopolitanism applies the international outlook with a particular emphasis on international relations and global politics, though the central theme of political cosmopolitanism is the protection of human rights – preference should be given to the rights of individuals rather than the rights of states (van Hooft, 2012). This central premise of political cosmopolitanism does not appeal to many political theorists, especially those of a realist persuasion and has become more precarious amidst the rising waves of populism in the world. The history of international relations is replete with socio-economic and political efforts geared at promoting a cosmopolitan agenda. Some argue that the commonwealth of nations at global, regional, and continental levels have demonstrated varying manifestations of cosmopolitanism.

Despite the degree of acceptance, the concept of cosmopolitanism has suffered the casualty of idea and implementation. In its different complexions, it has gathered considerable enemies that render it and reduces it to epistemic exercises. To ensure a

cosmopolitan world, the United Nations created numerous institutions and developed different strategies tailored to emasculate global poverty and suffering, foreclose global inequality, and prevent —and end— wars. The millennium goals, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are laudable cosmopolitan agendas. International laws have been a strong mechanism to moderating interstate relations. To say these institutions and structures are needless because of the laxity in the fruition of cosmopolitan agenda is unsound. Some remarkable milestones have been fairly covered over the last several years. Despite all these efforts, the idea of cosmopolitanism does not seem insulated from embedded contradictions, these inconsistencies are increasingly becoming more salient and deserve attention. To place the discussion in perspective, the chapter explores the scholarship on cosmopolitanism and subsequently addresses the issue of populism, COVID-19, racism, and refugee crisis in order to explain the contradictions, reductionism, and failure of cosmopolitanism in recent times.

### **Cosmopolitanism**

Brown (2013) posits cosmopolitanism as the philosophical idea that human beings are morally equal. It can be represented as a principle that demands that justice should be a universal and equal concern for all humanity. Cosmopolitanism may be located as a global phenomenon, carrying the element of a “global culture that helped to promote a wide network of social relationships which transcends state frontiers and encompass people all over the world” (Baylis, 2001, p. 269). For some scholars, cosmopolitanism is akin to globalisation because it does not only foster a cosmopolitan culture, it also allows “people and ideas to increasingly flow around the world...in closer proximity” (Murden, 2011, p. 419). Cosmopolitanism supposedly presents the idea of equality and common shared values and global-social networks (Linklater, 2001). For some, cosmopolitanism equals internationalism, as its emphasis is on the possibility of different peoples and cultures to co-exist as one. Sargent (2009) argues that the need for a united way amongst the citizens of the world may resonate with internationalists; however, there is a clear disagreement on what this way should be. Scheffler (2008, p. 68) echoes a similar view: “although many contemporary theorists have put forward views that they describe as cosmopolitan, there is little agreement among them about the central element of a cosmopolitan position.” Others also contend that it is hard to assert what cosmopolitanism truly is and how such a community can be created (Binnie, 2009; Breckenridge et al, 2002). Pogge (1992) argues that individualism (concern for human beings), universality (equal treatment of all humans regardless of their status and socio-cultural profile), and generality (concern for everyone beyond immediate compatriots) are the three elements of cosmopolitanism. For Wardle (2015), it encompasses four distinct overlapping perspectives: humanity, tolerance, global peace, and normative cosmopolitan aims and actions. Shapcott (2011) locates

cosmopolitanism within deontological and utilitarian ethics. However, according to Georg (2012, p. 96), Kant theorised and classified cosmopolitanism into ‘epistemological, economic, or commercial, moral, theological, political, and cultural versions.’ Scholars have debated the universality of Kant’s understanding of cosmopolitanism. What Kant (Georg, 2012) termed cosmopolitan law or the law of world citizens —*Weltbürgerrecht*— is largely true for Europe which was the immediate social laboratory for him. However, the exercise of that law in today’s world arguably carries some differential (discriminatory) manifestation as it was during Kant’s era. Law is arguably non-existent for many in the Global South as opposed to the Global North.

