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## Chapter 8: Rethinking Cosmopolitanism, Multiculturalism and Diaspora via the Diasporic Cosmopolitanism of Europe's Kurds

**Abstract:** This chapter re-defines cosmopolitanism based on three central notions: the establishment and continuation of justice-based transnational solidarities; foreignization through translation; and unlearning. I argue that multiculturalism, in its aspiration to dethrone the idea of national homogeneity, to equalize power relations, and to enhance the claim-making capacities of the silenced is essential for a cosmopolitan order. The chapter makes the case that it is possible to find cosmopolitan engagement and sociability where we expect it the least, as we have looked for it the least, amongst diasporic communities. I take Kurds, living in multicultural neighbourhoods of Europe's cities as my case study, showing that if cosmopolitanism is to be politically and theoretically rewarding, it must not only engage with multiculturalism seriously, but also recognize the openness, tolerance and justice oriented solidarities diasporic communities bring to, and demand from, Europe.

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Cosmopolitanism is often associated with Enlightenment ideals and European elites who saw themselves as citizens of the world, opening up to the world, ready to traverse and go beyond the cultural borders of what their nation-states offered or dictated. Cosmopolitanism was thus typically conceived and read as a critique of nationalism, as a sign of openness and thus the normative defence of the idea of human capacity to expand the sphere of identification and belonging beyond national boundaries. In recent years, it has become ever-so fashionable to talk about cosmopolitanism as it came to save the social sciences from what some saw as the 'debunked' multicultural narratives on one hand, and naive universalism on the other. In this chapter, I will critically examine the juxtaposition of cosmopolitanism against multiculturalism before going on to redefine cosmopolitanism around three central notions, namely justice-based transnational solidarities, foreignization through translation, and unlearning. On this basis I will defend diasporic cosmopolitanism and argue that it is possible to find cosmopolitan engagement and sociability amongst diasporic Kurds, living in multicultural neighbourhoods of Europe's cities. In so doing, I will hammer home the point that if cosmopolitanism is to be politically and theoretically rewarding, it must not only engage with multiculturalism seriously, but also recognize the openness, tolerance and justice oriented solidarities diasporic communities bring to, and demand from, Europe.

## ***Cosmopolitanism versus multiculturalism?***

The rise and prevalence of cosmopolitanism in social science coincide with the increasing backlash against multiculturalism in wider political debates and European public policy and discourse. The backlash<sup>1</sup> against multiculturalism has been mainly twofold. First, multiculturalism came to be used as a convenient label when talking about the *de facto* social exclusion, isolation and poverty of those living in subaltern neighbourhoods of Europe. Secondly, the negative attributions levied against communitarianism by liberal theorists came to be heavily levied against multiculturalism. Multiculturalism was allowed to become a 'bad word', partnered with particularism and separation. It was gradually associated with an image of Europe where ethno-religious communities live in cultural silos, leading parallel lives to that of the 'white mainstream' and refusing to mix with that mainstream. In other words, multiculturalism, which aimed to think through ways in which diverse societies can live together, accommodate diversity, tackle racism and exclusion and aid justice, came to be blamed for a host of evils, including the poverty, social exclusion and isolation which postcolonial 'immigrants'<sup>2</sup> faced. This shift in thinking, and the vilification of multiculturalism mainly occurred without addressing issues such as white flight, racial aversion in school choice, structural socio-economic inequalities or the dynamics of housing policies in Europe, ignoring considerable social scientific research on integration, education, race and ethnicity which exposed social and racial exclusions.<sup>3</sup> Perversely, the social exclusion and isolation of subaltern poor communities of colour are now in themselves presented as if they were an outcome of multiculturalism, the very aim of which was to promote diversity and inclusion through a rejection of the assimilationist policies of the old order. Multiculturalism was never about purely recognizing diversity and difference; it was about questioning the upper hand that the hegemonic national subjects held, allowing minoritized groups to make claims and participate on an equal footing as civic and political citizens. Thus it was about addressing inherited power relations in Europe and dethroning the idea of a homogeneous national culture. Identity and difference mattered because they were linked to power.<sup>4</sup>

Whilst it is unsurprising to hear European politicians of the right, such as David Cameron, Angela Merkel or Nicolas Sarkozy, paint multiculturalism in a negative light, and hark back to the days where the hegemonic status of privileged national subjects reigned, I would like to draw attention to how social scientists in the last decade also attacked multiculturalism, and

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<sup>1</sup> Even though there were criticisms of multiculturalism put forward in the 70s, 80s and 90s, this new backlash has a distinctive 'flavour' and has put Europe's Muslim communities at the centre of the debates about multiculturalism. For a summary of criticisms of multiculturalism see Madood (2007), and for an examination of its relationship to race see Lentin and Titley (2011).

