

## Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism: Irreconcilable Differences or Possible Bedfellows?\*

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**Abstract** Sparked by the recent reinvigoration of the long-running debate over the competing ideological merits of nationalism and cosmopolitanism by leading Western philosophers, this article presents an argument as to how these two adversarial projects might be reconciled. In a review of both ideological perspectives, it is argued that neither paradigm is adequate in its own right, and that both contain potential dangers. However, both nationalism and cosmopolitanism entail important complementary aspects that are essential in bringing about a more stable and innocuous synthesis of the two projects.

**Keywords** Nationalism; Patriotism; Cosmopolitanism; Pluralism; Political ideology

Are we desirous a people should be virtuous? Let us begin, therefore, by making them love their country: but how can they love it, if their country be nothing more to them than to strangers, and that it affords them nothing but what it refuses to nobody? (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *A Dissertation on Political Economy*, 1758)

To wish the greatness of our own country is often to wish evil to our neighbours. He who could bring himself to wish that his country should always remain as it is, would be a citizen of the universe. (Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary*, 1764)

Patriotism is the last refuge of the scoundrel. (Samuel Johnson (1775), cited in James Boswell, *Life of Samuel Johnson*, 1791)

Nationalism has two fatal charms for its devotees: it presupposes local self-sufficiency, which is a pleasant and desirable condition, and it suggests, very subtly, a certain personal superiority by reason of one's belonging to a place which is definable and familiar, as against a place which is strange, remote. (E(lwyn) B(rooks) White, *One Man's Meat*, 1944)

### Introduction: The Great Debate

The above quotations are but a small sample of the thoughts of some of humanity's most notable thinkers and authors on the topic of patriotism and or nationalism.<sup>1</sup> In fact, research into this particular issue will quickly reveal that almost every distinguished (and some not so distinguished) thinker or philosopher, past and present,

has had some thoughts to share with the rest of the world on the matter. It also becomes equally apparent that the deeper one looks, the further one gets from anything that might remotely resemble a consensus on this contested issue. A recent illustration of the polar disparity of ideas is the debate set off by the philosopher Richard Rorty in an article penned for the *New York Times*. Unreservedly extolling the virtues of American patriotism, the article calls on all American citizens to invoke an ‘emotion of national pride’ and ‘a sense of shared national unity’.<sup>2</sup> In contradistinction to Rorty, the classicist and philosopher Martha Nussbaum responds to his call by – echoing the words of the 2,300 year-old precedent set by Diogenes the Cynic (404–323 BC) – declaring herself to be a ‘citizen of the world’.<sup>3</sup> Despite their similar positions on other issues, in this context Rorty and Nussbaum are, by and large, indicative of the nature of the debate that has run through different epochs of recorded human history. Naturally, the intensity of this exchange has ebbed and flowed in response to the world-shaping events that either preceded or were shaping the intellectual environment around it.

Like Rorty and Nussbaum, the vast majority of those who have contributed to the discourse have, to differing degrees, tended to identify themselves as advocates of either one position or the other.<sup>4</sup> They are, with very few exceptions, either proponents of some form of patriotism and or nationalism or some brand of cosmopolitanism, rarely have contributors attempted to mediate between the two.<sup>5</sup> In the theoretical form, one extreme of this exchange might be represented by the thoughts of the communitarian Alasdair MacIntyre, who argues that when ‘large interests ... are at stake, patriotism entails a willingness to go to war on one’s community’s behalf’.<sup>6</sup> At the other extreme diametrically opposed to MacIntyre’s position, we might situate Lord Acton (1834–1902), who declared that ‘the theory of nationality ... is a retrograde step in history’.<sup>7</sup> Or, with his use of even stronger language, we might point to Leo Tolstoy who maintained that ‘the root of war ... [is] the exclusive desire for the well-being of one’s own people; it is patriotism. Therefore, to destroy war, destroy patriotism’.<sup>8</sup> In the realm of politics or statesmanship, many would describe the former President of Yugoslavia and now indicted war criminal, Slobodan Milosevic as an arch nationalist, while the former American President Woodrow Wilson might be thought of as coming close to fitting the cosmopolitan mould.

The position one adopts on this issue is largely dependent upon one’s prevailing conception of human nature. On Rorty’s side of the debate one tends to find those who subscribe to the Aristotelian view of man as a ‘political animal’.<sup>9</sup> Dating back to the Ancient Greeks it is possible to trace through history a broad stream of thought which, to varying degrees, is based on the presupposition that human beings desire and require a firm grounding in some form of community in order to achieve some degree of the good life. On the other side of the debate it is possible to follow the links in another broad stream of thought which, linking Diogenes to Nussbaum and like-minded contemporaries via the Stoics,<sup>10</sup> rests on the assumption that humankind’s greatest desire is for individual autonomy. This line of reasoning broadly holds that humankind is best served by the principles of personal liberty, non-interference and, within defined limits, a plurality of values when it comes to the pursuit of one’s conception of the good.

Obviously, this disagreement over these seemingly paradoxical aspects of human nature is not a new one, nor is it confined to the context of this particular debate. This ‘antagonism’ of human nature (or what Kant called our ‘unsocial sociability’<sup>11</sup>) lies at the very heart of the debate between liberals and communitarians as to whether: (a)

individual rights and liberties, or (b) considerations of the community into which one is born, ought to be of primary concern when making major life decisions concerning conceptions of the good.<sup>12</sup> Essentially, the nationalism-cosmopolitanism debate and the communitarian-liberal debate revolve around contending arguments as to whether it should be the embedded self or the autonomous self that prevails over the human consciousness.