Within the large number of contemporary International Relations theories, cosmopolitanism has generated considerable debates. Within the normative school of International Relations, Chris Brown (1992) identified and associated the idea of cosmopolitanism to the autonomy of the state, the ethics of the use of forces, and international justice. He posits that analyses of state relations cannot always be reduced to power relations; instead, he sustains we should focus on the moral principles guiding these relations. Within the same school, cosmopolitanism rejects state’s autonomy that undermines the moral rights of humanity or individuals. In addition to approving a just distribution of economic resources, it calls for humanitarian intervention if the moral rights of humanity or individuals are under attack (Smith, 2001). Dunne (2011) re-echoes Kant, suggesting that cosmopolitanism is an unwritten universal hospitality code by which the violation of rights in one part of the world is felt everywhere. Scheffler (2008) understands cosmopolitanism from the lenses of justice and follows John Rawls’s insistence that justice precedes other important political ideas such as liberty, equality, law, security, and others. For Rawls, “justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought” (Rawls, 1971, p. 3). Therefore, global institutions that tend to promote cosmopolitan ideas must advocate distributive or economic justice for all irrespective of the religion, race, caste, geographical location, and political affiliation (van Hooff, 2009).

Even though Parekh (2003) rejects the notion of global citizenship, he argues that the essence of cosmopolitanism rests on the conviction that we are all obliged to treat our fellow citizens as to those outside our community. This high value of being dutiful to others is premised on the idea of interrelatedness of human and ethics of interdependence, which by extension should reduce species-bias and contribute to the prevention of human suffering and inequality. Amidst a globalising world, indifference to global justice has resultantly created a more chaotic climate for the have and have-not individuals, respectively. The cost of socio-economic and political indifference towards others may probably explicate the proliferation of non-traditional security threats such as terrorism and genocidal mayhem. The globalisation of these phenomena has a significant impact on three cosmopolitan

positions - individualism, universality, and generality. The consequence of which generates the debate of cosmopolitan protection or what Mary Kaldor refers to as 'cosmopolitan law enforcement' through formidable, global, and functional institutions. Dallmayr (2003) critiqued the essence of such institutions since the end of the Cold War. Besides, one of those institutions created to ensure anti-cosmopolitan dispositions is the International Criminal Court (ICC) —that seems to some as a Western and colonial tool only to punish the weak states— has remained incapable to punish the impunity of powerful states. The rejection of the court's legitimacy and exit threat by few countries exposed the differential treatment and impunity accorded to different human species and nations (Kuwonu, 2017; Roth, 2014). Critics of the current system believe the selective justice system prevails in the global system *vis-à-vis* world actors and states (ICC Forum, 2014). In the light of international law and the premise of human rights protection, critics see the great powers to be manoeuvring the international institutions to promote their interest and at the same time breaching the national sovereignty of other states. Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria, for instance, are reference points.

Scholars have argued that the fruition of cosmopolitanism is dependent on the extent to which the particularity of the Westphalia nation-state system is tolerant to interests transcending national interests (Shapcott, 2011). Over the last several years, the embracement of parochial nationalism and chauvinism —considered by some as patriotism in its radical and conservative form— has proven to be one of the chief enemies of cosmopolitan societies (Beck, 2002), engendering egocentric and incognisant proclivity towards the plight of others (Parekh, 2003). The fate of the cosmopolitan world may not be unconnected to the creation of a powerful world government and institution, devoid of the interest and ego of a segment of the world. Such institutions must dwell on universal normative structure, ethical treatment of others, and to protect the cosmopolitan culture and manifesto (Beck, 2010). Proponents of cosmopolitanism assume a utilitarian status of international law as a tool or mechanism to ensure a cosmopolitan culture. Hegel exposes this utilitarian fallacy. He challenged the relationship between states based on a system of international law, because for him there can be no law without an agency of enforcement (Harmon, 1964). Even when few are considered the custodian of the law or its enforcers, international relations is largely driven by power politics, a demonstration of hegemonic inclination.

