Abstract: In a series of publications Chantal Mouffe (2004, 2005a, 2005b, 2008, 2009, 2013) has criticized cosmopolitanism for its lack of conceptualization of power, conflict and struggle, in short of politics. Even though this critique is largely well placed, the conclusions drawn from the analysis by Mouffe are flawed. As she puts it, if a cosmopolitan democracy “was ever realized, it could only signify the world hegemony of a dominant power that would have been able to impose its conception of the world on the entire planet and which, identifying its interests with those of humanity, would treat any disagreement as an illegitimate challenge to its ‘rational’ leadership”. (Mouffe 2005a 106–7). I argue that Mouffe paradoxically seems to be using a traditional 'realist' conceptualization of hegemony, signifying simply domination. Against this I argue that a post-structuralist understanding of hegemony – as developed by herself and Laclau in Hegemony and Socialist Strategy (Laclau and Mouffe,1985), precisely allows us to see the distance between universal values, such as freedom and equality for all, and their actual interpretation and use. The fact that the West is using democracy and human rights as legitimating devises for non-democratic goals, should not make us (radical democrats) abandon these values as the political goals on the global scale. If anything, ideas such as multipolarity or alternatives to human rights might be considered as strategic means 'on the way'. But even so, they need to be articulated into an overall strategy, the goal of which should be the implementation everywhere of the principles of freedom and equality for all – including some form of cosmopolitanism at a global scale.
Rethinking Cosmopolitanism. A critique of Mouffe

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Introduction
The purpose of this paper is to argue in favour of a post-structuralist or rather post-foundationalist understanding of hegemony and universals. My main argument is that Mouffe – in her later writings on the international realm – to a sufficient degree fails to do so. Both regarding the notion of hegemony and in her understanding of 'values' and human rights. I argue that we – i.e. radical democrats – must maintain equality and liberty for all as the most basic – and indeed universal, as Mouffe herself used to put it – values. The fact that they are in tension, never will find their final form and presumably will always be questioned from non-democratic positions should neither lead us to abandon, nor (even) to 'culturalize' them; i.e. as Mouffe has done lately, arguing they are suited only for the 'West'. Most of Mouffe analysis takes human rights as its target, which she claims are tied intrinsically to the 'West'. I want to make two suggestions in this paper.

First, any alternative to human rights, e.g. Panikkar's 'human dignity' must stand the test of the universal principles of equality and liberty for all, which is something I believe Mouffe so far has failed to carry out. In principle, it is imaginable that alternatives to human rights may show themselves Even though I personally find it difficult to imagine of course the possibility must be kept open.

Second, my arguments are directed towards basic normative principles, which means that it might well be the case that here and now, in our present circumstances, something like multipolarity – i.e. regional blocks with the establishment of negotiation channels for solving their conflicts – is indeed
the most promising way of organising international relations.\(^1\) The absence of actual global
democratic institutions might lead to the conclusion that any intervention and sanctions carried out
due to accusations of violation of human rights by the 'West' in the name of the globe, or 'humanity' as such', as if we were already in a cosmopolitan order necessarily illegitimates actions. My point is
simply that such a conclusion will be a historical, strategic one, based on an evaluation of how best
to further the universal values of equality and liberty for all. Arguing that they (or at least their
manifestation in human rights) are essentially Western and that other cultures should opt for
something else is a democratic blind alley. This means that something like a cosmopolitical world
order remains the horizon for (radical) democratic politics in the international sphere. If you are a
radical democrat you cannot really not be cosmopolitan.

**Is Mouffe a realist? A post-structuralist notion of hegemony.**
Thaler (2010) has argued that Mouffe, due to her use of *multipolarity* as an alternative to
cosmopolitanism, holds a 'realist' position. This however, is not completely correct. Mouffe's use of
multipolarity is not really descriptive, but rather normative. She inherits it from Carl Schmitt, for
whom multipolarity – if an unlikely outcome of the end of the cold war – was to be preferred over
unipolarity. To Schmitt, since our world is a *pluriverse*, not a universe, multipolarity was best suited
to avoid violent conflicts in the international realm. Mouffe adopts the notion of a pluriverse, since
it underlines the impossibility of reaching the universalism searched for by cosmopolitans and
liberals.

