

# Cosmopolitan Europe

## Postcolonial interventions and global transitions

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Is the notion of Cosmopolitan Europe an oxymoron? How can we think of a borderless world when, despite its supranational status, Europe still clings to its fortified external borders and is undergoing a revamping of internal national identities? Both terms included in the proposed oxymoron are highly contested. Europe – whether we want to define it as a geographical space, a cultural identity or a political entity – is still subject to many ambivalences, disagreements and disputes. “Where does Europe begin and where does it end?” asks Stuart Hall (2003: 36); “Is Europe a dead political project?” questions Étienne Balibar provocatively (2010) or is Europe “an unfinished adventure”, as Bauman (2004) puts it more utopically?

In his essay “‘In but not of Europe’: Europe and its Myths”, Stuart Hall quotes critic C.L.R. James’s position towards Europe, which was one of “he was in but not of it”. He concluded that he was formed by a relationship of “colonial dependency, subalternity and ‘otherness’ to Europe” (Hall 2003: 36). Hall has dedicated a lot of attention to the diasporic roots of Europe, and had accounted for the result of this process as producing “cultures of hybridity”, since cultural identities are emerging while in transition, drawing on different traditions but resisting wholesale assimilation (Hall 1992).

Whether we want to define Europe as an identity, a political project, a financial unit or a securitized bulwark, the oft-recited mantra of ‘Fortress Europe’ being predicated upon the motto of ‘Unity in Diversity’ rests on a profound ambivalence: whose unity and whose diversity is being addressed? What are the paradigms of universalism and difference that are being invoked?

Cosmopolitanism is as controversial and as contested a term as the notion of Europe. Being based on philosophical traditions which range from the Stoics to Kant and contemporary thinkers, it is distinctive for having continued to inflect political theory and cultural studies. It is a notion that, from the cultural spectrum to political institutions, allows the tension to be traced between the local and the global, the specific and the universal, individual freedom and collective responsibility, the normative and the pragmatic.

Cosmopolitanism is also a very ambivalent idea within the postcolonial, with which it seems to be closely linked. For Benita Parry “the global flows” of transnational cultural traffic have produced an emergent postcolonial cosmopolitanism (Parry 1991: 41). This often refers to the association of cosmopolitanism with a sort of perennial immigration condition but also to a confusion between the terms cosmopolitanism and transnationalism. Therefore the criticism of the

free-floating use of the term cosmopolitanism has been consistent and harsh. This is because an array of comparative cosmopolitanisms must cobble together quite disparate histories.

To combine cosmopolitanism and Europe doubles many of the dissonances that connote each term, and yet 'Cosmopolitan Europe' is not just a utopian notion but an aspirational term that proposes a diversification of both the dominant understanding of Europe and of cosmopolitanism to make space for difference and particularities which are usually seen as marginal both to the project of Europe and of cosmopolitanism.

Cosmopolitan Europe is therefore not just an oxymoron but as Spivak famously said, that which "we cannot not want" (Spivak 1999: 110). This implies that Europe has to address its own colonial history in order to be able to address its postcolonial and cosmopolitan present. And this implies that a new understanding of the postcolonial is needed beyond the understanding of 'postcolonial' as referring only to the 'other' places outside of the West, or to the immigrants that come to Europe as beneficiaries of a decolonial settlement. This new understanding of postcolonialism must account for Europe as a postcolonial place and for migrants as part of the European project of modernity (Gilroy 2004) coming to claim their long-standing history and connection to the project of Europe. Without the recuperation of those omitted, silenced or removed histories, no Cosmopolitan Europe can emerge which is predicated on a post-Enlightenment view of 'Unity in Diversity'.

## Postcolonial Europe

As Peo Hansen has argued, European Studies (including the study of European integration) has focused mainly on the historical internal rivalries within Europe and on the polarization brought by the Cold War, obfuscating or dismissing the dismantling of another world order in the form of colonialism and imperialism, which was at the basis not only of the establishment of European nation states but also of European formation. European integration became the model to escape the responsibilities of colonialism and to "adjust to the changing political and economic circumstances brought about by decolonisation" (Hansen 2002: 493).

