

working out and defending what it is that respect and tolerance require of us in this global sphere, designed to produce an account that is justifiable to any reasonable and rational person, or people.

### Related Topics

- ▶ Cosmopolitanism
- ▶ Decent Society
- ▶ Global Democracy
- ▶ Global Distributive Justice
- ▶ Political Liberalism
- ▶ Rawls, John
- ▶ Toleration/Tolerance, Liberal Principle of
- ▶ Wide Reflective Equilibrium
- ▶ World Government

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## Political Cosmopolitanism

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Political cosmopolitanism, as the term is used in this entry, refers to a family of conceptions of justice, each of which is based on some form of moral cosmopolitanism. Such conceptions of justice typically delineate morally required or (im)permissible international or global uses of the powers of political, legal, and/or economic institutions,

and accordingly ascribe rights and duties to individual and/or collective moral agents. Thus, the subject matter of this entry overlaps what Simon Caney (2010) terms “political cosmopolitanism” (which refers to proposals and arguments for global, supra-state, or international political and legal institutions), as well as what he terms “justice-based cosmopolitanism” (which refers to cosmopolitan conceptions of civil and political justice as well as distributive justice). This entry’s subject matter also overlaps four of the five cosmopolitan themes delineated by Held and Brown (2010).

Held and Brown describe cosmopolitanism since Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) as “both a moral and a political project” that addresses questions about how to implement cosmopolitan principles by reforming institutions and designing new ones. They explain that most cosmopolitans address issues at the interface between moral cosmopolitanism and its practical institutional application, and they delineate five interrelated themes: (1) “global justice cosmopolitanism,” (2) “cultural cosmopolitanism,” (3) “legal cosmopolitanism,” (4) “political cosmopolitanism,” and (5) “civic cosmopolitanism.” Global justice cosmopolitanism addresses questions about “what is owed to others as a matter of justice,” and cultural cosmopolitanism considers questions about “how to foster a condition of global justice in a culturally pluralistic world,” while legal, political, and civic cosmopolitanism address, respectively, questions about international law, global governance, and the construction of cosmopolitan citizenship. According to Held and Brown, all five of these cosmopolitan themes are influenced, directly or indirectly, by Immanuel Kant’s moral and political philosophy.

The literature of political cosmopolitanism since the 1970s has come to encompass debates on a wide range of topics. These include global poverty and distributive justice, duties to (non-)compatriots, cosmopolitan structures of global governance, and (most recently) climate justice. The most influential cosmopolitan theorists have written mainly about cosmopolitan conceptions of distributive justice; the debate on this topic is the central focus of this entry.

During the past four decades, many philosophers considering the moral duties of those who are in a position to take action to alleviate global poverty have discussed the arguments developed by Peter Singer about what charity and beneficence require and about responsibility for harm or suffering. Singer (1972, 2002, 2004) argues that everyone has a duty to help people in dire need, no matter where they are, with money saved by not spending on luxuries. He further argues that we are responsible for

harms that we could have prevented but did not, and that we are responsible for suffering that we merely allowed to happen as much as for suffering that we directly caused. Singer's argument for the duty to help others anywhere who are in dire need thus does not depend on any assumption that the people in wealthy countries are causally responsible for the poverty of the people in poor countries; he aims to show that there is an obligation to help all of the world's needy people regardless of shared histories or special relationships.

Similarly, cosmopolitans such as Kok-Chor Tan (2004, 2010) and Caney (2005, 2010) aim to establish relationship-independent duties to help all of the world's needy people. They support liberal egalitarian principles of distributive justice and argue that the same principles of justice apply both domestically and globally because all individuals are entitled to equal respect and concern. Versions of cosmopolitanism that depend, unlike Tan's and Caney's, on shared histories of interaction or relationship, assumptions about causal responsibility, or shared institutions or practices have been developed by theorists such as Charles Beitz (1979/1999), Thomas Pogge (1989, 2008), and Darrel Moellendorf (2002, 2009). These cosmopolitans contend that principles of distributive justice apply only when individuals bear certain types of relation to one another. Believing that economic relations, such as those involved in the economic integration brought about by globalization, constitute relations of the relevant types, they infer that egalitarian principles of justice now apply globally.

