Transnational citizens and cosmopolitan citizens: same, same or different?

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1 Introduction

The paper discusses to what extent transnational citizens, understood as international migrants who maintain connections to their country of origin and its (former) residents, could be considered to be cosmopolitan citizens. We hold the normative idea of cosmopolitanism up against the empirical research conducted among transnational citizens. On the one hand, migration entails that people have connections to other places or polities than the one they currently live in and their political identity and activity is not determined by one national context. Transnational citizens belong to societies and/or communities that cross national political and cultural boundaries. Yet transnational citizens are often described as tied to their ethnic, national and/or religious roots and these bonds are seen as primary determinants of their political identity and activity. This emphasis on ‘roots’ and embeddedness in a specific ethnic, national or religious culture suggests that transnationals are unlikely cosmopolitans. On the other hand, transnational studies also point to how the experience of migration has a formative effect on the identity of transnationals. From this perspective, it is ‘the routes’ and not ‘the roots’ (Clifford 1994) that determine the political identity and activity of transnational citizens. Precisely this aspect of transnationalism leads to a presumption in favor of thinking that transnationals have an enlarged perspective on the world and are thus cosmopolitan citizens.

Of course there is a critical matter of perspective here since the theoretical focus placed on transnational migrants in part would determine how they are identified. Or in other words: if you work from the theoretical presumption that it is roots rather than routes that determine identity and activity of transnationals you are likely to overlook the cosmopolitan dimension of their identity and activity. Moreover it is not clear why people from the Global South should be more parochial in their worldview than people from the Global North to start with. The purpose of the paper is to preliminarily explore the extent to which transnational citizens should to be identified as cosmopolitan citizens thereby implying a possible shift in perspective in some part/ a large part of the literature on transnationalism.
The article reviews the literatures on cosmopolitan and transnational citizenship in order to establish how the identities, values and motivations of cosmopolitan and transnational citizens are described and the extent to which the two overlap. To what extent are transnational citizens cosmopolitan citizens and how do they deal with religious, cultural and social diversity within and across national boundaries? For each set of literature we ask what the underlying identifications and identities are that are ascribed to cosmopolitan/transnational citizens respectively. What values and motivations are seen as driving cosmopolitan/transnational citizens and which kind of activities (symbolic/material) do they respectively engage in, where and for what purpose?

The literature on cosmopolitan citizenship normatively investigates what is entailed in becoming a world citizen, if and why it is an attractive ideal, and how cosmopolitan citizens could be created e.g. through the change of (national) educational programs. The literature on transnationalism has focused empirically on the migrants who move and settle into new national contexts but maintain links with their country of origin and with national (or religious) diaspora.

The paper argues that there are good reasons to expand the perspective on transnational citizens in order to allow for the cosmopolitan aspect of their identity and political activity and suggests that part of the reason that transnationals tend not to be characterized as cosmopolitan is that the focus in much of the literature is on migrants from the Global South to the Global North and these migrants generally are considered to be part of a global underclass. The cosmopolitan citizen in many ways is understood to be an ideal world citizen committed to universal principles of justice and democracy and guided by a global sense of solidarity. Migrants from the Global South to the Global North on the other hand, are often understood as holding less universal values because of being constrained by more narrow ties.

The paper’s next two sections outline the literature on cosmopolitan citizens and transnational citizens respectively while the fourth section aims to compare their characteristics as described in the literature focusing on similarities and differences respectively. The paper ends with a conclusion summing up the results of the analysis.

2 Cosmopolitan citizens

Who may qualify as a cosmopolitan citizen depends on how you define the concept and its criteria of application. In the following we will give short description of the defining characteristics of cosmopolitan citizens as understood by three different strands of cosmopolitan thought identified in the literature. Our focus is on the underlying identities and identifications ascribed to cosmopolitan citizens, on their expected values and motivations and on the kinds of activities they engage in as cosmopolitan citizens.
The common core idea about cosmopolitan citizenship is that all human beings are (or can and should be) citizens in a single community. However, it seems useful to distinguish between three different strands which have partly overlapping conceptions of the cosmopolitan citizen.

1. Cosmopolitanism of justice or moral cosmopolitanism emphasizing that we have equal moral duties or duties of justice towards all human beings regardless of the particular relations in which we stand to them.

