

CRITICAL REVIEW OF COSMOPOLITANISM PART 1: SCEPTICISM TOWARDS THE VIABILITY OF COSMOPOLITAN DEMOCRACY AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR AFRICANS

FUNOM Theophilus Makama

Human Rights and Global Ethics. Department of Politics and International Relations.
University of Leicester. Leicester. United Kingdom.

Email: ftm4@student.le.ac.uk

Abstract

This essay is the first of a two-part series about Cosmopolitan Democracy. It questions the viability of this idea, and the author seeks to understand the practicality of this concept on a pragmatic, rather than an idealistic lens, in the contemporary global society. Cosmopolitan Democracy, championed by globalists is a perspective of world governance or a "world state" concept where a decentralized system of governance is sustained by various decision-making sources whilst honouring states with some level of national autonomy. It is a concept which gives the morality of the individual a central viewpoint and this morality is what should be regarded when sustaining societies, hence the massive attention on social justice by its proponents. Issues raised such as distributive justice, coercion and partiality, the cosmopolitan conceptual legitimacy at a global level, citizenship, reciprocity and sovereignty oppose the legitimacy and practicality of this concept, giving statist, sovereigntists, nationalists and other sceptics of the cosmopolitan Agenda reasons to question this ideology. With the complexities surrounding the conceptual definition and implementation of cosmopolitan democracy, a good number of scholars fear it may not be as progressive as it has been widely portrayed by its adherents.

Keywords

Cosmopolitanism, Cosmopolitan Democracy, Globalism, Global governance, Distributive justice, Sovereignty

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Introduction

Cosmopolitanism is defined by three components: individualism, universalism and generality. (Barry, 1999) Thus, cosmopolitan Democracy aims towards the promotion and protection of universal civic and political rights. (Song, 2010, p.138) The individualistic nature of this perspective puts the individual, rather than, let's say, families, tribes, communities or states as the unit of morality. The implication of this is the universal status of persons being applied as the same in every part of the world and not particular to certain groups or geography. This negates, for instance, Thomas Hobbes Westphalian sovereignty ideology as the human being is naturally an asocial and chaotic being until placed into order by a higher authority such as 'the state,' hence fundamentally incapable of being the 'source of morality.' In this case, according to Hobbes, States which are relevant to human, human rights and humanity should also have their autonomy and independence from external influence. (Hobbes, 1994) But the state and the human are not alike. The human possesses an 'intrinsic' moral value for good association, the state does not but the State could also be autonomous on the framework of individual rights, hence, interference on a state is implicative of going against the will of citizens of the state. (Beitz, 1999) Therefore, state autonomy, though, not the same as individual autonomy, is an extension of it.

But are states free associations? Is the assumption of the voluntary bond and consent of individuals of states accurate? Most citizens are born into the political system to be coercively controlled by it even without giving their consent, and rejection of such membership comes with dire consequences, leaving the 'members' with no choice. But choosing to stay or immigrate into a particular political society or acts such as voting cannot be adequately described to constitute consent which qualifies an individual's membership. (Simmons, 1979) So, criticizing interventions, for instance, based on coercion of individual members of a state, as persistently done by scholars of opposing views means, all governments are equally guilty of this since no state qualifies as 'free association' without coercing its citizens, one way or another. (Beitz, 1999) The aim of this article is to critically assess the possibility of how practical the Cosmopolitan Democracy concept is in our contemporary global society, whilst addressing the 'serious concerns' raised by Sovereignists, Nationalists, statist, liberal democrats and proponents of any other opposing view.