As these two debates are of a similar nature and might be conceived of as running parallel to one another – or the nationalism-cosmopolitanism dichotomy as being an extension of the communitarian-liberal debate – it is not surprising to find that some theorists have contributed on both levels. (As can be seen above in MacIntyre's contribution to both the communitarian and patriotism arguments.) Not so long ago, however, there were commentators on world affairs who were suggesting that the collapse of communism and the thawing of the Cold War heralded 'a new era of liberal democracy' and thus the ascendancy of the cosmopolitan ideal.<sup>13</sup> This air of optimism, however, was to be short-lived, for the last age of empire was soon to be succeeded by the disintegration of many of the emerging states into ethnic civil war. For some with a certain affinity with the cosmopolitan ideal, like Michael Ignatieff, the despair generated by this turn in history was marked by the reluctant acknowledgement that 'the key language of our age is ethnic nationalism'.<sup>14</sup>

It is true that the 1990s and the beginning of the twenty-first century are readily identifiable by the widespread visible resurgence of ethnic and economic nationalism, and exclusivist sentiments. However, it is also true that the era is marked by the counter-trends of rapid internationalisation or globalisation (including economic, trade, communications, personal mobility, to some extent cultural, and more), interdependence and 'connectedness'. Even in their most moderate and benign forms it would appear as though these two trends are incompatible, and, thus, one would expect, mutually exclusive. It is for this reason that the following question has been asked: 'Can two civilisations so historically out of sync, the civilisations of the soil and of the satellite, coexist?'<sup>15</sup> Most commentators and participants in the debate would respond, I believe, in the negative. This response is supported by the very nature of the discourse outlined above – that is; the majority of the participants advocate either one side of the argument or the other, not some combination of both.

Given such a scenario – when two opposing or incompatible ideals-cum-ideologies are competing for the same minds – the number of possible outcomes are limited to three. First, one ideology can emerge victorious over the other. In this instance such an outcome is highly unlikely, nor, in my opinion, is it desirable. Second, the two can maintain an uneasy coexistence, in all forms, including the extremes, side by side. This option also seems highly unlikely, perhaps more so because competing nationalist projects are unlikely to peacefully coexist for any great length of time. The third, and I think most plausible and desirable option is mediation between the two competing projects. Naturally, such a proposition would likely require a considerable amount of compromise and accommodation from both sides of the debate, something that in reality many may be unwilling to concede. Nevertheless, in theory, I think it is possible to put forward a reasonably strong argument that illustrates how these adversarial projects might be reconciled – that is, at least in the mind if not in the general polity or any given national psyche.

In order to arrive at this end the following two sections of this article will include general discussions of nationalism and cosmopolitanism. In the fourth section, I will endeavour to convey how these ideals need not be thought of as competing, but rather,

as possibly complementary. The final section will briefly summarise and draw some conclusions. Again, I will stress that this is largely a normative exercise, for I am not naïve enough to believe that such a condition can or will be achieved widely in the near future, although it may, and perhaps already does, prevail in certain individuals, groups or locales.

### On Nationalism and Patriotism

Maurizio Viroli notes that in ‘scholarly literature and common language’, all too often ‘patriotism and nationalism, are used as synonyms. And yet ... they can and must be distinguished.’<sup>16</sup> Perhaps the best way of conceptualising this distinction is to think of nationalism as belonging to the realm of ideology, while patriotism is its psychological correlate.<sup>17</sup> As can be seen in the literature referred to below, however, there remains a considerable amount of slippage between the two terms. For example, by simply taking away some of the more insidious characteristics of nationalism, some authors arrive at what they conceive of as a more moderate and less dangerous form of patriotism. Still others use the two terms in combination to come up with concepts like ‘nationalist patriotism’.<sup>18</sup> This is not a problem that is readily overcome as the virtual interchangeability of the words is widespread in the literature, but it is something that one needs to be aware of when thinking through these issues.

Defining ‘nationalism’ is not a simple and straightforward exercise, for as Andrew Vincent correctly points out, ‘there is no one nationalist doctrine – there are rather nationalisms’.<sup>19</sup> Or in Ignatieff’s words, nationalism ‘is not one thing in many disguises, but many things in many disguises’<sup>20</sup>; which is to say that throughout a ‘tortured history’, nationalist projects have borrowed heavily from other ideologies to form ‘ideological hybrids’ including ‘liberal, socialist, conservative, fascist and even some anarchistic nationalisms’.<sup>21</sup> Despite the difficulty inherent in proffering a general definition of ‘nationality’ or ‘nationalism’, there have been many attempts made at it. Of these John Stuart Mill’s account in *Considerations on Representative Government* remains as instructive as any and is worth quoting at some length.

A portion of mankind may be said to constitute a Nationality if they are united among themselves by common sympathies which do not exist between them and any others – which make them co-operate with each other more willingly than with other people, desire to be governed under the same government, and desire that it should be government by themselves or a portion of themselves exclusively. This feeling of nationality may have been generated by various causes. Sometimes it is the effect of identity of race and descent. Community of language, and community of religion, greatly contribute to it. Geographical limits are one of its causes. But the strongest of all is identity of political antecedents; the possession of a natural history, and consequent community of recollections; collective pride and humiliation, pleasure and regret, connected with the same incidents in the past. None of these circumstances, however, are either dispensable, or necessarily sufficient by themselves.<sup>22</sup>

