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**COSMOPOLITANISM AS CRITICAL THEORY:  
AN ANALYSIS OF THE ETHICS, METHODOLOGY  
AND PRACTICE OF CRITICAL COSMOPOLITANISM**

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I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not  
be submitted either in the same or different form to  
this or any other University for a degree.

**Signature:**

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‘Once, years ago, I tried to tell someone whom this book had frightened how I myself sometimes regarded it as a negative, as an empty form, the hollows and depressions of which were all pain, despair and saddest insight but whose cast, were it possible to produce one (like the positive figure obtained with bronzes) might perhaps be happiness, the most definite and certain serenity. Who knows, I ask myself, whether we do not always emerge as it were at the back of the gods, separated from the sublime radiance of their faces by nothing save their own selves, quite close to the expression for which we yearn but standing exactly behind it? Yet what else does this mean except that our face and the face of the gods look out in the same direction and are at one; how then should we approach the gods from the front?’

R. M. Rilke (1946: 264), *Letter to L. H.*, 8 November 1915

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Methodology and Practice of Critical Cosmopolitanism

## ABSTRACT

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Cosmopolitan thought in recent scholarship is often used in either a prescriptive or a descriptive manner. It is thus most commonly understood as a research agenda for the prescription of various ethico-political projects or a description of the social and political world beyond national frameworks. In both cases cosmopolitanism seems to be mostly understood as a set of assumptions about the social world. This thesis aims to underline cosmopolitanism's critical characteristics and its capability to engage with the social world in a critical and therefore transformative manner. There has been relatively scarce scholarship on critical cosmopolitanism, a gap that the thesis closes by focusing on cosmopolitanism's capacity for critical intervention. In this study, the contribution of cosmopolitanism to critical thought is evaluated and advanced. Possessing an unparalleled ability to understand things and change them in the light of universalism, cosmopolitanism can be explored as a kind of critical theory that has a distinct agenda and normative guidance. In order to achieve this, the thesis looks at a version of critical theory that is in certain respects most akin to cosmopolitanism, that is, Axel Honneth's critical theory and his theory of recognition, and connects the two in a way that shows both the cosmopolitanism's possession of critical theory's main features and its differences from Honneth's critical theory. It is proposed that cosmopolitanism can be regarded as a critical theory with the concept of recognition as its main framework, but also that it differs from Honneth's theory in its understanding of world disclosure and holding to more universalist and utopian claims. While cosmopolitanism can be understood as being critical, it can also be used as an enhancement of the existing conceptualisation of recognition relationships through cosmopolitanism's universalist dimensions.

**Keywords:** cosmopolitanism; critical theory; Axel Honneth; recognition ethics; immanent transcendence; solidarity; hospitality.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
What is Missing and How Can Critical Cosmopolitanism Be Enhanced?	4
Aims, Methodology and Contribution of the Thesis	6
Structure of the Thesis	8
<b>1 SITUATING THE IDEA OF CRITICAL COSMOPOLITANISM</b>	<b>13</b>
1.1 Cosmopolitanism and Its Critical Characteristics	14
1.2 Critical Cosmopolitanism: A Review	19
1.3 The Future of Possibility	26
Conclusion	29
<b>2 THE CONCEPTUAL SOURCES OF CRITICAL THEORY AND ITS METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>31</b>
2.1 The Origins of Immanent Critical Theory: An Overview of Early Critical Theory	32
2.2 Critical Theory's Architectonic Structure	37
2.3 Immanent Critique and Immanent Transcendence: The Future is Always Already in the Present	42
2.3.1 <i>Immanent Critique</i>	42
2.3.2 <i>Immanent Transcendence</i>	44
2.4 Critical Theory's Methodology	46
2.4.1 <i>Application of Methodology</i>	49
Conclusion	52
<b>3 ELEMENTS AND METHODOLOGY OF AXEL HONNETH'S CRITICAL THEORY</b>	<b>54</b>
3.1 Social Philosophy as the Core of Critical Theory	54
3.2 Historical and Normative Underpinnings	58
3.3 Social and Ontological Elements	61
3.4 Political Aspects	65
3.5 Honneth's Methodological Approach	68
Conclusion	71
<b>4 IMMANENT TRANSCENDENCE IN COSMOPOLITANISM</b>	<b>73</b>
4.1 Transcendence and Immanent Transcendence in Philosophical and Sociological Texts	74
4.2 This-Worldly Immanent Transcendence	77
4.3 Immanent Transcendence in Cosmopolitanism	82
4.3.1 <i>Dialogical Immanent Transcendence in Cosmopolitanism</i>	85
4.3.2 <i>Disclosing Immanent Transcendence in Cosmopolitanism</i>	87
4.3.3 <i>Self-Transcendence in Cosmopolitanism</i>	88
Conclusion	91

