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From sociology to social theory: Critical cosmopolitanism, modernity, and post-universalism

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Abstract

This article focuses on the critical cosmopolitan aim of transcending sociology's provincial outlook, which mistakenly universalizes Western societies' historical experiences and normative aspirations. The authors argue that a change in perspective, from sociology to social theory, is crucial in this regard. While a sociological inflection carries a primary investment in the analysis of changes cosmopolitanism brings to the social world, social theory addresses the ontological and epistemological features that these changes precipitate. To demonstrate this, the authors offer a condensed reconstruction of critical cosmopolitan sociology, presenting Beck's foundational formulation, outlining three main criticisms it faces and alternative programs stemming from them, and demonstrating how Delanty's immanent-transcendent approach overcomes these limitations. To conclude, the authors address a crucial onto-epistemological challenge facing contemporary cosmopolitan scholarship, namely, how to mediate between the particular and the universal.

Introduction

Globalization is an authentic historical experience which discloses new features of the human condition, and thus holds substantive immanent learning potential. This is precisely what critical cosmopolitan scholarship seeks to apprehend. While the idea of cosmopolitanism has been increasingly used as an empirical category for the analysis of globalization, a brief reconstruction of its central tenets uncovers its world-disclosing potential. For critical cosmopolitans, it is not merely a case of addressing how globalization is differently experienced, but of grasping its internal logics and dynamics, as well as of mobilizing the normative potential it carries. In sum, a critical cosmopolitanism foregrounds cultural diversity, interconnectedness and self-transformation.

Ulrich Beck's *Risk Society* (Beck, 1992 [1986]) is foundational to critical cosmopolitan scholarship. Intertwining environmental concerns and socio-political analyses with a critique of scientific rationality and modernization, this book can be taken as an early analysis of globalization. Beck introduced into the lexicon of an increasingly globalized sociology the terms 'risk', 'uncertainty', 'climate change', 'terrorism', 'cosmopolitanism'; in addition to a conception of reflexivity associated with modern institutions. By revealing the significance of global contingencies in our experience of globalization, Beck's theory of world risk society re-signified the philosophical idea of cosmopolitanism as a way for sociology to evolve with the changing trends of the social world.

This article argues that Gerard Delanty's critical cosmopolitan renewal of the sociological imagination (Delanty, 2009, 2011) has been integral in shaping the critical cosmopolitan project following Beck's formulation (Beck, 1999, 2006). We propose that Delanty's approach is of merit insofar as it is sensitive to the limitations of Beck's account and has been central in furthering a critical cosmopolitanism which is attuned to broader contemporary developments across social-scientific scholarship, including postcolonial criticism.

In justifying this submission, this article offers a condensed reconstruction of critical cosmopolitan sociology, articulating what we see as a transition from sociology to social theory. Although not doing justice to the many contributors to this development, it nonetheless offers an appraisal of the main problematics which have animated the critical, sociological internalization of cosmopolitanism. In the following two sections, we first reconstruct Beck's foundational cosmopolitan sociology, and then present three criticisms of its substantial features and alternative programs stemming from them[1]. In the next section, we show how these criticisms are overcome by Gerard Delanty's *The Cosmopolitan Imagination*. In this manner the article provides an overview of

critical cosmopolitan sociology's development towards a post-universal conception of both cosmopolitanism and modernity, one which is aware of the immanent finitude of human understanding. To conclude, we address a crucial onto-epistemological challenge facing cosmopolitan scholarship, namely the fashioning of a 'cosmopolitan reasoning' capable of mediating between the particular and the universal.

Beck's critical sociological cosmopolitanism

In this section, we outline the core features of Beck's sociology as developed from his *Risk Society* (1992 [1986]) to his *World Risk Society* (1999). Beck's subsequent scholarship has continued to further the dialogues these texts served to foster, bridging the sociology of risk, modernization theory, and cosmopolitan scholarship. The connection between modernization and global risk is the essential analytic within the author's cosmopolitan program, and as such we shall first present the lineaments of his world risk society.

Methodologically, Beck's analysis of risk is dialectical, serving to explore the tensions produced between the productive profits of modernization and its destructive 'externalities': environmental, social, economic, political. The critical charge lies in his normative interrogation of the socio-political contradictions emanating from the conflictual and integrative dynamics of late modernity. While this sits Beck's work close to Frankfurt School pathology diagnosing social criticism (see Harris, 2018), he proceeds through a distinct, empirical-normative approach.

A dual critique guides Beck's diagnosis of global risks. The first critique targets the multiple downsides of continuous modernization, focusing on the unpredictable side effects of the hyper-specialization of knowledge and functional differentiation (Beck, 1992: 26–34, 57–71, 170–176). The second critique questions classical theories' methodological nationalism in light of globalization (Beck, 2006: 24–32). Beck adopts an explicitly essayist approach aiming at avoiding, what he terms, 'old ways of thinking' (Beck, 1992: 9). The demand is that sociologists adopt a methodological approach which enables social reality to be explored 'from within', drawing on concepts and categories emanating from the actor's experience.