<sup>2</sup> The term 'immigrant' in this chapter is placed in quotation marks. As 'sneer' quotation marks they seek to highlight how their descendants are still cast as 'immigrants' in the society in which they were born and grew up, and thus draw attention to the otherization which continues in Europe, and the ironies of race and place. Children of white British parents born elsewhere, schooled in international schools with little or no connection to Britain or who perhaps never lived in the UK, however, are not typically cast as immigrants in the minds of the wider public or media. Whilst they never cease to be part of Britain, the former cannot shake off their 'migrancy' irrespective of being born or having lived in the 'host' country for decades. Instead they can have their allegiance questioned if they riot or challenge the status quo or make transformative claims. My use of sneer quotes also seeks to highlight that many of those cast as first generation 'immigrants' in Europe were themselves born as subjects of European colonial empires. The political rally cry of the 1960s and 1970s in Britain 'we are here because you were there' recalls the colonial ties, and reminds Britain of this shared history behind, unsettling the national order of things.

<sup>3</sup> In 2015, children from Arab, Turkish, African and Moroccan backgrounds recently 'took to the streets' in Netherlands and demanded 'white' classmates and integration: <http://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/dutch-immigrant-kids-take-to-street-demanding-white-classmates/ar-BBk9gkw>

<sup>4</sup> It should be clear that the multiculturalism discussed here goes beyond the instrumentalism which is sometimes associated with 'diversity managers' and 'city council multiculturalists'.

more importantly for this chapter, used multiculturalism as a foil when defending cosmopolitanism.<sup>5</sup> Beck's work, for example, approaches multiculturalism critically. Associating it with methodological nationalism and ignoring the way in which multiculturalism sought to question the upper hand the hegemonic national subjects held, Beck argued: 'Multiculturalism means plural monoculturalism. It refers to collective categories of difference and has a tendency to essentialize them... multiculturalism perceives cultural differences as -so to speak- "little nations" in one nation' (Beck 2011: 54). Beck provides no evidence or discussion from the works of theorists who defend (or even criticize) multiculturalism to justify this definition. Beck's straw man depiction of multiculturalism is as oversimplistic as a portrayal of cosmopolitanism being not much more than a bit of dabbling in different cultures. Others followed Beck's disdain for multiculturalism. The depiction of multiculturalism in opposition to autonomy and justice, and its association with difference and division were, for example, put forward by social theorists: 'cosmopolitanism is not a generalized version of multiculturalism where plurality is simply the goal' (Delanty 2006: 35); '[m]ulticulturalism, too, often results in an increase in cultural differences as opposed to being a means to secure autonomy and justice' (Delanty 2011: 650).<sup>6</sup> The need to avoid multiculturalism also came from scholars of migration and cosmopolitanism: 'ours is an effort to move beyond multiculturalism', and to go beyond the 'ultimately essentializing nature of culturally and ethno-religious-based paradigms' (Glick-Schiller et al. 2011: 401).

It is timely that whilst European policy-makers, politicians and social scientists abandoned multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism gained renewed attention in academia. Many scholars appealed to cosmopolitanism's Enlightenment and thus European origins, taking Kant's theories on cosmopolitanism as a basis. Cosmopolitanism is what the desirable Europeans did and aspired to; the 'undesirable' 'parochial' ethno-religious communities of Europe, on the other hand, did something we did not like very much: they did multiculturalism. Barring a few exceptions (Bhambra 2011; Lentin and Titley 2011) such racial undertones of the swift dismissal of multiculturalism in favour of cosmopolitanism have largely been ignored by social scientists. A second problem is that the critics of multiculturalism often conflate existing *social* problems with those of *culture* and end up ascribing problems which are to do with social exclusion by laying it at the door and 'culture' of the subaltern groups. This attempt in fact exonerates the dominant modes of social and racial exclusion faced by those living in subaltern neighbourhoods whilst making 'them' and 'their culture' a problem. It conveniently absolves the majority culture of any responsibility, and avoids structural problems being discussed and addressed. Thirdly, there has been little criticism of the way in which multiculturalism is used as a shorthand for describing the tensions, failed integration policies, poverty, in other words whatever *de facto* problems exist in poor 'ethnic' neighbourhoods of Europe. Multiculturalism is stripped of its normative aspirations, burdened with poverty and exclusion as problems it is unable to solve whilst cosmopolitanism is allowed to emerge as the attractive alternative normative aspiration, promoting mobility, tolerance, difference and openness.