Therefore insufficient attention has been paid to the link between the process of decolonization and that of European formation, and to the idea that Africa just came as a dowry to Europe (Hansen and Jonsson 2014). On the contrary, since its inception Europe, or at least the Europe we tend to associate with the European Union, has been predicated on the idea of peace and freedom (Hansen, 2000). Built on the ravages of World War II and the memory of the Holocaust, the European project of integration and unification was meant as a 'never again'. It was a response to atrocities and crimes against humanities that until then had been thought possible only when far removed from its own territory, placed outside of Europe, displaced in the far-off territory of the empire, where the colonies functioned as laboratories for European social, political and cultural experimentation.

It is no surprise that the eugenics of empire was developed in order to create a stark opposition, or a motivation for differentiation between the West and the Rest, to support the civilizing mission as the white men's burden which was predicated on racial taxonomy and exclusion. The first genocide of the twentieth century was that of the Herero in Namibia in the early 1900s (which led to more than 100,000 deaths). Memories of this have been repressed, removed and for a long time disassociated with the development of concentration camps in Nazi Germany (Gewald 1999; Conrad 2012), the continuum of empire coming back home to affect and disturb what had been considered a regulated European order, initially established with the Westphalian treaty in 1648 which was supposed to end the wars of religion in Europe in order to overcome one of the most destructive periods in Europe.

The history of Europe has always excluded the colonies, even when they were officially still part of Europe after 1945: Algeria belonging to France until 1962, the protectorate of Somaliland under Italian administration AFIS (Amministrazione Italiana Fiduciaria della Somalia) until 1960, Angola and Mozambique belonging to Portugal until 1975, Suriname and the Caribbean islands as part of the Netherlands, Western Sahara under Spain until 1975, and Melilla and Ceuta still under Spanish rule. However, the conflicts related to the wars of independence in those regions (e.g. the Algerian War until 1962) were seen as not part of Europe but displaced elsewhere, and therefore not denting the European project of peace and freedom.

Therefore it was surprising when the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the European Union (EU), which:

for over six decades contributed to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe. . . . The work of the EU represents ‘fraternity between nations’, and amounts to a form of the ‘peace congresses’ to which Alfred Nobel refers as criteria for the Peace Prize in his 1895 will.

*(Nobel Prize committee, Nobleprize.org)*

This challenges not only the way in which one envisions a postcolonial Europe but also the very notion of European cosmopolitanism as predicated on the idea of freedom and peace. How can the idea of Europe be referred to as an ideal of Western modernity and democracy when histories of exclusion have continued to be reproduced not only in the far-off territories of empire but within Europe itself?

As I have written elsewhere, Europe works as both an “exclusionary and discriminatory fortress and a supra-national organization based on ideas of peace, justice and emancipation” (Ponzanesi 2011: 1). The European Union began as a coordinating organ, an economic marketplace and an alliance between sovereign states. As an organization based on the free movement of goods, ideas, persons and services, it promotes and facilitates global flows on the European continent. This European economic integration – comprising norms of good governance and democracy, social justice, environmental protection and human rights – is shaping global governance by contributing ‘European standards to the world’ (Magone 2009: 277). It is this idea of exceptionality and of Europe as a civilization based on a broad consensus about the idea of democracy, law and science that allows European culture to be exported to the rest of the world (Bhambra 2009: 76).