Upon reading this or many other definitions it might not appear to the reader as though there is anything inherently insidious in nationalist ideology. In fact, it has been said that ‘paradoxically, nationalism has probably been more deeply successful *because* it has no coherent substantive doctrines’.<sup>23</sup> However, it would be fair to suggest that

many theorists of nationalism do articulate a core doctrine and attribute to nationalism what might be described as its ethical claims. An example of this is Anthony Smith's assertion that:

the source of all political power is the nation, the whole collectivity; for freedom and self-realisation, men must identify with a nation; nations can only be fulfilled in their own states; loyalty to the nation-state overrides other loyalties; the primary condition of global freedom and harmony is the strengthening of the nation-state.<sup>24</sup>

Expanding on these ethical claims, as a political doctrine, nationalism demands that the peoples of the world be divided into nations. It further seeks that each of these nations be granted the right to self-determination, either as self-governing entities within existing states or as stand-alone nation states. As a cultural ideal, nationalism insists that although individuals may be unique and may have many identities or affiliations, it is through the membership of or belonging to a nation that moral worth is realised. 'As a moral ideal, nationalism is an ethic of heroic sacrifice, justifying the use of violence in the defence of one's nation against enemies, internal or external.'<sup>25</sup> In essence, it requires that one must be willing put the nation first – to die in defence of the nation if need be.

It is amidst these claims and demands that the more insidious tendencies of nationalism can be uncovered. Nationalist sentiment is not naturally occurring, it is not something one is born with it 'has to be taught, inculcated, or somehow acquired'.<sup>26</sup> This acquisition often involves the perpetuation of half-truths, or as Fred Halliday points out, in many instances the blatant 'falsification of history'.<sup>27</sup> The potential danger in this characteristic of nationalism is revealed when one seeks the answers to Halliday's questions: 'Yet what if the lies of one movement conflict with the lies of another? Are they equally valid?'<sup>28</sup> For nationalists, the answer is almost inevitably no, for one of the more dangerous tendencies implicit in the claims of nationalism is the assertion of superiority. This notion of national superiority rests upon a deeply held yet unsubstantiated belief that one's own ethnic group, culture and or history are superior to neighbouring or competing projects. If the nation is thought of as the highest moral platform, then it is likely to follow that that which is external to the nation is necessarily subordinate or inferior. With this comes the inference that only fellow nationals can be trusted and all that is beyond the national border and different from those who constitute the nation pose a possible threat.

It further follows from this that the maintenance of one's own nation is more important than the perpetuation of any other. Furthermore, any means of guaranteeing such, including the use of war to eliminate those threats, be they real or perceived, is deemed to be legitimate. However, it does not necessarily follow that a common ethnicity, culture or history automatically leads to social cohesion or a sense of community. Whilst instilling nationalist sentiments and a sense of belonging is intended to absorb the usual array of petty differences, within any community, homogenous or not, there is likely to be dissenters who are opposed to some or all of the core values of their fellow nationals. When these cracks begin to appear in the veneer of national unity, as is almost inevitable in time, nationalist regimes are compelled to maintain unity by force rather than consent. It is for this reason that nationalist regimes, although they may start out as democratic, rarely remain so, tending to slide down the slippery slope toward authoritarianism.<sup>29</sup>

As can be detected in the ethical claims that Smith attributes to nationalism,

nationalism is antithetical to the idea that the claims or needs of the individual, the family or any other sub-group can take precedence over the demands of and loyalty to the nation. In essence, nationalism requires that all individuals belong to a nation in order to realise their true moral worth. Consequently, they then owe their primary loyalty to the nation over any other sub-group to maintain that moral value. It requires what might be described as a somewhat blind adherence to the mantra, 'my country, right or wrong'. It is this extreme form of nationalism that we might identify as being synonymous with the Spartan patriot. And it is this extremist adherence to nationalist pride that has been implicated in precipitating upon humanity some of its darkest moments and more horrendous of crimes. It has haunted much of the twentieth century and now curses the twenty-first century with the spectres of racial hatred and ethnic cleansing.

However, must the human need for belonging necessarily lead to such extremes? The answer ought to be no. The brand of nationalism outlined above is best described as an exclusivist form of nationalism. As an alternative, there is a model of nationalism known as 'civic' or 'liberal' nationalism, whereby membership in the nation is based on the equal rights of citizenship – regardless of ethnicity, colour, race, etc. – of a community that subscribes to a shared set of political values and practices. This particular form of civic nationalism is what some describe as 'moderate patriotism'.<sup>30</sup> Its distinction from ethnic nationalism hinges on the absence of unjustified exclusivity. It does not deny that one may care more about or have greater obligations to those that are 'nearest and dearest' (e.g., family or even fellow citizens), but it requires that this not be at the expense of strangers (i.e., foreigners). It requires that the particularist morality of the patriot be considered in conjunction with and, if need be, ameliorated by a more universalised conception of morality. Effectively, it holds 'that patriotism is a virtue so long as the actions it encourages are not themselves immoral'.<sup>31</sup> Ideally, a morally constrained version of patriotism is necessarily democratic, permits room for greater individual freedom of expression and preferences, and, where circumstances demand, allows for dissent. It is a restrained and reasoned patriotism conditional upon the ethical nature of the nation to which one's loyalty is accorded or directed.