Tan (2004) argues that since commitment to equal respect and concern generates John Rawls's two principles of domestic social justice (Rawls 1971), and since everyone is entitled to equal respect and concern (all individuals worldwide, not only citizens within bounded groups), therefore Rawls's two principles of domestic social justice apply globally: a just global scheme of institutions would be regulated by Rawls's difference principle and would ensure global equality of opportunity.

Caney (2010) says that the best argument in favor of his own version of cosmopolitanism, which he calls "humanity-centered," starts from the widely shared, strong conviction that persons should not fare worse in life because of "morally arbitrary characteristics," examples of which include, he says, their ethnicity, class, or religion; and that distributive justice should be blind to such features. From this conviction, Caney infers that persons should not face worse opportunities because of nationality or citizenship. Therefore, he rejects what he calls the "interdependence-based" version of cosmopolitanism propounded by Moellendorf. Caney contends that

Moellendorf's arguments about national boundaries show not only that they are morally arbitrary but also that the boundaries of economic systems are equally so. If one's place of birth is morally arbitrary as Moellendorf says, then surely, Caney declares, one's birth into one scheme of economic institutions rather than another is also arbitrary and thus also should not affect one's life prospects. To ascribe differential entitlements to people because they are members of different economic systems is, he says, to penalize some for morally arbitrary reasons. Being a member of any particular system or scheme is "just one further deep contingency," says Caney, who credits this phrase to Pogge.

Tan's and Caney's versions of cosmopolitanism are based on luck egalitarianism, which is the view that there is injustice in economic distribution when inequality of goods reflects lucky or unlucky circumstances of various kinds, instead of such things as the degrees of arduousness of different people's labors, or people's varying preferences and choices with respect to income and leisure. Tan (2008a) offers an extended defense of his version of luck egalitarianism. Jon Mandle (2009) offers a sophisticated argument against both Tan's and G.A. Cohen's luck egalitarian views.

Beitz (1975) points out that the question of whether citizens of relatively affluent countries have obligations of justice to share their wealth with the poor in other countries does not pose special theoretical problems for utilitarians such as Singer, since utilitarians hold that utility-maximizing calculations need not respect national boundaries and regard the distinction between obligations of humanitarian aid and obligations of social justice as a second-order distinction justifiable only if it serves to maximize utility. Beitz bases his own cosmopolitan argument not on any utilitarian conception of justice but on (his interpretation of) the contractarian conception presented by Rawls (1971), and addresses the question about wealth-sharing obligations by arguing that Rawls's principles of justice ought to apply not to a nation-state only, but instead globally. According to Beitz (1975, 1979), the derivation of the principles of justice for the law of nations in Rawls (1971) would be correct, although incomplete, if that derivation did not depend on the assumption that societies are self-sufficient cooperative schemes. This assumption is false, Beitz asserts, for there exists a system of interdependence comprising an international division of labor, a system of world trade, and international financial and monetary institutions. Furthermore, he argues, this system of interdependence imposes burdens on poor and economically weak countries that they cannot practically avoid, and their

participation in the global economy on the only terms available involves a loss of political autonomy. Therefore, he concludes, national boundaries can no longer be regarded as the outer limits of social cooperation, and purported principles of domestic justice will be genuine principles of justice only if they are applicable to the entire global scheme. Beitz argues, agreeing with suggestions already made by several others (including David Richards, Brian Barry, and T.M. Scanlon), that the two principles of Rawls's conception of domestic social justice, suitably reinterpreted, can and should be applied globally. Pogge (1989) develops a similar position. Rawls and several others including Mandle (2006, 2009) offer rebuttals to these arguments.