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<sup>5</sup> In so doing, they also reproduced problematic constructions of what multiculturalism defends as a political philosophy. Just like liberalism, different varieties of multiculturalism exist in political theory. For a discussion see Gutmann (1993) and Kymlicka (1995). A defence of multiculturalism in political theory which is based on hermetically sealed, mono-culture communities living parallel lives is one I have yet to come across.

<sup>6</sup> No evidence is given to support this claim. The only example which could count as evidence Delanty provides in fact goes against the claim he makes. Delanty mentions the example of Muslim women wearing headscarves in western European countries and links it to 'individualism and the creation of a modern Islamic female identity' (Delanty 2011: 650).

It is no wonder then that in the literature, cosmopolitanism emerged as some sort of an ideal, an imagination, a true European gentleman. That the recognition of that difference and respect, which multiculturalism defended, is essential for a non-hierarchical relationship with the 'other', and thus essential for a cosmopolitan order, came to be conveniently ignored. Consequently, a false dichotomy is increasingly drawn between multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism. Recognition of difference and respect for the other are crucial for the questioning of previously established social and cultural hierarchies between the West and its others and any possible learning from the other which cosmopolitanism promotes. Multiculturalism, in its aspiration to allow minoritized groups to participate as equals in civic and political life, and to enhance their claim-making capacities is essential for a cosmopolitan order.

Multiculturalism (as a political theory) aims to foster not just diversity of cultures and difference as they enhance 'the quality of life and learning' (Gutmann 1994: 10), but, even more importantly, aims to question the very hierarchical standing of the West vis-à-vis its others living in amongst itself. It promotes the humbling of the identity which holds the upper hand to present itself in a non-glorified language, rupturing previously established colonial orders, its subsequent assimilationist policies and inherited racial and cultural hierarchies. Attempting to interrupt the ethnocentric imposition of western cultures on others, multiculturalism invites the dominant self, identity and culture to engage in the painful and awkward process of seeing itself in a new light. Rather than essentializing cultures or groups as its critics claim, its aim has been to attempt to de-essentialize, to question homogeneity within nation-states and to challenge Eurocentric hegemony. As Taylor says: 'What is to be avoided at all costs is the existence of "first-class" and "second-class" citizens' (1994: 37) and the political transformation which can follow from that. By collapsing social and cultural pecking orders between those who hold the upper hand and those who were previously subjugated, multiculturalism invites different groups to challenge national narratives and to make transformative demands. It demands that minoritized cultures and groups find a voice at the nation-state level, and beyond. It is no coincidence that it has been widely used to depict and defend the moral and political claims of disadvantaged groups, for example religious and ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples in North America and New Zealand, and African Americans.<sup>7</sup> It allows those who are/were in a minoritized position to be able to modify, change and criticize not just themselves but also the majority through enhancing their claim-making capacities. In that sense, rather than being the culprit of exclusion and isolation, multiculturalism is a vehicle for fluidity, hybridity, learning from one another and for challenging Europe's self-understanding, whether it be in the form of rendering visible the historical connections of the minoritized with Europe, or questioning the racialized categories which are still reproduced within the European political sphere. I suggest that cosmopolitanism without a multicultural ethos is nothing but a monologue; one where openness and dialogue are redundant if not impossible.

### ***Re-defining Cosmopolitanism***

Globalization and the compression of space and time have heralded cosmopolitan perspectives. Appadurai (1996) noted the disjunction between subjectivity and territory as a result of globalization whilst Beck (2006) emphasized that the global other is now in our midst. Cosmopolitanism, Beck argues, allows the seeing of not just others but also oneself in new ways, connecting individuals and groups in novel ways. According to Beck, whose work is considered as having made a major contribution to this scholarship, cosmopolitanism

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<sup>7</sup> In North America it has also been used to defend the rights and claims of LGBT communities, the disabled, and of women.

