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COSMOPOLITANISM IN THE FACE OF POPULISM – CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES ON THE PATH OF EUROPEAN IDENTITY FORMATION

Abstract: The paper examines the continuing viability of the critique of methodological nationalism in the context of recent resurgence of nationalist sentiments across western liberal democracies. Using the distinction between first and second modernity, it shows how cosmopolitan social theorising can actually be seen as predictive of some of the effects that nationalist populism has enjoyed in the context of the post-2008 series of crises. The discussion is mostly focused on the challenge the current political dynamics poses to the weak forms of social integration underpinning the project of European supra-national unification.

Keywords: cosmopolitanism; nationalism; modernity; Ulrich Beck; Jonathan Heidt.

Juxtaposition of cosmopolitanism with nationalism has recently been moved from the realm over theoretical consideration to the forefront of political challenges faced by western liberal democracies in the post-financial crisis era. For quite a while, most observers were focused on the difficulties involved in forging a unity of purpose among the disparate societies participating in the project in European integration and, yet, instead of becoming have a closer falling into ever more acrimonious disunion under conditions of lender-imposed economic austerity. The never-ending recriminations over possible "exists", and the actual reality of the vote for Brexit, brought back to the fore open discourse of national interests and resentments of the European Union member states. Not only was the openly nationalist talk of us against them back in a way not seen before, but also it happened to be underpinned by the political dynamic of the resurgent nationalist political parties all over the continent. In fact, this time round not even the usually robust institutions of German political mainstream succeeded in facing off the rising Alternative fur Deutschland. However, most shocking of all – both due to the largely unexpected nature of the event and the still unpredictable magnitude – a nativist, nationalist and unilateralist surge brought down the floodgates of Washington. Throughout the protracted 2016 presidential campaign, the problem of America-first populism was seen as a major challenge that the incoming administration would be forced to somehow deal with, but few in any serious pundits or analysts considered the possibility that this populism would actually be

in control of the White House. Of course doubts can be raised over the peculiarities of the American political system, and especially this skewed nature of the electoral college, e.g., a counterfactual simulation performed on the voting data of the first round of the French 2017 election showed that had it been run along the American set-up Mariene Le Pen could likely have won outright (Economist 2017). But even if the electoral effect of Trump presidency over-amplified the magnitude of underlying political shifts, it showed that suddenly no place was safe for the cosmopolitan, globalist outlook.

Neither cosmopolitanism nor nationalism are uniform and well-defined political world-views – this is obviously true in the academic realm where never-ending discussions may be held over the precise meaning and heritage of the labels, but it also seems no less important to note that when it comes to the self-understanding of political actors and of the citizens in various western democracies those notions assume wildly diverse characteristics. What is more, even though some important arguments have been raised that this contrast might prove name the principal fault line of late-modern societies (cf. Haidt 2016), in no obvious sense has it become so far a common-sense and popular contrast in a way comparable to the principal ideological oppositions of the past such as "communist" vs. "liberal" or "progressive" vs. "conservative". Still, unless one is aiming for much conceptual depth or analytical precision, the meaning of the juxtaposition seems intuitively clear.

What I attempt to achieve is not a normative discussion leading to a favourable view of one over the other ideological tenets, neither would I venture into available empirical data – such as for instance cross-national survey data – in order to gauge where the winds of public opinion are blowing. My undertaking is conceptual – I will investigate how the recent wave of popular and practical nationalism can be understood from the point of view of one of the principal contemporary social science theories advancing cosmopolitanism as one of the key concepts for understanding the contradictory dynamics of late modernity, i.e., the cosmopolitan vision put forward by Ulrich Beck as an outgrowth of his more general theory of second modernity (cf. Beck and Grande 2010). In terms of my discussion, I will mostly be focused on the European dynamics and discourses, but I will also relate to some of the exogenous impulses – most notably those originating from the US. My main argument is that even though Beck's cosmopolitan theorising seems to be backing the losing side of the short-to-mid-term political front, it still provides a good understanding of why cosmopolitanism seems to fail while nationalism all but thrives.