Not all theorists, however, subscribe to this distinction between what is variously referred to as 'civic nationalism', 'liberal nationalism' or 'moderate patriotism' and ethnic nationalism. Many liberal theorists in particular are less willing to see the former as some form of enlightened progressive variation of the latter. For some there are no shades of grey, any form of nationalist or patriotic demand that impinges on individual liberty is seen as a retrograde development.<sup>32</sup>

### **On Cosmopolitanism**

As indicated above, the cosmopolitan ideal is not merely the preserve of the late twentieth/early twenty-first century, nor is the logic behind it altogether new. Today, for some it may be a deliberate reaction to the recent excesses of nationalism, and thus, conceived of as a concerted attempt to bend the stick back in the other direction, so to speak. It is also reasonable to assume that certain elements of globalisation, the ideal of universal human rights, and Nussbaum's twin concepts of world citizenry and cosmopolitan education have further revived cosmopolitanism. Its history, however, is a long and varied one that is worth expanding on. As noted above, it finds its roots in the thought of the Greek philosopher Diogenes the Cynic, who lived around the time of Plato. Through the Cynics, a loose group of philosophers adhering to parts of Dio-

genes' philosophy, some elements of Diogenes' teachings were indirectly acquired by Zeno of Citium (334–262 BC), the founder of the Stoic school of philosophy, and subsequently passed on to his followers.<sup>33</sup> Stoicism effectively came to an end with the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius (AD 121–180), whose cosmopolitan bent is indicated by his famous declaration: '[M]y city and country, so far as I am Antonius is Rome; but so far as I am a man, it is the world.'<sup>34</sup>

Many centuries later, vague hints of the cosmopolitan ideal can be detected in Desiderius Erasmus's (1466–1536) particular brand of Renaissance humanism. Later still, it is more explicitly found in the works of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), particularly his *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose* (1784), and later *Perpetual Peace* (1795). Living and writing at around the same time, although not as widely recognised as the work of Kant, there are those who claim that in *Common Sense* (1776) and *Rights of Man* (1791–1792), Thomas Paine's (1737–1809) 'prophecy of democratic peace preceded Kant's'. It is further claimed that, in general, Paine's writing provides a more coherent and complete version of the cosmopolitan ideal, whereas 'Kant's cosmopolitan right was minimalist at best'.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, regardless of the merits of this argument, both have made significant contributions to cosmopolitan thought. Yet, it is aspects of Kantian ethics – particularly his Categorical Imperative in the form of the human individual as being thought of as an end in itself, and not simply a means to an end – that remains the touchstone of modern cosmopolitan thought. Finally, to return to our current place in history, Andrew Vincent suggests that the closest we have come to anything resembling the practice of cosmopolitanism was the 'heyday ... of *Risorgimento* liberal nationalism ... from the Congress of Vienna (1814–15) up to the Treaty of Versailles [1919] and [President] Wilson's Fourteen Points'.<sup>36</sup>

Tracing a similar path through history, Anthony Pagden observes that Nussbaum's account of 'cosmopolitanism looks like a philosophically more interesting, historically-grounded version of "multiculturalism"'.<sup>37</sup> However, despite there being 'much to applaud in modern cosmopolitanism', particularly if the 'only plausible alternative is belligerent nationalism or ... sentimental patriotism', he warns that cosmopolitanism's history runs a 'torturous course' through the 'construction of ... European overseas empires'.<sup>38</sup> 'Cosmopolitanism,' he argues, cannot be easily 'separated from some kind of "civilizing" mission', for it is 'a philosophy particularly well suited to the spread of empire'.<sup>39</sup> The point Pagden is making here is that despite its claims, throughout its history cosmopolitanism has fallen well short of 'extending a benign cultural relativity to all possible peoples'. For instance, 'In calling upon all men to belong to a common *deme* or polis, Zeno was also, of course, making all men members of the *deme* or polis to which *he* belonged.'<sup>40</sup>

Beyond the rather vague notion of thinking in terms of a global citizenship, as advanced by some cosmopolitans, what specifically is it that cosmopolitanism stands for? The three central tenets shared by most cosmopolitan positions, as identified by Thomas Pogge, are (1) *individualism*: the primary unit of concern is the individual rather than families, ethnic, cultural or any other sub-groupings, nations, or states. These collectives indirectly derive their concern solely by virtue of the fact that they are made up of individuals who are first and foremost, rights-bearing beings, and second, by chance happen to be members or citizens. (2) *Universality*: the primacy of the individual as the central unit of concern is afforded to all human individuals without exception – that is, it is not limited or restricted to people of certain classes, gender, colours, creeds, religions or any other subset one wishes to distinguish. (3) *Generality*:

the primary concern for the individual is extended to all humanity. One's concern for others does not stop at the border, nor is it the privilege of only those who share one's own race, religion or other features held in common.<sup>41</sup>

Pogge makes a further distinction between what he calls 'legal cosmopolitanism' and 'moral cosmopolitanism'.<sup>42</sup> Legal cosmopolitanism seeks to move toward a more institutionalised and legally ordered world polity, in which the rights of all so-called 'global citizens' are guaranteed and protected by something approaching a system of world government. I do not wish to add to the discussion on this form of cosmopolitanism, for it is one whose chances of being realised in the near future, if at all, are highly remote. Though that is not to deny that there already exists some forms of global governance, however, the opposition of most states to ceding any further sovereignty, especially to a world government, is deeply entrenched and unlikely to abate.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, as Charles Beitz has correctly noted, 'a cosmopolitan conception of international morality is not equivalent to, nor does it necessarily imply ... world federalism'.<sup>44</sup> Essentially, it can be argued that there is nothing to prevent autonomous states from pursuing cosmopolitan ends.