focuses on the increasing connection and intertwinement with actors beyond national borders and thus challenges not only xenophobic but also exclusionary national and particularistic politics (2006). Whilst Beck's work, and especially his promotion of cosmopolitanism as a growing non-hierarchical acceptance of others is welcome, there is curiously little said in Beck's work about Europe's 'European others', namely Europe's diasporic communities. This is in spite of cultural plurality being woven into the fabric of European history and society (e.g. arising from coloniality). Beck is keen to promote increased cross-cultural dialogue and learning but is curiously silent on what Europe can learn from Europe's postcolonial 'immigrants' some of whom now present an important political presence, consciousness, challenge, 'making a claim in the West, on the West' (Asad 2015). Beck instead sees the European Union as a concrete embodiment of diversity and cosmopolitanism. This is surprising on several accounts. Cosmopolitanism necessitates being open to not just encounter but also change. Through being open to others who think and act differently, and through engagement with them we not only promote cross-cultural dialogue but also see ourselves and others in an entirely new light, including a non-hierarchical acceptance of, and interaction with, the other. If we only spoke to, and were keen to learn from, those who all ascribed to very similar world-views, values, social positions, then it is not obvious what the point of cosmopolitan sociability and interaction would be. Is there is anything worth knowing what those living in multicultural neighbourhoods of Europe make of mainstream European society? Beck's works are curiously silent about this. Neither do his works allow the possibility that they should be able to change and mould the majority. His work 'takes little account of the diversity within Europe as constituted by its minorities within states' (Bhambra 2011:319). Diversity is sought by looking elsewhere, at the institutional capacity the EU can offer when linking nation-states (e.g. see Beck and Grande 2007). His works have very little to offer to Europe's diasporic communities, subaltern groups and marginalized ethnic minorities. As Baban and Rygiel (2014: 465) state: 'cosmopolitan Europe, as it is predominantly defined in the existing literature, has very little to offer cultural minorities'. I therefore argue that Beck's cosmopolitanism sits oddly with his blind spot and disregard for Europe's European others. His vision of the EU as a concrete embodiment of and vehicle for cosmopolitanism is also peculiar given the restrictive and hostile EU migration regimes for those outside of the EU. The 'allure of elsewhere' and the 'urge to experience another culture' commonly associated with cosmopolitanism seem only available for the mobile northern professionals of the west, or what has been referred to as the 'cosmocrats' (Micklethwait and Wooldridge 2003; Helen Kirwan-Taylor 2000).

Whilst the critics of multiculturalism are quick to mock its banal versions and confine it to 'saris, samosas and steelbands', it is worth remembering that cosmopolitanism is not immune from such banal versions either. If we are to go beyond the banal and 'consumerist cosmopolitanism' (Calhoun 2002: 105) of eating sushi for lunch, buying world music in the afternoon and going to salsa dance classes in the evening, then we can re-define and refine cosmopolitanism by placing social justice as its central pillar, as 'a new sociality characterized by global connectivities that engender justice-oriented alliances and solidarities' (Cook 2012: 3). The 'allure of other struggles', the 'urge to support other struggles' and the 'urge to make justice-oriented alliances and solidarities' can then be seen as central pillars of cosmopolitanism.<sup>8</sup>

If one of the central pillars of cosmopolitanism is the allure of justice-oriented solidarities, another central pillar of cosmopolitanism should be willingness 'to foreignize' and to be 'foreignized' via translation or encounter. Postcolonial scholars such as Bhabha (1994) have

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<sup>8</sup> Cosmopolitan approaches which make social justice and solidarity central are rare with exceptions such as Calhoun's (2002). He argues that cosmopolitanism needs an account of social solidarity.

noted the role of cultural translators, especially those located in liminal in-between spaces in creating hybrid, cosmopolitan visions. Delanty also notes the key role of translation in cosmopolitanism and his critical cosmopolitanism underlines the 'cosmopolitan condition of living in translation' (Delanty 2009: 196) whereby seeing one's culture through the eye of the other and thus transforming oneself are central motifs. The key role of translation in the cosmopolitan vision, however, has been defended in detail in the works of Bielsa (2010, 2012, 2014) who argues that '[t]ranslation provides a model for approaching cultural interaction beyond cultural pluralism and the "dialogue between cultures"' (2014: 12). I also maintain that insights of translation studies and especially the work of Venuti have much to offer to cosmopolitanism. Venuti's seminal work on translation (2008) goes beyond naïve conceptualizations of translation as the transmissibility of information and intelligibility of exchange and communication. It highlights the political and uneasy nature of translation between the core and the periphery and the imposition of the core into the translations of text and cultures emerging from the periphery.