World risk society's diagnosis can be summarized as follows: 'dangers are being produced by industry, externalized by economics, individualized by the legal system, legitimized by the sciences and made to appear harmless by politics' (Beck, 1998: 16). Beck's primary thesis demonstrates a coupling of the social production and distribution of wealth (labor, goods, welfare) with the social production and distribution of risks (economic crises, pollution, terrorism, structural unemployment) (Beck, 1992: 19–50; 2009: 67–80). The account thus brings with it a significant change in our understanding of social class, the antecedent relational framing predicated on the labor-steered social differentiation is now accompanied by a risk-steered social differentiation. For Beck, social and

cultural stratification are now not merely revealing of one's class destiny, but also of an encompassing threatening present and future, from which no one, poor nor rich, can entirely escape.

As society becomes aware of the dangers produced by its own modernization, it enters into a reflexive dynamic (Beck, 1994). Reflexive modernization discloses how the societal rationalization triggered by labor overlaps with a societal rationalization triggered by risk. One can read Beck to be articulating how modernization's 'unpredicted side effects retroactively *themselves* become sources of modernization' (Bosco, 2020, forthcoming). Central to this account is thus the understanding of modernization as a deep, sociological process attuned to cognitive-technological rationalization which affects the entire society and its sources of certainty, while opening up new opportunities for action. This connects to Gidden's analysis, that modern capitalism is a 'unique conjunction of the banal and the apocalyptic' (Giddens, 1981: 252).

As Bernstein (1998) articulates, the social crafting of the notion of risk is central to the emergence of modern consciousness: it is crucial to the transition from a fatalistic 'God's whim' appreciation of futurity, to the rationalizing, calculating subject of today. Beck identifies three differentiating features of contemporary risks (Bosco, 2020, forthcoming).[2] Risks have become *institutionally manufactured* by science, the market, government, activists, and the mass media (Beck, 1999: 19–47). Second, human senses are blind to them; they are *invisible* (pesticides and GMOs, for instance) (Beck, 1992: 24–27). Third, they do not have *spatial* and/or *temporal borders* (as the Chernobyl and Fukushima nuclear disasters, the 2008 financial crash, and 9/11 dramatically illustrate) (Beck, 1992: 27–28). To put it simply, risk is now both invisible and global, and that it becomes 'real' only in the way that modern institutions construe it and prefigure their responses.[3]

Risk does not exist 'out there'; its objectivity depends on empirical and theoretical knowledge and, what Beck terms, its 'staging' (Beck, 2009: 1–23). It becomes 'real' as experts, entrepreneurs, politicians, journalists, and activists establish 'relations of definitions constituted' (in the Marxian sense) as 'relations of domination' (Beck, 2009: 34–46). It follows that the social construction of risks is permeated by power relations, economic interests, and social justice issues. By attempting to manage dangers and destructions it has itself produced, society enters into a reflexive dynamic that precipitates the need to rethink the industrial institutional system, i.e. capitalism and democracy.

If one accedes to Beck's framing that the preponderance of risk in late modernity furthers a reflexive societal rationalization to suppress and curtail societal harms, the (in)commensurability of side effects becomes crucial to institutional action and legitimation. The issue here lies in the increasing fragmentation of reality by expert cultures, each of which holds to particular and self-validating standards of reality (Beck, 1992: 155–182). While experiments may occur optimally within the laboratory, once they are industrially applied, they become exponentially more complex

and unpredictable (Beck, 1992: 170–176). This is revealing of an explanatory limitation of expert knowledge in that it ignores distinct qualitative dimensions of technological and economic externalities. To the extent that no clear, agreed connection between cause, risk and harm can be established, controversial definitions of threats pluralize (counter-diagnosis), entering public awareness through their 'staging'. The upshot is an 'organized irresponsibility', whereby legal accountability for the consequences of modernizing actions is simply impossible to ascribe (Beck, 2009: 14–16, 27–34, 42–46, 193–195). The scientific incommensurability of side effects prevents legal accountability: Who can be charged for causing climate change? In the social sphere, such uncertainty over externalities is then lived as injustice. In sum, a continual legitimation crisis, born out of competing social, political, economic and scientific rationalities, characterizes world risk society.

The move towards cosmopolitanism is accomplished when recognizing that risks are ubiquitous, that the threats to which their 'staging' gives form do not have temporal and/or spatial borders. In Beck's words: 'A system of "risk-cosmopolitanism" is developing in which an exceptional degree of cosmopolitan interdependence, itself a side effect of side effect global publics, is bringing transnational conflicts and commonalities into the everyday practices which necessitate political (state) and subpolitical (civil society) action' (Beck, 2006: 34). By evidencing and deepening a condition of structural interdependence, global risks force the cosmopolitization of experience, global publics form, and a politicization from within takes place that progressively disrupts national society (Beck, 1999: 23-35; 2009: 47–66, 81–108). Cosmopolitanization is thus a by-product of global contingencies.

Within this dialectical movement of national disruption/cosmopolitan emergence, world risk society demonstrates explanatory and normative limitations of a national outlook, while disclosing countervailing normative aspirations. That is, Beck derives (cosmopolitan) normative implications from the diagnosis of global risks' cosmopolitanizing effects. This is what distinguishes sociological, empirical cosmopolitanism from philosophical, normative cosmopolitanism: normative content is taken as the possible outcome of empirical changes brought about by cosmopolitanization (Beck, 2006: 17–47). As will be discussed later, this poses a methodological problem as regards the conception of social reality.

Normatively, Beck argues for a principle of corrective reciprocity as a way to mediate relativism and universalism (Beck, 2006: 58–61). Justifying this is the empirical argument that, since risks are global in scope (e.g. climate change), they pose the cognitive and political challenge to bring together particular historical experiences and *Weltanschauungen*, life conditions and normative aspirations, within which they gain significance. Beck advocates for a value-based and procedure-oriented 'contextual universalism' that seeks to combine a negative universalism (defending against

threats to life and freedom) with 'procedural universalism' (globally shared legal procedures) (Bosco, 2020, forthcoming).