Michael Blake (2002), disagreeing with all cosmopolitans who hold that egalitarian principles of distributive justice apply globally, argues that although there is an obligation to remedy absolute deprivation, wherever in the world it may be, legal coercion is a precondition for a concern with relative deprivation. Taking a state to be a territorial monopoly on the (legitimate) use of coercive force, which broadly determines and directs the lives of all who live within the jurisdiction of its legal system, Blake says that the nature of what a legal system can do to all and only its own citizens grounds a requirement of justification to specifically those citizens. According to the liberal principle of autonomy that Blake endorses, egalitarian distributive justice is relevant to the justification of state coercion of individuals through criminal and civil law because such coercion must be justifiable to everyone whose lives are constrained by that legal and political system. Respect for compatriots with inferior life prospects generates a requirement to address their disadvantages when justifying their coercion, by demonstrating that no alternative arrangement or form of the coercive institutions would have made the least advantaged any better off, in terms of life prospects or opportunities. Thus, according to Blake, liberalism's impartial concern with autonomy leads to a concern with relative economic deprivation only among compatriots.

Thomas Nagel (2005) argues (somewhat tentatively, as he says) that "humanitarianism" morally requires only a global minimum, and only the existence of states can generate more-demanding duties of socioeconomic justice. In a sovereign state, there is a special presumption against arbitrary inequalities in treatment of persons subject to the rules of the legal and political system, not only because these rules are coercively imposed, but also, Nagel emphasizes, because the persons subject to them are putative joint authors of the system. Membership in a political society involves engagement of the will, and political

authority is exercised in the name of the participants in "the general will"; this complex fact, Nagel argues, creates the special presumption against arbitrary inequalities in the treatment of the members by the system. Given that the state exercises sovereign power over its citizens and in their name, those citizens have an associative obligation of justice toward each other, to be carried out through the legal, social, and economic institutions made possible by sovereign power, he contends. Moreover, Nagel claims, the other-regarding motives that support adherence to just institutions when they exist do not provide clear guidance where the enabling conditions for such institutions do not exist. Nagel characterizes the international relationships that bear on material well-being as mere economic interaction, and regards such interaction as "an inappropriate site for claims of justice." Denying any obligation to enter into the "strong political relations" with others that would generate demanding duties of socioeconomic justice, and contending that the enabling conditions for just global institutions do not exist, Nagel concludes that the requirements of justice do not apply to the world as a whole, although they may apply if and when the world comes to be governed by a unified sovereign power.

Cohen and Sabel (2006) agree with Blake and Nagel on the point that principles of political morality must be sensitive to the various circumstances of human engagement and the different types of relation for which the principles are formulated. To this extent, Cohen, Sabel, Blake, and Nagel all reject (non-relational) cosmopolitanism. However, Cohen and Sabel disagree with Nagel's "strong statism," contending that it is now a mistake to assign the state so fundamental a role in political morality. Cohen and Sabel challenge Nagel's view that the duty of justice is an associative obligation which we owe only to those with whom we stand "in a strong political relation" and that there is no obligation to enter into such special relations. They argue that justice requires both procedural and substantive inclusiveness, and suggest that competing conceptions of global justice be understood as advancing alternative accounts of the kinds of respect and concern that inclusion requires.

Andrea Sangiovanni (2007) explicitly endorses moral cosmopolitanism, but argues that justice requires limiting the range of permissible social inequalities only among members of the same state. Noting that coercion-based accounts, such as those defended by Blake and Nagel, hold that state coercion is a necessary condition for egalitarian justice, Sangiovanni argues against them by denying this. Granting that shared participation in the authorship and reproduction of the state puts people in a special relation

to each other that they do not have with those outside the state's borders, and granting also that coercion, private law, and taxation are important factors in explaining why obligations of egalitarian justice are limited to the state, Sangiovanni argues that equality is a relational ideal of reciprocity among those who support and maintain the state's capacity to provide basic collective goods (including principally protection from physical attack, and maintenance and reproduction of a stable system of property rights and entitlements). However, Sangiovanni emphasizes, his reciprocity-based internationalism does not presuppose the existence of the modern state, although it does take states currently to be the agents ultimately responsible for provision of the basic collective goods necessary for developing and acting on a plan of life. He simply contends that, although other possible organizational forms might be better at providing basic collective goods, until such organizations arise, the demands of distributive equality hold only within state borders.