We could say that the granting of the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize on the basis of this expanding European ideology is debatable. From a postcolonial context, we could refer to the imperial or neocolonial character of this enterprise, in which the emphasis on the spread of democracy can be questioned. This can be contested through what Balibar calls the “democratization of frontiers”. According to Balibar (2003a: 43), the condition for the construction of a “democratic Europe” is an ambiguous notion, where the frontiers constitute a system of internal and external frontiers, which are radically antidemocratic. Interesting here is the question Appadurai (2006) addresses in *The Fear of Small Numbers*, which explores the reason why inclusionary, democratic states also produce exclusionary and xenophobic ideologies. According to Appadurai (2006: 6) there are two contemporary Europes in evidence: one of democracy, inclusion and multiculturalism and one of exclusion and xenophobia. In addition to the latter, Appadurai observes a desire for purity, singularity and wholeness in modern nation states (Appadurai 2006: 3). Although Appadurai seeks the answer in the heart of globalization and Balibar concentrates on the democratic character of Europe, these desires are also articulated in the (related) construction of European borders, which stands in contrast with the statement of the Nobel Prize committee who awarded the prize to the European Union for the “fraternity between nations”.

Balibar refers to what he terms “European apartheid”, in which he points to the types of exclusions that are not only applied at the level of legislation but also as a way in which Europe is constructed as a concept (Balibar 1998). He argues that borders have not vanished but are vacillating and that they have been replaced by a multiplication of borders in the form of “internal borders”, new, invisible borders that are ideological, radicalized and politicized (Balibar 1998: 217). In this sense borders are moving from the physical (the gate to European territories and citizenship) and symbolic (the myth of Europe and its idea of superiority) to material borders (the marked bodies of foreigners, immigrants and asylum seekers), which become ‘border’ figurations (construction of otherness, foreignness, alienness) (Ponzanesi 2011: 3).

A postcolonial approach to Europe aims to account for the ‘untold’, ‘submerged’ or ‘unconscious’ realms of Europe’s complex history of modernity, which needs to be rewritten or assessed from the point of view of fractured modernity, as Chambers writes (2008), or should include the history of fascism and racism as Gilroy claims (Gilroy 2004). As such, “provincializing Europe”, to use Chakrabarty’s resonant phrase (2000), is not only about bringing to the fore other histories and experiences but also about recognizing and deconstructing – and then reconstructing – the way in which knowledge is constructed and the narratives that underline the construction of Europe. Looking at Europe differently, as Dainotto argues, means not only changing perspectives and points of view, but also questioning the very cultural categories on which the idea of Europe has been predicated (2007). Addressing ‘modern Europe’ from the perspective of ‘postcolonial’ Europe then provides a more adequate understanding both of contemporary Europe and its decentred place in the world (Bhambra 2009).

It is therefore crucial to contest the absence of (post)colonial awareness from the process of European formation and to rewrite it into its narrative. The project of Cosmopolitan Europe is therefore a project that assesses Europe’s postcolonial transformations, in which the holdings of the imperial past continue to inform the crisis of the present, and to haunt it through its neocolonial, xenophobic and neoliberal practices.

## Cosmopolitan Europe

The notion of cosmopolitanism has many interpretations and genealogies. But its many inflections from history, political theory, philosophy and cultural studies must be rethought from a postcolonial perspective. Though the notion of cosmopolitanism has been thoroughly critiqued and renewed from the postcolonial perspective in the form of critical cosmopolitanism (Robbins 1998), convivial cosmopolitanism (Gilroy 2004), discrepant cosmopolitanism (Clifford 1992), cosmopolitanization (Beck 2000), subaltern cosmopolitanism (De Sousa Santos 2002) or border thinking (Mignolo 2000), often also defined as vernacular cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitanism from below (Pollock 2000; Gilroy 2004) and a series of scholars have focused on the developing concept of ‘postcolonial Europe’ (Bauman 2004, 2018; Balibar 2003b, 2016; Gilroy 2004; Huggan 2008; de Medeiros 2011; Ponzanesi 2011, 2016; Leurs and Ponzanesi 2018), the engagement with the notion of cosmopolitan Europe is still relatively underdeveloped.