Although it is more abstract than the legal model, moral cosmopolitanism is, I think, more relevant than the former *because* of its abstract quality, which can be explained thus. Moral cosmopolitanism holds that all human beings stand in a certain moral relation to one another. Explicitly, all human individuals are required to respect fellow human beings' status as the ultimate units of moral concern – that is, we are limited in our actions to the extent that we are morally required to respect and preserve fellow beings individual rights, or human rights. Although this may appear weaker than the former argument, it is of greater consequence and general applicability in that it is compatible with a world government model, a system of autonomous sovereign states or even within a pluralist society.<sup>45</sup>

Returning to cosmopolitanism in general, according to Ulrich Beck the motivation behind cosmopolitanism, or in his words:

The key idea for a Cosmopolitan Manifesto is that there is a new dialectic of global and local questions which do not fit into national politics. These questions are already part of the political agenda – in the localities and regions, in governments and public spheres both national and international. But only in a transnational framework can they be properly posed, debated and resolved. For this there has to be a reinvention of politics, a founding and grounding of the new political subject: that is – *cosmopolitan parties*.<sup>46</sup>

Without making explicit reference to cosmopolitan parties, Pogge also argues that 'persons should be citizens of, and govern themselves through, a number of political units of various sizes, without any one political unit being dominant and thus occupying the traditional role of the state'. To which he adds, 'political allegiance and loyalty should be widely dispersed over these units: neighbourhood, town, county, province, state, region, and world at large'.<sup>47</sup> Pogge's vision sounds very much like the 'concentric circles' analogy that Nussbaum borrows from the Stoics, the first encircling the self, the next the family, and then so on outwards until 'the largest one, [encircles] humanity as a whole'.<sup>48</sup>

In a sceptical response to Nussbaum's appeal for a more cosmopolitan polity with a greater global consciousness, Michael Walzer makes the point, 'how odd it is to claim that my *fundamental* allegiance is, or ought to be, to the outermost circle'. He continues: 'My allegiances, like my relationships, start at the center. Hence we need to

describe the mediations through which one reaches the outer circles, acknowledging the value of, but also passing through, the others. That is not easy to do.<sup>49</sup>

Walzer is right, it is not easy to do, therefore, at this stage we must ask ourselves, how relevant or plausible is the cosmopolitan ideal to the vast majority of the individuals that constitute 'humanity as whole'? In doing so I am not forgetting that this is largely a normative exercise, but if normative theory and philosophy is to have any relevance to politics and policy, then ideally we must be able to gauge its applicability. Ignatieff has ironically, and correctly, pointed out that it 'is only too apparent that cosmopolitanism is the privilege of those who can take a secure nation state for granted'.<sup>50</sup> He argues that the order of the great cosmopolitan cities like London, Paris, New York and Los Angeles critically depend on the law-enforcing ability of the state. When this order breaks down, as it has done in all of these cities (e.g., the Los Angeles riots of 1992), they too are vulnerable to violent divisive rivalries. It follows then that 'cosmopolitans ... are not beyond the nation; and a cosmopolitan, post-nationalist spirit will always depend, in the end, on the capacity of nation states to provide security and civility for their citizens'.<sup>51</sup> Thus, it is fair to assert that as much of humanity does not enjoy this sense of security or civility, we are well removed from an era in which cosmopolitanism's appeal encircles 'humanity as a whole'.

### Reconciling the Alternatives

It is apparent that neither side of the patriotism and/or nationalism versus cosmopolitanism debate presents a flawless argument. What direction then are we to turn? The problem with the nature of this debate is that for many of those engaging in it, it is something of a zero-sum exercise that fails to take full account of the 'unsocial sociability' of human nature. For I do not believe that the essence of human nature can be reduced to exclusively one or the other of the community embeddedness versus personal autonomy perspectives. Although probably differing in proportions from one individual to the next and being dependent upon time and place, it is more accurate to assert that human nature is simultaneously constituted of both the collectivist- and individualist-oriented sentiments. It follows then that despite the arguments presented by the advocates of both some form of patriotism and or nationalism and cosmopolitanism being flawed, each does hold some legitimate claims. However, history has shown that it is equally true that the extreme versions of each, when permitted to flourish unopposed can pose a serious threat to the well being of much of humankind.

This point cannot be over-stated, as Walzer makes painfully clear by the following.

The crimes of the twentieth century have been committed alternately, as it were, by perverted patriots and perverted cosmopolitans. If fascism represents the first of these perversions, communism, in its Leninist and Maoist versions, represents the second. Isn't this repressive communism a child of universalizing enlightenment? Doesn't it teach an antinationalist ethic, identifying our primary allegiance (the class limitation, "*workers of the world,*" was thought to be temporary and instrumental) much as Nussbaum does? A particularism that excludes wider loyalties invites immoral conduct, but so does a cosmopolitanism that overrides narrower loyalties. Both are dangerous.<sup>52</sup>

Referring to cosmopolitanism's demands for the suppression of nationalist and or patriotic sentiments, Isaiah Berlin makes the further point,

a wounded *Volksgeist*, so to speak, is like a bent stick, forced down so severely

that when released, it lashes back with fury. Nationalism, at least in the West, is created by wounds inflicted by stress. As for Eastern Europe and the former Soviet empire, they seem today to be one vast open wound ... sooner or later, somebody will rebel, somebody will cry for room. Not only will people revolt against totalitarianism, but against an all-embracing, well-meaning, benign system as well.<sup>53</sup>

It is readily apparent then that we must find some way of moderating the claims and assertions of both nationalists and cosmopolitans, and embark on an attempt to reconcile the two and bring them together as a unifying project. Of course, any such attempt risks satisfying no one and alienating all. Yet, given what is at stake and the possible rewards for getting it right, it is a risk worth taking.