2. Democratic or political cosmopolitanism which underlines the need for creating democratic communities at the transnational level and for establishing democratic institutions at the global and/or regional levels which enable cosmopolitan citizens to participate politically and hold decision makers accountable. The key concern is to ensure that citizens’ democratic autonomy under conditions of globalization and interdependence where nation states individually cannot protect their citizens’ fundamental interests and thereby to install or further global justice.¹

3. Cosmopolitanism of culture which sees cosmopolitanism as an identity and way of life which is characterized by a (partial or complete) transcendence of local ties, of being able to move effortlessly around in the world (being at home nowhere and anywhere) and of combining elements of different cultural practices from the cultural reservoir of a globalized world to create one’s own idiosyncratic mix and identity. This strand has long historical roots, but is today associated with the idea that a globalized world need to be matched by cosmopolitan culture and identity formation and that this ensures the (conditions of) the good life for the individual much more than holding on to traditional (national or ethnic) cultures and identities (Waldron 1992).

For moral cosmopolitanism what should be shared is only a moral community, requiring the cosmopolitan citizen to help other human beings as such. Political cosmopolitanism envisions the universal community in terms of shared political institutions and emphasizes new and global or transnational ways of participation (Kleingeld & Brown 2014, Linklater 1999). Cultural cosmopolitanism represent an aspect of identity formation which may be linked to moral and political cosmopolitanism since moral and political cosmopolitanism requires a certain stance towards the world on the part of the individual, but cultural cosmopolitanism can also be an individualist form of life (Waldron 2000).

Moral cosmopolitanism defines cosmopolitan citizens by a global ‘sense of justice’ which applies to the whole of humanity and which concern itself with human beings as such without placing much moral weight on particular relations and group identifications that people have, e.g. nationality or ethnicity. The strongest version claims that special relationships and group affiliations never suffice by

¹ Some conceive democracy and democratic rights as intrinsic to justice (e.g. Bohman 2007) while others see democracy as the best means to further justice.
themselves to generate special responsibilities while a more moderate version argues that being a world citizen implies having an ethical relationship with human beings as such in addition to one’s concrete affiliations with a national or local community (Nussbaum 2010; Scheffler, 2001: 114-115).

Moderate versions of cosmopolitanism insist that the particular relations that one has with particular persons (e.g. friends, family, co-nationals) per definition comes with special obligations (Scheffler 2001: 121, Parekh 2003: 6-7). However, these obligations do not mean that they overrule the concern with equal worth and equal treatment of all human beings in all contexts. The privileging of particular relationships in some contexts does not exclude that in other contexts the concern with humanity and its welfare must come first. Hence global citizenship does not necessarily require you to detach yourself from your national identity, since the moderate interpretation is compatible with the recognition of different spheres of justice and finding a responsible balance between universal and particular obligations (Walzer, 1983; Held, 2010; 234 Parekh 2003).

While moral cosmopolitanism rests on an abstract sense of justice political/institutional cosmopolitanism is more concerned with creating an actual feeling of community between cosmopolitan citizens through institutional means. Cosmopolitan citizenship is an active identification with a community/communities of other ‘global’ citizens (non-compatriots) beyond the nation and consists in political activity directed at global issues (e.g. poverty, global inequality, climate, peace) on the one hand and in relation to supra and/or international institutions and their (direct or indirect) democratization on the other. Here the significance of global or transnational social movements within global civil society is emphasized (Kaldor, 2003), as is the potential of reconstructing existing international political institutions to be more democratic and accountable. Globalization and interdependence means that effective democratic self-determination can only be achieved through the creation of democratic transnational institutions (Archibugi, 2004; Bohman, 2007; Habermas, 2001; Held, 1995; Linklater 1999). Here again some conceptions of cosmopolitan citizenship place weight on the ability to transcend the boundedness of particular, e.g. national, communities in order to engage with issues, communities and institutions that reach beyond national borders and boundaries while others underline the possibility of maintaining particular and valued attachments to national communities etc. while becoming globally oriented too (Delanty 2007, Held 1995, Parekh 2003).