As a definition, ‘Cosmopolitan Europe’ originates with Jürgen Habermas who stated that “the universalist project of the political Enlightenment in no way contradicts the particularist sensibilities of multiculturalism, provided that the latter is understood in the correct way” (2009: 68). But what *is* the correct way, as Bhambra questions, and “if its correctness is challenged, are those who do so placed in contradiction to the universalism of a European Enlightenment?” (Bhambra 2016: 188). The tension between cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism are crucial to the political debates about more or less integration in Europe. Habermas proposes a normative idea of the political project of Europe. In the opinion of Habermas, to create citizens within

Europe as citizens of the European Union it is necessary to integrate the political project with a welfare state that is able to level inequalities without eliminating differences. For Habermas the specificity of Cosmopolitan Europe rests on the possibility of unity in diversity, in a way that is capable of negotiating religious pluralism.

This implies deconstructing the idea of Europe as coterminous with Christianity, to a later understanding emphasizing its secularization, to contemporary questions of European identity in the context of the EU's expansion and consolidation, culminating in the anxieties regarding the integration of post-communist Eastern Europe and secular Turkey with its predominantly Muslim population (Baban and Keyman 2008).

For Delanty the cultural significance of Europeanization lies in a certain cosmopolitanism, which consists in the cross-fertilization of identities and discourses leading to a new idea of Europe. The idea of a cosmopolitan Europe has to stand against the alternatives which would be a 'national Europe' meaning a Europe of nations on the one side versus a global Europe on the other side. According to Delanty a cosmopolitan Europe "is a more accurate designation of the emerging form of Europeanization as a mediated and emergent reality of the national and global. Underlying it is a dynamic of self-transformation" (Delanty 2005: 406).

Beck, for example, identifies the project of a cosmopolitan Europe as the most recent incarnation replacing previous modern and postmodern conceptions of Europe. This cosmopolitan Europe, he suggests, is best understood in terms of being the institutionalization of the European tradition's own internal critique (Beck and Grande 2007). For Beck, cosmopolitan Europe is based on the assumption of sameness instead of difference and on how many parts of the 'Third World' today show Europe the image of its own future. As he writes:

on the positive side this could list such features such as the development of multi-religious, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural societies, the cross-cultural model and the tolerance of cultural difference, the legal pluralism observable at a number of levels and the multiplication of sovereignties.

(Beck 2010: 218)

For Ulrich Beck there is a distinction between the notion of cosmopolitanism and of cosmopolitanization. This is due to the fact that the latter affects modern society at large typically in 'banal' ways, whether we notice it and acknowledge it or not. Cosmopolitanization means that "the key question of a way of life, nourishment, production, identity, fear, memory, pleasure, fate, can no longer be located nationally or locally, but only globally or *glocally*" (Beck 2002: 29–30). However, as Beck states "it would be utterly mistaken to equate cosmopolitanization with the idea that nowadays everyone is automatically a cosmopolitan. The opposite is more likely to be true: a world-wide trend towards the re-discovery of national identity" (Beck 2010: 68–9).

As Gurminder Bhambra writes, both Habermas and Beck are normative thinkers whose cosmopolitanism is indebted to Kant. They firmly believe that European integration has been important and successful in overcoming divisions in the past and that the new divisions arising from multiculturalism, the migration crisis and the rise of Eurosceptic nationalism are only new challenges that can be solved if Europe remains true to its earlier commitment of social and economic justice. Bhambra takes issue with this position that migration is a recent phenomenon unconnected to Europe's own history. She argues that "insofar as the cosmopolitan project of Europe does not come to terms with its colonial past and postcolonial present, it establishes a form of neocolonial cosmopolitanism that legitimizes neocolonial policies both within and outside Europe" (Bhambra 2016: 189).

This is a cosmopolitanism still stemming from Kant and therefore a reflection of the values of Western liberal democracies. Even though Habermas and Beck want to differentiate European cosmopolitanism from the broader Western understanding, it remains within that intellectual tradition that privileges European centrality to the world, disavowing its history of domination that is directly correlated with its present multicultural predicament.