Methodological Nationalism and its Discontents

The critique of methodological nationalism constitutes an application of the theoretical framework of Risk Society (1992) not so much to methodology per se but rather to the conceptual foundations of modern and post-modern social theory. It takes up the fundamental distinction between first, i.e., simple modernity, and the reflexive modernity and modernisation processes. That is not say that everything that one can find in Beck's writing on methodological nationalism in the cosmopolitan condition can be found in his early opus magnum or some of the later updates such as the idea of globalised "world risk society". Even though some of the main ideas can indeed be traced throughout his works, which is an obvious feature

of theoretical continuity, it would be unfair and plainly wrong to see the critique of methodological nationalism to be some recycled and reheated incarnation of the *Risk society*. The fundamental cosmopolitan tenets may have always been there, yet, only at a later stage have they moved to the forefront. In other words, it seems prudent to read "later" Beck in context on is earlier theorising while not trying to somehow reduce the new to the framework of the old.

Putting it succinctly, the main point of the critique of methodological nationalism comes in not taking the premise for granted that "equates societies with nation-state societies, and sees states and their governments as the cornerstones of social-scientific analysis"(Beck 2003:453). Such incorporation of normative nationalism, i.e., the prevalent modern conception that humans are coercively organised as nations, which combine some degrees of political sovereignty and cultural distinctiveness, into the framework of sociological imagination constrains it within the conceptual bounds of the nation-state dominated world. This seems increasingly problematic on both empirical and normative grounds under conditions of late modernity. Thus, when discussing what the world is like, one cannot fail to observe the globalising forces that have moved institutions, networks, discourses and people out of the scope of the nation-state frames of reference: financial markets, migrant networks, nomadic corporate elites, globally streamed culture – examples abound, where the nation state no longer constitutes a primary frame of reference for understanding. That is not to say, of course, that it should disappear completely out of the picture – in most cases the nation states keep having some role to play, albeit a secondary one: just as there may be marked national differences in Netflix-available inventories, it would simply be wrong to understand the Netflix as an experience and cultural practice with the state enclosed national cultures and public spheres as central explanatory categories. Even more importantly, from the point of view of theorising based in the framework of risk society, taking the nation state as the natural reference point often confounds normative discussions concerning what is to be done about the problems and challenges that societies face. Just as pollutants recognise no borders, many other late modern issues cannot be seen from the point of view of the strict dichotomy between the domestic and the international: "global risks activate and connect actors across borders, who otherwise don't want to have anything to do with one another" (Beck 2007:287).

Crucially, this call to reject or at least question methodological nationalism as a premise of social-scientific thinking is not quite the same thing as advancing a post-national thesis, i.e., prophesising the coming demise of the nation-state principle: "One does not criticize methodological individualism by proclaiming the end of the individual (…) The decisive point is that national organization as a structuring principle of societal and political action can no longer serve as the orienting reference point for the social scientific observer" (Beck and Sznaider 2006:4). In fact, the reverse is true, by taking methodological nationalism out of the domain of default convictions the social tensions involved in the crisis of the nation state principle can be more readily appreciated. This would not be the case if the received nation-statist notions were to be simply cast away to museums of the history of social thought. Critique of nationalism as a method of thought and classification is about making them reflexive and attuned to the pace of social change.

Methodological nationalism is not only a failure of imagination, but also an actual methodological failure whereby data keeps being gathered at country-levels and analysed at best in terms of cross-country comparisons. This is not at all surprising, given that the state constitutes the root-word of statistics, but it should not be unreflexively acceptable that "categories of the state census are the main operational categories of empirical social science. This is even true for most "global" data, which presuppose nation-state statistics and exclude transnational "networks," "flows," and "scapes." (Beck 2003:455). Although this particular criticism is over a decade long, such conservative bias towards states as primary units of observation and comparison remains clearly visible in the realm of social and economic indicators. For instance, even when it comes to such avowedly European projects as the Eurobarometer, what happens in terms of measurement is a series of concurrent cross-sectional surveys conducted on national samples, and when it comes to analysis the main messages in the public sphere are construed in terms cross-country comparisons. Such conservatism is methodologically dangerous in that it constitutes enforced blindness to some social phenomena. To use Beck's own example, when global inequalities are perceived from the nation-state vantage point the attention is predominantly put on the actually small within-society inequalities, while the large global inequalities are either ignored or explained away as irrelevant (Beck 2003:459).