For the most extreme form of political cosmopolitanism the ultimate goal would be some form of world government or at least a global governance structure whose first priority always would be global matters, not least global (distributive) justice. The dominant political identity would be that of being a world citizen. Moderate forms of political cosmopolitanism would involve the integration of local and national institutions into supranational institutions at the regional and global levels which counterbalance global with national concerns and which are based on some notion of subsidiarity which allow particular (national) communities to interpret universal values according to their own
culture and tradition (Parekh 2003: 15). Moderate political cosmopolitanism may also issue in work to realize a non-hierarchical form of political organization by which nations gain political representation in each other’s national political institutions (Koenig-Archibugi 2012). Political identities would globally oriented national citizens, who are open towards heeding the concerns of other affected or layered identities which combine the local and national with the regional and the global; - an identity conceived in terms of concentric circles (cf. Nussbaum 2010: 158).

Cultural cosmopolitanism may be seen as both entailed in men and women of the world living in and traveling between the big metropolitan areas, but also people who stay at home and adopt or share new (and global) cultural norms and practices (Waldron 1992; 2000). As a way of life, cosmopolitans may or may not be conscious about sharing an identity with other cosmopolitans, e.g. with people who like themselves are ‘open-minded’ or who are part of the (local) ‘international community’. Cultural cosmopolitanism is also split between an extreme and a moderate form. The extreme form claims that only people who are able to transcend their rootedness in particular communities and to create from the pool of cultural elements found in a globalizing culture their own cosmopolitan lifestyle and identity will be sufficiently attuned to the conditions of today’s world: ‘the hybrid lifestyle of the true cosmopolitan is in fact the only appropriate response to the modern world in which we live’ (Waldron 1992: 763). The moderate form of cultural cosmopolitanism claims, against nationalism and multiculturalism, that the continued rootedness in the culture in which one is reared is not (at all) a necessary precondition for a good and autonomous life, while agreeing that for some people it may be fulfilling to stay true to their roots (Scheffler 2001: 117, Waldron 1992, 762).

As argued, then, moral cosmopolitanism relies mostly on an abstract sense of justice to motivate cosmopolitan citizens while political cosmopolitan more ties motivation of cosmopolitans to the sense of identifying and interacting with other citizens in concrete communities emerging in connection with global civil society and international institutions. Cultural cosmopolitanism implies a certain way of life which may be congruent with a sense of justice and a politico-democratic engagement but which may also just result from an individualist motivation to lead ‘the good life’ in a global era and/or from identification with other cosmopolitans. On some conceptions cosmopolitans have no particular identities or seek to transcend the boundedness of particular communities while on others the global orientation and commitment is paired and balanced with other attachments and obligations.

In the cultural conception, cosmopolitanism is a way of life that does not by itself imply a specific positive moral or political engagement with others. In the moral and political conception however, cosmopolitan citizens are oriented towards realizing justice and democracy at a global level and to solving issues which have a transnational or global scale or dimension.

Although not a very dominant position, libertarians or free market liberals arguing for free trade in a global capitalist market unfettered by regulation and political power may qualify as cosmopolitans due
to their universalist and formal conception of justice (Kleingeld & Brown 2014). However, in general cosmopolitans are described as progressive (egalitarian) liberals and democrats who possess a considerable degree of reflexivity towards their own beliefs, identity and value commitment. They recognize and respectfully and open-mindedly engage with the diversity of others who are different from themselves in order to support them and/or reach commonly acceptable solutions to common problems or simply to share a good time and valuable practices with them. This also means that cosmopolitans would not be conservative and religious. So for example people working to spread a conservative and intolerant religion globally would not be characterized as cosmopolitans, despite their global outlook (Appaih 2008; Brock 2011).

**Cosmopolitan activities**

Cosmopolitanism entails different kinds of social and political activities. Social activities involve creating and attending cultural events and associations which celebrate aspects of a cosmopolitan culture. Politically, cosmopolitanism issue in acts of protest and advocacy oriented towards policy makers at national and international levels as well as demonstrations of global solidarity. Such acts can take different forms from issuing statements, starting campaigns (e.g. of awareness, consumer boycotts), to creating think thanks and holding conferences (e.g. alternative summits, World economic forum) and obstruction and sabotage of commercial activities and political institutions (e.g. Green Peace activism, protests against political summits, G-meetings). Activities also have a material side to them including notably the organization of global charity and volunteer work (aid organizations, NGOs) and the support of this through voluntary donations towards global NGOs and the paying of membership fees (cf Kaldor 2003, ch. 4).