The specificity of Cosmopolitan Europe is therefore myopic about the shortcomings in the motto 'Unity in Diversity', based on a religious pluralism which is very much in conflict with the religious diversity brought about contemporary immigration which cannot be relegated to the private sphere. As Bhabra specifies, for Habermas the postcolonial always pertains to the migrant as 'other' and related to Europe in the form of the loss of empire. He does not account for migration as part of European modernity and Europe's continuing modes of colonization.

We need therefore to arrive at an understanding of cosmopolitanism no longer as an egalitarian, Western and universalistic notion (Kant 1999; Nussbaum 2010; Habermas 2003; Habermas and Derrida 2003) but as a cosmopolitanism from below (Bhabha 2000) that requires the revision of its own normative premises in order to make space for subjects excluded by dominant historiographies. Yet very little has been done on the notion of cosmopolitan Europe from a postcolonial perspective, with the exception of the excellent work of Gurminder Bhabra (2009, 2011, 2016) and Feyzi Baban (2013, 2016), who focus on the notion of "European cosmopolitanism" and "postcolonial cosmopolitanism". An intervention on Cosmopolitan Europe from the humanities rather than just the social sciences is also needed in order to engage with Europe not just at the level of political, economic or international relational dynamics but specifically in cultural terms, as Europe has been deemed to be more an idea and a project than a concrete space or material entity. The postcolonial heritage must then be seen not just as an add-on but integral to the project of European diversity, that speaks to the public sphere as well as the individualized and diversified identities necessary for the enactment of a cosmopolitan polity.

This awareness would shed a different light and understanding on Europe's recent austerity crisis, which has severely impacted on the southern countries of Europe, the so-called PIGS (Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain). The austerity measures enforced on some countries have reminded Europe of its neoliberal agenda that is geared to defending the economic and financial system of the north imposed in tyrannical and imperial forms on the south. The crackdown on Greece is something that has already happened in many countries of the Global South but to have that within the European model is a stark reminder of how Europe is reproducing its own inequalities within and how colonial models have been imported to safeguard the continuity of the European ideal. But what kind of ideal? And at what cost? Brexit and the possible further divisions (Grexit, Frexit, Itexit, Spexit and so forth) that might affect Europe are not just a testimony to the revival of nationalism and populism but also to the crumbling of the cosmopolitan ideal as based on the project of European Enlightenment. But a new model of cosmopolitanism is needed in order to not only incorporate the colonial history into the European project, but also accept that the European project as a whole was a colonial venture. This implies also facing the current 'refugee crisis' not as a threat to the European project but as a stark reminder of Europe's neo-imperial policies that have destroyed postcolonial states in the Global South whose political and financial collapse has caused the movement of labour and forced migration to Western countries. This implies holding the IMF, World Bank, European Central Bank (ECB) and other international organizations responsible in these transnational shifts in mobility on a global scale.

Therefore the European Union is not only preserving peace and freedom as commemorated by the Nobel Prize but it also works as an enforcement of technocratic rule that manages migration as a form of criminality to be dealt with through military interventions and through scandalous push-back operations in the Mediterranean. This is further aggravated by unsavoury legal treaties

in the making with African and Middle Eastern countries such as Niger, Libya and Eritrea and Turkey, in order to manage the migrant crisis ‘elsewhere’, what has been called the “externalisation approach”. These measures range from the Dublin regulations (European Union 2013)<sup>1</sup> which established that asylum seekers must apply for asylum in the first European country they enter, and “safe third country” agreements (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013), which allow member states to deport asylum seekers to non-EU countries that are deemed safe, to the sub-contracting of detention centres to third countries on the borders of Europe (Andrijasevic 2006). Recent tensions have emerged in places like the ‘Calais Jungle’, Ventimiglia at the border between Italy and France, Lesbos in Greece and the ongoing Mediterranean drama magnified around Lampedusa in Italy. As Fayzi Baban writes, the securitization of borders is an attempt “not to block movement altogether, but to *manage* movement, regulating flows of people who are deemed to be desirable while keeping out others who are declared inadmissible” (Baban 2016: 37).