To date, most attempts at reconciling nationalism and cosmopolitanism have been of the nature alluded to earlier in the first section of this article – that is, in the form of ‘liberal nationalism’, where ‘there is a continuum between values and practices associated with local citizenship and the beliefs which underpin a conception of global citizenship’.<sup>54</sup> The reconciliation being attempted here is one of a more abstract nature. It is influenced by and expands on George Santayana’s observation: ‘A man’s feet must be planted in his country, but his eyes should survey the world.’<sup>55</sup>

Let us suppose that patriotism/nationalism and cosmopolitanism are not antithetical ideals, but rather, they actually hold a unifying potential to create an alternative lens through which we may someday view the world. Up until now, humanity has been trapped and limited by the exclusionary nature of these two dominant paradigms and their respective perspectives on human nature and history’s twists and turns. In order to move beyond these limitations we are obliged to consider these ideologies in a new light, such that we may arrive at point where – if not in history or reality, then at least in the mind – they begin to come together as a unifying force.

First, it must be borne in mind that regardless of the differences and separateness that any one nationality perceives of itself, that collective psyche or national identity is, ironically, solely dependent upon the distinctiveness of the numerous national identities beyond that nation’s border. In the absence of contrast and the relationship of the ‘other’, blind belief in a distinctive national identity and patriotism towards one’s nation is effectively trapped in the realm of the subjective, it lacks consciousness. Something to compare and contrast the self or one’s nation with is a basic necessity of self-awareness or self-recognition, and therefore, consciousness. It is also the case that without the contrasting of the other or others, let’s say pluralism, a universalising cosmopolitanism may be ‘empty’ or soulless, as the likes of Berlin believe it to be.<sup>56</sup> Or as Pagden sees it, ‘by embracing all values,’ cosmopolitanism ‘lacks any’.<sup>57</sup>

We need now to remind ourselves that any given national identity or culture is not a static museum piece. Its vitality and longevity depend upon its adaptability, on its ability to absorb the influx of foreign influences if it is not to stagnate and risk extinction. Similarly, cosmopolitanism and its notion of a global citizenry should not be thought of as a universalising homogenising project. For Ignatieff makes the pertinent point that ‘cosmopolitans [have] made a positive ethic out of cultural borrowing: in culture, exogamy ... [is] better than endogamy, and promiscuity ... [is] better than provincialism’.<sup>58</sup>

Let us now take a further step out on an already fragile limb. Accepting the awareness of one’s own national identity, as I believe we must, let us try to conceptualise the notion of a global citizen and his or her global consciousness as the sum total of all

existing ethnic, national and/or cultural identities. A difficult task indeed. Taking a step back from the precarious position on the limb, it is of course impossible for one person to intimately know, let alone embrace with patriotic fervour, an obscure identity that is, on the whole, foreign to him or herself. However, I think we may be permitted to claim that through such a conceptualisation, we may arrive at a point where the local (national) and global mind-sets meet. And thus, it will be here, if anywhere, that the reconciliation and perhaps synthesis of the internal patriotic and cosmopolitan sentiments might take place. At this point we will become aware that without a sense of belonging or national identity, we may also be incapable of identifying and opening ourselves up to externally received (foreign) additions to our respective personal and national make-ups. In setting aside our own national identities and sense of patriotism, we may well risk denying ourselves the option of embracing what it is that we value in the other, or even having an appreciation or toleration of that which is 'different'. Doing so may prevent us from ever actually having a true appreciation of what it means to have a global consciousness.

It should be spelled out that the possession of a global consciousness need not inhibit one from expressions of patriotic pride, or even a love of one's country. For as Stephen Nathanson correctly points out, 'it is possible to love one's country without hating other countries, being an enthusiast about war, limiting one's concerns to one's own country, or believing in mindless obedience and support'.<sup>59</sup> However, a patriotic embrace of one's national identity ought not to end in delusions of cultural and national superiority. Extreme nationalism with this end in mind is, as previously stated, really nothing more than a delusion based upon false manifestations of imagined histories, perpetuated by misrepresentations, usually in the name of (some one's) self-interest. In essence, it might best be described as something of an aberration. Rather, an awareness of the importance and the depth of meaning one's own national identity should enable us to realise, acknowledge and accept the importance of the respective national identities of the external others. We need not travel to every corner of the globe seeking every last detail about all peoples of the world, but we can be made aware of and adopt a willingness to recognise the true value of diversity. If such a condition can be widely achieved, whereby a form of 'cultural cosmopolitanism' engenders a wider understanding and toleration that leads to what might be described as 'moral cosmopolitanism' – where the term 'cosmopolitanism' is defined in a truly multicultural sense alluded to earlier – might not we be on the verge of a more peaceful world?<sup>60</sup>

This is the kind of pluralist tolerant world order that Berlin insists Johann Herder envisioned. He states:

Herder's idea of the nation was deeply non-aggressive. All he wanted was cultural self-determination. He denied the superiority of one people over another. Anyone who proclaimed it was saying something false. Herder believed in a variety of national cultures, all of which could, in his view, peacefully coexist. ... For him there were few timeless truths: time and place and social life – what came to be called civil society – were everything.<sup>61</sup>

Naturally, the ability of all these cultures to peacefully coexist depends to a considerable extent on the very nature of the societies. For is it not true that some cultures engage in practices that more liberal societies find abhorrent, and, dare I say it, vice versa? Yes, it is true, in both cases, but at the risk of being branded a cultural relativist we should also consider the following. Is not the point of the cosmopolitan global consciousness that we all be made aware of the variety of traditions and moral values

observed by the different nations of the world? And then, once having become aware, we are virtually free to borrow and experiment with the vast array of positive traits found in different cultures,<sup>62</sup> adopting them if we see fit or discarding of them if we believe otherwise. Our newly acquired global consciousness and appreciation of alternative beliefs and values should also allow us to either propose, or take on board and consider the recommendations or polite protestations of other nations in a civil manner. Of course, no individual or nation can force another to see things its way for any length of time with any true conviction if force is the only means being applied. Rather, the proffering of a well-grounded case backed up by reason should, over time, provide a decent opportunity to succeed in doing so, and is preferable to resorting to antagonistic posturing and the threat of violent force.