Cosmopolitan citizen activities take place both ‘at home’ and ‘abroad’ and in different types of locations although globalization and new communication technology reduce the distance in time and space and allow activities to take place simultaneously in different locations. Physical co-presence is not (always) required (Giddens XXXX). Abroad, they range from very concrete projects such as building and funding schools in a particular area (e.g. a village or a region) to influencing the constitution of international trade regimes (e.g. WTO). At home, cosmopolitanism entails doing the ground work for global activities taking place elsewhere. However, cosmopolitans realize that global migration has produced increasingly diverse and cosmopolitan societies across the world, and that their cosmopolitanism also entails engaging and expressing solidarity with others in the national society and local community, especially those who are different from themselves. The challenge is to accept shared responsibility for a common future and for solving common problems through collaboration and dialogue (Osler & Starkey, 2003, Hannerz 1990). Again what characterizes cosmopolitan activities both at home and abroad and from the concrete to the general (from schools to

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2 This does not imply that religion cannot serve as a basis for cosmopolitan identities, motivations and activities.
trade regimes) is that they issue from a commitment to universal principles of justice and democracy, a global sense of solidarity and/or a conception of cosmopolitan life as (the conditions for) the good life.

**Routes to cosmopolitan citizenship**

An important issue pertaining to the discussion of cosmopolitan citizens is how they are created; how their identities and motivations are formed and how they relate to the kind of activities they are engaged in. Not least in this paper which investigates the extent to which transnational citizens are cosmopolitan citizens. In the literature on cosmopolitan citizenship the main route to cosmopolitanism seems to go through formal education (e.g. Heater 2002, ch 7). Educational institutions should educate coming citizens to become cosmpolitans or at least globally oriented national citizens. From this perspective, the identity formation and motivation in a certain sense comes ‘before’ the activities in which people are engaged. Identity and motivation precedes activity.

However, as with the theory of citizen creation in general the immersion of people into different kinds of activity, not least economic and political activity could also be viewed as a way to create cosmopolitans. Being involved in global economic activities, trade, production and service, could be a route to some kind of cosmopolitanism at least a cultural one (market behaviour typically being of an opportunistic nature and hence the opposite of concerns about justice and social responsibility). Likewise social, civil society and political activities could in themselves be a route to cosmopolitanism: the experience of entering into social, associational and political activities with others (different from you) can lead to an enhanced cosmopolitan perspective provided that groups are moved to look beyond their own group’s immediate interests and particular concerns (Kymlicka 2002, 303-6). This kind of activity based socialisation to cosmopolitanism is perhaps most likely in connection with participation in transnational social movements and NGO as well as in political activity directly oriented towards supranational institutions (e.g. European Parliament elections) where at least in some cases the ‘organizing principle’ for the activity is cosmopolitan in nature. But also activities which are not in and of themselves cosmopolitan could be a route to cosmopolitanism. Examples of this could be ‘joint ventures’ to build schools in a particular region in a developing country which for some is motivated by their particular attachment to this region (their ‘place of origin’) but by others are motivated by international solidarity and concerns about ensuring fundamental rights and global justice for all. The concern with the plight of specific groups of refugees, e.g. Palestinians or Bosnians, could be another example. People may be involved in such

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3 In addition, theories on the formation of ideological outlook of persons indicate that the length and type of education is a good predictor for how ‘liberal’ or cosmopolitan outlook they have. People with university degrees tend on average to hold more liberal values than people with vocational training and unskilled people with only basic education. Also the general income level of families and countries seem to be predictor for how liberal the values they hold are (Inglehart xxxx). The difference in the level of education and income between the Global South and the Global North may be a basis for the presumption that people of the Global North in certain respects are more cosmopolitan than people from the Global South.
projects for very different reasons, but realizing that there are other complementary cosmopolitan reasons available and adopt them as their own.