This is literally reproducing the modality of the European unification after 1945 as a peace project which evaded not only its own colonial history of dispossession and racism in the name of ‘fraternity among nations’ but also its own contemporary histories of ongoing neocolonialism and predatory market sovereignty.

If European cosmopolitanism must be theorized differently, in order to recover its validity in a time of globalization in which Europe has become provincialized and displaced, what kind of theories and discourses should be embraced to avoid repeating Eurocentric views and universalistic claims? Is the multiplication into various inflections of ‘cosmopolitanisms’ (Horta and Robbins 2017) not an undermining of the very notion of cosmopolitanism itself and a Eurocentric attempt to save a Western concept?

In the recent Rhodes Must Fall movement in South Africa, monuments of European heritage were attacked and libraries were burned as all knowledge stemming from the West and from the Empire is seen as ideologically tainted and oppressive. To decolonize the mind as Ngugi Wa Thiong’o had already advocated (1986), we do not just need to repel the imperial language and turn to nativism but also to recognize local and alternative traditions as equally valuable and better suited to repair the epistemological violence of imperialism, be it in the form of militarism, culture, education or legislative systems. However, as Achille Mbembe responded (2016), to burn Western books is not a way to decolonize the university and start all over with a clean slate. He notes that history is not the same as memory and that we cannot just erase history; we should engage with memory as a way of putting history to rest, especially histories of suffering, trauma and victimization (Mbembe 2016: 30).

As Mbembe argues with the student movement in South Africa, the revolutionary thought of Franz Fanon was very much influenced by European philosophers and critics such as Hegel, Marx, Sartre, Freud and Lacan, and to deny that intertwined legacy, which has been appropriated and abrogated for decolonial purposes, would be counterproductive and self-damaging. Fanon was very critical of Africanization and did not trust the African middle class with the project of decolonization and nation-building. As Mbembe writes:

The harder I tried to make sense of the idea of ‘decolonization’ that has become the rallying cry for those trying to undo the racist legacies of the past, the more I kept asking myself to what extent we might be fighting a complexly mutating entity with concepts inherited from an entirely different age and epoch. Is today’s Beast the same as yesterday’s or are we confronting an entirely different *apparatus*, an entirely different rationality – both of which require us to produce radically new concepts?

(Mbembe 2016: 32)

He agrees that Rhodes Must Fall was an important and necessary moment but says that the battle was long from being won. Its main achievement was to have brought back on the agenda the question of de-racialization in South Africa's institutions and public culture, something that has ignited similar movements outside of South Africa as well. Mbembe acknowledges that the decolonizing project is back on the agenda across the world but that it has two sides: the first is a critique of the dominant Eurocentric model (what in Latin America is referred to as 'epistemic coloniality'); the second is an attempt to imagine and look for alternative models. There is an agreement anyhow on the exhaustion of the Western academic model with its origins in the universalism of the Enlightenment, but also that this alternative model is not yet ready made and we still live in an interregnum, as Gramsci would say: "The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear" (Gramsci 1971: 276). As Zygmunt Bauman has explained, Gramsci detached the idea from the original meaning (the routine interlude between one regime and the other, be it hereditary or elected). He connected it to extraordinary situations

in which the extant legal frame of social order loses its grip and can hold no longer, whereas a new frame, made to the measure of newly emerged conditions responsible for making the old frame useless, is still at the designing stage, has not yet been fully assembled, or is not strong enough to be put in its place.

(Bauman 2012: 49)

As for the idea of Europe, we must see cosmopolitanism not as an ideal and privilege of the West but as a travelling concept (Said 1984) that has moved through time and geographical constituencies to acquire new meanings and values beyond its normative aspect. Therefore it is important not to throw the baby out with the bathwater, but to recognize the importance of dialogue and stop this 'moral panic' created by the 'refugee crisis' which has brought 'strangers at our door' (Bauman 2016, 2018).