Venuti exposes the way in which peripheral languages and cultures need to constantly translate themselves to make themselves intelligible in the language and culture of the dominant. He sees this as an act of appropriation of the other, albeit one which is oriented towards making the 'other' intelligible to the dominant (western) value-system. Referring to the process whereby the translated text is made to read fluently as 'domestication', Venuti thus underlines the ethnocentric aspects of translation. In this process the foreignness of the original is hidden away and the disruptions it can bring to the receiving dominant language and culture are smoothed over. In fact the original is often violated. In contrast to domestication, Venuti discusses 'foreignizing translation'. Through foreignizing, through engaging in non-smoothed over texts and values, the core can truly enlarge the horizons of its own language, culture and worldview. It can de-centre itself. In so doing it can also form the foundation for, and aid the creation of, cosmopolitan futures. It is this insight from translation studies which brings diaspora, cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism together. I see the interruptions diasporic groups within Europe carry out as a form of foreignizing and thus as part and parcel of a non-Eurocentric cosmopolitan engagement.

### ***Diasporic cosmopolitanism of Europe's Kurds***

Having outlined my opposition to the juxtaposition of cosmopolitanism against multiculturalism, and having re-conceptualized cosmopolitanism, in the rest of this chapter I will discuss the diasporic cosmopolitanism of Kurds living in multicultural neighbourhoods of Europe. I will 'diasporize' and 'multiculturalize' cosmopolitanism. This is because non-Eurocentric cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism defended in this chapter have many overlapping concerns as enablers of not just plurality but also of intercultural communication, solidarity and hybridity.

Non-Eurocentric cosmopolitan approaches have highlighted the need to go beyond typically European tropes and have turned attention to openness towards those living outside of Europe. Whilst this aspect of cosmopolitanism brings into our sphere of knowledge the experiences of those outside of Europe, openness to, and cosmopolitanism of, Europe's 'European others', namely Europe's diasporic communities, have received much less attention. I will aim to fill this lacuna by taking Kurdish diaspora as a case study and examine the 'diasporic cosmopolitanism' of Kurds living in multicultural cities of Europe.<sup>9</sup> Diasporic cosmopolitanism can at first sight be seen as an oxymoron. As diasporic communities are oriented towards continuing ethno-political battles, they are generally seen as representing

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<sup>9</sup> The research underpinning this article has focused on Kurds from Turkey.

ethnic and cultural closure, the opposite of the openness which cosmopolitanism aims to promote. Whilst diasporic groups' engagement with, and revival of, ethno-political heritage in Europe can be seen as atavistic and essentialist, cosmopolitanism is oriented towards not only questioning these, but in fact posits itself against such parochialisms. In other words, a taken-for-granted view of diasporas and the kind of attacks on multiculturalism I discussed above share a similar fate: they are cornered with accusations of particularism, separatism and a host of other evils, especially up against cosmopolitanism and post-nationalism. Below I will examine the extent to which such juxtapositions, dominant in our understandings of diaspora and cosmopolitanism, are sustainable. I will argue that it is possible to find cosmopolitan engagement and sociability where we expect it the least (as we have looked for it the least), amongst diasporic communities, and I will take Kurds, living in multicultural neighbourhoods of Europe's cities as my case study.

Similar to multiculturalism, the deployment of diaspora as an analytical category has been criticized as 'too limiting', 'privileging the nation-state model and nationally-defined formations when conversing about a global process such as immigration' (Soysal 2000: 2). Soysal argues that diaspora can be a 'trope for nostalgia', 'through its naturalizing metaphors of roots, soil and kinship' (2002: 13) whilst Yeğenoğlu has been critical of how 'attributing a transformative and resistive power to migrancy, mobility and hybridity has become something of a structural and structuring feature of a certain type of intellectual discourse in the Anglo-American academy' (2005: 123). Soysal and Yeğenoğlu are correct to draw attention to the fact that diaspora, migration and travel do not necessarily produce cosmopolitan sociabilities. However, as Werbner (2005) and Gilroy (1993) have highlighted, diasporas can be ethnic-parochial but also open, emphasize contingency, hybridity and indeterminacy against essentialist and narrow conceptualizations of nation, race and culture. The latter perceives diasporas as dynamic and vibrant instead of as atavistic and rigid entities, not just in terms of the identity connections they maintain with the home and the host, but also in their development over time (e.g. how 'Turkish economic migrants' over time became 'Kurdish diaspora' in London (Demir forthcoming 2017)).