Mandle (2006, 2009), too, denies that the arguments supporting liberal egalitarian principles of distributive justice for domestic society entail similar or identical global principles. Like Blake, Nagel, Sangiovanni, and Richard Miller (discussed below), Mandle denies that economic relations alone are sufficient to constitute relationships of the relevant types. He argues that justice requires respect for basic human rights and also requires that nobody be subordinated to anyone else's arbitrary choices, but he denies that justice requires promoting a pattern of equal distribution of economic goods. What justice requires, he says, is that we use egalitarian standards when we design our basic institutions, including the structure of our property rights as well as our political institutions: a scheme of property rights must be selected through a just political mechanism, and satisfying the non-subordination requirement of justice entails an egalitarian standard. Schemes of property rights are not purely conventional, since they must respect the requirements of justice; nevertheless, Mandle argues, property rights are essentially indeterminate and incomplete outside of a legitimate political and legal system that can specify them, apply them to particular cases, and enforce those judgments. In Mandle's view, if there were a global political structure that had the ability to specify, apply, and enforce rights, it would be subject to an egalitarian standard of evaluation; however, justice does not require a global political order, and unless and until such an order exists, there is "no occasion" to demand egalitarian distributive justice on a global scale.

Mandle's conception of justice includes important cosmopolitan elements, principally the universality of

human rights and the duties of justice associated with them. However, it diverges from what he terms "strong cosmopolitanism," which holds that the same principles of justice that should be applied within a society ought also to be applied globally. Mandle (2006) defends, he says, a "moderate cosmopolitanism," which supports strengthening international political institutions without eliminating national attachments and loyalties. Mandle (2009) also defends, he says, a form of what Cohen and Sabel (2006) call "weak statism," which holds that the existence of a state is necessary and sufficient to trigger the highly demanding norms of egalitarian justice (in their terminology, "strong statism" is the view that the existence of a state is necessary and sufficient to trigger norms beyond humanitarianism's moral minimum).

The account developed by Richard Miller (1998, 2010) of the distinctive moral significance of political ties among compatriots claims that politically active citizens, taking part in coercively imposing terms of self-advancement on fellow citizens, can show them respect only by seeking to improve the situation of those with the worst life prospects. Miller argues that citizens have a duty to cultivate social trust as a basis for civic cooperation, and also argues that fulfilling this duty requires showing special concern for disadvantaged compatriots. Disagreeing with Blake about the grounds of international obligations to remedy absolute deprivation, Miller (2010) argues that obligations to advance interests of needy people in all developing countries derive not only from requirements of transnational beneficence, such as those that play a role in Blake's argument, and not only from international economic relations of the kinds emphasized by cosmopolitans like Beitz, Pogge, and Moellendorf, but also from other kinds of international or transborder relations and power inequalities such as those Miller discusses. According to Miller's "relational perspective," current international relationships generate demanding duties, often duties of fairness, which are "utterly different" from our duties of mere humanitarian assistance. Miller notes that Beitz, Pogge (in his earlier writings), and Moellendorf base their conceptions of global justice on the view that duties to help the disadvantaged worldwide can be inferred from duties to help one's compatriots, which they take to include special duties toward disadvantaged compatriots. These cosmopolitan theorists all claim, Miller says, that the mere fact of economic interdependence sustains a demanding duty to help the disadvantaged. Disagreeing with this claim, he argues that facts of interaction going beyond economic interaction, primarily including political interaction, ground the demanding duties to help disadvantaged compatriots. Compatriots' needs have

political priority, according to Miller, although this priority is not unconditional. He argues that now, in the actual global situation, priority must be given to the vast unmet transnational responsibility that has been generated not only by international economic interdependence but also by morally important international ties of other kinds.

Miller (2010) characterizes his own view as “quasi-cosmopolitan.” It resembles cosmopolitan views, he explains, in holding that there is a large, demanding responsibility on the part of people in developed countries to advance the interests of needy people in all developing countries, and also in holding that the ultimate goal of global justice mirrors in a significant way the ultimate goal of domestic justice. According to Miller, both are goals of civic friendship, which take different forms because of the different circumstances. The goal implicit in Miller’s rejection of transnational relations of exploitation, inequity, and negligent harm is, he says, a world in which mutual reliance across borders is based on mutual trust among self-respectful participants in genuine cooperation. Such a goal can be regarded as cosmopolitan, Miller thinks; however, as he emphasizes, his view is not cosmopolitan if this is understood to require a single global standard of distributive justice or a global extrapolation of principles of domestic justice.