Practicality of this concept

The individual has been refocused and given huge importance by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, setting the stage for the possible practice of Cosmopolitan Democracy in a world of post-sovereign states. (Booth, 1999, p.65-6) Cosmopolitan democracy over sovereign equality and non-intervention gives room for public accountability on a global scale where members are no longer restricted to states but seen as 'global citizens' in an 'international society.' (Bianchi, 1999) Therefore, scholars argue that sovereignty and non-intervention are in direct opposite to democracy and accountability, and hence the need to evolve democracy to transcend borders into a global level (Archibugi, 2000; Bianchi, 1992; Camilleri & Falk, 1992; Robertson, 1999) David Beetham argues that just as democracy has evolved from township practice to a national practice in the eighteenth century, it should also evolve from national to humankind as a whole, or to global practice in the twentieth century, so, cosmopolitan democracy is feasible and achievable. In a state consisting of a divided set of

residents in the ‘citizens vs. non-citizens’ dichotomy, when decisions are taken by citizens without the input of ‘non-citizens’ like in the instances of border villages in African States being affected by decisions made by the intra-state governments, central power structures and hierarchies, it is no longer a democracy. (Held, 1998) Such inequalities have been further illustrated by Daniele Archibugi as for instance Germany’s interests’ rates decisions may hamper on Greece’s and Portugal’s employment rates. Likewise, the European Union’s immigration policies negatively affecting the economic growth of Mediterranean Africa and I will add, the building of the water Dam by Ethiopia which will affect Egypt, hence causing the Ethiopia-Egypt water conflict (Lawson, 2017; Woldemaryam, 2020); all happening without the affected citizens giving their own inputs in these decisions. (Archibugi, 1998, p.204)

If everyone must be heard and given the chance to participate in decision making, frameworks creating political constituencies which may be larger or smaller than states should be created. These constituencies should give individuals the opportunity to be adequately represented in global affairs independently and autonomously of their political representation in domestic affairs. (Archibugi, 1998, p.212) Sovereign states may still play a role in this cosmopolitan democratic framework but will not be responsible in taking the final say as ‘independent and autonomous’ institutions will be present to do so whilst preserving the rights of their global citizens. (Shaw, 1994, p.134-5)

Concept of Distributive Justice

Matthias Risse would say ‘earth belongs to humanity in common’ - an assumption that is at the core of some versions of liberal cosmopolitanism. (Cited in Chatterjee, 2000, p.66) So, particularity in culture is not an excuse for exclusion and this can also be extended to immigration policies mischievously or intentionally aimed at excluding others with different cultures or worldviews even in so-called liberal states. It is for this reason that Michael Walzer, David Miller and John Rawls claim that egalitarian distributive justice is typical only to political communities with borders. (Miller, 1995; Rawls, 1999; Walzer, 1983) In this regard, social justice may only be well understood and effective from the perspective of a ‘bounded world’ but factored by its culture, history and membership. Since distributive justice is local, some cultures seeing themselves as dominant or the ‘majority’ are liable to appropriate resources to themselves much more than they proportionately deserve, on the detriment of others, and these further cements this view as an extreme opposing view to Cosmopolitanism.

The reality on ground is, larger communities are defined as a collection of mini-communities. This spreads across rich and poor nations, western and non-western states. Practically, contingent matters are what define community membership, cultural uniqueness and a collective consensus. Having the interest or extending some loyalty to another community by members of a different community is usually not the case because of the ‘insiders vs. outsiders’ divide and this makes normative justice very difficult, if not impossible. But it can still be achieved. Since the desire from people to connect to others outside their small units is significantly low, creating a new identity they can familiarize with and expanding, rather than demanding their loyalties to correspond with the global society through political and economic globalization by gradually evolving their consensus, cultural uniqueness, collective practices and contingent issues; moral justice on a global scale can therefore be achieved and it is on this ideology that the cosmopolitan democratic framework is established.

(Arneson, 2004; Oldenquist, 2008) So, Cosmopolitan Democrats are faced with fighting the issue of boundaries which separates people physically, politically, culturally and as well, morally; a fight against giving precedence to exclusion over inclusion. Therefore, provided boundaries exist, achieving moral justice especially on a global scale is practically difficult. (Chatterjee, 2009, p.67)