Kurdish diaspora appeared in Europe from the late 1980s and early 1990s onwards. The village evacuations in Turkey, the environment of suspicion and discomfort created around Kurdishness together with their social, economic and political exclusion and deprivation in Turkey have forced many Kurds to move to Europe (see for example, Bayir 2013; Houston 2004; Saraçoğlu 2010; Zeydanlıoğlu 2012). Kurds are now a substantial part of European cities such as Paris, London and Berlin, both in terms of numbers and their critical voice and activism (e.g. Eccarius-Kelly 2002). They are politically active and continue ethno-political battles for identity at a distance, translating their suffering and rebellion to European audiences and also to their second generation whereby they challenge the way in which the Kurdish question is told by Turkey to the outside world. Debates which they raise have also become 'instrumental in setting the agenda in Turkey itself' (Neyzi 2002: 93). Having created a vibrant political space in Europe enacted through their transnational networks with Turkey, as well as across many European cities, they now have a 'hegemonic presence in diaspora politics' (Hassanpour and Mojab 2004: 222).

I argue that the diasporic cosmopolitanism of Europe's Kurds manifests itself in three distinct ways. First, Kurds are enrolled in justice-based solidarity movements. The Kurdish movement is a keen supporter of social liberation movements and socially progressive efforts in Europe. Far from being atavistic, ethno-chauvinistic or obsessed with 'roots' and 'origins', it is internationalist in character, transnational in its activities and practices (Başer 2015). It is highly 'Euroversal' (Soğuk 2008: 176) in spirit. Its political activism is geared



towards building solidarities, including with sections of the Turkish and Alevi diaspora which share its political vision. They display what Said has called 'awareness of simultaneous dimensions' (2000: 186) and sensitivity towards other social movements.

The allure of other struggles is something to which many Kurdish organizations in London are attracted. 'Justice-oriented alliances and struggles' which Cook (2002) places at the heart of cosmopolitanism range from the expected (e.g. the Tamil struggle) to the unexpected. Alliances and solidarities are built with, for example, those who campaign against student fees in the UK, against austerity, in favour of LGBT rights, refugee organizations and the green movement. Members of Kurdish movements are usual attenders of 1<sup>st</sup> May demonstrations and women's day parades in London and in other European cities. The 'allure of other struggles' and the urge to make 'justice-oriented alliances and solidarities' are present. Such solidarities allow the margins of Europe to collaborate, and aim to interrupt the established order of things and 'business as usual' attitudes.

Secondly, Kurds of Europe, through their translation of the Kurdish political movement to European audiences, engage in, borrowing Venuti's terms, both foreignization and domestication and thus in active interaction, engagement and intervention. They take on the task of foreignizing by telling grueling, uncomfortable and 'unpalatable' stories not just about their suffering but also their rebellion. Their stories are not always domesticated and made easily consumable for the European public. Through unpalatable and uncomfortable translations of the Kurdish struggle, Kurds inadvertently foreignize the European political sphere. They interrupt the order of things by holding public gatherings and demonstrations, whether it be challenging what they call 'Cameron's silence on Turkey', or organizing a campaign in Hamburg against the building of the Ilisu Dam, or campaigning against the European arms trade with Turkey. Their engagement is aimed at disrupting the dominant modes of thinking to the extent that they do not always smooth over language and practices. I argue that they foreignize their interlocutors, that is the European public and force them to engage in the demanding job of learning, discovery and questioning the self and their governments.

Here however, there is never pure foreignization. Kurds of Europe also attempt to domesticate their story for Europeans to some extent. This is because there is increasing recognition amongst the Kurdish diaspora that their translation of the Kurdish struggle and rebellion needs to be what I previously called 'palatable' to other audiences (Demir 2015). There is therefore a tension between this domestication and foreignizing which Kurds undertake, a tension which I argue is in fact fruitful and essential for building cosmopolitan sensibilities as it allows learning and interaction on both sides. The perceived need to translate the Kurdish struggle and rebellion, to engage with the other, and to establish solidarities means that cultural capacities and practices learnt from the other are advertently or inadvertently introduced to diasporic Kurdish lives and discourses. Canons previously brought from home are modified and refashioned. Similarly, the foreignizing which Kurds invite enhances possibilities for Europe's cosmopolitanism in that it confronts and challenges the limits of European sensibility, compassion and responsibility. Through this interesting balance between foreignizing and domestication which this diasporic group brings, one can locate not just passive openness but interrelation and intervention, central tenets of cosmopolitanism. Not only the European but also the Kurdish diasporic circle of identification and vision are expanded.