It is however in her use of the notion of hegemony, one can trace a certain (and surprising) 'realism'
in Mouffe's latest writings. To realism, and in the IR tradition in general, hegemony signifies little
more than simple domination, obtained by the strongest power. As is well know in the Gramscian
tradition hegemony signifies not only domination but also consent and support to be gained in

\(^1\) Cf. Marchart who argues that multipolarity in their own way, still are 'Western values' (Marchart 2016)
political struggle. In their original post-foundationalist formulations, Mouffe and Laclau (Laclau and Mouffe 1985) moved even further away from a 'realist' position. They started from the premise that universality is unobtainable. Any identity is by definition a particular identity, defined in its particularity by its differences to other particular identities. True universality as e.g. a universal 'human-ness' constituting the human is forever going to recede us. No matter what particular content is used in order to specify the universal instance, it is necessarily going to be particular. However, as Laclau aptly puts it, the impossibility of universality doesn't remove the need for it (Laclau, 1996b: 53). Rather than concluding that we are left with only particularities, what we do have, is a forever on-going game of particular identities trying to occupy the place of the universal (and this is an unavoidable consequence of the absence of foundations). Now a particular identity which has been able to – for a period – represent itself as a universal, 'being more than it is', is precisely a hegemonic identity. Speaking on behalf of a totality is (an attempt of) gaining hegemony. However, and this is where power and politics enters the equation, any hegemonisation always involves the repression of alternatives, also seeking to represent the absent universal.

In her earlier writings Mouffe made a (strong) point out of this. First she underlined how radical, leftist politics was based on the same values as liberalism, i.e. liberty and equality for all. The fact that these values has been hegemonised by liberalism, does not make them illegitimate. As she stated, one cannot imagine more radical – and universal – values than these (Mouffe, 1989). The task for the radical democratic left was not to look for other values, but to fight for their re-articulation i.e. their re-hegemonisation by the left (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, Mouffe, 1989). The important point is that it is the very values of liberty and equality for all which can be mobilised by the left. Precisely to criticise all those places they are not realised.

In her recent writings, however, hegemony is used simply as domination, as the imposition of the West of its interests and values. This creates two problems in her texts. First, it leads her to identify
the universal values with 'the West', in a way which rather than keeping them open (to hegemonic struggles over their articulations) essentialises them and ties them necessarily to a particular identity, the West. Secondly, if the actions carried out by the West in the name of these values are deemed illegitimate – which they very often are – the reason is that other parts of the world 'holds other values'. This seems to lead to a general 'culturalisation' of her argument, one that resembles cultural conservatism, as e.g. Huntington's 'Clash of civilisations' (Huntington 1993).

Perhaps this return to a realist notion of hegemony is the implicit reason why Mouffe does not argue in terms of liberty and equality for all. When she criticises cosmopolitanism, her target is primarily human rights. She claims human rights are tied to the West, due to their individualism and apparent universal moralistic foundations. This leaves the possibility open that Mouffe – implicitly – still is arguing in favour of the universal values of liberty and equality for all, and 'only' claims human rights to be – obviously – but one specific interpretation of these values. If so they could – and perhaps should be replaced by something else, elsewhere in the world. It is imaginable in principle that alternatives to human rights may show themselves. Personally, I find it difficult to imagine, but of course the possibility must be kept open. This would still imply the alternatives to human rights – dignity of the person and, perhaps 'harmony', as we shall see – stood the test of liberty and equality for all. A test that Mouffe nowhere explicitly carries out.

It should be noted that one of Mouffe's strongest objections to cosmopolitanism, and the universal application of human rights, is its pretensions to speak on behalf of 'humanity as such'. Speaking on behalf of humanity as such might be problematic in a sense which affirming universal values such as liberty and equality for all is not, since they are precisely a (i.e. particular) set of (specific, if universal) values. In contrast to fighting for specific values, speaking on behalf of humanity might be intrinsically problematic, since any opponent would be pointed out as in-human. I do think we
should fight in the name of values rather than 'humanity' but I mention in passing it seems we can not do without a reference to 'the human'. Schmitt himself unwittingly affirms this when he states that any war carried out in the name of humanity is particularly inhuman (Mouffe: 2004: 77). A radical democratic imaginary for the international realm would probably do better if it is cast in terms of citizenship – democratic citizens of the world. This would allow us (radical democrats) to maintain an 'outside' which is obviously 'human': i.e. all those who refuse to accept democratic rules of the international game.