Coercion and Partiality

In the liberal democratic setting, legitimacy to exhibit partiality towards one's fellow citizen is established on grounds of responsibilities demanded by the political community. These demands are created from coercion and the imposition of rules to prove one's loyalty and for self-development. These demands are then displayed in different degrees as more would be expected from 'citizens' leading to more coercion while less expectation is shown on 'foreigners.' Equal respect for all humans is therefore not the same as equal concern for all. (Miller, 2004; 2005) This is more illustrated in a scenario of the rich countries' obligations in eradicating poverty in the world. Should they prioritise these obligations to poorer countries or prioritise the poor in their own domains? Blake will argue that it is a reasonable standpoint if they insist on prioritising their own poor people even if they are better-off than poor foreigners. (Blake, 2002) This, therefore, creates a dichotomy of 'the poor' because of boundaries or borders and though the foreigners may need the benefit of this obligation more, they are of less concern since they are not coerced to be responsible to the rich countries confined in borders.

Therefore, coercion is characteristic of self-governance in democratic settings through legal bindings of citizens to their governments, unlike on a global scale where binding agreements are non-existent between 'outsiders' and hence, no coercion. And no coercion, means less or no demands of duties which in turn means less partiality.

Concerns against cosmopolitan democracy

Just a Radical Agenda

A big issue with the Cosmopolitan democracy concept is the obsessive resistance from its scholars against democracy and politics to the point where too much focus is centred on legitimizing moral and ethical policies rather than reducing the limits of sovereign governments thereby giving less concern to establishing a new framework for democracy on the global scale. (Chandler, 2003, p.340) The hostility towards sovereignty does not strengthen the mechanisms of democratic accountability and there is no feasible action taken to do the latter. Human rights protection, global peace or sustainable developments are progressive ends. The means to these ends will require some 'frameworks' to arrive there. Cosmopolitan Scholars seem to shy away from such frameworks. Andrew Linklater calls for a 'bolder moral standpoint' (Linklater, 1998) adding that the preference for normative rather than a substantive democracy to propagate ethical and legal norms in the global society and Ken Booth's wish of global ethics as the centre of international relations in the twenty first century (Booth, 1995) means that the conceptual framework of Cosmopolitan Democracy is based on a radical Agenda of criticism which is by default, conservative, uncritical and Machiavellian.

Cosmopolitan Legitimacy favours the West

The Cosmopolitan concept is by far different from the liberal democratic approach. While the former claims rights for others, the latter, on the background of the self-governing capacity of individuals, derives rights from them. The framework of this liberal-democratic concept lies on the assumption of independent, rational, responsible and accountable individuals on which laws and their enforcements, legal contracts, punishment of defaulting or committing crime, governments, state institutes and their systems are developed. (Chandler, 2003, p.343-4) In essence, the individual subjects fully participate voluntarily and willingly without being coerced into accepting any bounding agreement or higher purpose or policy. This cuts across all laws, for instance, civil law- a legal contract between two individuals, binding them based on their own words; criminal law- the breaking of a social contract between an individual and his/her community where his/her action affects another member of that same space he/she is; hence the equality of every individual altered in balance due to the crime committed.

The court of law in this case is responsible for passing judgements after the accused has been scrutinized and allowed to defend him/herself, yet again, equality and free will respected. So, principles such as equality, justice etc, must come from the people themselves and not from an external source. As Hannah Arendt states: 'Equality, in contrast to all that is involved in mere existence, is not given us, but is the result of human organisation..... We are not born equal, we become equal as member of a group on the strength of our decision to guarantee ourselves mutually equal rights. (cited in Chandler, 2003:342; Arendt, 1979:301)

This is not the case with the Cosmopolitan framework as 'human rights' are still abstract and not practical until legal and political frameworks are established. (Lewis, 1998, p.85) Cosmopolitans see human rights as moral as opposed to being legal and political, thereby creating difficulties in the implementation and protection of these rights and their accountability thereof. In international relations, for example, while the UN Charter legitimately treats both western and non-western states equally despite the disparities, Cosmopolitans still consider some states illegitimate. The Cosmopolitans stand on an 'Audit framework' where states are assessed by external agents and the states which fail these 'assessments' lose their rights of legitimacy and in extension, equality with others and since decision-making affecting individuals that are bonded to states must involve the making and enactment of laws, this perspective indirectly supports partiality and grossly gives an advantage to western views. (Held, 1995, p.232)