<b>5 RECOGNITION AND COSMOPOLITANISM</b>	<b>93</b>
5.1 Honneth's Conception of Recognition	95
5.1.1 <i>Self-Confidence and Love</i>	96
5.1.2 <i>Self-Respect and Rights</i>	97
5.1.3 <i>Self-Esteem and Solidarity</i>	98
5.2 Globalising Recognition	100
5.3 Recognition and Cosmopolitanism	102
Conclusion	110
<b>6 THE NORMATIVE FOUNDATIONS OF CRITICAL COSMOPOLITANISM: TOWARDS THE CONCEPT OF COSMOPOLITAN SOLIDARITY</b>	<b>112</b>
6.1 Good or Ethical Life in Recognition Theory	114
6.2 Critical Cosmopolitanism's Ethics	118
6.2.1 <i>Mediations and Moderation</i>	120
6.2.2 <i>Judgement and the Common World</i>	121
6.2.3 <i>Relationality and Singularity</i>	124
6.3 The Concept of Cosmopolitan Solidarity	127
Conclusion	136
<b>7 CRITICAL COSMOPOLITANISM'S UTOPIANISM AND WORLD- DISCLOSING CRITIQUE</b>	<b>137</b>
7.1 Sociological and Critical Concepts of Utopia	138
7.2 World-Disclosure, Utopianism, and the Future-Orientation of Critical Theory	141
7.3 Possibility Rather Than Validity: An Enlarged and Pluralistic Conception of Reason	147
7.4 Cosmopolitanism and Utopia	152
Conclusion	154
<b>8 HOSPITALITY: CRITICAL COSMOPOLITANISM'S CRITIQUE AND A WAY FORWARD</b>	<b>157</b>
8.1 Problem Disclosure and Object Constitution: Hospitality's Contradictions	158
8.2 Diagnostic Reconstruction and Explanatory Critique	160
8.2.1 <i>Immanent Reconstructive Critique</i>	162
8.2.2 <i>Transcendental Reconstructive Critique</i>	163
8.2.3 <i>Explanatory Critique</i>	167
8.3 Elements of Critical Cosmopolitanism Revisited	169
Conclusion	174
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>176</b>
Limitations of the Study and Implications For Future Research	182
Cosmopolitan Hope in a Non-Cosmopolitan World	183
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>185</b>



## INTRODUCTION

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‘Cosmopolitans don’t insist that everyone become cosmopolitan’, wrote Kwame Anthony Appiah (2006a) in an essay just before his book *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (2006b) was published. What he meant by this is that cosmopolitanism is not and should not be an all-encompassing and omniscient theory that holds all the answers. As much as cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitans are able to prescribe their remedies, they must also be able to learn from strangers and change themselves and their beliefs accordingly. I believe that this latter component is often missing in the more conventional understanding of cosmopolitanisms. In normative or political conceptions, cosmopolitanism often lacks a critical stance that embraces receptivity, which is a prerequisite for being open to other suggestions but also challenging our self-understanding. Similarly, Delanty and He (2008) argue that cosmopolitan theory in social science is normally either too normative and thus empirically exclusive, or completely empirical without any connection to the normative. A turn to critical cosmopolitanism is needed in order to resist and overturn this dualism and show that cosmopolitanism can act as a critical theory that combines the two. In this way we can avoid provincialisation of our world as much as of our minds.