## Populism

Cosmopolitanism derives from the Greek word *kosmopolitēs* ('citizen of the world'). Therefore being a world citizen must be guarded by sets of moral and legal precepts – unique and uniform for all. Besides, being cosmopolitan suggests an individual will not be “subservient to a particular religious or political authority, someone who was not biased by

particular loyalties or cultural prejudices” (Kleingeld & Brown, 2019). If this description were tenable, one logical argument would be that cosmopolitanism requires a state of humanism and independence of values. Populism has become one of the most striking and elegant political phenomena of the contemporary reality. Given its proliferation and its flexibility to change, it is characterised by the politics of polarisation and protection of group interests at the expense of others. Populism as a thin political ideology is socially constructed and equally promotes othering, exclusivity, and treatment of diversity with disdain (Bakare, 2019). Such characterisation is laughable amidst any claim of a cosmopolitan world. On one hand, populism, especially the right-wing populism, tends to make its adherents happy, but simultaneously displeasing others, which partly contravene Kant’s concept of ethical commonwealth. The wave of populism, especially the right variant, fuelled the rise of hate crimes and racial discrimination saliently. In North America, Europe and Asia there has been a significant legitimization of crimes against others. For instance, during Trump’s era, America was characteristically racist, anti-others, anti-immigration, and anti-Muslim; this era recorded significant hate crimes (Ray, 2022) to an extent that based on its own statistics, the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) elevated hate crimes and civil rights to a top national threat priority (FBI, 2021a; FBI, 2021b). The advent of COVID-19 further exacerbated the already tense climate; hate crimes against the Asian and African Americans rose sharply (Mangan, 2021).

In Asia, the embracement of Hindutva by the Modi’s BJP led government carries overarching consequences not just for India but also for the region. Like every populist belief, Hindutva is a religious-political ideology that seeks “to establish the hegemony of Hindus and the Hindu way of life” (Bakare and Iqbal, 2021). Its public representation is akin to cultural autocratic-nationalism, promoting Hindu consciousness, Hindu backlash, and anti-minorityism (Malik & Singh, 1992). As it is with ideology, Hindutva is “accepted as a fact or truth by a group of people and provides the believer with a picture of the world both as it is and as it should be” (Sargent, 2009, pp. 2-3). This non-cosmopolitan worldview reduces Hindutva to a parochial fanatical belief that emboldens the majority. Same holds true for the wave of European populism, which was not discriminatory in scope and breadth, every parts of Europe experienced —and are still experiencing— one variant of populism. The radical rightist variant in Europe may hold differential views, yet they all converge on anti-immigration, anti-globalisation, Islamophobia, and homophobia (Rattansi, 2020; Savage, 2020). This variant of European populism is increasingly synonymous with insecurity nurtured by minority communities. The enabling climate created by this variant has given new impetus to hate crimes to the height of political and moral correctness (Florian, 2018; Hagemeister, 2022; Pap, 2021; Pappas, Mendez, & Herrick, 2009). Canada, a part of the Western bloc, has largely avoided ethno-populism, but not the surge of hate crimes (Miller, 2017).

The attendant consequences of hate crimes grow beyond the populist borders, as hatred enhances. The tough rejection that punctuated the refugee crisis across the European borders exposed European understandings of cosmopolitanism and implicated the unconcealed ethno-nationalist rationale for the rejection. PISOIU and AHMED (2016) argue that this is not merely rooted in fear but it is also a capitalisation on fear. As a European leader, the response of the German government towards the refugees was a unique and commendable largess. Unlike Germany, the rest of the continent displayed an unequivocal anti-immigration, anti-refugee, and anti-cosmopolitanism attitude. At the core of the drama was political-cum-religious-cultural discrimination.