Since the West has these resources and necessary culture to promote it, there is then a need for them to assume this 'new duty' to take on this needed 'global leadership.' (Shaw, 1994, p.180-81) The liberal democracy concept is based on the collective decision of the people, but what if these people have no global interest but self-interests? So, Cosmopolitans believe, a decision made even democratically can be as wrong as a 'final say' from the government. The people also cannot be fully trusted, as their governments, leaving the international community to establish institutions that can carefully select micro-societies with Cosmopolitan interest, as Kaldor will call them 'Islands of Civility' which can be trusted to make decisions for all even if a minority. (Kaldor, 1999, p.120) Nothing beats imposition and injustice as this. This new moral concept of 'legitimacy' further widens the gap between legitimacy and legality, creating 'grey zones of ambiguity' in international relations. This gives rise to flexibility in the approach to international laws, making these laws more dangerous and

accessible to be used by Western States to foster their Agendas. For example, the issue of Military intervention cannot be settled only based on protecting human rights in the intervened State. If several states are to give their inputs, a consensus would not be reached because of their different criteria to what human right abuses are. This leaves it open for ‘legitimate states,’ usually Western, to act when the need arises, which also sets it up as a prerogative of the powerful against the weak. (Chandler, 2003, p.346)

Cosmopolitan democracy also gives forum to globalize the economy and define the rights and responsibilities of actors in the ‘free market,’ these so-called ‘free markets’ will still be controlled by more powerful participants than their less powerful counterparts, thereby generating a legitimate fear by non-western states of the neo-marxist systematic expansion or spread of empires. (Hardt & Negri, 2001; Tully, 2008). Also, the UN Security Council is creating global ‘emergency conditions’ using this as a tool to deformalize laws and promote extrajudicial political measures around the world. The right to protect, especially which the UN promotes as necessary to avoid threats to international peace and security from domestic human rights violations is a plausible cause. But the selective imposition of debilitating sanctions, military invasions and the authoritarian occupation of administrations by some states either acting on their own or unilaterally through coalitions, tagged as ‘enforcements’ are causes of concern, more so, these states cannot be opposed by other member states of the UN due to the veto power that they have. Therefore, the threats of converting cosmopolitan intents into hegemonic nightmares is real. (Cohen, 2008; Scheppele, 2006)

Finally, the function of the international criminal court to prosecute crimes against humanity is seen by some scholars as neo-colonial deceptive tools to dominate the world by the West. (Mamdani, 2008, p.18; Mamdani, 2009) The Cosmopolitan Democracy framework therefore proves to be, not only flexible, but multi-layered whilst dismissing accountability in decision-making putting non-western states vulnerable. This framework also fuels the incapacitation of strict hierarchies of international law, hence giving room for the West to dictate international relations which invariably means, a gradual and increasing inequality in universal international law, hence ‘might equals right.’ (Chandler, 2000/55-6)

Citizenship

The concepts of ‘global citizen’ and ‘state citizen’ and how they correlate or how an individual may assume these statuses is a complex problem. Should these two statuses have the same kind of rights? Are they equally demanding or responsible? Is the global citizen also responsible to the state and vice versa? Can a citizen have different privileges as a legal resident of the world rather than of a secular state? (Archibugi, 1998, p.216; Kaldor, 1999, p.148) These issues even further complicate the roles of national political parties as Cosmopolitan theorists cancel them for their inability to propagate a Cosmopolitan citizenship because they function around national issues rather than global ones. (Archibugi, 2000, p.146) In this regard, national political parties are replaced with transnational civil society groups to represent individuals on a global level. (Beetham, 1999, p.142) But can these groups influence policy making at national government levels? How easy can these groups device a framework of political accountability? (Charnovitz, 1997; Forsythe, 2000, p.169) Civil society groups usually include: Community groups, pressure groups of particular issues, grassroots campaign organizations, NGOs, the

media, research groups etc, and they usually operate independent of the political terrain which have in turn institutionalized democratic equality and accountability.