The term cosmopolitanism is an ancient Greek term (*kosmopolites*) that designates a distinct being and acting in the world as a citizen of the world. This meaning of cosmopolitanism is, however, only one of the meanings since the latter naturally changed as different historic occurrences have influenced cosmopolitanism’s *raison d’être*.<sup>1</sup> The Stoics, for instance, understood it as a declaration of people’s simultaneous existence in two worlds, the local on the one hand and ‘truly great and truly common’ on the other (Held, 2005: 10). Despite this, they thought that our moral commitments are owed to humanity rather than immediate locality: ‘Allegiance is owed, first and foremost, to the moral realm of all humanity, not to the contingent groups of nation, ethnicity or class’ (Held, 2005: 10). The second major transformation or appropriation

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<sup>1</sup> Fine and Cohen (2002: 137–62) identify four historical cosmopolitan moments that show how the meaning and use of cosmopolitanism have changed throughout history, emphasising both limitations and possibilities of cosmopolitanism: Zeno’s cosmopolitanism in the ancient world, Kant’s Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, which has become a basis for contemporary studies, Arendt’s post-totalitarian thought, and Nussbaum’s cosmopolitanism and late North American thought.

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of the concept occurred in the Enlightenment period, and Immanuel Kant was the most prominent cosmopolitan theorist (Held, 2005: 10).<sup>2</sup> He believed that the participation of an individual in a cosmopolitan society is his or her ‘cosmopolitan right’ (Held, 2005: 10). However, Kant’s ideal must also be appropriated for the contemporary world. In his essay, *Kant’s Idea of Perpetual Peace With the Benefit of Two Hundred Years Hindsight*, Habermas (1997) rightly points out the limitations of Kant’s idea of perpetual peace and shows how these should be surpassed in today’s world. For instance, Kant was satisfied with a purely negative conception of peace, but nowadays the aim is not merely to prevent violence but also to realise the ‘necessary conditions for a common life without tensions among groups and peoples’ (Habermas, 1997: 133).

The understanding of cosmopolitanism today is broader, with research on cosmopolitanism being a dynamic field, such that there is no pertinent definition that could encompass its nuances and meanings.<sup>3</sup> There also should not be any single definition of cosmopolitanism; that would defy its purpose and make it into a totalising grand project. Nevertheless, we can perhaps identify a few formal traits that make cosmopolitanism a distinct approach within social theory. According to Hayden (2005: 11), the contemporary idea of cosmopolitanism can be understood as being based on three premises: that human beings are the fundamental entities of political and moral concern; that, derived from universalism, every human being possesses equal moral status; and that everyone must respect the equal moral status of all other subjects (Hayden, 2005: 11). There are also at least two varieties of cosmopolitanism: moral and political cosmopolitanism. Moral cosmopolitanism posits that all human beings must obey and live by the same moral laws, while political cosmopolitanism views human beings as being liable to the same political authority that has credibility to implement moral laws (Miller, 2007: 24). Critical cosmopolitanism is closer to the moral version of cosmopolitanism because it puts great emphasis on the equal moral worth of individuals. What this means is that because every individual is entitled to possessing equal moral worth, everyone has to simultaneously fulfil certain universal moral responsibilities, so that entitlements can be realised at all (Hayden, 2005: 3; Brock and Brighouse, 2005: 4).

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<sup>2</sup> To understand how much Kant’s cosmopolitanism is owed to ancient Stoic’s version, see Nussbaum (1997).

<sup>3</sup> Vertovec and Cohen (2002: 8–14) define six perspectives on cosmopolitanism: a socio-cultural condition, a philosophy or world-view, transnational institutions, multiple subjects, an attitude or disposition, and a practice or competence. For contemporary writings on cosmopolitanism, see e.g. Fine, 2007; Fine and Smith, 2003.

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Cosmopolitanism therefore emphasises our responsibilities to others who we might not know or be in direct contact with, fuelled by the realisation that we nonetheless have an effect on their lives in some ways (Brock and Brighouse, 2005: 3). After all, we all live in one world and interdependence is one of the main characteristics of living together. Therefore, '[t]he particular focus of cosmopolitan thinking is on the content and weight of obligations beyond national (or, sometimes, state) boundaries, relative to the content and weight of those obligations to which national and state boundaries give rise' (Brock and Brighouse, 2005: 3).