From the above discussion, it is apparent that three concepts are substantial to Beck's account (Bosco, 2020, forthcoming). First, risk produces conflictual and integrative dynamics, the dialectical interplay of which is a significant steering phenomenon in the social construction of reality. Second, cosmopolitanization is understood as an encompassing side effect of risk production, which leads to empirical, political and normative changes. Third, risk and cosmopolitanization put into motion a form of reflexivity that explains the dynamic gearing social reality. These three insights help clarify the local–global ambivalences and contradictory forces which are unleashed by a modernization that has become reflexive. In short, Beck argues that a reflexive and cosmopolitan second modernity has formed out of an outmoded, national first modernity.

The broad implication Beck draws out of this is the following: since cosmopolitanization discloses a new, encompassing societal formation and, at the epistemological level, it demonstrates the explanatory limits of classical theories and the disciplinary organization of knowledge, it would be necessary to develop a new sociological framework. Beck proceeds by reframing the theoretical interplay of the actor's outlook (the historical dimension) and the observer's outlook (the logical dimension), as well as by redrawing the methodological intertwinement of the spatial and temporal dimensions of experience with a cosmopolitan intent.

For Beck, theories of the first modernity are grounded on an 'empirically false' national 'metatheory of identity, society and politics' which equates the concept of society with the nation-state (Beck, 2006: 5). Methodological nationalism's background assumption consists of a more or less tacit assimilation of the observer's outlook with the actor's national outlook, the consequence being that a logic of *exclusive* differentiation based on an 'either/or principle' undergirds the formation of both categories and concepts. For instance, national cultures, the sciences, society, and nature are defined according to their mutually exclusive features. The upshot is an internally disaggregated or disjunctive image of the social world. With the emergence of globalization, the actor's outlook 'cosmopolitanizes', and it would be necessary for sociology to develop a corresponding outlook, one based on the 'both/and principle' and a logic of *inclusive* differentiation – e.g. multicultural identities, interdisciplinarity, nature as symbolically mediated by society, and society as integral to nature (Beck, 1999: 19–47; 2006: 57–71, 78–79, 81–83). Methodological cosmopolitanism calls for a 'paradigm shift,' a transition from the 'exclusive to the inclusive,' from the 'national to the cosmopolitan.' In short, Beck advocates an 'epistemological rupture' (Bosco, 2020, forthcoming).

Methodologically, this logic of inclusive differentiation translates into a shift in our framing of both the spatial and temporal dimensions of experience. Instead of (exclusively differentiated)

local-national and national-national relations, sociology must now look for 'trans-local, local-global, transnational and global-global patterns of relations' (Beck, 2006: 77). However, Beck remarks that without connecting this spatial shift of direction to the temporal dimension, one would otherwise inccur 'a false *one dimensional* real-cosmopolitanism and the reification of an ahistorical global present' (Beck, 2006: 77). By historicizing spatially located and globally entangled experiences, sociology opens up to 'the cosmopolitanization of society and politics, history and memory' (Beck, 2006: 77). In short, Beck's methodological orientation sets the analytical scope on sociologically located, and transnationally shared, experiences of risk. Such a cosmopolitan outlook does not erase, or oppose, the national. Rather, it incorporates the national within the broader framing of world society, one directed towards addressing a globally shared present and future that follows a mutually exclusionary, national past (Beck, 1999: 137–138; 2009: 4–14).

Beck's critical cosmopolitan sociology is predicated on a 'relational and highly stratified conception of social reality' (Bosco, 2020, forthcoming). It is relational insofar as social reality is seen as being driven by manufactured global contingencies, shaping contexts of interaction in which diverse social actors take part. It is highly stratified because social reality is understood through the local–global interplay of conflictive/integrative processes, whose side effects no actor can fully appreciate. These considerations lead us to Beck's methodical position.

By asserting that cosmopolitanization is the by-product of global contingencies, Beck integrates a realist approach, which emphasizes the concreteness of global threats and catastrophes, with a constructivist approach, when working through the reflexive dynamic of actors' 'staging' of risks. Such a realist-constructivist position aims at reasserting that global risks are not construed from nowhere, they are based on lived, catastrophic experiences and scientific knowledge; and that we cannot adequately understand globalized social reality with our nationally conceived categories and concepts (Beck, 2006).

In summary, Beck seeks to transition sociology from the 'monological' (i.e. the logic of exclusive differentiation) and 'mono-perspectival' (the either 'us' or 'them' principle) 'nationalism to a dialogical (inclusive differentiation) and multi-perspectival (both 'us' and 'them') cosmopolitanism' (Bosco, 2020, forthcoming). At the metatheoretical level, Beck's objective is to develop a 'dialogical imagination,' whereby 'translation and bridge-building' open up the possibility for collaboration across disciplines and aims at constructing a cosmopolitan alternative to the catastrophic future of which world risk society warns us (Beck, 2006: 89).

Criticisms of Beck's cosmopolitan outlook, alternative programs

While Beck's account has been subject to extensive critical scrutiny, in the following, we focus on three recurring, potent criticisms, briefly presenting the alternative programs stemming from them. In

the subsequent section, we argue that Delanty's social-theoretical reorientation of cosmopolitan scholarship serves to substantially offset these limitations.