A third way in which cosmopolitanism is demonstrated in Kurdish diaspora's engagement and activities is the way in which Kurds undertake the task of 'unlearning'. As Asad and

Dixon have highlighted, an important aspect of translation is not simply learning but in fact 'unlearning' (1985: 173). Attempts to interrupt and correct problematic constructions of the self and others in media, public and political life and discourses are some of the ways in which unlearning can be carried out. Unlearning is a vehicle for being able to see and present not just others but also oneself in new ways. Alongside foreignization and enrolling in solidarity-based struggles, it should be seen as a crucial pillar of cosmopolitan engagement.

Kurds of Europe undertake unlearning in two ways: making others unlearn; and making themselves unlearn. Invitation to unlearn occurs, for example when Kurds correct Orientalist depictions of Kurds, or other groups, or when they re-tell history and narrate cultural memory including European involvement in the carving up of Kurdish lands in early-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. Kurdish diaspora also engage in unlearning through de-Turkification, that is correcting, interrupting and shedding the intense Turkification and assimilation which Kurds have been recipients of in Turkey (Demir forthcoming 2017). Both explicit and hidden Turkish biases in their interlocutors' discourses, for example, the use of Turk/Turkish when referring to Kurdish people, or the use of 'east of Turkey' instead of 'Kurdistan' are challenged. Such critical discursive interruptions are not only put to less political Kurds in diaspora but also to European audiences. Kurdish diaspora challenge their own language, invert hierarchies, and essentialized ways of thinking which they see as imposing unwarranted characteristics on themselves or others. Such unlearning requires accommodations and negotiations with the self; and is thus a central pillar of cosmopolitan attitudes.

Having said that, a defence of diasporic cosmopolitanism which is hand in hand with multiculturalism, and the Kurdish case I have outlined above, do not mean that reactionary ethno-nationalist discourses are gone. Such discourses can still exist amongst diasporic groups, similar to the way in which they exist in the xenophobic stances and policies by parties and movements such as Britain First, True Finns, the Golden Dawn in Greece or Sweden Democrats. Neither transnationalism nor diasporic experience necessarily leads to pluralistic and transformative possibilities and visions. There is no one-track path which brings diasporas to cosmopolitan or multicultural sensibilities and attitudes. In fact, we need to be aware of the celebration of migrancy and mobility as intrinsically transformative and associated with hybridity (Yeğenoğlu 2005). Multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism are both political visions, and they need to be fought for. The social and political context of the host countries (e.g. openness and acceptance vs xenophobia), as well as the nature of political struggles diasporas bring (e.g. progressive vs conservative) affect the diasporic experiences and connections diasporas make with Europe, and determine the extent to which their diasporic experience is cosmopolitan.

### **Conclusion**

As outlined above, cosmopolitan thinking has, on the whole, not only overlooked ethno-political diasporas, but also posited the theoretical and normative framework of cosmopolitanism against multiculturalism (e.g. Beck 2006; Delanty 2006 and 2011; Glick-Schiller 2011 and 2014). That multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism as normative political theories have many overlapping priorities came to be written off. Barring a few exceptions (e.g. Bhambra 2011, Stevenson 2002) they are posited against one another by scholars of cosmopolitanism. I, on the other hand, argued that enrolling in solidarity-based struggles, foreignization (alongside domestication) through translation, and unlearning should be seen as central pillars of cosmopolitanism and discussed how diasporic Kurds living in

multicultural cities of Europe carry this out. This reconceptualization of cosmopolitanism, via the insight which translation studies offers, brings cosmopolitanism closer to both diasporas and multiculturalism. The unholy opposition constructed between these three is questioned.