Cosmopolitanism and critical theory share much in common. The latter can be understood as a specific tradition that stretches from thinkers such as Kant, Fichte and Hegel to Marx, Lukács and the Frankfurt School thinkers, and which has as a more general method been used to scrutinise assumptions about our social world and submit them to an ongoing critique (Cannon, 2001: xi), as well as to explore meanings from nuanced and different perspectives. Both cosmopolitanism and critical theory were responses in specific historical situations to atrocities or injustices in the world. The upsurge of their practise and theorising occurred after the Second World War, where such kinds of responses were absolutely needed in order to counter and understand the barbarism that had happened. Cosmopolitanism and critical theory, then, are both concerned with critique of social pathologies and of the conditions that made way for these to materialise. They are able to do so because they both possess a strong normative dimension against which social and political practices are judged. They are both concerned with moral and ethical issues, but always stay grounded in and stem from worldly affairs. Some of the characteristics of cosmopolitanism inherently possess the potential impetus for practising criticism. For instance, immanence is one such characteristic, since it allows cosmopolitanism to tackle the existing, worldly contradictions from within and not set an ideal well beyond reality. Openness and hence reflexivity are other such characteristics, as well as the ability of world-creation, communication and dialogue, and susceptibility to transformation with utopian intent.

A link between critical theory and cosmopolitanism has already been made to a certain extent in scholarship, but not very directly and particularly not to the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. Scholars have written on a type of cosmopolitanism, that is, *critical cosmopolitanism*, which is the best approximation to what this thesis sets out to do. The

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first chapter of the thesis will look at the existing scholarship on the topic of critical cosmopolitanism more closely and consider what is missing. In short, so far critical cosmopolitanism studies understand their critical component more broadly and also as a way of criticising the existing understandings and usages of cosmopolitanism that might be ideologically corrupt. For instance, Pieterse (2006) and Mignolo (2000) argue that cosmopolitanism must embrace the legacies of the past and include the perspective of colonialism in order to avoid building abstract universal ideals but create a project that stems from subaltern perspectives and dialogue. Besides this, authors such as Kurasawa (2011) and Rapport (2012a) emphasise the emancipatory characteristic of critical cosmopolitanism, where the former understands critical cosmopolitanism as a project of universal emancipation challenging structural sources of global injustices that deter development of human potential, and the latter as avoidance of man-made reduction of the world into limiting camps such as nations, ethnicities, castes and others. Another characteristic of critical cosmopolitanism is its ability to act from below (Kurasawa, 2007; Pieterse, 2006; Mignolo, 2000; Bhambra, 2010 and 2011). Instead of developing grand universal designs, critical cosmopolitanism should begin its critical practice by looking at ordinary ways of thinking and acting in various spatial and historical locations. The authors emphasise that such an approach to and of cosmopolitanism also incites its dialogic capabilities, which is another characteristic of critical cosmopolitanism according to Gilabert (2006), Kurasawa (2007) and Delanty (2012). The main general underpinnings of critical cosmopolitanism are thus understood as emancipation, cosmopolitanism from below, dialogue or public deliberation, and inclusion of history into further development of critical cosmopolitanism.

### **What is Missing and How Can Critical Cosmopolitanism Be Enhanced?**

What these efforts at identifying a critical kind of cosmopolitanism, which are more closely studied in the first chapter of the thesis, lack is an engagement and connection with the tradition that most intensely and overtly engages in social criticism. Such a connection can and should be made since it could benefit both critical theory and cosmopolitanism. Even though previous research on the critical capabilities of cosmopolitanism is absolutely valuable and enhances especially cosmopolitanism in

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important ways, I believe that the connections between these two types of engagement with the social world can be made even stronger. This thesis therefore tries to demonstrate that critical theory and cosmopolitanism work very well together and sets out to show how such comradeship between two very different yet considerably akin movements works. I believe this is worth exploring for at least two reasons. First, cosmopolitanism is too often understood merely pragmatically as a design for global institutions and a blueprint for realisation of universal ideals, whereas in order to contribute to justice in such ways it has to possess a strong critical basis from which it then proceeds in making changes in the real world. Second, linking cosmopolitanism and critical theory together does not only benefit cosmopolitanism but also critical theory. The latter's normative dimension has not been 'cosmopolitanised' and because numerous contemporary challenges are global in nature, critical theory must add a cosmopolitan perspective to its investigations.