Therefore, even if they are a part of the policy-making process, their formal representation is most often lacking to be worthy enough to be counted as propagating 'world citizenship.' (Edwards, 1999, p.180; Heater, 1999, p.144) A good example is the non-governmental organizations fighting for human rights such as Human Rights Watch, or the International Commission of Jurists who have only very few members that are affluent, intentionally so to have the needed networks or necessary access to governments and international officials. (Charnovitz, 1997, p.270; de Waal, 1997, p.3-4; Forsythe, 2000, p.167-8) In this case, representation, especially on a global scale to denote 'world citizenship' status is defeated. There is also the issue of their 'non-elected' system of operations that makes them not fully answerable to the people they represent. This is the direct opposite to democracy. (Bosco, 2000) Thus, difficult to hold these civil societies to account which, in other words means a defeat to democratic accountability. (Chandler, 2003, p.336) Even if civil society groups take part in a decision-making process of a nation, they do not have the power to hold states democratically accountable as the process of receiving license or being appointed by international officials gives more power to states. (Charnovitz, 1997, p.283) These make the civil society groups essentially advisory, not executive. (Archibugi, 1998, p.219)

The global citizen has no fixed territorial identity, hence has no legal or political standing to hold policy actors accountable. The rights of the Cosmopolitan citizen is hence attached to international agencies or groups which then means that the authenticity of the global citizen is shown only through 'representation' on particular issues, raised by a 'representing' agency. This makes it difficult to understand the claims of 'representation of the people' by civil societies since there is no institutionalisation of the mechanisms of accountability. (Edwards, 1999, p.180) For instance, most NGOs raise awareness, rather than express 'representation' (Kaldor, 2001) thereby triggering the moral conscience, and not appealing to a political majority; in a more-or-less display of democracy by articulation, rather than by representation. (Galtung, 2000, p.155) The state citizen has defined set of rights and duties enforced by the police and the courts. But the global citizen has 'new rights' which are not exercised by him or her but by international institutions, which have 'new duties' matching these 'new rights' making its practicality very complex and no provision of a mechanism of accountability to give content to these rights. So, in the case of an impending genocide, global civil societies can exercise control in preventing it, but by demanding the intervention of the governments of all states. (Archibugi, 1998, p.219) Enforcing this demand becomes a serious problem if the states in question are reluctant to dedicate resources for such an intervention as in the case of the Rwandan genocide. (Beetham, 1999, p.140) The irony here is allocating duties of using force to actors incapable of coercive powers whilst demanding from the champions of military might, who are the states, to be 'silent.' (Chandler, 2003, p.338)

State Coercion and Reciprocity in Distributive Justice

External interference means some level or degree of coercion because not every member of the state will agree to it, so, the Cosmopolitan democracy is equally guilty. Coercion be it from the government or elsewhere is no different in principle. What matters is the result which is- liberal justice. (Song, 2010, p.140) External interference also means imposition and this can be

detrimental to the will of the people as well. Forcing my son to go to the football Academy is different from another Man doing the same to him. My son may most likely accept my authority, but not the other man. In coercive imposition, what matters is ‘who’ is imposing and not ‘what’ is being imposed. (Song, 2010, p.143) Irrespective of methodology or fantastic framework created, an external agent acting as an ‘authority’ over sovereignties is liable to be resisted. But when it comes to distributive justice, Cosmopolitan scholars have accused statist and sovereigntist of state coercion, and this is not the case. The reason for distributive justice is not state coercion but reciprocity. The more the state is responsible for an individual, the more its moral right to demand loyalty. In another way, the more loyal a citizen is to a state, the more responsible the state is or should be. It is a case of reciprocity and not coercion. (Sangiovanni, 2007) This, then, is a relational view of distributive justice. The Cosmopolitan perspective is non-relational which functions on ‘demand’ of moral personhood, independent of institutional and cooperative affiliations. (Sangiovanni, 2007, p.71) Reciprocity functions on an existing model of political governance, it is for this reason it will have to be egalitarian in nature when dispensing justice among fellow citizens. This will be different from the globalist cosmopolitan perspective which is abstract. When citizens and residents sustain the state system via a financial and sociological network of contributions paid through trust, compliance, resources and participation, they, by right should enjoy more considerations and benefits from their states. (Sangiovanni, 2007, p.20-21) Interestingly, without these states and the ‘coins’ paid by their citizens, the global order cannot be sustained even if established. Thus, ‘contributions,’ ‘reciprocity,’ and ‘participation’ are important factors to justice.