A common lacuna in the discourse of populism is the reductionist approach, which mostly reduces the discourse to a one-sided debate. More often than not, populist elites are dubbed as actors, who exploit people's sentiments, using a particular kind of language, symbols and expressions within a given historical and cultural context. While this understanding of populism stands factual, it however neglects the legitimation of the people as an agency —though a silent agency, but whose voice gets vocal through the mouth of the populist elites. Second, the relationship between the two is divergent yet convergent and based on reciprocity. Populist leaders do not create ill feelings and sentiments for the people, instead what is often missed is that the former act as catalysing agents that de-hibernates the existing hibernated sentiments amongst the people. A further nuanced understanding of populism shows that it is the people that greases the engine of populism, they accord both political and public legitimacy to the elites, upon these two forms of legitimacy populism thrives (Bakare, 2019; Bakare, 2017).

Populist leaders habitually present a messianic role of themselves —a role geared at leading people towards change (betterment) from the crop of corrupt governments and leaders. Combined with this role is the exclusive knowledge of knowing what is good for others —the desire for change, to invade space, even exterminate others (Inayatullah, 2014). Theoretically, Kant challenges this underlying proclivity to populism. Considering that what is good and being the source of happiness for others was a moral question for Kant. He argues that humans are incapacitated to know the moral status of other individuals — as humans we know not what is in the thought of others and hence we are in no position to assess if the other deserves happiness. To this end, the overbearance of populist rhetorics may be welcoming to few who subscribe to a similar worldview, but perilous for many who are considered as the others and must be helped. For instance in recent times, populist leaders with religious doctrines have done more damage than good. In their form of religious cosmopolitanism, their actions have created “hell” instead of the “kingdom of God” on earth, which would guarantee “the harmony of morality and deserved happiness” (Georg, 2012, p. 96). Such anti-religious cosmopolitanism is evident for all of those who

claim they are fighting for God, in either the virtual and or public sphere, and want to create a uniform religious space (Adogame, 2020; Bakare, 2020). In a post-truth era in which the proliferation of new media has exploded (Arif and Bakare, 2022), the intent of mandatory inclusion, resultantly disrespecting individualism, disparaging diversity and de-promoting inclusion endangers cosmopolitanism. For instance, Modi's Hindutva ideology in India, Christian populist leaders in Europe and America who categorically disparage Muslim refugees on racial and religious grounds, the extremist and genocidal policy of Buddhist in Myanmar, and of course the terror regime of Daesh —the Islamic State (ISIS), a non-state actor in the Levant— are all few but reference points. Disrespect for true cosmopolitanism comes with lamentable consequences amongst which is the refugee crisis in Syria, the genocidal conduct against the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, the persecution of religious-minority (Christians and Muslims) in India and in Indian Occupied Kashmir. At best, a logical remedy can be the embrace of a humanistic world that upholds the value entrenched in Kant's ethical and theological cosmopolitanism, a commonwealth of people "where humans unite freely into a commonwealth based on equality and self-legislation, rational beings are respected as ends in themselves, and a moral whole of all ends is achieved." This aspect of cosmopolitanism advocates loving oneself and others with the aim for perfection (Georg, 2012, p. 98).

### **Response to COVID-19**

The COVID-19 outbreak exposes the vulnerability "of human scientific and technological advancement. It reinforces the binarity that characterises the architecture of the global system" (Bakare, 2022a, p. 141). Nevertheless, the virus exposed the epistemic capacity of the medical community to confront existential threats. The outbreak reinforced the vast difference between the physical quality and quantity of the health infrastructure, especially between the Global North and South. The virus is border-blind, rapacious, and indiscriminate. Whereas the exigency and existentiality of the virus demands a global response, the initial answer was not merely contradictory to the concept of moral and ethical cosmopolitanism, but it visibilised how COVID-19's vaccines were weaponised and used as a tool of diplomacy and geopolitics. Bakare (2022a) argues that while the Global North led the race of developing the vaccines, the Global South remained peripherally dependent on the North.