According to Margaret Moore (2010), Caney’s as well as many other versions of cosmopolitanism assume or presuppose that justice is universal in scope and that therefore the “site of justice” is universal and principles of justice must be global. Moore cautions that this may not be the right way to approach questions about justice, because although we can often confidently identify injustices, it is less clear what justice is. People can reasonably disagree, Moore says, about whether principles of justice should be strictly egalitarian, or instead prioritarian (giving priority to the worse off), or else focused on avoiding serious deprivation (understood in absolute terms). Different people and different political communities might reasonably arrive at different answers to the question of which principles of justice should guide the making of laws and policies in their society, and this is one of the reasons, Moore argues, why collective self-government is so important: Justice is not fully determinate from a universal perspective, and political communities allow people to cocreate and implement justice among themselves.

Cosmopolitan theorists pondering the morally important international or global political and economic relationships generated by globalization have raised questions about how best to structure institutions and practices of global governance. Beitz (2005) notes that most

discussions of global distributive justice during the last two decades of the twentieth century were framed as if the most important practical consequence of taking justice seriously would be a requirement to advocate large increases in intercountry transfer payments. He notes that he himself had previously (1979) envisioned largely indigenous processes of economic development supplemented by foreign aid and international economic reforms; now, he says, he has come to see this as a confusion of a part for the whole. Although international transfers can influence the global distribution of advantages, they are less significant by any measure, he says, than other forces that are potentially open to political manipulation, such as private capital flows, the rules of the trade system, and the system of international property rights. Principles of justice should, Beitz contends, apply to these and all other economic, legal, and political institutions and practices that influence the global distribution of advantages.

Pogge (2008) argues that the current international institutional order is unjust, that wealthy and powerful countries and their citizens cause great harms by imposing this order coercively, and that they have duties to mitigate and compensate for these harms as well as to reform the order. He proposes an “institutional understanding” of human rights, according to which such rights justify moral claims directly against the institutions and shared practices of which the claimant is a part and indirectly against those who support these institutions. In Pogge’s view, an institutional design is unjust if it foreseeably produces massive avoidable human rights deficits, and an institutional order harms people when its design can be shown to be unjust by reference to a feasible alternative design. He claims that whenever people are involved in upholding any coercive institutional order, they share responsibility for official disrespect of human rights within, or produced by, that order. Pogge’s widely discussed proposals for reforming significant aspects of the global order aim to eradicate severe poverty, reduce the huge incidence of avoidable mortality and morbidity in poor countries, and promote the spread of democratic values and practices. Pogge’s proposals include a Global Resources Dividend, reforms of the international resource privilege and the international borrowing privilege, and ways to stabilize fledgling democratic orders.

David Held’s version of cosmopolitanism focuses on global governance and democratic values. In 1992, he argued for extending democratic institutions across state borders and creating a democratic cosmopolitan global order. In 1995, he argued for recasting and strengthening democracy, both within and across preestablished borders,

and advocated enacting democratic public law in the wider global order, as cosmopolitan law. Held contended that a democratic cosmopolitan global order must be structured by a division of powers and competences at different levels of political interaction, and must involve linkages, both vertical and horizontal, among distinct domains of authority. Similarly, Pogge argued in 1992 for global institutional reforms dispersing governmental authority and patriotic sentiment, both vertically and across a plurality of nested territorial units.