A statist view of maintaining statism is more realistic and just than a globalist view. In this regard, inequality between fellow citizens is more of a serious problem because they share the same political system, economic structures and legal institutions within a state as compared to inequality between residents of different states. Therefore, prioritizing the poor within a state despite being better than the poor elsewhere is moral and justified. (Sangiovanni, 2007, p.72) If reciprocity-based institutional arrangements presuppose the need for state boundaries whilst being established as a yardstick for justice, then the notion of equity is completely defeated. Equity aims at creating a ‘near-balanced’ world be it in a mini-society or in our global society irrespective of the disparities in the status and contributions of the members of these societies. As much as it is insane for smaller communities to make demands to be at par with their richer counterparts, the richer ones can ‘assist’ or ‘contribute’ more to the smaller one in an external ‘space’ or even directly, so as to allow significant representation of both parties in an international forum. This ‘space’ can be regulated by a body or community outside the two participatory communities which will also provide an intermediate sort of international governance and cooperation that may even generate duties of reciprocity at the global level.

Nevertheless, the two communities remain major actors or stakeholders in this arrangement so as not to ‘extort’ one to please another or bully one whilst deceptively ‘helping.’ In this regard, the promoters of statism have a strong argument, even at the level of global democracy, because reciprocity at whichever degree cannot be rule out, or else a divide of ‘charity states’ vs. ‘begging states’ will be established. The beggars, only having themselves to blame if they eventually lose respect or relevance at the global stage. This is the current plight of Africa as a continent, which is the most beneficiary of international aid and yet little development has come out of it, whilst the continent continues to suffer ‘global

marginalization' in world politics and representation. (Abbas and Niyiragira, 2009; Cai et.al, 2018; Lancaster, 1999) This reciprocity comes with 'political accountability,' a major problem the Cosmopolitans are finding hard to address.

Sovereignty

Sovereignism can be best seen in two perspectives: the nationalist and the democratic perspectives. Sovereignism is defined around the concept of sovereignist territorialism whereby laws legitimise self-determination of a homogenous group of people clearly separated from others in discrete makeup, societal functions and ideologies whose laws promote and bind its collective will alone. This group of people is known as the 'ethnos' and this idea is propagated by the nationalists. The democratic view holds the self-determining people responsible as the author and at the same time, the subject of its laws and hence not a must that these laws should express the will of its people or an 'ethnos' but should focus on the mechanism of creating these laws and the extent of the authority of these laws. (Benhabib, 2009, p.693) The nationalist view is quite rigid and strict and is hardly considered when debating about the Cosmopolitan globalist idea because the ideology behind it is emphatically clear and opposing to Cosmopolitan democracy. The democratic sovereignist can be brought into the equation because of the more liberal and flexible nature of its ideology. Interestingly, adherents of this view still consider a harmonized global society from a legal and political angle as normatively dangerous and undesirable (Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Koh, 1997) since neither the economy nor the legal system in a global scale is created on the background of human associations whose members are willing to relate with each other under a framework of differential rules for the distribution of benefits and liabilities. (Nagel, 2005:120).