The politicisation of the vaccines defeated the concept of moral cosmopolitanism — the commonwealth of people, who do not only strive to love themselves but to share similar compassion for others. This contradiction otherwise underscores the culturally rooted and undefeatable parochial nationalism, its embracement over cosmopolitanism. Combined with the stigmatisation of COVID-19 as a Chinese or Wuhan virus, the Chinese vaccines were also ensnared in a vilified diplomacy and politics. For instance, the initial response



of many western states to the Chinese were demeaning, even when the Chinese vaccines were certified amongst the most effective (Khan and Bakare, 2022). In addition to the politicisation, there was a considerable human rights side of the debate. Travellers were forced to administer sets of particular vaccines (against their will) due to the travel restriction, The vaccines politics contravened the concept of moral cosmopolitanism, in which human togetherness (commonwealth) should be based on equality and self-legislation, and were humans are considered rational beings with respect (Georg, 2012).

By extension, the COVID-19 pandemic saw a worldwide spike in anti-Asian sentiments and xenophobic behaviours (Human Rights Watch, 2020). The pandemic exposed the vulnerability of intolerance in contemporary societies. The globalised nature, exigency, and the existentiality of the virus suggest the need for a solution that considers the wellbeing of people within the global commonwealth without any distinction. Premised on the claim of a cosmopolitan world, it is both moral and legal, and the response to the virus must display “a view to the well-being of the human race as a whole and insofar as it is conceived as progressing toward its well-being in the series of generations of all future times” (Kant, 1996).

The political and diplomatic drama following the outbreak of the virus underpins how strong human and national sentimentality can be. It equally reiterates the securitisation of crises and the transcendence and power of elites to galvanise public sentiments and polarise the world. The degree of sectionalism and hesitancy that surrounds the COVID-19 vaccination does not merely speak of the vulnerability of the world to post-truth and fake news, it certainly depicts the un-cosmopolitan propensity of segments of the world population (Khan & Bakare, 2022). On one hand, segments of the world had relatively abundant vaccines, while others were lacking, and on the other, the champions of vaccine hesitancy constituted a degree of public nuisance to the generality and to public health security (Khan & Bakare, 2022). The division created by the vaccine hesitancy reaffirmed Johan Galtung’s conceptualisation of conflict as the incompatibility of goals (amongst people – between those who want and do not want to be vaccinated) and why the path towards a perpetual peace as theorised by Kant will not be accomplished soon.

## **Racism**

The universal derogation, discrimination and disenfranchisement of dark skin individuals make them to introspect themselves about the reasons for their plight. They also wonder about why were they historically the major victims of slavery, colonialism, immigration, among others. These are both moral and legal questions, yet a reason for people affected by such, are forced to wonder whether they fit the definition and label of world citizens, or at least a member of the human race. Similarly, they question the fact of whether they

have much in common with others around the world in terms of privileges. With this in mind, racial discrimination challenges cosmopolitanism, which emphasises tolerance to differences and the acceptance of the other, as it does internationalism (Georg, 2012). Textbook descriptions or media representations often portray racism as a Euro-America problem, a monopoly of the White race. While these characterisations are attested by history, racial discrimination is nonetheless beyond the circle of the “white race”. Research has shown that racial discrimination is a social construct, emboldened, encouraged, and transmitted through the processes of socialisation. Predicated on certain variables, societies are prone to cultivate racial discrimination, which has become more precarious amidst the advent and proliferation of the new media and the post-truth era. Interestingly, if the root of racism is embedded in social constructs and socialisations, its elimination can equally be addressed through the purification of the same factors —i.e. social construction and socialisation.

Recently, the wave of racial discrimination and ill-treatment has proliferated underlying the degree of global un-cosmopolitanism. This is exemplified through the inhumane treatment of African migrants in Libya, dubbed as the modern-day slave market (CNN, 2017). Another example is the racist representation of Africa in the Chinese discursive and non-discursive practice; the impact of such representational practice on African migrants in China, on Chinese social media and the manifestation of such anti-cosmopolitan conduct of Chinese in Africa, despite the claim of the Chinese government of zero tolerance for racism (VOA, 2022). The attendant racial profiling of Asians, especially Chinese, following the outbreak of COVID-19 in the US, the growing racial issues in Canada, Europe, and its structural representation in the US may not be widely discussed, but the global attention the killing of George Floyd and the global momentum gathered by the Black Lives Matters nuance the depth of the issue.