The first two criticisms which we engage with derive from postcolonial studies and focus on the relationship between Beck's account and modernization theory more broadly. Both Costa (2006) and Bhambra (2011) confront a problematic precept of modernization theory that underpins Beck's work, which holds that European/Occidental modernization would teleologically precede, and overdetermine, the development of 'the Rest'.

Costa's engagement with Beck is twofold: he identifies both this 'historical deficit' of modernization theory and what he deems to be an underappreciation for the 'tensions between geographical levels of analysis' (Costa, 2006: 122–123). For Costa, while Beck's account might aid an analysis of some European societies, it hardly applies to countries that integrated into the modern world as colonies. Colonization and enslavement precipitated reflexivity and a critical engagement with modernity's promises long before industrialization (Costa, 2006: 219–220). Costa's research on Latin America helps disclose a central limitation of Beck's two modernities thesis: that the changes modernity undergoes can only be understood by including non-Western modernizations as co-eval within European modernization. In summary, Costa identifies a historical-geographic Eurocentrism in world risk society and its purported cosmopolitanism.

This historical-geographical deficit also underpins a methodological limitation: Beck's critique of methodological nationalism, and his cosmopolitan alternative, ultimately succeeds only in displacing one problematic representation of world society (as isolated nation-states), with another, equally problematic representation based on the 'West/Rest' dichotomy. Costa submits that when a non-Western perspective is adopted, one realizes that Beck transposes the European, self-referred nationalism of first modernity into a second modernity's Occidentalist, self-referred cosmopolitanism. The analytic loss incurred is the reduction of geographically located, historically entangled, and unevenly produced and distributed contingencies to those deemed relevant within European borders.

Bhambra (2007, 2011) also stresses the methodological and analytical implications of the West/Rest dichotomy, however she submits a broader claim, one that encompasses the entirety of classical sociology. For Bhambra, both classical sociology and Beck's critique of methodological nationalism erase the imperialist logics which undergirded European modernization. Bhambra submits that this criticism also applies to methodological cosmopolitanism more broadly, for it fails to acknowledge neo-imperialist structures within the postcolonial context. While Costa's criticisms are ultimately analytical-methodological in nature, Bhambra advances a critique of sociology's historico-cultural European self-referentialism, and locates Beck's work within this broader problematic. Bhambra's concern is that the sociological imagination holds a problematic taken-for-

granted assumption that bears a particular socio-political rubric: while classical thought is not merely nationalistic, but rather manifests a 'methodological Eurocentrism' when taking the nation-state as the basic analytical unit of world society, contemporary cosmopolitan thought displays a 'methodological Occidentalism' which replaces the nation-state by the European Union and liberal democracy. Bhambra can thus be read to be partially embracing both Beck's critique of methodological nationalism and his proposed cosmopolitan outlook, while rejecting their imperialistic and colonialist legacies.[4]

The final criticism with which we engage also identifies a historical deficit in Beck's cosmopolitanism. Both, Robert Fine and Daniel Chernilo produce nuanced criticisms of the interplay between the logical and historical dimensions of Beck's account. Fine argues that Beck's methodological critique, which declares classical theories nationalistic and outmoded, disregards first modernity's non-national scope. Examples abound: colonial empires, liberal internationalist enterprises (such as the League of Nations), many waves of immigration. It follows that Beck's claim for an epistemological rupture betrays a problematic 'presentism', which suggests that classical (nationalistic) theories were adequate to understand first modernity's societies (Fine, 2007: 7–14).

Chernilo (2006; 2011) develops this position, arguing that methodological nationalism is as limited an optic for engaging with Beck's first modernity as it is for engaging with globalized society. By assimilating society to the nation-state, methodological nationalism assumes an empirically false conception of social change as an intra-national process, on the one hand, and recedes into a '*conceptual fetishism*', on the other. 'The nation-state is a fetish when it is conceptualized as the self-sufficient, solid and well-integrated representation of the modern society – when it is thought of as *the natural organizing principle of modernity*' (Chernilo, 2006: 14). Perhaps Chernilo's most interesting intervention is his submission that the ambivalent status of the nation-state in social theory manifests nothing but the historical, sociological and normative ambivalences of modernity's global aspirations.

Both Fine and Chernilo draw into question Beck's tacit correspondence between the actor's and observer's outlooks and his epistemological divide. Classical sociology was aware of modern society's global reach inasmuch as it was of the nationalistic shaping of social life and political organization. Instead of claiming classical sociology redundant, one then needs to re-interpret its categories and concepts in light of the new reality of modern society integration in a transnational direction.

These criticisms do not target the pertinence of cosmopolitanism for understanding globalization as such. From different perspectives, they problematize the relationship between cosmopolitanism's disclosing potentiality and defects within the antecedent sociological imagination,

while also formulating alternative research programs. Through different routes, Costa and Bhambra demonstrate world risk society's Eurocentrism, and thus, why Beck's account is a deficient cosmopolitanism. Against Beck's historical deficit and methodological bias, Costa asserts the need for more nuanced methodological approaches to address the diversity of modernity's formations and the latter's historically entangled nature. Bhambra reminds us of the primary role played by power and the reproduction of world historical asymmetries in modernity and the obfuscation these promote in sociological inquiry. For Bhambra, cosmopolitanism entails conceiving of the sociological scholarship as a move towards provincialization, whereby the image of different, connected sociologies permeated by power and various cultural traditions comes to bear (Bhambra, 2007). Finally, by objecting to Beck's claim for an epistemological rupture on the grounds that it is historically and logically deficient, Fine and Chernilo argue that cosmopolitanism requires sociology and social theory to overcome its natural law foundation.