Living within a multicultural ethos and in multicultural cities of Europe can allow non-essentialist forms of belonging and identity to develop and can foster cosmopolitan attitudes. It is a necessary but not sufficient ethos for cosmopolitanism. A multicultural ethos within nation-states and cities is essential for diasporic groups to be able to establish solidarity-based identities and activities with other groups, to foreignize themselves and others, and to engage and unlearn whilst holding onto and moulding their group identity through recognized claim-making capacities. Multiculturalism incites solidarity-based politics rather than exclusionary ethno-national politics. This is because, as discussed above, multiculturalism was not about celebrating diversity (or difference) for its sake. It was about destabilizing the dominant identity, that is addressing the hegemony national subjects held by dethroning the idea of national homogeneity and attempting to equalize power relations and claim-making capacities between different ethno-cultural groups. Difference and diversity mattered because an emphasis on these questioned existing hierarchical power relations between citizens in nation-states and demanded that those who hold the upper hand humble their identities and recognize others as equal interlocutors. Hence it is not just the socially diverse fabric of London, Paris or Berlin which can help put essentialist and atavistic brakes on but more so the multicultural ethos which has, since the 1970s, questioned homogeneity, reified and essentialist national orders, uneven power relations and assimilationist policies of the old order.<sup>10</sup> While a multicultural ethos attempts to move minoritized groups from being seen as subjects of assimilation and domination to actors who can make transformative claims about the majority within nation-states, cosmopolitanism has the potential to move them to being transnational actors with global claims. The two claims are not divorced or conflicting; they are both vehicles for preventing reified identities, for ensuring that groups are open to hearing each other and for increasing possibilities for collective action around issues. The cosmopolitan dream of expanding the sphere of identification and belonging beyond national boundaries is therefore more likely if a strong multicultural ethos within nation-states exist. It is the latter, in spite of the backlash, which has been consistently challenging unequal power relationships and building practices, institutions and laws enabling minority communities to find a voice.

Such rethinking of diasporas, cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism which forms the basis of my defence and above presentation of diasporic cosmopolitanism, could also enable us to understand better contemporary issues over difference in Europe, including debates which arose around Brexit. There is currently a growing opposition to both multiculturalism and to cosmopolitan ideals in Europe. The backlash against multiculturalism is accompanied by an anti-immigration and nationalist sentiment, challenging cosmopolitan values. The 'threat' from one is conflated with the other, presented as a menace poised against, and ready to puncture, European identity, culture, civilization and values. Resistance to cosmopolitan values and multiculturalism is in fact a deep yearning for an old Europe and thus is a resistance to those who challenge Europe's self-understanding. We need conceptualizations which are able to connect and make sense of the resistance to both multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism rather than seeing the resistance as incongruous movements. Caricatured depictions of multiculturalism however, refuse to see such links and play into the hands of those who hark back to the assimilationist and unequal policies of the old order. Diasporic cosmopolitanism renders more complex our understanding of both multiculturalism and

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<sup>10</sup> This why the diasporic cosmopolitanism I defend here goes beyond a focus on everyday sociability of residents of cities (Glick-Schiller 2014), transient encounters and conviviality.

cosmopolitanism and through engaging them in a dialogue we can begin to grasp how popular politics of ethnic and cultural resentment overlap with resentment over immigration and feed the roots of the reactionary populism in Europe. A diasporic cosmopolitan perspective also holds the potential to help remould Europe temporally and spatially: temporally via rendering visible the historical connections diasporas have with Europe, reminding Europe that cultural plurality has been at the core of European history and society (e.g. arising from coloniality) and spatially, via creating, extending, and re-shaping justice-based solidarities within, and outside of, Europe.

As Delanty (2011: 652) puts it '[t]he nature and logic of cosmopolitanism is primarily one of encounter, dialogue and exchange'. This article shows there is much room and need for theorists of cosmopolitanism themselves to encounter and engage in dialogue and exchange with approaches such as multiculturalism and diaspora studies and explore the correctives multiculturalism and diasporic communities of Europe can offer to cosmopolitanism. The search for an inconsistency between cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism is in vain. Appiah rightly asks 'Where, in other words, would all the diversity we cosmopolitans celebrate come from?' and he invites us to 'entertain the possibility of a world in which everyone is a rooted cosmopolitan, attached to a home of his or her own, with its own cultural practices, but taking pleasure from the presence of other, different, places that are home to other, different, people' (Appiah 1996: 22).

Serious engagement with multiculturalism would not only help shift cosmopolitanism away from its banal interpretations and implementations, but also give it the political and normative recognition it seeks whilst steering it away from Eurocentric theorizing and outdated models of assimilation. Politically transformative cosmopolitanism cannot be achieved by using multiculturalism as a foil and by refusing to recognize that it is the multicultural turn which allowed the recognition of 'the identities of cultural and disadvantaged minorities' (Gutmann 1994: 3). If 'cosmopolitanism is back' (Harvey 2000: 529) and is to be rewarding theoretically or politically, it must concern itself with multiculturalism, and the openness, tolerance and justice-oriented solidarities diasporic communities bring to, and demand from, Europe.

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