### **Refugee Crisis**

War is a product of unresolved human incompatibilities and is intrinsically embedded in human sociological history. The reasons and consequences of war and conflict are numerous and can take the shape of social protracted conflicts (Bakare, 2021). In 1992, the UN created the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to “provide political and executive direction to UN peacekeeping operations around the world and maintain contact with the Security Council, troops and financial contributors, and parties to the conflict in the implementation of Security Council mandates” (UNPK, nd). Although the idea of peacekeeping predates the DPKO, in its seventy-two years of operations, this agency has tried to ensure the cessation of violent conflicts in various parts of the world, but with limited success.

In the dynamic world, the cessation of conflict is uncertain and its intended consequences may not be predicted. Amongst others, conflicts induce migration and are responsible for several refugee crises, which in turn constitute national, regional, and continental security threats. Because of conflict, the forceful mobility of people across transnational and continental borders now counts as part of non-traditional security threat – NTS. The status of a refugee is clearly protected by international laws and other customary regimes agreed by states. Though not all states are signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol, at least 149 are members of these regimes. The Refugee Convention has non-discriminatory rules for which states are expected to comply. The convention aim to protect refugees from any form of discrimination on the bases of religion, culture, skin colour. Article 3 states: “The Contracting States shall apply the provisions of this Convention to refugees without discrimination as to race, religion or country of origin.” (The refugee convention, 1951).

There are many people who are either refugees outside or within their traditional homes or states. In today’s conflictive world, many have been displaced due to wars in different African countries, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and more recently Ukraine. Conceptually, the adherence to cosmopolitan philosophy should mediate and moderate the incessant intra and inter-state wars, however, compelling factors beyond this philosophy makes Kant’s perpetual peace a farfetched epistemic adventurism. Undoubtedly, intra and inter-state wars and the following human displacements are a concern for ethical and cultural cosmopolitanism.

Being a refugee is an international recognised status that clearly requires humanitarian response without any form of discrimination. In addition to the language, the essence of the Refugee Convention is situated within the ambit of international human rights law. Therefore, refugee crises must be treated as a human rights and humanitarian crisis without any degree of discrimination. As noted by Nussbaum (1996), “we should recognize humanity wherever it occurs, and give its fundamental ingredients, reason and moral capacity, our first allegiance” (p. 161). Invariably, it requires no hard logic to understand the cosmopolitan spirit embedded in the aforementioned Article 3. However, two recent cases suggest there are degrees of contradictions in the understanding, adherence, and implementation of this article: these are the Middle East and Ukraine refugee crises.

At the outbreak of the refugee crises in Syria and Iraq, caused by the inhumane atrocities of Daesh, otherwise known as the Islamic State of Levant (Iraq and Syria), the refugees forced their ways towards the European borders hoping to survive, but were rejected and greeted with insolence (Bakare, 2016; Bakare, 2017). The media reporting, commentaries, and political narratives that surrounded the Middle East refugee crisis were de-cosmopolitan in nature, incongruence, and diametrical opposite to Article 3 of

the Refugee Convention. The discriminatory otherness towards the Middle Easterner refugees was evident and they were forced to face dehumanisation across the European borders. Masked in nationalist rhetorics, European states created walls against people seeking help and compassion; they were placed within the bracket of others. Other than Germany, the rest of Europe fell short in their fulfilment of the rules governing the treatment of refugees; instead, there was a sheer display of anti-refugee and anti-cosmopolitan appetite.