Even though critical theory does have some fundamental characteristics that form its core and make it distinct from other approaches, it is still a vast and diverse area of study. Therefore, it is necessary to be more precise and connect cosmopolitanism to a certain type of critical theory. I chose Axel Honneth, a critical theorist of the third generation of the Frankfurt School's tradition, and his critical theory and theory of recognition for several reasons. Foremost, my choice has to do with recognition theory and cosmopolitanism's similarity in understanding and dealing with relations among people and their struggles and secondly, Honneth's theory allows for the prospect of the concept of recognition and cosmopolitanism enhancing each other in significant ways. Honneth's understanding of recognition forms a normative keystone to social criticism that allows one to understand justice in a wider than just distributive sense. To understand social relations through the prism of recognition means to be able to take into account not only the structural, objective or materialist forces that impede social justice, but additionally and foremost also the normative claims made by subjects. Therefore, Honneth looks at everyday life and tries to find those experiences of disrespect that can launch social resistance and change. Recognition is also inherent in cosmopolitanism; it lies in the midst of its endeavour to make relations among people better and more open. However, recognition in Honneth's theory stays conceptually strictly within national borders, which makes it rather inapt for dealing with instances of misrecognition on a global level. Honneth's theory of recognition thus offers the

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structure and method of critical theory to cosmopolitanism; and the latter can cosmopolitanise Honneth's three recognition relations, which has not been done so far. Therefore, critical cosmopolitanism to a certain extent follows but at the same time can advance Honneth's critical theory.

So, how does this differ from existing theories on critical cosmopolitanism? Critical cosmopolitanism in this thesis acknowledges and retains all characteristics and critical qualities developed by the aforementioned authors, but it puts cosmopolitanism in direct connection to critical theory in order to see whether it can be deemed critical in a proper sense of the word. Scholars who have written on critical cosmopolitanism present its critical features in an isolated way – that is, identifying only one or the other characteristic, whereas, I argue, it is necessary to look at critical cosmopolitanism as a more coherent and comprehensive theory that possesses the main features of critical theory. Only in this way can we fully use and understand the critical dimension of cosmopolitanism, stipulating its aims and potentials.

### **Aims, Methodology and Contribution of the Thesis**

The overall aim of the thesis is thus to show that cosmopolitanism can be understood and used as a kind of critical theory. This is a broad aim but is made up of five other, more detailed objectives:

- i. to identify the critical characteristics of cosmopolitanism;
- ii. to identify the constitutive elements of Honneth's critical theory that make it 'critical', and test whether they can be found in cosmopolitanism;
- iii. to pinpoint the most important constituent of critical theory (both Honneth's and cosmopolitanism) that prescribes its methodology and object constitution;
- iv. to connect cosmopolitanism with the concept of recognition;
- v. to find out how and whether critical cosmopolitanism differs from Honneth's critical theory.

Following these goals, the argument of the thesis is as follows:

Cosmopolitanism can be understood as a type of critical theory because

- it possesses characteristics of social philosophy that allow it to identify social pathologies;
- it proceeds from the principle of immanent transcendence, that is, this-worldly and reflectively;
- it has its own ethical drives and sensibility for justice and therefore considers both what is good and what is right;
- it understands the world in an intersubjective manner and through relational aspects;
- it encompasses utopia and hope and it is world-disclosing and future-oriented;
- it is effective as social critique because it does not criticise social pathologies only with regards to the development of human rationality, but is able to address also those that are consequences of breached conditions of recognition.

Taking Honneth's critical theory as a point of departure also dictates the methodology of this research and the means of testing the abovementioned argument. Even though Honneth's critical theory belongs to a wider tradition of critical theory, it does differ substantially from the other types of critical theory of the Frankfurt School, and through analysis of Honneth's theory I am hoping to be able to identify what are its elements, how it works and how it identifies an object of investigation. These will then be applied to cosmopolitanism in order to be able to make a comparative analysis about where and how the two are similar and different. The main finding of the thesis is that cosmopolitanism and the critical theory of recognition are highly compatible and work very well together. However, critical cosmopolitanism possesses other qualities that differ from Honneth's critical theory. For instance, the main differing characteristic of cosmopolitanism is its world-disclosing capability, which differs considerably from Honneth's understanding of world disclosure. Namely, critical cosmopolitanism possesses a strong utopian impetus – lacking in Honneth's theory – that enables it to become a critical theory that surpasses the main challenge to contemporary critical theory of 'how to go on'.