Mouffe's critique of liberal consensus and cosmopolitanism

One of Mouffe's most persistent – and correct – claims is, that we do not live in a post-political or post-hegemonic world. Her main target is liberalism, with its pretensions of being rational or neutral. She points out how, even in Rawls' political version of liberalism, political decisions, exclusions and the use of force are inevitable. She makes a strong point regarding Rawls' distinction between 'reasonable' and 'unreasonable' pluralism when she points how “the function of this distinction … is to draw a boundary between the doctrines that accept liberal principles and the ones who oppose them. It means that its function is a political one, since it aims at discriminating between a permissible pluralism … and what would be an unacceptable pluralism …” Mouffe points out how “this is the expression of an eminently political decision, not the result of a moral requirement. To call the anti-liberals ‘unreasonable’ is a rather disingenuous way of stating that such views cannot be admitted as legitimate within the framework of a liberal democratic regime.”

(Mouffe 2005b: 223–4.)

To Mouffe all forms of cosmopolitanism – even in its democratic, political versions as developed by Archibugi and Held – “share the liberal belief in the superiority of liberal democracy” (Mouffe: 2005: 91). They postulate the availability of “consensual governance” and are therefore “bound
to deny the hegemonic dimension of politics.” (ibid: 106). Her conclusion is that “[i]f such a project was ever realized, it could only signify the world hegemony of a dominant power that would have been able to impose its conception of the world on the entire planet and which, identifying its interests with those of humanity, would treat any disagreement as an illegitimate challenge to its ‘rational’ leadership.” (2005: 106-7)

It is possible to identify four different arguments in Mouffe. The first and most basic claim that any imposition of a single model, would in fact not transcend particularity, but would be “the imposition of Western hegemony”. This is illegitimate or problematic for three different reasons. First, it is ‘impracticable’: “how is it to be done”? (Mouffe 2005: 98; 100). Second, “bringing more people directly under the control of the West … is bound to arouse strong resistances and to create dangerous antagonisms.” (2005: 103). Thirdly, “[b]y justifying the right for international institutions to undermine sovereignty in order to uphold cosmopolitan law, [cosmopolitanism] denies the democratic rights of self-government for the citizens of many countries” (ibid 101)

The first thing to be considered is the relationship between those different criticisms. Take the basic claim that cosmopolitans are fooling themselves by believing in the possibility of consensus and the superiority of liberal democracy. Of course to the extent Mouffe's charges against liberalism stood the test, one should be a bit more careful before demanding international organisations to intervene. However, just as Mouffe declares that she has no quarrels with Rawls' limitation of pluralism, a misunderstood self-representation does not in itself jeopardize a normative position. The content of Rawls' political liberalism is not disqualified by the fact it is based upon political decisions and exclusions. In the same way the fact that no intervention can be based on global consensus does not in itself make it illegitimate.

The same might be suggested to her second argument, that it is 'impracticable'. In a post-
foundational perspective everything is (ultimately) 'impracticable', i.e. it cannot be reached in any
finalistic sense. Actually, Mouffe used to praise liberal democracy exactly because it combined two
ultimately incompatible political principles of liberty and equality. According to her it is exactly
their ultimate incompatibility which keeps (liberal) democracy open and alive (Mouffe, 1989).
(Ultimate) impracticability might lead cosmopolitans to greater precautions before demanding the
international community to intervene, and it would definitely be welcomed. But again, it does not
jeopardize the cosmopolitical project as such.

The third argument is perhaps the strongest. Mouffe claims international interventions, by
undermining sovereignty, “denies the democratic rights of self-government for the citizens of many
countries” (Mouffe 2005: 100). However the precondition is we are dealing with countries in which
citizens actually do hold democratic rights. To my view this complicates the rejection significantly,
since international interventions normally are carried out against non-democratic countries.
Mouffe's counter argument would be to ask who is to determine which countries are democratic and
which are not? as she in fact does against Held. But the – ultimately unresolvable – problem of who
is to determine which countries are in fact democratic, does not in it self, in principle turn
interventions against undemocratic countries illegitimate. It makes the decision much more difficult
and should no doubt give rise to more precausitions than is sometimes the case. Further, we notice
how universal values of democracy seems to 'sneak in' again. One can only question the legitimacy
of Western actions by basing one self on general or indeed universal values.

The fourth argument states that to seek one global model, is bound to produce strong resistances,
and to create dangerous antagonisms (Mouffe 2005: 103). This is – again – probably true, but we
have to ask why arousing antagonisms is in itself undermining the values? Mouffe has always
stressed that any order – inclusive of democratic ones – are based on a basic antagonistic
relationship towards political forces *denying* those values. According to Mouffe any domestic democracy is based on a constitutive antagonism towards its (potential) enemies.²

Again, to claim that the attempt of establishing a democratic hegemony leads to antagonisms can not *in self* undermine the pursuit of democracy at the international level – if it did, it would also undermine it at the domestic level. There must therefore be some kind of more basic distinction between the domestic and the international realms.