In *Cosmopolitanism: Ideals and Realities* (2010), Held explains that globalization has increased not only mutual interconnectedness but also vulnerability, and argues that the resulting political problems generate imperatives to formulate common standards to be embodied in common institutional arrangements. He notes that since democracy “pulls toward” self-organization of activity in delimited territories, while globalization pulls toward creation of new, dense forms of transborder interaction, it is not immediately clear how such transborder interactions can be brought under democratic control and rendered accountable; however, he contends, political ideas and mechanisms that were developed with reference to particular communities and spaces must be reinvented for a global age. Held argues that democratic public law’s legitimate rules and conflict-resolution procedures can and should constitute a framework in which cultural diversity and individual difference can flourish in a public life marked by discussions, debates, and shared deliberations. Emphasizing the importance of acknowledging that the human associations in which we already live are “multilayered,” Held does not advocate a single global community organized on democratic and cosmopolitan principles, but instead favors seeking new procedures and mechanisms that would enable democracy to flourish at various levels. His approach to political life, he says, champions self-determination and freedom from domination and arbitrary power. Accordingly, he advocates not only accessible, open public fora, but also fair conditions for economic cooperation and competition, to be achieved by a “reframing” of market forces according to cosmopolitan standards.

Since 1945, Held (2010) notes, cosmopolitan initiatives have transformed the sovereign states system in a number of important respects; however, since these efforts have focused on checking abuses of political power, not economic power, there does not yet exist a cosmopolitan structure for market regulation and economic accountability. Held contends that it is necessary to restructure the market by building bridges between international economic law and human rights law, between

commercial law and environmental law, between state sovereignty and transnational law, and between cosmopolitan principles and cosmopolitan practices. In his view, cosmopolitan standards require efforts to reduce the economic vulnerability of many developing countries by, among other things, eliminating debt, reversing the outflow of capital assets from the poorest countries to the richest, creating new development-focused economic facilities at the World Bank, the IMF and the UN, and shifting priorities from military expenditure to the alleviation of severe need.

Held (2010) takes no position in the debates among political philosophers about global principles of distributive justice, luck egalitarianism, or precisely how to justify duties to (non-)compatriots, nor does he discuss these debates; furthermore, unlike most other cosmopolitan theorists, he says little about Rawls’s conception of international justice. When discussing socioeconomic justice, Held argues for the fulfillment of “urgent need” and the avoidance of “serious harm,” and leaves these ideas vague enough to be compatible with a variety of positions. The economic measures he advocates could arguably accomplish initial steps toward international or global justice as conceived by Beitz, Pogge, Moellendorf, Tan, and Caney, as well as by Cohen and Sabel, Mandle, Miller, and Rawls.

As Tan (2008b) explains, the forces of globalization have posed challenges to the deliberative democratic ideal, which requires that collective decisions meet the condition that the individuals affected by them be able reasonably to consent to them. He considers the case for cosmopolitan democracy (citing primarily Held 1995, 2000) and finds it insufficiently practical and realistic. Instead he favors global democracy conceived as international democracy, which builds on existing national-level democratic institutions. Noting that this approach resembles that of Rawls’s global theory of justice (see the entry “Law of Peoples”), Tan says that his rejection of cosmopolitan democracy is not a rejection of cosmopolitan justice. The best available approach to global democracy is, he argues, a democracy of nationally rooted democracies, which would preserve and build on the preconditions for deliberative democracy and provide a realistic solution to the global democratic deficit.

This entry has surveyed some of the discussions among political theorists and philosophers about global poverty and distributive justice, duties to (non-)compatriots, and cosmopolitan structures of global governance. Important questions of justice relating to global climate change are addressed by several cosmopolitan or quasi-cosmopolitan theorists including Caney, Miller, Moellendorf, Henry Shue, and Singer. Few moral or

political philosophers have written much about climate change until recently, but now the literature is growing rapidly. (See the entry on ► Climate Justice in this encyclopedia).

## Related Topics

- Beitz, Charles
- Caney, Simon
- Compatriot Partiality Thesis
- Cosmopolitan Democracy
- Cosmopolitanism
- Democracy, Deliberative
- Democracy, Transnational
- Global Basic Structure
- Global Contractarian Justice
- Global Democracy
- Global Egalitarianism
- Global Governance
- Human Rights
- Humanitarian Aid
- Justice and Reciprocity: Local and Global
- Law of Peoples
- Liberalism
- Luck Egalitarianism
- Miller, Richard
- Moellendorf, Darrel
- Moral Cosmopolitanism
- Nagel, Thomas
- Pogge, Thomas
- Tan, Kok-Chor

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## Political Ecology

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Political ecology is the study of the intersection and relationship between the political, broadly understood, and environmental and ecological phenomena. Political,