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The contribution of the thesis is therefore twofold. On the one hand, it makes a considerate contribution to the study of cosmopolitanism or, more precisely, critical cosmopolitanism, which has so far never been associated with the tradition of critical theory. On the other hand, it adds a cosmopolitan normative dimension to contemporary critical theory. The thesis shows that cosmopolitanism is indeed critical in nature and that it is a reflective theory which possesses those elements of critical theories that make them epistemologically distinct from other theories such as natural ones. Thus, cosmopolitanism guides human action that produces enlightenment and emancipation, is a form of knowledge, and is reflective or self-referential – meaning that cosmopolitanism is in no way a theory detached from the world, but comprehends itself also as a part of the object that it examines.<sup>4</sup>

### **Structure of the Thesis**

The first chapter of the thesis situates the idea of critical cosmopolitanism within the existing literature on cosmopolitanism. Besides embodying a normative dimension, cosmopolitanism also expresses a certain social criticism. Whereas much scholarship has been dedicated to the investigation of cosmopolitanism as a normative perspective, relatively little attention has been paid to studying cosmopolitanism in relation to its characteristics which show its capacity for critique and its link to critical theory. Embarking on a review of existing literature, this chapter identifies the main characteristics of critical cosmopolitanism, which is a form of cosmopolitanism that resembles a critical theory most closely. It examines the manner in which various types of critical cosmopolitanism connect to different strands of critical theory, explores the main features of such a connection, and considers aspects that might be missing. The chapter also proposes that cosmopolitanism might be best thought of as a world-disclosing critique, or a form of critical theory that recognises conditions that obscure or foreclose our possibilities and conceives of itself as a possibility-disclosing practice. As such, this frame of thought endorses cosmopolitanism's imaginative quality and is closely related to cosmopolitanism's capacity for world-constitution.

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<sup>4</sup> These are the characteristics that Geuss (1981) attributes to critical theory.

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The second chapter explores the essential aims of critical theory, and examines its conceptual sources and methodology. The aim of the chapter is not to create a detailed history of critical theory's legacy, nor to engage in critically assessing its existing weaknesses. The chapter traces the origins of critical theory, its structure and dimensions, and already touches upon one of the most important concepts of critical theory, that is, immanent transcendence, which will be more thoroughly considered in the fourth chapter. The main goal of the second chapter is thus to elucidate the way in which critical theory functions as a social scientific project and the way in which it recognises and deals with various societal problems, challenges and crises. Thus, this chapter prepares important ground for further research on cosmopolitanism as critical theory because it identifies what conceptual principles cosmopolitanism as a social theory needs to possess in order to be able to connect theory with practice and function as a critical social theory. Immanent transcendence plays an especially important role and is a prerequisite of critical theory's undertakings of social critique. The concept of immanent transcendence, which is a part of Honneth's critical theory as well as critical cosmopolitanism, entails going beyond what is rooted in the present and actual situation. The point is to surpass social contradictions by discovering possibilities in the present.

The third chapter focuses on the critical theory that is most pertinent and similar to cosmopolitanism. Namely, the chapter examines aspects and the methodology of Honneth's critical theory of recognition. The purpose here is to identify fundamental and constitutive elements of his theory in order to find out how it works and how and whether it differs from the first and second generation of critical theorists. This is necessary because the exposition of critical cosmopolitanism will mainly be based on the critical theory of recognition, and if we want to 'cosmopolitanise' the concept of recognition and employ cosmopolitanism as a kind of critical theory, we must be able to identify the same fundamental elements that are found in Honneth's theory also in cosmopolitanism. The chapter begins with an analysis of the central field of study which sets up the basis for Honneth's critical theory, that is, social philosophy. The latter's main characteristics are to understand justice in a wide sense and search for social pathologies. The chapter then proceeds to identify Honneth's theory's normative, social and political dimensions, which are all equally important and interdependent in the process of critique. The chapter also points out the concept of immanent transcendence,

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which plays an important role in Honneth's critical theory and distinguishes it from its predecessors.

The fourth chapter is then able to deal with one of the central concepts of critical theory, that is, immanent transcendence. Instead of only criticising the social world immanently, the concept of immanent transcendence has been used to identify social injustices in the present and at the same time to point to future possibilities on the basis of what is found in the present. The chapter first looks at the philosophical and sociological texts in which the concepts of transcendence and immanent transcendence have been used. It then goes on to theorise about immanent transcendence and show how the immanent and the transcendent work together in order to avoid pure materialism on the one hand and otherworldly transcendence on the other. The chapter argues that immanent transcendence is inherent in critical cosmopolitanism, and distinguishes between three types, which I call dialogical, disclosing and self-transcendent. The first type emerges in encounter and recognition between people, and allows for the existence of multiple truths and establishing relations among strangers. The second type of immanent transcendence in cosmopolitanism concerns critical cosmopolitanism's ability to expand the imagination of the possible by disclosing hidden aspects and the potential of an object. The third type of immanent transcendence in the context of critical cosmopolitanism is self-transcendence or self-transformation, which puts a subject in a position of self-analysing with regards to the Other.