### **Conclusion**

It is fair to assert then that neither nationalism nor cosmopolitanism alone provide satisfactory solutions to all of humanity's questions and needs. Although there will undoubtedly be those who disagree, I believe it has been well proven here, and better elsewhere, that both paradigms possess some major flaws, rendering them potentially dangerous. In acknowledging this I have endeavoured to articulate a process by which these perspectives – usually thought of as being in competition for the same hearts and minds – might actually be conceived of as complementary, and thus, possibly reconcilable. As I have argued that it is a dichotomy derived from competing conceptions of human nature, it is appropriate then that the setting for this resolution, and ultimately the synthesis of the perspectives, is the individual mind-set or psyche. If we can first succeed in reconciling patriotic and cosmopolitan sentiments in our own minds, then there is a hope, however faint, that it can spread and ultimately be realised in the various national polities and collective national psyches.

More with hope than with expectation, should such a condition be widely achieved, then I suspect we would find ourselves in a situation where both advocates of nationalism and cosmopolitanism would be satisfied with the outcome, without, I might add, having had to give up too much of significance. Finally, Isaiah Berlin has noted that the Austro-Hungarian Empire is proof that 'it is possible ... to have political and economic uniformity, but cultural variety'.<sup>63</sup> Although this statement may have some truth to it, I think it would be unwise to suggest that the Austro-Hungarian Empire is an ideal model to be followed in attempting to see the reconciliation of nationalism and cosmopolitanism realised. Nevertheless, I would like to echo the sentiments (and borrow the eloquent words) that Berlin never lived to see realised: 'I do not wish to abandon the belief that a world that is a reasonably peaceful coat of many colours, each portion of which develops its own distinct cultural identity and is tolerant of others, is not a utopian dream.'<sup>64</sup>

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### **Notes**

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1. The relation and distinction between patriotism and nationalism will be made clearer below. For the moment, however, the situating of this debate requires the acceptance that, when compared and contrasted with cosmopolitanism, they are both usually thought of as ideals antithetical to cosmopolitanism.
2. *New York Times*, 13 February 1994.
3. Martha C. Nussbaum, 'Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism', in Joshua Cohen (ed.), *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1996), pp. 2–3. On Diogenes the Cynic (404–323 BC), see Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers* (London: William Heinemann, 1925), Vol. II, Book VI, Chapter 2, pp. 22–85. The 'I am a citizen of the world' response is quoted on p. 65. At the time, the title 'Cynic' literally translated to 'Dog', for through his life Diogenes is reputed to have adhered to the philosophy he espoused. An anecdote records that he once masturbated in the marketplace, commenting to passers-by: 'If only it were as easy to get rid of hunger by rubbing my stomach.'
4. A good indication of this is the collection of essays responding to Nussbaum's 'Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism', included in Cohen, *For Love of Country*.
5. A recent exception is Yael Tamir's attempt to articulate a theory of 'liberal nationalism'. See Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993). See also Bruce Ackerman, 'Rooted Cosmopolitanism', *Ethics*, 104/3, 1994, pp. 516–535; Charles R. Beitz, 'Patriotism for Cosmopolitans', *Boston Review*, 19/5, 1994, pp. 23–24; Pauline Kleingeld, 'Kantian Patriotism', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 29/4, 2000, pp. 313–341. An earlier example is the 'liberal *Risorgimento* (awakening) nationalism' of the Italian 'humanitarian internationalist', Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872). See Andrew Vincent, *Modern Political Ideologies*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), pp. 248–251.
6. Alasdair MacIntyre, 'Is Patriotism a Virtue?', in Ronald Beiner (ed.), *Theorizing Citizenship* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995), p. 213.
7. Lord Acton, quoted in Nathan Gardels, 'Editorial Comment: The New Babel and the Noblest of Pain', *New Perspectives Quarterly*, 84/4, 1991, p. 2.
8. Leo Tolstoy, 'Patriotism, or Peace?', in *Tolstoy's Writings on Civil Disobedience and Non-Violence* (New York: New American Library, 1968), pp. 106–107.
9. On this point, see Aristotle, *Politics*, William Ellis (trans.) (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1912), Book 1, Chapters 1–2, 1252a–1253b, pp. 1–5.
10. On Stoic cosmopolitanism, see Thomas L. Pangle, 'Socratic Cosmopolitanism: Cicero's Critique and Transformation of the Stoic Ideal', *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 31/2, 1998, pp. 235–362.
11. Immanuel Kant, 'Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View [1784]', in Lewis White Beck (ed.), *Kant On History* (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), p. 15.
12. For a classical illustration of this, compare and contrast John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), the modern standard-bearer of liberal thought, with Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London: Duckworth, 1988) or Michael Sandel, *Liberalism and its Critics* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984).
13. Michael Ignatieff, *Blood & Belonging: Journeys Into the New Nationalism* (London: BBC Books and Chatto & Windus, 1993), p. 2. On this point, see especially Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992). See also Robert Wright, *Non-Zero: the Logic of Human Destiny* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000).
14. Ignatieff, *Blood & Belonging*, pp. 2, 7.
15. Gardels, 'Editorial Comment', p. 2.
16. Maurizio Viroli, *For Love of Country: An Essay on Patriotism and Nationalism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 1.
17. I am grateful to one of the reviewers for highlighting this point.
18. Kleingeld, 'Kantian Patriotism', p. 319. Kleingeld argues that 'there is no value in quarrelling about the right to use the word "patriotism"'. She also points out that 'Viroli's purist approach leads to problems even in his own historical account'. See p. 318.
19. Vincent, *Modern Political Ideologies*, p. 241.
20. Ignatieff, *Blood & Belonging*, p. 9.
21. Vincent, *Modern Political Ideologies*, p. 241.
22. John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism, Liberty, and Representative Government* [1859–1861] (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1962), pp. 359–360.
23. Vincent, *Modern Political Ideologies*, p. 241. Emphasis in original. It should be noted that Vincent is not suggesting that nationalism is an innocuous ideology.