When it comes to international relations we could easily grant Mouffe the fact of the ever present possibility of antagonism. The possibility for a universal peaceful acceptance of equality and liberty for all seems empirically/historically so unlikely that any viable strategy would have to take (several) antagonistic Others into account. But the problem is that Mouffe seems to essentialise these around national/regional borders.

What is the argument on which this is based? Even though it seems obvious that there are such basic differences between the domestic and the international sphere, Mouffe is not quite clear about in what they consists. She states:

“When we move from domestic to international politics, we encounter a very different type of pluralism … a pluralism which undermines the claim of liberal democracy to provide the universal model that all societies should adopt because of its superior rationality. Contrary to what liberal universalists would want us to believe the Western model of modernity, characterized by the development of an instrumental type of rationality and an atomistic individualism, is not the only adequate way of relating to the world and to others.” (2005: 123)

But just as nation-state based democracies according to Mouffe’s own account, also have to come to

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² I have put potential in brackets, since I believe that there is a logical flaw in Mouffe’s argument. She argues that the mere possibility or potentiality of antagonisms turns these into constitutive relations, making the Political ontologically primary. As I have shown elsewhere, this really doesn’t stand the test. But for all practical purposes, when looking at international relations, it is probably safe to assume that the establishment of democracy will be based on antagonistic relations (Hansen, 2014)
terms with (the possibility of) antagonistic others, the mere fact of (or even the likelihood of the likelihood of) antagonisms in international relations, would not necessarily lead to an abandonment of the very ideals of liberty and equality for all.

**Human rights and the culturalisation of universal values**

Mouffe doesn't really spell out the constitutive differences between the domestic and the international realm underpinning her multipolar ideal. But when one scrutinises her argument for limits for universal values, it seems that she ends up giving cultural reasons (cf. Marchart 2016). Universal values are to be questioned because they are not really universal, but specific to one culture, i.e. the Western. The most problematic effect of the error of seeing antagonisms as essentially following national or regional borders is the 'culturalisation' of the values which Mouffe used to praise for their universality. Even though she does actually mention equality and liberty for all, at least their current 'interpretations' liberal democracy and human rights, are constructed as Western values.

There are three problems in such a culturalisation of liberal democracy and human rights. First of all it is questionable whether democracy can in fact be so closely linked to the 'West' (Isakhan and Stockwell, 2012; Chou and Beausoleil, 2016). As Isakhan states:

“people everywhere are prepared to take grave risks in order to topple dictators and tyrants, and to agitate for a more democratic order. For the people who set themselves alight in Tunisia, for the protesters who took control of Tahrir Square in Egypt, for the rebels who fought in Libya and for those demonstrating across the region, it is democracy they want and it is democracy that they assume will solve their problems” (Isakhan 2012: 4)

Second, even if stick to the 'traditional narrative' (Chou and Beausoleil, 2016) their Western history does not tie them essentially and necessarily to “the West” - cf. Laclaus notion of a systematical de-centring of the West (Laclau 1996b: 53). Any value, and especially universal values can transcend the context of their emergence and figure as 'surfaces of inscription' in a variety of new settings.

Third, the fact that the West has indeed hegemonised and also abused these values, and used them
as legitimation for all kinds of actions based on simple economic and power interests, in no way questions their general legitimacy. Quite the opposite: the very fight against imperialistic aggression – from the West as well as from all other places – can precisely be criticised and opposed, with im- or explicit base in these very values. One relevant question is whether the abuse of the signifiers of democracy and human rights has dis-credited them to an extent that it is no longer possible to mobilise on the base of these. Sadly enough it might well be the case, and the role played by radical Islamism today points in that direction. Mouffe rightly points towards this problem. But her conclusion, that democracy and human rights are only suitable for the West, and should be confined to specific areas in a multipolar organisation is flawed. It might be that notions such as democracy and human rights should be avoided in concrete struggles (even though I don't believe so) but this could on be for purely strategic reasons, not because we should limit the long term struggle for their global implementation.