The above programs can be read as agreeing on the importance of understanding that globalization reveals new features of the human condition which require sociology to develop alternative ways of thought, i.e. a cosmopolitan imagination. In different ways, and to differing extents, these scholars invest in a more social-theoretical approach to clarify sociology's methodical self-understanding. However, a change in inflection alone is insufficient; as Vincenzo Cicchelli and Sylvie Octobre (2017) argue, what is also required is the development of new methodological tools for social analysis enabling a sustained and meaningful engagement with the globalized world.

It is clear that all three criticisms of Beck's account, discussed above, call for a post-universal conception of both cosmopolitanism and modernity as a way for the sociological imagination to evolve with changes brought about by globalization. This is precisely what Gerard Delanty's *Cosmopolitan Imagination* provides.

A social theoretical approach to critical cosmopolitanism

Partially drawing on Beck's cosmopolitan outlook, Delanty formulates a *social-theoretical* framework for a critical cosmopolitanism predicated on an immanent-transcendent approach, bridging social research, normative social and political theory, and his continuing interrogation of modernity (Delanty, 2009, 2013). Delanty presents a 'sociological imagination' encompassing what cosmopolitanism evokes in the world, namely cultural diversity (plurality), interconnectedness (interaction), praxis (through immanent transcendence) and self-transformation. In this section we submit that the account presented in Delanty's *The Cosmopolitan Imagination* (2009) and subsequently developed elsewhere (Delanty, 2011; Delanty and Harris, 2018) provides solutions to the three central limitations of Beck's account, as detailed above.

Delanty follows Beck in the view that cosmopolitanism and transnationalism are not 'external' phenomena but are internalized in people's attitudes, identities and consciousnesses.

Moreover, they both identify cosmopolitanism's sociological relevance in discourses of global contingencies and on the formation of global publics. However, Delanty objects to Beck's conflation of cosmopolitanization with transnationalization, as well as the author's successive approach to normativity, as if the latter would only be sociologically relevant as the outcome of changes in social reality. In contrast, Delanty's account is more closely tied to Critical Theory and more social-theoretical in nature.

Delanty is primarily invested in an immanent-transcendent analysis of social rationalities and normativities as forces existing in a dialectical relationship with social institutions and social life. Delanty is explicit: cosmopolitanization is not merely an inevitable by-product of transnationalization; indeed, without distinguishing cosmopolitanization from transnationalization, the former loses normative potency and analytical specificity. While the latter refers to actions, experiences and social relations beyond the local and the national, cosmopolitanization involves self-transformation following the experience of the unfamiliar, changes in people's attitudes and orientations, and macro societal trends. Expressed most simply, Delanty submits that transnationalism regards the transformation of the subject, whereas cosmopolitanism focuses on *subject formation* (Delanty, 2009: 68-75). In such terms, transnationalization relates to cosmopolitanism as a non-determinant precondition (82-85). This non-determinant attribute is important for two reasons. First, because cosmopolitanism is not a contemporary phenomenon (see Coulmas, 1995), it has potentially existed where there was contact with the Other. Second, because living in a globalized social world does not necessarily entail developing a cosmopolitan identity, attitude or orientation, as many anti-globalization movements and the ongoing spread of (far-)right populism in the democratic world show. Cosmopolitanism is fostered by transnationalization, without being reducible to it.

A second area of divergence between Delanty and Beck exists in the relationships they conceive existing between the philosophical and sociological conceptions of cosmopolitanism. In essence, Beck can be read as taking what is primarily an analytical distinction as an empirical one. Both the empirical and normative have to be considered as equiprimordial, for the social world is as much constituted by the objective world as it is by values, principles and aspirations. It follows that the primary methodological question is not what comes first, but whether a cosmopolitan outlook emerges. Empirically, Delanty asserts that cosmopolitanism sheds light on moral and political orientations in individuals' attitudes and cultural identity, 'macro societal trends and collective identities,' characterized by multiple loyalties and cultural attachments (Delanty, 2009: 85). Normatively, it refers to shifts in self-understanding stemming from the 'understanding of the Other;' the 'positive recognition of the Other' entailing inclusiveness and adaptation; intercultural, critical dialogue whereby 'mutual evaluation' occurs as in deliberative processes; and the creation of a

shared, normative 'third culture' transcending cultural difference (Delanty, 2009: 86-87). These are the four dynamics of relations constituting cosmopolitanism's normative core (see also Delanty and Harris, 2018) and characterizing softer to stronger forms of 'shifts in self-understanding', whereby 'the articulation of new cultural models' may open up 'different conceptions of political community and social organization' (Delanty, 2009: 13).

The above summarizes what Delanty takes from Beck's work and already shows significant conceptual innovation. The novelty lies in clarifying cosmopolitanism as a determinate kind of immanent-transcendence, one which happens within the experiential, dialectical intertwining of Self, Other and world. This forms the ontological core from which Delanty derives his cosmopolitan framework.