Let us also consider Communitarianism. Communitarianism is a social philosophy that concentrates on communities and their moral framework formed from individual moral contributions to it. Communitarianism functions on societal units such as the family, voluntary associations and schools that historically transmit values and morals within themselves to give the community an identity. (Etzioni, 2015) Some Communitarian theorists strongly opined a shared identity because of shared responsibility. The sense of mutuality and solidarity among persons is what leads to a joint commitment to social justice and as Sandel would state: individuals only see themselves as members of a society if they are responsible to each other. (Sandel, 1983)

Walzer made clear that, unlike nations which are historic communities, embodying a common history, language, culture and way of life, and hence having a viable moral community, the global society exhibits none of these shared common ideals and unlike the nation, cannot be a moral community. (Walzer, 1980) On this school of thought, Michal Sandel concludes that a more difficult task of achieving commonality on a framework, established to achieve a global society consisting of political associations that are more expansive than nations and with fewer cultural traditions and historic memories is the case with this globalist view of democracy. (Sandel, 1996) Therefore, the existence of sovereign states is exactly what makes justice to function and enforcing a relationship between citizens of a state with the rest of humanity which they do not have must come from a framework on which building enduring projects of mutual benefits and cooperation are established. This is lacking in the global society; hence, this globalist idea is relegated to the promotion of seemingly 'anonymous

governance' to achieve a techno-elitist or Cosmopolitan democracy, which in turn is already proving problematic rather than progressive. Attempts in achieving democracy and human rights on a global scale and beyond territorial limitation to establish global governance will create a gap between the custodians of these new Cosmopolitan rights and those with social duties, hence creating dependency, rather than empowerment, which puts the UN's Charter framework of the preservation of self-governance and the rights already in existence at risk of being bastardized. (Chandler, 2003, p.332) The Cosmopolitan democracy framework can only come into practicality if a high level of homogenisation on a global scale is achieved. Such level of homogenisation can only happen through war and repression. (Held, 1995, p.230; Kaldor, 1999, p.148; The Commission on Global Governance, 1995, p.xvi) War and repression mean human rights violation and negating the only reason the concept of cosmopolitan Democracy is established, in the first place. So having a Cosmopolitan framework on a global scale which operated on a social, economic and cultural regulation that enable individual citizens to enjoy political equality is impossible.

Practical implications of cosmopolitanism in Africa

Due to the significant different between the global North and the global South, the practice of cosmopolitanism through globalization is prone to further widen this gap. (Farmer, 2004) The already systemic denial of the right to health of the poor in the current global order puts this suspicion more into reality than fiction and a good example of this was the first epidemic of globalisation- HIV/AIDS global spread. (Barnett and Whiteside, 2004, p.4; Farmer, 2006). According to Paul Farmer (2004), the unequal distribution of the risk and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa is significantly associated to Africa's encounter with neoliberal globalization through imposed structural adjustment programmes by international financial institutions in the 1980s and 1990s. The resulting increase in poverty, dismantling of the already dilapidated healthcare systems and unfairly drafted debt repayment systems, drained limited resources away from the governments of these African nations to effectively provide basic social services. And the peak of these unfortunate events was reached at the same time when HIV/AIDS was becoming the most acute public health crisis that plagued Sub-Saharan Africa (Hickel, 2012; Mark, 2009; Rowden, 2010). The chronic effect of this still persists more than three decades later as it has inflicted the single greatest reversal in human development in recent history across the sub-Saharan region. Two thirds of the global total of infected people are from the Sub-Saharan region. In 2010 alone, almost two million people became infected and about 1.2 million died on account of AIDS-related causes, while millions still lack access to life-saving antiretroviral treatment. (Stavinoha, 2015) Though, infection rates and mortality have significantly dropped due to the sponsored PEPFAR programme of giving free anti-retroviral medications to low-resource settings, Donald Trump, the president of the United States has reduced this funding. The implication of this will be an increase in infection rates and mortality rates as well. (Schreiber, 2025)