Meanwhile at the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war and the consequent refugee crisis, display a more favourable and amiable media reporting, commentaries, and political narratives toward refugees. At the core of the narrative was identity congruence and cognitive consonance, as opposed to the cognitive dissonance amidst the refugees from the Middle East. The corresponding response to the Ukrainian refugees reinforces the 'in and out group' identity and equally underscores the distinction and preferential treatment for European migrants. The media narrative at the outbreak of the Ukraine war was more compassionate toward Ukrainians as they are white Europeans, as opposed to people from Afghanistan or Africa (Ahmad, 2022; Traub, 2022). The Ukrainian refugees enjoyed the identity and privilege of being European, but similar privileges were not extended to those from the Middle East. While many Arabs and Afghans were treated with pure brutality and inhumanity, Europe was swift to open its borders to Ukrainian refugees, a clear double standard (OCHA, 2022). The binary correspondence to the two cases exhibited the failure of cosmopolitanism to war. Contemporary wars are reduced to a plague peculiar only to the malfunctioned undeveloped nations; however, the Ukrainian case defeats such reductionist approach.

The Ukrainian case proves the primacy of realism in international politics and world affairs. The Russia-Ukraine war re-echoes the dearth of morality and neutrality of realism. Irrespective of the religion, ethnic proximity, language similarity, socio-cultural similarities, national interest and the protection of sovereign integrity is a package that cannot be accomplished by the state. The corresponding European policy to the Ukraine refugee crisis demonstrates the failure of cosmopolitanism, in terms of selective reductionism. It depicted the double standards of the West when it comes to refugees from non-European and European extraction. The differential treatment and mammoth Western concern geared towards Ukrainians was in stark contrast to the narratives and policies that followed the refugee crisis in 2016. Similar un-cosmopolitan ill-treatments characterise African migrants on the Mediterranean seas (BBC, 2015) and the same holds true for the South Americans seeking asylum in the US. The debate of double standards may be routed and located in the adherence of human rights and the protection of state sovereignty.

Another aspect of the discriminatory and lopsided response was the narrative on freedom fighter. The latter was acceptable for the Americans and Europeans volunteers wanting to fight for Ukraine, but the same privilege was considered legally non-extendable to the volunteers wanting to join the Daesh. The common denomination of these two divergent volunteers was the conviction in the sacredness of their cause —i.e. the willingness to sacrifice their lives – through a jihad or crusade (Bishara, 2022; Gibbons-Neff, Hopkins & Arraf, 2022; Khalel & Vickery, 2015, Mehra & Thorley, 2022; Seldin, 2022). The lopsided description of freedom fighters indicates the dichotomous and binary representation of people, which brings ontological contradictions that typify international relations. The response of Europeans to the refugee crises explicitly revealed the dichotomous relations between international law (supposedly cosmopolitan) and national law. Interestingly, while theorising perpetual peace, Kant envisioned international peace as closely related to international law. This form of peace in Kant’s view was part of a federation of states willing to cooperate based upon moral and religious grounds (Harmon, 1964). Such idealism has been challenged in the past and the present populism also indicates the advocacy for sovereign autonomy and national law over international law, as in the case of the European Union.

## Conclusion

The Westphalia nation-state system prides itself on state autonomy and resistance against the overbearance of international institutions that supposedly cater for all. This limitation explains why the global political arena has been characterised by insecurity, both traditional and non-traditional security threats. The dearth of global justice for all and the preferential treatment being enjoyed by a segment of the world complicates the idea of cosmopolitanism in all fronts. The need for an egalitarian cosmopolitanism is imperative to nourish and resolve the lacunae and inconsistency that characterises present-day cosmopolitanism. Without a more inclusive and transparent representation of the world identities in the global structures and institutions, the fruition of cosmopolitan world will remain farfetched. Even when it is hard to convince nations against their parochial nationalism, the failure to appreciate cosmopolitanism always come with consequences. The failure to ensure better living standards in poor nations, to promote good governance, to maintain political and economic stability will always create incidents, such as refugee crisis, that may resultantly become a threat to the enablers. To protect the spirit and value of cosmopolitanism, the idea of global institutions that protects human values and togetherness should be reconsidered more thoroughly. The essence of law and institutional functionality requires a sense of belonging in decision-making. Efforts must be geared at domestic, regional, transnational, and global levels to safeguard the world against forces and enemies that promote anti-cosmopolitanism. ❁

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