The notion of social reality undergirding this framework is also relational, but here this is explicitly acknowledged. The social is a processual, hermeneutically open space of experience where conflictive orientations intertwine. It is where social groups and societies embroil with one another, global forces acquire significance in local context, border notions of internal and external are continuously redrawn, and the 'reinvention of political community around global ethics' and a 'cosmopolitan epistemology of shared reality' arise (Delanty, 2009: 7; 2011: 637–642). Hence, this relational, processual vision of social reality is fundamentally multi-perspectival, for otherness is integral to it. It then inscribes cosmopolitanism in social reality and brings together empirical elements of cultural diversity and interconnectedness along with normative notions of 'care, rights and hospitality' (Delanty, 2009: 7). The cosmopolitan moment is one of self-transformation coming out of the experience of the unfamiliar, implying that it involves new forms of knowledge for which a determinate sociological imagination is required.

The centrality given to immanent-transcendence binds cosmopolitanism up to modernity's tendency 'towards self-problematization and reflexivity' (Delanty, 2009: 13). Instead of defining modernity by its sociological features, as Beck does, modernity is here understood in critical-hermeneutic terms, as a mode of accessing and intervening in the world. Characterizing a shift in self-understanding whereby humanity aims at seizing its present through the free scrutiny of the past, modernity entails putting forward, and acting in accordance with, an image of the future. This break with tradition is cosmopolitan in that it opens up new possibilities of realization through world openness and self-confrontation. As a mode of accessing the world, modernity favors the intermeshing of different, civilizational orders of interpretation, out of which a broadening of the available sources of meaning occurs and new interpretations take form. It then entails a continuous process of self-problematization steered by both the revision of one's own tradition and the experience of otherness. Accordingly, '[it] lies in the basic self-understanding of modernity that there are no secure foundations for identity, meaning and memory. The term cosmopolitanism signals a

condition of self-confrontation, incompleteness; modernity concerns the loss of certainty and the realization that certainty can never be established for once and for all' (Delanty, 2009: 71). Modernity is a condition of continuous self-transformation, and cosmopolitanism is one of its key dynamics. This modernity–cosmopolitanism connection captures modernity's ambivalent character without shattering it into a chronological model, which is, as we have seen, empirically, normatively and epistemologically problematic.

This formulation unfolds significant implications in a cosmopolitan direction, the primary one being that modernity does not hold, as it were, civilizational authorship. Detached from particular cultural manifestations such as secular reason, democracy or republicanism, modernity is global in outlook and passable of emerging in any civilization. This means that, although European or Western modernity did have a major influence on other modernities, it does not follow westernization or that it first emerged in Europe and posteriorly spread. Rather, modernity takes multiple forms. Yet, for Delanty this does not mean, as it is assumed in the multiple modernities thesis (Eisenstadt), that these have nothing in common: the primary tension, he states, between 'autonomy/freedom, on the one side, and power, discipline and instrumental reason, on the other', pervades all forms of modernity, however it takes different social, political and economic configurations (Delanty, 2009: 184).

Although relevant to cosmopolitan scholarship, modernity's multiplicity in itself does not account for the interactive dynamic whereby civilizations undergo change. 'Civilizations […] are all based on frameworks of meaning which can be interpreted in different ways within and beyond the contours of a given civilization' (Delanty, 2009: 190). The cosmopolitan thrust of this resides in the entanglement of modernity's diverse societal and civilizational formations. If we are to grasp modernity's cosmopolitanism, plurality has to be tied up with the understanding of the historical process as an entwined one. With its focus on trans-historical processes, global history remedies to multiple modernities' overemphasis on plurality and sheds light on the transformative nature of historical entanglements.

One then concludes that Delanty locates the development of a critical cosmopolitanism as a result of immanent-transcendence in the context of plurality and interaction. However, although global history stresses the interconnected nature of the historical process, it does not provide insight on the developmental logic underpinning the interactive dynamic of multiple modernities. That is, global history does not account for transformations in self-understanding steered by cross-cultural interaction and subject formation. This is where cultural translation acquires a central theoretical function as the logic through which third cultures emerge.

Third cultures do not exist per se, they are a cultural "in-between" through which translation can happen. They are constituted by 'global cognitive models [e.g. human rights, democracy, world

religions] by which cultures interpret themselves' . The significance third cultures have acquired in modernity stems from globalization (immigration, transportation, developments in information and communication technologies, inter alia), which have contributed to render 'cultures more and more translatable', making translation a 'central category in all of communication'. Accordingly, 'translation becomes the very form of culture,' and third cultures become a ubiquitous feature of the social. Modernity's cosmopolitan, developmental logic resides, Delanty argues, in the 'universal translatability' of cultures (Delanty, 2009: 194-196).

Therefore, cultural translation is not merely the correspondence of meanings between languages. It involves interpretation as a creative moment, and, since culture is not morally or politically neutral, it is permeated by reciprocity, misunderstanding, power, and inequality. Delanty (2009: 195-197) identifies three main features constituting the logic of translation. First, it assumes taking the cosmopolitan perspective of the Other, for which a certain degree of distantiation from one's own culture is necessary. Second, translation is ambivalent and antagonistic as it involves negotiating difference; it triggers a process of revision of symbolic content, whereby one's own system of meaning confronts its own limits. Third, translation entails a loss of meaning. What is being translated is forcefully transfigured into a different world-related system of meaning, with its own particular, hermeneutical variations. Thus, what is translated takes on new traits as it enters into a different system of meaning, while its specificity, albeit re-interpreted, remains traceable. However, it is precisely because something is lost, that what is translated partially becomes something new as it enters into a different system of meaning; that it involves, in short, *transformation*.