Even though lines in the sand have been repeatedly drawn by the proponents of the critique of methodological nationalism between this endeavour and practical political engagement, such distinctions cannot ever be consistently maintained when it comes to critical theory. The critique is not only about methodology or epistemology, and there seems little doubt that it does remain sympathetic with "patchwork quilt of nation-states" and their respective patriotic sentiments. The message is clear, and clearly resonant of historical necessity, namely that the move from the conditions of first to those of the second modernity is something objectively happening outside of the scope of control of the nation-states and their associate institutions. What choices there remain for us are not those conditions not of our making but our ways of adapting to them – and in this respect doubling down on the principles and conditions of first modernity is an option whose allure should not be underestimated: "the state structure evolving under conditions of world risk society could be characterised in terms of both inefficiency and post-democratic authority (…) It is quite possible that the end result could be gloomy perspective, that we have totally ineffective and authoritarian state regimes (even in the context of Western democracies)" (Beck 2007:288). In other words, one should not hope for solutions to be optimal for the challenges at hand, especially so far as the heuristics for finding solutions hanker after old certainties of first modernity.

Legitimacy and identity:
Europeanisation under conditions of second modernity

Concepts of legitimacy being a function of efficiency have long underpinned technocratic arguments in favour of European integration. Such system-integration-focused thinking essentially boils down to the thesis that long term gains from beneficial regulations should outweigh any short-term costs, thus providing social support for institutions managing them. from this perspective, the transfer of power to the European level looks like a perfect fit for the task. However,

even though such regulatory efficiency were to be indisputable, the social perception of such supranational regulatory institutions would remain disputable as the lack of embeddedness in the mechanisms of the public sphere and public opinion formation makes them lack any firm footing in the mechanisms of democratic legitimacy (cf. Ward 2002:2-3).

The constructivist approach to the relationships between citizenship and identity emphasises that in the beginning and for quite a while European citizenship can rely on purely legal constructs which would only later result in the emergence of identity bringing together citizens having common Rights and duties in that The main empirical component of this debate relates to the relationship between the sense of community and the sense of citizenship, and in particular to the causal sequence within this relationship (Thomassen and Bäck 2009:187). From this point of view, European demos is an end-point of a long-lasting process, and it would simply seem silly to expect it to already be there at the beginning of the quest. attention is also focused clearly on the political dimensions of identity as any kind of common cultural or replicated the contest lies behind and being on the horizon of expectations. This does not mean that having other than political forms of identity will not be welcome, it only means that they not seen as indispensable or likely to occur.

The question whether Europe could ever construct something akin to nationalism over and above the level of nation-state has never ventured outside of the realm of academic discussions. Even in the case a constitutional patriotism practically superseding the actually existing national identities. In fact, any such proposition would be strewn with contradictions in the first place, as it seems itself is doubtful whether they are a normative preference for any kind of group be compatible with the inclusive nature of European values (por. np.Karolewski 2010:61-64). Many authors found it also suspicious that the notion of your disposition refrains derivative from nation-state assignment, is it seems in many ways to run counter to the essential animus of European integration. Especially that it would seem amenable to record using some exclusivists aspects of national entities at a Continental level (por. np. Jacobs and Maier 1998:9-12).

One exemplary instance of the fallacy of thinking about European Identity as a second national identity comes in the form of "tacitly accepting that European identity is very much like national identity" (Cerutti 2011:4). Even putting aside political difficulties of such statements – given the exclusive nature of national identities one would be prone to contradictory loyalties – any such formulation much of the thinking under European identity: "The idea of cultural cohesion as a prerequisite for social integration fails to understand the nature of culture and of social integration. Culture is about reflection and interpretation, debate and conflict around social alternatives, the search for social compromises. The outcome of these processes is various degrees of cultural and social cohesion. Through social strife and conflict, societies are moulded together (…) Identities emerge through politics." (Stråth 2013:105-06). Contrary to the myth of European cultural integration, the European legacy is contested and diverse, but a unified culture is not a prerequisite of a common political identity: "Many have seen in such a separation between cultural and political identity the key with which to face the issue of the possibility of European identity. One entry point […] is the potential

federating role played by a shared political culture facilitating the emergence of common identity" (Bottici and Challand 2013:31)

Following such faux logic of some continental, secondary national identity in the making, the European Identity formation would always be at a loss. In fact, the discussion would never quite venture past the contention that when challenged into any kind of a zero-sum game vis-à-vis national identities the European Identity would not stand a chance (Smith 1992). Crucially, this is not the path taken by the cosmopolitan camp – at least not by those critical of methodological nationalism – what they envisage as cosmopolitan alternative to nationalism is a creature of the second modernity, and thus not playing the same ball-game as the first-modernity derived notions of nations and nationalism. In practical terms, the social base of cosmopolitanism is also associated with social and occupational categories that embrace second modernity.