A final in this context very important route to cosmopolitanism, is that the experience of travel and migration itself is giving people an enhanced cosmopolitan perspective. The experience can come from shorter term cultural exchanges (sometimes organized by educational institutions) and from more or less permanent movement or resettlement. The experience contains both the movement including the reasons for it and the awareness and understanding of the diversity of places (the ones you move from and the ones you move to).

3 The transnational citizen

This section will outline the transnational approach that was launched with books like Nations Unbound (Basch et al., 1992, Basch et al., 1994, Glick Schiller, 1992, Glick Schiller et al., 1995) in order to explore to what extent transnational citizens are cosmopolitan citizens and what underlying identifications are ascribed to them. What values and motivations does this literature assume transnational citizens to have? What activities (symbolic /material) are discussed in the transnational literature, and where are these activities located? While there are a wide range of social processes that transcend national boundaries, including religious communities, social movements and media, we will here focus on migration since this has been a central focus of transnational studies. More specifically, we aim to find out what that literature teaches us about the transnational citizen.

Central to transnational migration studies is a reformulation of the concept of society so that it is no longer automatically confined by the boundaries of a single nation-state (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004). The effects of globalization are visible in everyday lives through the increasing speed and density of interconnectedness across locations. Giddens (1990) argues that in conditions of modernity, locales are thoroughly penetrated by and shaped in terms of social influences quite distant from them. In the early 1990s, those pioneering the transnational approach argued that this changing reality required a new analytical lens and methodological approach focusing on the networks and flows that crossed borders and simultaneously connected different locations.

Migrants are often embedded in multi-layered, multi-sited ‘transnational social fields’ (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004), and this reality impacts basic assumptions about central concepts of social analysis such as citizenship. The transnational approach argues against the common methodological nationalism in social sciences which assumes the nation-state and its boundaries as a given (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003). The nation-state is represented as natural and given, rather than recently constructed. In order to challenge such approach, the focus is on networks and flows within these networks, irrespective of their location; operating in a transnational social field.
The most common activities that are studied in the transnational migration studies literature, relate to flows within transnational social fields that bridge country of origin and residents. While there are a wide range of activities of interest, there are a number of topics that have been studied extensively and are seen as central to our understanding of transnational citizens. First, remittances – and in particular the flows of money that move from countries of residents in the North to countries of origin in the South – have been extensively studied. The literature on remittances has focused on what motivates migrants to send money (Add references); the impacts of remittances (Add references); while distinguishing between a range of uses for remittances, including family consumption, humanitarian aid and development contributions on local, regional or national level (Bakewell, 2007, De Haas, 2007, Van Naerssen et al., 2007). A related theme within the literature addresses other forms of spending that migrants engage in – largely in country of origin. Examples are investments in businesses (Add references) and the building of houses (Erdal, other references).

A third common theme in the transnational literature focuses on their political engagements (Horst, 2008, Lyons, 2007) – add Brinkerhoff 2012), including voting (Collyer 2013, Lafleur 2011), lobbying (inter)national actors to engage in particular cases or countries (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003) and taking part in the political system of the country of origin (running for a political position, contributing to the political campaigns of individuals and parties). As Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) argue, many migrants may not engage politically until a particular event or crisis occurs. These moments may trigger lobbying, demonstrating, organizing or campaigning to inform the public in order to influence either actors in the country of residence or of origin.

It is clear that the focus, then, is on a range of practical and tangible activities that largely take place in countries of residence and connect migrants to their countries of origin. Levitt’s (1998) introduction of the term ‘social remittances’, adds another dimension to this focus on material flows. She argues that it is just as important to understand the transfers of values, knowledge and motivations taking place between contexts, and in particular flowing from the Global North to the Global South. This concept builds on the idea that transnational citizens’ multiple experiences of governmentality and political socialization do not occur in isolation from one another and that people in transnational social fields are exposed to different ideas of citizen rights and responsibilities, direct experiences with international rights regimes and different histories of political practices (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004: 1025-6).

