



# Cosmopolitanism: Approaches, History, and Possibilities

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## Introduction

Cosmopolitanism, a philosophy and set of moral / ethical values, may hold untapped potential for navigating “modernity” – the collection of global factors that make up life itself as we know it in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

By digging through the history and dense theory of cosmopolitan thought, as well as testing falsifiable hypothesis, we can theorize how to build a better global tomorrow. What is possible today with a cosmopolitan outlook?

## History

Cosmopolitanism began with Diogenes, who refused to accept national jurisdiction, proclaiming he was a citizen of the world. (1)

The Stoics cultivated this sentiment, coming to the conclusion that all people are capable of rationality, and thus, individuals retain a citizen-like belonging to the world. (2)

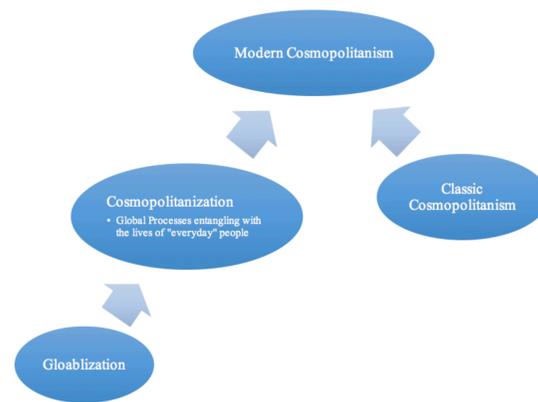
Immanuel Kant, perhaps the most famous founder of cosmopolitanism, proposed that a “cosmopolitan right” – essentially a right to life founded on the baseline of human commonality – would be critical to creating a “Perpetual Peace.” (3)

Today cosmopolitanism takes on a variety of new forms, often influenced by modern globalization.

## Modern Conceptions

Today there is variety to the cosmopolitan perspective – arguments for global government, universal human rights, and increasing the UN’s executive power can fall under the cosmopolitan umbrella.

Specific to modernity is the idea of “cosmopolitanization:” the latent onset of cosmopolitan-esque values in individuals as a result of globalization (4).



I argue that to stay consistent with its universalistic axioms, cosmopolitanism must embody the pluralistic nature of the global community. We do not need to forgo difference in order to heed to a composite global state or culture in order to be cosmopolitanism.

*“Plurality is the condition of human action because we are all the same, that is, human, in such a way that nobody is ever the same as anyone else who ever lived, lives, or will live.”*

- Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, page 9

## A New, Accountable Definition

- 1) Viewing humanity as one community by virtue of shared humanity.
- 2) That single community reflects openness and difference.
- 3) Individuals in the single community should have a moral impulse to help attend to other’s basic needs.

## Possibilities & Indicators

An internalization of cosmopolitan mindset at the individual could proliferate out and “take the reigns of globalization,” so to speak.

Cosmopolitanism, as a driving and acknowledged framework used by the international community, could help facilitate interstate solutions to implications of industrialization, climate change, and other inter-governmental challenges.

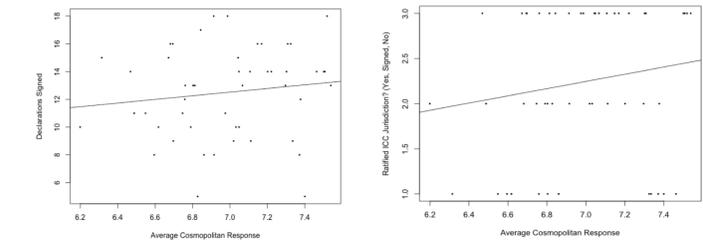
Additionally, cosmopolitanism could arguably facilitate more positive forms of international independence.

Cosmopolitan individuals may show a variety of traits – namely empathy and openness – while pro-cosmopolitan states may show benevolence towards immigrants and respect for human rights and multi-lateral institutions.

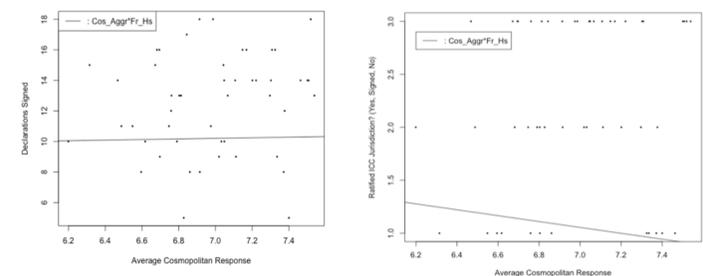
## Supplemental Analyses

I test whether or not a link exists between cosmopolitan individuals and cosmopolitan state actors. Using the World Values Survey (4), I calculated a “aggregate cosmopolitan score” (the average survey response) of individual’s level of agreement with the statement: “I see myself as a citizen of the world.”

I then scaled these scores for approximately 50 countries with both the number (out of 18) of human rights declarations signed by said country and with indicators signifying the level of ratification of the Rome Statute (Ratified, Signed, Neither).



It was also necessary to control for “democracy,” as democratic processes should make it easier for the proliferation of cosmopolitan sentiment. Thus, I also provide Freedom House Score as an interaction term.



None of the results were significant, but they did most often turn up slightly positive correlations. More narrow and robust analysis must be done to determine if this is evidence that a cosmopolitan connection is “budding” or if it needs deliberate facilitation in order to occur.

## References

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**Data:**

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