On a final note, nationalism in sub-Saharan Africa is of historic and political significance to the region, especially as it was used as a tool for anti-colonial protests. Even territorial nationalism was considered inauthentic due to the already carved out and established colonial boundaries that were located. So, nationalism takes precedence over territorial nationalism that

is characterized by strong cultural heterogeneity. Unfortunately, post-colonial nationalism has taken another form with deeper implications as compared with the pre-colonial variant. This is because the emerged African elites after independence took advantage of the centralised systems of national unity to overlap the ethnic and language cleavages with class and extremely inequitable income structures as local citizens toil and moil for seemingly limited resources. This has led to the concept of boundaries more sacrosanct on the detriment of cultural diversity, and hence, the complete embrace of the “state” concept over that of “nation”. And national symbols such as anthems, flags and football teams have further resulted to a “banal nationalism”. Though, reverse is the case with a country like Nigeria where nationalism is weak, and the notion of “nations” bounded by tribe and ethnicity supersedes “state” as the country itself is a boundary of many ethnic nations and not even the national symbols earlier mentioned have an influence for a change of loyalty to “state”. Nevertheless, the outcome remains the same as Nigeria’s reality is a compound full of “enemy neighbours”. This current trend in African population has even gone as far as igniting xenophobic attacks by Africans on Africans. A recurrent example is the fatal “indigene-settler” dichotomy that has ravaged Nigeria and more popular is the local black South Africans against Nigerians, Somalians, Zimbabweans and the people of Mozambique. That black Africans still see themselves as foreigners within the shores of Sub-Saharan Africa strongly suggests an uphill task in uniting black Africa in ideology, patriotism, morality and legality- a serious challenge faced by the African Union, and the proponents of Pan-Africanism. (Guess, 2018; Kersting, 2009; Mpfu, 2020; Mutanda, 2022; Ogele, 2020; Olasupo, Olayide & Ijeoma, 2017) Therefore, achieving practical cosmopolitanism in Africa where, not just member states, but every African is a global citizen is an almost impossible task. The continent is a makeup of several states, thousands of distinct communities, tribes, a variety of ethnicities and traditions and a post-colonial invention of divided cultural orientations, languages and geographic boundaries. Therefore, Pan-Africanism must first be achieved before Africans can interact with others outside Africa in the same cosmopolitan capacity. Considering that the rapport between sovereignty and empire must be revised, the racialized international hierarchy created by empire must be aggressively challenged, and the emphasis on the moral dignity of persons with attention to collective claims of independence and non-domination must be promoted, celebrated and sustained, cosmopolitanism is, therefore, a long shot for Africans. (Glassman, 2018; Mosima, 2023; Sangmpam, 2017)

Conclusion

The individuality of Cosmopolitan Democracy means that every human is treated the same in every part of the world, irrespective of environmental, socio-political and economic factors. Globalists believe that it is practically possible as it also uniquely propagates democracy. Since Democracy has evolved over the last century from smaller geographic units to national levels, it should be able to continue in this manner to a global scale in this century. But the cosmopolitan theorists have invested more in the criticism of sovereignty and the politics of states than creating a framework where democracy will be feasible at a global level, relegating the concept of cosmopolitan democracy to merely an Agenda.

The heavy emphasis on the morality, rather than the legality or political relevance of human rights makes human rights abstract. And until a legal and political framework is created

on which citizens can practically explore and enjoy the ‘cosmopolitan drive,’ this concept will only continue to exist in an ‘Audit’ mode, for powerful nations to take advantage of. Since the west with its enormous wealth exists in cultures that are favoured by it, Western States will automatically be given undue advantage if it is adopted as a global system of governance and this is already evident as seen in the West’s dominance of the ‘free market’ and global politics, especially of interventions.

Enforcement of human rights that the cosmopolitan concept is attempting to address is arguably the biggest challenge ever, since there is no framework to propagate it. Unfortunately, the state which has the coercive might and political powers to convert these human principles into laws that will be enacted and implemented are being opposed by cosmopolitanism. The use of ‘external bodies’ as a system of the implementation of Cosmopolitan Democracy is also hardly ever practical. These bodies are hardly a ‘representation’ but more of the ‘articulation’ of specific issues without any empowerment to enforce or sometimes, even lobby the implementation of these principles. From the ambiguous and conflicting definitions of a global citizen from a state citizen to its flexible and multi-layered structure which gives rise to extrajudicial political measures, Cosmopolitan democracy is problematic rather than progressive and hence impossible to adopt in global governance.

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