24. Anthony Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 2nd edn. (London: Duckworth, 1983), p. 21.
25. Ignatieff, *Blood & Belonging*, p. 3.
26. Walter Berns, 'On Patriotism', *The Public Interest*, 127, 1997, p. 24.
27. Fred Halliday, 'The Perils of Community: Reason and Unreason in Nationalist Ideology', *Nations and Nationalism*, 6/2, 2000, p. 166.
28. Halliday, 'Perils of Community', p. 167.
29. Ignatieff, *Blood & Belonging*, p. 5.
30. Stephen Nathanson, 'In Defense of "Moderate Patriotism"', *Ethics*, 99/3, 1989, p. 535.
31. Nathanson, 'In Defense of "Moderate Patriotism"', p. 538.
32. See, for example, Bernard Yack, 'The Myth of the Civic Nation'; Kai Nielsen, 'Cultural Nationalism, Neither Ethnic nor Civic'; Will Kymlicka, 'Misunderstanding Nationalism', all in Ronald Beiner (ed.), *Theorizing Nationalism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 103–118, 119–130 and 131–140, respectively.
33. On Stoic cosmopolitanism, see Pangle, 'Socratic Cosmopolitanism', pp. 240–242.
34. Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1949), Book VI, Chapter 29, p. 68.
35. See Thomas C. Walker, 'The Forgotten Prophet: Tom Paine's Cosmopolitanism and International Relations', *International Studies Quarterly*, 44/1, 2000, pp. 51–72. Quotes at pp. 55 and 79.
36. Vincent, *Modern Political Ideologies*, p. 249.
37. Anthony Pagden, 'Stoicism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Legacy of European Imperialism', *Constellations*, 7/1, 2000, p. 3.
38. Pagden, 'Stoicism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Legacy of European Imperialism', p. 3.
39. Pagden, 'Stoicism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Legacy of European Imperialism', pp. 4–6.
40. Pagden, 'Stoicism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Legacy of European Imperialism', pp. 5–6.
41. Thomas W. Pogge, 'Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty', *Ethics*, 103/1, 1992, pp. 48–49.
42. Pogge, 'Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty', p. 49.
43. It is worth noting that neither Kant nor Paine advocated a system of world government. For a recent argument for greater global governance and the possibilities of global government, see Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), pp. 144–147.
44. Charles Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 183.
45. Pogge, 'Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty', p. 49.
46. Ulrich Beck, 'The Cosmopolitan Manifesto', *New Statesman*, 20 March 1998, p. 29. Emphasis in original.
47. Pogge, 'Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty', p. 58.
48. Nussbaum, 'Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism', p. 9.
49. Michael Walzer, 'Spheres of Affection' in Joshua Cohen (ed.), *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1996), p. 126. Emphasis in original.
50. Ignatieff, *Blood & Belonging*, p. 9.
51. Ignatieff, *Blood & Belonging*, p. 9.
52. Walzer, 'Spheres of Affection', pp. 126–127. The 'workers of the world' reference is to Karl Marx and Frederick Engels', 'WORKING MEN OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!' appeal at the end of their *Communist Manifesto*. See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, 'Manifesto of the Communist Party' in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1 (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1958), p. 65. Ulrich Beck makes a similar appeal at the end of his 'Cosmopolitan Manifesto': 'Citizens of the world, unite!' (p. 30).
53. Isaiah Berlin, 'The Ingathering Storm of Nationalism', *New Perspectives Quarterly*, 8/4, 1991, pp. 5, 9.
54. April Carter, 'Nationalism and Global Citizenship', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 43/1, 1997, p. 76.
55. George Santayana, *Reason in Society: Volume Two of The Life of Reason* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), p. 136. It is also influenced by related ideas raised by Robert Couteau, 'Must World-Mindedness Destroy National Identity?', *The Humanist*, March/April 1986, pp. 15–16, 42.
56. Berlin, 'Ingathering Storm of Nationalism', p. 9.
57. Pagden, 'Stoicism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Legacy of European Imperialism', p. 4.
58. Ignatieff, *Blood & Belonging*, p. 7.
59. Stephen Nathanson, quoted in 'Citizens of the world, unite?', *The Wilson Quarterly*, 15/2, 1995, p. 128.

60. For more on the distinction between 'cultural' and 'moral' cosmopolitanism, see Samuel Scheffler, *Boundaries and Allegiances: Problems of Justice and Responsibility in Liberal Thought* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), Chapter 7.
61. Berlin, 'Ingathering Storm of Nationalism', p. 5. For more on Herder, see Isaiah Berlin, *Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas* (London: Hogarth Press, 1976).
62. Of course, this also means we are in a position to adopt negative traits as well; however, the application of critical reflection, or reason should prevent us from doing so.
63. Berlin, 'Ingathering Storm of Nationalism', p. 9.
64. Berlin, 'Ingathering Storm of Nationalism', p. 8.