Cosmopolitanism and its challenges

Cosmopolitanism and nationalism closed in for a major clash not in Europe, where localised tensions had indeed been brewing, but in America – the lynchpin of the post-war liberal-democratic world-order. Michael Linda, looking at the American political scene, considers 2016 to be a breakthrough from the point of view of the normative points and ways of articulating ideological differences. In view of the advocates of such optics, the transition from thinking about the political divisions of American society in the current paradigm of the "cultural war", i.e., the confrontation between religiously motivated conservatives and basically secular progressive liberals over the worldview issues such as the availability of abortion or the permissibility of homosexual marriages. From this point of view, the major struggle will run between mostly right-wing nationalists and mostly left-wing multicultural globalists. The consequence of this shift would come primarily in rethinking of party positions on the issues of free trade and economic openness to the world. The Republican party would grapple with the protectionism vs. its traditional market-and-trade orientation, and on the other hand, the transition to the position of multicultural globalization would involve the separation of the Democratic Party from the remnants of the historical base of unionized working classes and, consequently, the transition to a favourable position both for free trade and a relatively open immigration policy.: „The Democrats of the next generation will be even more of an alliance of upscale, progressive whites with blacks and Latinos, based in large and diverse cities. They will think of the U.S. as a version of their multicultural coalition of distinct racial and ethnic identity groups writ large. Many younger progressives will take it for granted that moral people are citizens of the world, equating nationalism and patriotism with racism and fascism."(Lind 2016).

Jonathan Haidt proposes to develop the refinement proposed by M. Lind by referring to the normative contrasts between nationalists and globalists that go beyond the controversy of current politics. It also leads the political dichotomy beyond the original boundaries of the American political scene, showing, among other things, that it allows us to understand the sense of moral and political controversy surrounding the European migration crisis. Starting from the empirical side of the analysis of transformations of values with increasing prosperity on the basis of World Value Survey data, and on the theoretical side of

the concept of dynamics of authoritarianism developed by Karen Sterner, who recognizes authoritarianism as a psychological propensity to intolerance in response to a sense of threat rather than a stable personality trait, Haidt argues that „globalization and rising prosperity have changed the values and behavior of the urban elite, leading them to talk and act in ways that unwittingly activate authoritarian tendencies in a subset of the nationalists" (Haidt 2016:1). The core of the globalist worldview, which acts on the nationalists as an irritant is cosmopolitanism, in particular, in the belief that all forms of tribal loyalty are morally suspect, and that patriotism is essentially the same as racism because it comes down to accepting the primacy of arbitrary attributes. belonging to the particular social category over the universal requirements of morality. Looking from this perspective true universalism is only possible as a result of struggle against both patriotism and nationalism (Gomberg 1990:150). Apart from philosophical reasons, the sources of this cosmopolitanism can be traced in the experience of the benefits of globalization through the social layers in urban economic and academic centres, which, besides loosening the sense of national bond, also lead to relegation to the second plan of survival values. On the other hand, the same processes of eradication, to which the response of globalists is cosmopolitan, lead to a sense of danger for those who see patriotism as a virtue; they think their country and its culture are unique and worth preserving. This is a real moral commitment, not a pose to cover up racist bigotry. (…) Nationalists feel a bond with their country, and they believe that this bond imposes moral obligations both ways" (Haidt 2016:3).

In addition to M. Lind's thesis on J. Haidt's observations, the globalists are equally inconceivable to the nationalists as morally repulsive and vice versa - in this obvious sense the "border war" is essentially a continuation of the "cultural war" with a few other means. A strong correlation also arises between the composition of the fighting armies, but the same armies are not facing each other - for example, the position of the Catholic Church in the situation of "border war" is far less comfortable and unequivocal than it was in "cultural wars"". Even if globalist and nationalist positions are irreconcilable in principle, but in practice, Haidt points out the possibility of working out a modus vivendi, with recommendations on how they can be worked out to globalists. Dealing with the tension around immigration requires recognition that accentuating cosmopolitan views leads to a greater sense of threat on the part of the nationalists: „Think carefully about the way your country handles immigration and try to manage it in a way that is less likely to provoke an authoritarian reaction. Pay attention to three key variables: the percentage of foreign-born residents at any given time, the degree of moral difference of each incoming group, and the degree of assimilation being achieved by each group's children." (Haidt 2016:7).

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