To sum up, radical democrats should in no way abandon the values of liberty and equality for all, and their manifestation in democracy with both democratic and liberal moments and human rights, or more precisely, restrict their area of applicability to 'the West'. Rather radical democrats should engage whole-hearted in a 'de-centring of West' and fight for a re-hegemonisation of these values in a profound general, international or global sense.

As I have stated, in her recent writings Mouffe never really take issue with the values of liberty and equality for all. This lack of analysis leads to a set of different problems. The first problem for her position is she never makes explicit whether or not they are universal values. Sometimes one gets the impression that they are not, especially liberty. She approvingly quotes Francois Jullien, who has pointed out that “‘liberty’ is the final word in European culture, for the Far East, from India to China, that word is ‘harmony’” (Mouffe 2013: 30). This leads to a reconsidering on liberal democracy, that used to be presented as the – albeit
imperfect – political form of articulating the two universal principles. Now Mouffe presents the
matter in a different way:

“The liberal democratic model, with its particular conception of human rights, is the
expression of a given cultural and historical context, in which, as has often been noted,
the Judeo-Christian tradition plays a central role. Such a model of democracy is
constitutive of our form of life and it is certainly worthy of our allegiance, but there is
no reason to present it as the only legitimate way of organizing human coexistence and
to try to impose it on the rest of the world. It is clear that the kind of individualism
dominant in Western societies is alien to many other cultures, whose traditions are
informed by different values. Democracy, understood as ‘rule by the people’, can
therefore take other forms – for instance, forms in which the value of community is
more meaningful than the idea of individual liberty.” (2013: 29-30)

To a certain extent I agree with this statement, especially that this model should not be imposed on
the rest of the world. But it must be seen eminently as a historical strategic observation, not one of
principles. From a radical democratic perspective, one cannot but worry about what exactly Mouffe
means when she states that the value of community is more meaningful than the idea of individual
liberty. To me at least, it cannot mean – as certain of Mouffe's formulations might seem to indicate,
that individual liberty is a 'Western value', not suited for the rest of the world. Obviously such a
position opens up to all kinds of despotic and autocratic possibilities of alternatives to the 'Western
model'.

The second set of problems are related to human rights. Mouffe relates to human rights in slightly
different ways. Sometimes she presents them as strictly Western values, the 'imposition' of which on
the rest of the world would have strongly negative consequences, since they are tied up with a
Western individualism:

“Many theorists have pointed out how the very formulation in terms of ‘rights’ depends
on a way of moral theorising which, while appropriate for modern liberal individualism, can be inappropriate for grasping the question of the dignity of the person in other cultures. According to Francois Jullien, for instance, the idea of ‘rights’ privileges the freeing of the subject from its vital context and devalues its integration in a multiplicity of spheres of belonging. It corresponds to a defensive approach which relinquishes the religious dimension and presents the individual as absolute. Jullien notes that the concept of ‘rights of man’ does not find any echo in the thought of classical India, which does not envisage man as being isolated from the rest of the natural world.” (Mouffe 2013: 31)

In other places she is more in the positive as when she criticizes the claim that “moral progress requires the acceptance of the Western model of liberal democracy because it is the only possible institutional framework for the implementation of human rights. This thesis has to be rejected, but that does not necessarily mean discarding the idea of human rights. Human rights might, in fact, continue to play a role, but on the condition that they are reformulated in a way that permits a pluralism of interpretations.” (Mouffe 2013: 30)

However, the logic of Mouffe's argument implies that human rights are but a specific Western interpretation of more general normative principles. She approvingly quotes Panikkar and asks whether other cultures do not give different answers to the question of providing basic criteria for the recognition of human dignity and a just social and political order. She states:

“Once it is acknowledged that what is at stake in human rights is the dignity of the person, the possibility of different manners of envisaging this question becomes evident, as well as the different ways in which it can be answered. What Western culture calls ‘human rights’ is in fact a culturally specific form of asserting the dignity of the person and it would be very presumptuous to declare that it is the only legitimate one.“ (Mouffe 2013: 31)

Since alternatives to human rights obviously cannot be ruled out theoretically, in principle, it might well be presumptuous to declare they superiority, but as long as Mouffe has not provided
convincing arguments for alternatives, they seem to be – together with democracy – the best values we can fight for.

Over all, the thrust of her argument is the culturalisation of human rights, i.e. the claim that not only do they have a Western history, they are more intrinsically tied to the West. If this is so, and if however, we maintain that liberty and equality for all are universal values, the possibility, indeed the necessity of showing how liberty and equality for all might be reached without involving rights is implied. However despite Mouffe's mainly critical attitude towards rights, she has so far not produced such analysis.