Transnational civic identity and its location

After having introduced the transnational citizen and her/his activities as discussed in the literature, we now ask what underlying identities are ascribed to the people operating within transnational social fields. One of the issues that is seen as challenging in discussing the identities and in particular loyalties of transnational citizens, stems from the question of what happens when ‘society differs from
polity and is made up of sets of social relationships in intersecting and overlapping national and transnational social fields’ (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004: 1015). There is often a zero-sum assumption which sees transnational involvement as a direct challenge to local engagement and ‘good citizenship’ on a national level. However, various recent studies (Nagel and Staeheli, 2008, Snel et al., 2006, Waters, 2009, Erdal and Oeppen, 2013) have argued against this assumption by showing the complementarity of both processes. Taking this debate a step further, one might argue that the representation of processes of identification and belonging – and ensuing civic engagement - as tied to mutually exclusive locations is deeply problematic.

In the transnational literature, those under study are often international migrants from the Global South to the Global North. Their identifications are represented as relating to ‘homelands’ through family (ethnic) ties and emotional connections.\(^4\) By focusing on their connections to, and roots in, another place and time than where they are, this literature contributes to the perceptions of transnational ties hindering local integration. This effect is intensified in light of discourses of global inequality and development (Escobar, 1995). As the pioneers of the transnational turn have argued in their later work, on top of this, transnational studies of this kind can resurrect methodological nationalism by operating within the boundaries of ethno-national and cultural identities (Glick Schiller, 2005).

Yet groups are never static and the idea that we belong to only one community, defined empirically and even geographically, and this community is unified by a single idea of the common good, is problematic (Mouffe year: 7). As Mouffe argues, and feminist studies more generally has shown convincingly, we are always multiple and contradictory subjects, inhabitants of a diversity of communities. As such, as a transnational citizen one can be connected to an ethnic group through family ties and a shared history; to residents of the city where one lives through shared affiliations and everyday experiences; to members of a particular religion through a shared faith and shared religious practice; and to activist within, say, the global environmental movement through a shared concern for the environment. A number of studies on diasporas, which are described as transnational communities per excellence, similarly show how notions of national belonging and citizenship are mediated by, for example, religion and community (Fumanti and Werbner, 2010).

In order to understand transnational citizens’ multiple identifications the locations of study is crucial; as identities are about community as well as place. The concept of the transnational social field is useful in this respect as it allows us to study the potential range of social relations transnational citizens engage in. It calls into question ‘neat divisions of connections into local, national, transnational, global’, as near and distant connections penetrate the daily lives of residents in a certain place, who relate to several localities with their particular social institutions simultaneously (Levitt and  

\(^4\) Recently there has also been increasing interest in religious ties; among those who are part of a global religious community (add reference Rijk Van Dijk, Levitt). ALSO check Werbner 2002 on the Muslim diaspora / transnational moral community.
Glick Schiller, 2004). Within the social field, which is both about community and place, we need to distinguish between ways of being in them and ways of belonging (ref): the actual practices and social relations engaged in versus the feelings of connection to a particular group, which can be based on shared history, blood ties or values. The two of course are closely connected.

A number of scholars point out that migrants often feel most rooted in the cities where they settle; both in the sense of their ways of being and belonging. As Fumanti and Werbner (2010: 7) argue, ‘if the origins of citizenship are the Greek city, for migrants civic citizenship is often paramount, and they express their sense of belonging by inscribing their presence on city spaces’. Simon Keller (2013 – add reference and pg nr) states that migrants often form attachments not to the new country but ‘to the particular places and communities within which she makes her new life’. Identification takes place with particular communities and ways of life, and is often focused on the city.

**Transnational civic virtues?**

Do transnational migrants have civic virtues that make them good world citizens? While this is not necessarily a question that the transnational literature asks directly, it does explore the motivations behind transnational activities extensively. In this exploration of transnational activities, the question of what motivates migrants to provide assistance or engage politically is central to many studies. Often, motivations are discussed either in terms of egoistic or altruistic motives (ref Carling?) or a range of obligations and responsibilities to kin or community are stressed. The few studies that exist which explore the relevance of cosmopolitan normative ideas for studying transnational empirical realities go a step further by discussing the underlying values and virtues that drive transnational activities.