The fifth chapter analyses the most central concept of Honneth's critical theory and connects it to critical cosmopolitanism. Recognition and cosmopolitanism work well together and in this chapter not only a connection between them is pursued but it is also shown that Honneth's three relationships of recognition can and must be 'cosmopolitanised'. The chapter closely analyses Honneth's recognition patterns and then proceeds to critique them from a global perspective. The second part of the chapter thus offers a review of the scholarship that has already tackled the shortcomings of its conception of recognition from a global standpoint, and emphasises their contribution but their limitations as well. In the last part, the concept of recognition gets 'cosmopolitanised', that is, enhanced and enriched by a cosmopolitan outlook. It is argued that all three recognition patterns – love, respect and esteem – can be

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contextualised in cosmopolitanism and used as the most fundamental paradigm of critical cosmopolitanism.

The sixth chapter focuses on another constituent of critical cosmopolitanism, that is, cosmopolitan ethics, because a critical theory such as Honneth's must possess an ethical basis from which to challenge social contradictions. Critical cosmopolitanism not only distinguishes between right and wrong but tries to extend claims about a just society to a global level, where justice is understood in a much wider sense than just, for instance, distribution. In the first part of the chapter, Honneth's conceptualisation of good life is studied in order to explicate the aspects of its formalistic character that will guide the formation of critical cosmopolitanism's ethics. It is argued that the latter consists of three distinct characteristics: moderation, judgement and relationality/singularity. The last part of the chapter then tries to bring all these together and show how the concept of cosmopolitan solidarity can be formed. A connection is made between Gadamer's notions of friendship and solidarity and cosmopolitan solidarity.

The seventh chapter presents a different critical aspect of the nature of critical cosmopolitanism. It discusses critical cosmopolitanism as a world-disclosing critique that stems from its capacity for utopianism. This is where critical cosmopolitanism differs from Honneth's critical theory; namely, it does not deny its utopianism and goes a step further in making world-disclosure one of its main objectives. The chapter underlines the transformative and critical characteristics of the concept of utopia that significantly revitalise critical theory and therefore form an essential part of critical cosmopolitanism. Such utopianism conveys a world-disclosing critique, which helps us to find new possibilities for surpassing social flaws and contributing to self-decentring and self-transformation. In this way, critical cosmopolitanism does not search for truth but, rather, tries to open up the future and locate potentialities for improvement in the present.

The eighth and last chapter of the thesis is an application of critical cosmopolitanism on the case of hospitality. Hospitality is chosen because it combines all those aspects that critical cosmopolitanism needs to tackle in a critique: recognition, and political, social, normative, and relational aspects. The chapter establishes hospitality as an object of critique and then moves on to reconstructive and explanatory critiques respectively. The

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former tries to expose those elements that obstruct or distort hospitality, such as understanding the Other as a problem or imbalance between conditional and unconditional hospitality. The task of a reconstructive critique is therefore twofold – to identify such elements, and at the same time to indicate possible transformations with respect to those elements. An explanatory critique goes even deeper than that and identifies societal structures and mechanisms that block the practical realisation of socio-structural possibilities. After the practice of critique has been completed, the various elements of critical cosmopolitanism are revisited and re-examined in a way that shows how they have been used in the critique of hospitality.

## **CHAPTER 1**

# **SITUATING THE IDEA OF CRITICAL COSMOPOLITANISM**

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In trying to fulfil cosmopolitan aspirations, cosmopolitanism should also resort to criticism of existing norms, institutions and practices – as well as itself. Cosmopolitanism is not an unchanging idea that would instantly result in something concrete. It is a dual process of co-creating the existing world and of making new ones. It creates as much as it undermines, and it explains as much as it brings into question. It can be easily understood as the critique of methodological and political nationalism, for instance. A cosmopolitan outlook helps one grasp the changing social and political realities and in doing so, opens up new possibilities and experiences. If the world and the human condition are becoming increasingly cosmopolitan, it is important for scholarship to consider the kind of critique exercised by cosmopolitanism. What form, then, does critical cosmopolitanism take? Which strand of critical theory does it follow? The research question that I therefore pose in this chapter is: what has already been researched on the topic of critical cosmopolitanism and how can it be further developed?