If human rights are not a universal standard, and in principle, it might be they are not, one would have to employ another standard in order for us to evaluate the alternatives Mouffe presents to human rights. E.g. when Jullien points to 'harmony' the question arises what kind of actions towards individuals would be conceived of as legitimate, in order to restore 'harmony'. It is very easy to imagine authoritarian regimes using the 'restoration of harmony' as legitimation of all kinds of violations of their populations. Related to democracy 'harmony' seems to go completely against the main thrust of agonistic, let alone radical democracy with its emphasis on dynamic inherent in ongoing clashes of opinions rather than consensus-seeking (cf. Marchart 2016 for a similar point).

It is definitely theoretically possible to think of alternatives to 'rights', but such possible/ hypothetical alternatives would have to stand the test of 'equality and liberty for all' – i.e. a notion such as 'human dignity' can be considered as a legitimate equivalence to human rights. Such considerations are always a good exercise, given the basic contingency of all political signifiers i.e. their constitutive impossibility of being identical to the universals as such. However, in order to be accepted 'human dignity' as well as other possible alternatives would have to be exposed to the **universals** of equality and liberty for all.
Strange bedfellows: no-conservatives and the Iranian Islamic Republic.

Before drawing the conclusions, asking what we should then think of cosmopolitanism, let us look into how Mouffe's essentialisation of values in national/ regional terms, forces her to conclusions which strikes one as very odd, coming from a radical democrat. In one of Mouffe's latest writings, she argues in favour of being sceptical about an “optimistic, ‘smooth’ view of globalisation” and surprisingly quotes a cultural – conservative thinker, Robert Kagan. It is however, even more worrying when Mouffe addresses the undeniable difficulties democratizations of Islamic countries face. In line with the argument that the Western model should not be seen as universal, she introduces the role played by religion and is critical of the idea of secularisation as a necessary step towards democracy. Relating to the new Islamic parties she quotes Feldman. “...For the constitution of the Islamic state to acknowledge divine sovereignty rather than establish popular sovereignty and then use it to enact Islamic law. On this theoretical model, the people function somewhat as the ruler did in the classical constitutional order: they accept the responsibility for implementing what God has commanded.” (Mouffe 2013: 37) Mouffe comments:

“According to some interpretations, a democratically elected legislature responsible for enacting the provisions of the sharia needs to be supervised by a constitutionalized process of Islamic judicial review. Feldman does not ignore the difficulties that the establishment of such a democratic Islamic state will encounter, but he insists that it would be an error for the West to see such a project as a threat to democracy and to undermine the legitimacy of those who are thinking along those lines.” (Mouffe 2013: 37)

Everything depends upon how we read the last part of the quote. If it is read as argument in favour of the principled support for something like an Islamic pole in a multipolar world, I find it deeply worrying. It is also in complete contrast to what she used to have to say about Islam and democracy (Mouffe 1993: 132). If it is read as a historical tactical intervention, reminding us that an abuse of
democratic values by the West might have worse consequences for the spread of democracy, there might be good political sense in it. The problem is however, that Mouffe does not talk about multipolarity in these terms. It seems to be the actual goal.

**Conclusion: you cannot not be a cosmopolitan**

As soon as we accept the universal values – and I hope that Mouffe still does – of equality and liberty for all, the 'naturalisation' of national and regional borders becomes very hard to defend. There is a move “outwards” or upwards inscribed in the very logic of democracy (there is no reason why someone should be denied the effect of these values just because she happens to live on the other side of a national border.

However, the way much cosmopolitanism are actually spelled out, leaves it open for criticisms – even in its cosmopolitical form. But that the struggle for equality and liberty for all involves some kind of move beyond nation-states and regional blocks to me is out of the question. How this move, or rather moves, will take shape, and how those values get interpreted along the hegemonic way, is of course an open contingent, and eminently political question. Cosmopolitanism must without doubt be re-thought with an eye for conflicts and power – i.e. hegemony. We might well conclude in the present state of affairs things like 'humanitarian interventions' should be avoided, because the institutions able to carry them out in a legitimate, i.e. democratic way, are simply not there. We might also reach the conclusion that here and now we should aim for something like Mouffe's multipolarity. But the arguments would still have to be posed in universal terms, based on the values of liberty and equality for all – and this leads to something resembling democratic cosmopolitics.

Being a post-structuralist radical democrat, you really cannot not be a cosmopolitan.
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