Fumanti and Werbner (2010) argue that the process of migration introduces a process of expanding horizons, permeable ethnicity, intercultural communication and citizenship making. They encourage researchers to understand activities that take place in the transnational social field as ‘rooted in moral ideas and values’ and call for reviving the notion of ‘virtuous citizenship’ (Fumanti and Werbner 2010: 6). At the same time, such moral rooting in their perspective is strongly linked to personal and communal ties to people ‘at home’. As such, their approach to understanding the cosmopolitan nature of transnational citizen is deeply rooted in the particular although they also make an attempt to argue for pan-African cosmopolitan virtues. Furthermore, their argument focuses very strongly on diaspora elites, introducing class to the equation.

As Giles (2006) argues, obligations to a given socio-political community are part of defining its citizenship in terms of what a ‘good’ member of that community should do. Transnational citizens are thus understood as sharing a sense of co-responsibility (Werbner 2002) or moral conviviality (Mercer and Page 2010) with a community beyond the bounded territory of the state they reside in. Soysal (1994) has argued for a need to explore citizenship in the context of a post-national world in which
rights and duties are no longer defined exclusively within the boundaries of nation-states. The transnational perspective rather suggests that transnational citizens have relationships to *multiple* states and polities. In either case, there is a need to reconceptualise the relationships between political community, territory and obligation (Giles 2006).

Yet a narrow focus on ethnic and national ties as drivers of action is partial because there are other sources of ‘obligation’, including obligations obtained by virtue of being human (Giles 2006). Sinatti and Horst (2015) make a similar argument when challenging perceptions of development aid and its underlying motivations. They argue that the urge to assist others in the case of the western development worker is linked to a professional call, whereas members of diasporas ‘help their own people’. Such an analysis, as the authors argue, ‘does not take into account that a shared sense of humanity might underpin the urge to assist, the wish to help others as fellow human beings. Instead it assumes that nationality or ethnicity is a defining feature of the relationship between helper and helped’ (Sinatti and Horst 2015: 141)

Keller’s perception on migrants as ‘worldly citizens’ is an inspiring call to move beyond an understanding of transnational citizens that questions the particular ties that they have, while his is not just applicable to the cosmopolitan elite. According to Keller, worldly citizens are ‘genuinely citizens of a particular country, and with particular attachments to places and communities within that country, but taking upon her country a perspective informed by her knowledge that that country is not the only one there is’ (Keller year: page). While Keller does not call this worldly citizen cosmopolitan, she could be understood as such within the cosmopolitan perspective that allows for but moves beyond particular attachments such as those related to nationality, religion and ethnicity. Keller’s paper thus provides an interesting entry point for linking the literature on transnational and cosmopolitan citizenship.

### 4. Comparison

The previous two sections have addressed the identities, motivations and activities of cosmopolitan citizens and transnational citizens as they have been discussed in the respective literatures. The cosmopolitan literature is predominantly normative and so discussing how the ideal cosmopolitan citizen should identify herself, how her motivation should be structured and the kinds of activities she should be engaging in on this basis. The literature on transnational citizens studies how actual transnational citizens are engaged in the world. In our discussion however, we have emphasized how important it is not to get stuck with conceptions of transnational migrants as deeply embedded in their own culture and unable to extend their moral, social and political orientation and activities beyond their community and country of origin. In fact the literature indicates that aspects of the identity, motivation and activities of transnationals that have cosmopolitan traits.
First, some transnationals live and act in ways that closely resemble those of cultural cosmopolitans. They move to, feel at home at and engage with others in their new cities of residence. They adopt new technologies, cultural habits, modes of organization and governance in connection with economic, social and political activity, and combine them with what they already know. In doing this, they are most often ‘moderate cultural cosmopolitans’ in the sense that they expand their cultural repertoire and identification points while holding on to their original attachments, e.g. to the family, to the community ‘back home’ and to other members of the diaspora. The cultural cosmopolitanism emerges as a result of the transnational social fields that transnationals live and move within. And transnationals function as multidirectional ‘transmission belts’ of new knowledge and ways of living across national and cultural boundaries. Of course, some transnationals may be very tied to their ‘community of origin’ which becomes their predominant identity maker and be reluctant to engage with other groups and the surrounding society. And it is not clear from the literature on transnational citizens that they generally consider themselves to be (moderate) cosmopolitans and identify with other cosmopolitans (over and above their original attachments). However, that should not obfuscate the fact that many of them may practice a cosmopolitan lifestyle and are aware (or think) that a precondition for living a good life in the contemporary world is the ability to be open-minded and take on new ways of thinking, organizing, working, and living. And this of course also means that transnationals are sources of information when it comes to understanding what a cosmopolitan life entails.