Translation characterizes three kinds of relation. These are the relation to otherness, where Self and Other translate into one another or a shared system of reference is created (exchange system, world religions); the relation to the universal, where the local translates into the global and can take a hegemonic form over other cultures (science, law, systems of value) or be translated by the local culture (hybridization, indigenization, creolization); third, a relation between 'past and present,' whereby the past is re-interpreted in its relation to the 'understanding of the present' (Delanty, 2009: 197-198). Translation's cosmopolitan moment 'concerns the symbolic and cognitive processes by which cultural aspects of a given collective identity are appropriated by a different one, which will variously adapt, transfigure it, subvert it. In the resulting re-codification of culture, new meanings and structures are created' (Delanty, 2009: 196). Assuming a certain degree of evaluation, translation is what affords normative significance and specificity to cosmopolitanism. Here, the cosmopolitan challenge is '[how] to achieve reciprocity' (Delanty, 2009: 197).

From the above, one then understands how Delanty's reasoning proceeds by complementarities: what multiple modernities lack in terms of the inter-civilizational, one finds in

global history's interactive dynamics; what global history lacks in developmental logic, one finds in cultural translation. The whole of his social-theoretical approach to critical cosmopolitanism can be summarized in five intertwined dimensions. First, cosmopolitanism is a kind of immanent-transcendence happening within the experiential entwining of Self, Other and world. It then characterizes a condition of finitude, potentially entailing collective learning processes following the experience of otherness. Second, this ontological anchorage is further derived into an encompassing theoretical framework aiming at apprehending both micro changes in individuals' attitudes and orientations and macro historical dynamics and trends of modern society in the context of cultural plurality and interconnectedness. It follows that '[the] research object of critical cosmopolitan sociology concerns the discursive space of translations, dialogue and exchange' (Delanty, 2009: 79), within which societies and modernities interact, third cultures evolve, and subject formation occurs. Fourth, the moral and political thrust of critical cosmopolitan social theory is intercultural communication, hereby understood as a 'deliberative reasoning' with, and 'critical scrutiny' of, the perspective of the Other, out of which third cultures can be enhanced and created, and new images of the social order arise (Delanty 2009: 261). Fifth, as modernity is multiple, inter-civilizational, and animated by the logic of cultural translation, the conception of cosmopolitanism is necessarily a post-universal one: no previous content is ascribed to it; it regards the potential universal outcome of the communicative handling of particularisms. By acknowledging the existence of diverse cosmopolitan projects, rooted in different and entangled modernities, this post-universal conception of cosmopolitanism calls for re-interpretations of history in light of the shared present and future. It follows that critical cosmopolitanism affords an ethically, morally and politically decentered and entangled vision of the social order as opposed to a universal order.

One then concludes that, by developing a cosmopolitan understanding of immanent-transcendence, *The Cosmopolitan Imagination* not only further clarifies the relevance of cosmopolitanism for sociological inquiry, as Beck insistently argued for, but also, and foremost, lays down the foundation of a broadening of critical social theory to globalization, going beyond concerns with domination and emancipation within Western borders. From a cosmopolitan perspective, immanent-transcendence means, first, that every culture is embedded in a particular historical experience and holds correspondent, normative and political aspirations. Second, that cultures' particular, transitive orders are not segregated from one another, they are historically and asymmetrically entangled; the implication being that those aspirations may have broader reach and need to be negotiated with, or inclusive of, the Other.

Crucially, instead of making its path through a 'presentist' outlook ending up in an epistemological rupture, a critique Fine and Chernilo level at Beck's cosmopolitan sociology, Delanty re-interprets established concepts, theories and history in light of the reality of globalization.

This formulation also overcomes the Eurocentrism Costa and Bhambra object to in Beck's work. Both cosmopolitanism and modernity are not particular to any society or civilization, but rather disclose the generative nature of cross-cultural encounters. Furthermore, by locating both micro and macro societal trends in particular entangled historical experiences, immanent-transcendence entails more nuanced geographical levels of analysis, which are lacking in Beck's account (Costa).

Conclusions and further considerations

Beck's *World Risk Society* offered fertile terrain from which to grow a cosmopolitan sociology. His account must be credited for engaging seriously with both difference and urgent global issues, and for identifying possibilities for cosmopolitan transition immanent within the social world. Beck's impactful contributions left the academy, and wider society, with a new discourse, and a heightened sensitivity to the limitations of the political order. That stated, the three criticisms discussed above are, nonetheless, pertinent. In crude summary, Beck's sociology's blind adoption of the European/Occidental self-understanding as the universally applicable blueprint for modernity is ultimately found wanting. While the epistemological consequence of Eurocentrism lies in the subversion of the principle of immanence when extra-Western societies are considered, the politico-normative implication is the reproduction, although obfuscated by emancipatory intentions, of world-historical asymmetries. Eurocentrism blinds critical cosmopolitanism, at least, in three regards: it obliterates the Other's world and culture, the influences of the Other on the formations of Western modernity (or modernities?), and world power relations underpinning modernities' emergence.

As we have argued, Delanty's reorientation of modernity as a historically variable outcome of latent, immanent-transcendent potentialities within intercultural exchanges presents a modernity which is no longer bound by Occidentalism. In contrast to Beck's two-phased model, Delanty views modernity as a way of accessing the world, rather than as a derivative, determined outcome of Eurocentric development. Cosmopolitanism is then a world-disclosing dynamic within modernity, shedding light on collective learning processes as cultures come into contact with one another, while also providing new ways to interpret the social world and history. One then concludes that cosmopolitanism is both an experience of the world and a mode of interpreting it.