James Clifford has written that instead of renouncing cosmopolitanism as a false universal, one can embrace it as an impulse to knowledge that is shared with others, a striving to transcend partiality that is itself partial, but no more so than the similar cognitive strivings of many diverse peoples (Clifford 1992, 1998). In this way the notion of Cosmopolitan Europe should be recuperated in order to undermine the increasing racism, xenophobia and regressive nationalisms. Despite their Euroscepticism, ultra-right parties such as Golden Dawn in Greece, the Party for Freedom (PVV) in the Netherlands, Marie Le Pen's Front National in France, UKIP in the United Kingdom, the Northern League in Italy, the Danish People's Party in Denmark, Vlaams Blok in Belgium, the Sweden Democrats in Sweden and the rising AfD, the nationalist Alternative for Germany in Germany, are the only ones really operating at a pan-European level, operating through a 'European cosmopolitan model' where common ideals and values are shared, however deplorable and antidemocratic they might be. It is a discourse *against Europe*, but it is also, crucially, *a European discourse*. Those parties then agree on rhetoric and strategies, and their inflammatory racism and xenophobia quickly surpass the limits of the nation state that they so adamantly defend, in order to forge a united and transnational front of fascist ideologies. Moreover, as Feyzi Baban observes, it is too easy to "delegate" to these far-right formations the epistemic and material violence of racism and nationalism, for their hegemonization of the political discourse in today's Europe not only has driven virtually all political formations further towards the right, but it also works in concert with the EU's migration management and border policing (Baban 2016).

The irony should not be lost in how the principle of cosmopolitanism has been hijacked by right-wing constituencies, even though they would never recognize it in these terms. It is therefore important to make visible the rise of political parties such as Syriza in Greece and grassroots organizations such as Podemos in Spain that contest unequal forms, inequality and marginalizations. Emerging especially from the European south, they contest not only the austerity regulations but also pose crucial questions about what kind of Europe they want to be part of, while definitely rejecting the positions adopted by the far right as well as by neoliberal political parties, proposing instead an alternative “radical cosmopolitanism”. Feyzi Baban calls for a “radical cosmopolitanism” resulting from a revision of liberal cosmopolitanism through postcolonial interventions, all of these contributions engaging with the cosmopolitan option both critically and affirmatively, in an attempt to re-articulate it from a European postcolonial and anticolonial political standpoint. Engaging with Cosmopolitan Europe today demands that we find ways to open it up once again, re-articulating Europe differently, thus turning this particular province of the world into an object of political, transformative desire for those who happen to inhabit it.

## Conclusions

Based on the elaboration of alternative histories, representations, subjectivities and forms of relations, a new understanding of cosmopolitanism will emerge. This cosmopolitanism is aware of the difficulties of accounting for particularities while not giving up on the right of difficult generalization. There is the famous sentence by Bruce Robbins, extrapolated from the work of Mohanty:

If we agree that there is ‘no easy generalization,’ don’t we want to retain the right to *difficult* generalization?

(Robbins 1998: 251)

Connecting a theoretical and analytical framework with societal and political issues, Cosmopolitan Europe aims to account both for the unmaking of Europe as a space of exemplarity, exception and privilege and the remaking of Europe as a convivial space of inclusiveness, transcultural ferment and openness to the rest of the world (Huggan 2011). By applying and revisiting the postcolonial paradigm in relation to cosmopolitanism, a new idea of Cosmopolitan Europe emerges which accounts for alternative forms of integration, emancipation and management of diversity. Cosmopolitan Europe emerges not as a renewed Eurocentric notion but as a space of transition and renewal that can still fulfil its cosmopolitan promise despite its dark legacies and contested pasts.

## Note

- 1 ‘Dublin Regulation’ (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 established the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national or a stateless person.

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