Second, the literature on transnationals evinces activities which are aligned with moral cosmopolitanism and a concern with human rights and global justice. The contribution of remittances from transnationals to humanitarian aid and local development is one prevalent example. Another more singular example, discussed by Fumanti & Werbner (2010), is how sharing a religious identity as Muslims makes groups of Pakistani women settled in the UK engage in relation to the human rights violations and deficits of Palestinian and Bosnian refugees by offering material support and staging public awareness campaigns. Of course, strictly speaking as long the motives behind such activities solely rely on the particular attachments to the specific groups (home community and Muslims respectively) it is doubtful whether such activities can be seen as cosmopolitanism. Moderate cosmopolitanism of justice is open for the prioritization of obligations towards specific people in certain contexts, but still requires that considerations of the equal worth of all human beings play a significant role within the moral outlook of people in order for them to be classified as cosmopolitan citizens. Indeed this is the distinguishing feature of cosmopolitanism. However, the examples should open up for the possibility that the motives behind activities are mixed so that they combine a concrete solidarity with specific group with a more global sense of justice. The plight of members of the specific group may represent a particular instance of a general injustice to be remedied. Transnationals

5 Ideally we would need statistical documentation for this claim. The same applies to similar claims made below.
may also look as their engagement as part of a division of moral labor in the realization of global justice. By taking on the responsibility to take care of ‘their own’ - and hoping that others in turn will take care of their own - they make sure responsibility for realizing global justice does not fall between chairs as when all are responsible for all and no one is responsible for anyone in particular. While this division of labor argument is deficient from a philosophical point of view, it may still be a motivational factor behind the activities of transnationals.

Obviously, these thoughts have a rather conjectural nature as the extent of cosmopolitan motivation driving transnationals have not been explored in depth. Such exploration may help to equalize unjustified hierarchies of status and expectation, say between Western help workers and transnational migrants, and to map the potential for creating broader coalitions for development and global justice.

Third, the political activities of transnationals as described in the literature would seem to have some resemblance of those pertaining to political cosmopolitanism. Granted, transnationals’ primary political activity is directed towards their home country and again the main driver is typically a concern with the home community or more broadly with the diaspora. To a much lesser extent does it seem to be concerned with the creation of political communities and institutions organized around the resolution of global issues and the realization of justice. Nonetheless, in certain circumstances the political activity of transnationals is directed at several national political institutions simultaneously and appeals are also made to international organizations. As such it shares traits with the activities, if not the motivations, driving political cosmopolitanism. And again, this kind of activity may overlap with a wider political engagement with global issues.

5. Conclusion

Our discussion in this paper [hopefully] demonstrates there are indeed many sources from which cosmopolitanism can be learned and that these sources are not necessarily only Western or have the form of formal education. The cosmopolitan literature would not deny this. However, turning towards and engaging with transnational migrants, taking in their perspectives on hardship and injustices in the world, has the potential for expanding our understanding of what cosmopolitanism is and could be about.

Secondly, the political activities of transnational migrants overlap with or spill over into more general concerns with global issues/justice. Initiating and maintaining activities which also have a cosmopolitan nature (cultural encounters, refugees, women’s rights, humanitarian aid, development) can come from other types of motivations.

6 Strictly interpreted this argument implies that rich nations take care of their own relatively rich co-nationals and leave the poor nations to take care of themselves.
In connection with this the discussion the relationship between universal and particular values is central including what the underlying virtues are for different kinds of activity. When comparing the largely normative cosmopolitanism literature with empirical studies on transnational citizens, the main question becomes whether we can really argue that transnational citizens are committed to universal principles of justice and democracy and guided by a global sense of solidarity, when their activities are mainly targeting those in a particular national community (though typically dispersed across the world). A central question is hence what the underlying values or virtues to their actions are. We hope that this is where we can add to the literature, discussed throughout, that attempts to link cosmopolitanism with the study of diasporas / transnational communities.

**References**

**On cosmopolitanism**


**On transnationalism**