Here, the shift towards a social-theoretical understanding of critical cosmopolitanism is crucial. While a sociological inflection brings a primary investment in the analysis of changes cosmopolitanism brings to the social world, social theory addresses the ontological and epistemological features these changes manifest. As such, social theory aims at contributing to sociology's methodical self-understanding. At least three conclusions can be highlighted in this regard.

First, as it questions the nature of what globalization reveals in social reality – namely, the transformative tenet of cultural encounters – the social-theoretical perspective clarifies the critical

cosmopolitan understanding by providing an ontological foundation. As Delanty argues, we must acknowledge that the transformative potential of the encounter between Self and Other does not apply only to the object, but also to the *knowledge subject*. Second, social theory goes beyond the sociological analysis of critical cosmopolitanism by uncovering its generative character within both globalizing processes and history, thereby not being merely an epochal feature – in contrast to many of the classical approaches to modernity. Third, by combining ontological and social research components, Delanty's social-theoretical framework holds the potential to develop new, critical epistemologies. Cosmopolitanism reasserts cultural diversity and the immanent particularity of our world experience, while stressing the generative character of cultural encounters in an increasingly interconnected world. It is precisely through this interplay of ontology and social research that new forms of knowledge can emerge.

Critically understood, cosmopolitanism discloses the trans-historically mediated nature of societal rationality; it is a core constituent in the evolution of societal formations, and articulates decentering processes steered by intercultural collective learning. In this sense, the idea of critical cosmopolitanism binds to praxis as an argumentative struggle for the realization of normative aspirations. It then concerns practical implications of the public use of reason and aims at being useful to actors' self-clarification and action. This means that, in addition to analyzing existing forms of cosmopolitanism, critical cosmopolitanism also aims at uncovering the forces constraining the realization of globalization's historical potentials and the cosmopolitan futures it discloses.

The onto-epistemological challenges cosmopolitan scholarship engages with can be framed as the fashioning of a 'cosmopolitan reasoning' which enables mediating the particular and the universal. The increasing complexity of risk led Beck to conceive of 'cosmopolitan reasoning' as grasping the trans-locally and transnationally shared experience of global contingencies, for which transcending both the national outlook and disciplinarity is necessary. Delanty also grapples with this question by overcoming national assumptions and bringing different disciplinary knowledges to bear. Taking on the hermeneutically open nature of the social world, Delanty conceives of 'cosmopolitan reasoning' in dialogical terms, through the dialectics of Self, Other and world, i.e. through changes that mutual understanding and evaluation bring about in the objective world.

However, while both Beck and Delanty advance in regard to the ontological and theoretical implications of critical cosmopolitanism, we still need to fully develop a corresponding theory of knowledge. That is, the ontology of the social world cosmopolitanism uncovers still has to be effective in epistemology. We conclude by putting forward two brief considerations in this regard.

Cosmopolitanism has both phenomenological and hermeneutic implications: it shapes both our experience of the world and our mode of interpreting it. As such, the manner in which we experience other cultures, the way in which we encounter their lifeworlds, their world, and learn their

languages, requires considered investigation. Intercultural experience may precipitate forms of reflexivity which provoke cultural self-distantiation, whereby estrangement[4] induced by partial access to the Other's horizon relativizes the Self's cultural life and worldview. By triggering such a decentering cultural process, intercultural experience enables problematizing taken-for-granted assumptions about (one)Self, the Other and the world. To be sure, this applies to both the agent and the interpreter: the culturally alienated position holds critical epistemic potential.[5]

Second, critical cosmopolitanism requires that we acknowledge the finitude of our understanding in terms of the relative incommensurability of another's and one's own cultural life and worldview; one cannot, so to speak, outstep language and the hermeneutic situation within which one finds oneself.[6] Cosmopolitanism thus certainly involves translation and openness to, and evaluation of, other intellectual traditions, i.e. intercultural communication. However, just as power binds to discourse in *intra*cultural contexts, it does so within the *inter*cultural context, with at least equal potency. Hence, intercultural communication has to engage with the postcolonial symbolic forms which shape the Self's relationship to the Other, and the Other's way of thought. Epistemologically, intercultural communication then entails a critical-dialogical attempt whereby the interpreter seeks to clarify his own particularism in terms of culturally-bound reasoning and (inherited) pre-understanding of the Other.

Funding

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Notes

1. These two sections develop arguments first presented by Estevão Bosco (2020) in a forthcoming chapter.
2. Beck distinguishes among environmental, economic, terrorist and biographical global risks according to the binomial purpose/chance (Beck, 2009: 13–14, 199–204). For an overview, see Bosco, 2016: 88–90.
3. In Cordle's (2008) account, this is framed as a "state of suspense".
4. This can be seen as similar to Nelson Maldonado-Torres' (2007) engagement with Habermas' Eurocentrism.
5. On intercultural experience and estrangement, see Waldenfels, 2011.

6. On the conception of critical social theory forming out of this, see Kögler, 1999; Kögler and Dunaj, 2018.

7. On the finitude of our understanding, see Gadamer, 2004: 267–277, 290–298, 435–468. For a critical reconstruction of Gadamer's hermeneutics, see Habermas, 1998: 143–170; Kögler, 1999: 19–111.

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