The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first part discusses cosmopolitanism more generally but because it is a very broad concept, the focus will be on the meaning and features that are important for further development of the argument in this draft chapter. Therefore, those characteristics of cosmopolitanism that show its critical essence will be emphasised. In the second part, a review of the existing literature on critical cosmopolitanism will be made, discussing how, for example, some authors have already written about cosmopolitanism and its ability to exercise critique, be it from the perspective of experience and practice from below, or, for instance, through practices of public deliberation and engagement of people who endorse a (critical) cosmopolitan standpoint. In the last part of the chapter a new way of seeing cosmopolitanism as critique will be proposed, that is, a critique that takes the concept of recognition as its main paradigm and discloses new worlds and possibilities.

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## **1.1 Cosmopolitanism and Its Critical Characteristics**

Cosmopolitanism should first function as a means of evaluation and critique before it can be employed by various disciplines and agents to establish social institutions that embody cosmopolitan norms. In addition to giving expression to a certain form of humanity, cosmopolitanism is also expressive of a certain vision of possibilities that stem from its ability to critically engage with reality. Seyla Benhabib (2011: 2) rightly points out that cosmopolitanism must be understood as a critical ideal that blocks false totalisations. This understanding at the same time also recognises that cosmopolitanism is not a totalising ‘grand design’ (Mignolo, 2000) either. A little differently, Ulrich Beck (2002: 18) understands it to be an outlook that makes us see things alternatively: ‘The cosmopolitan perspective is an alternative imagination, an imagination of alternative ways of life and rationalities’. Delanty (2009: 14–15) similarly understands cosmopolitanism as an orientation, and one which allows people’s imagination to adopt different forms and change with regards to the social setting. The cosmopolitan imagination is consequently not ‘a matter of an ideal that transcends reality or a purely philosophical or utopian idea but an immanent orientation that takes shape in modes of self-understanding, experiences, feelings [...]. The imaginary is both a medium of experience and an interpretation of that experience in a way that opens up new perspectives on the world’ (Delanty, 2009: 14–15). Consequently, the cosmopolitan imagination enables the subjects to distance themselves from their immediate experience as well as consider and engage with others. What is more, the cosmopolitan imagination ‘requires in some way a problematisation of one’s own assumptions as well as those of the Other’ (Delanty, 2009: 16). Specifically, it is the self-problematisation, change in self-understanding, and distance from one’s own practices, traditions and viewpoints that exemplify the cosmopolitan imagination. In this way, cosmopolitan imagination becomes a sort of critique for challenging the existing phenomena and relations. Thus, cosmopolitanism is far from being only an abstract and empty ideal. Cosmopolitanism should be understood as a developing set of social forms that can and must always be recreated, modernised and criticised (Fine, 2007: 136).

Cosmopolitanism is a well-researched, interdisciplinary movement that has intrigued many scholars in various fields such as international relations, law, political and moral

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philosophy, social theory as well as sociology.<sup>5</sup> If it is sometimes misused and accused of being doctrinal this chapter signals the beginning of an endeavour to show the contrary. Contemporary theories of cosmopolitanism are very wide-ranging. Therefore, there is no definition of cosmopolitanism that would be fitting enough to showcase the totality of its implications. Therefore, we will not use a particular definition of cosmopolitanism but will try to embrace a meaning of cosmopolitanism that is perhaps distinctive and moves away from the prevalent conceptualisations of cosmopolitanism that are normative in their nature.<sup>6</sup> Trying to define and therefore confine something like cosmopolitanism can also be counterproductive: ‘Cosmopolitanism may instead be a project whose conceptual content and pragmatic character are not only as yet unspecified but also must always escape positive and definite specification, precisely because specifying cosmopolitanism positively and definitely is an unc cosmopolitan thing to do’ (Pollock et al., 2002: 1). Having said that, one must be careful not to turn cosmopolitanism into an ‘ism’ – an ideology or doctrine with set aims or dubious intentions. It should and must not be prescriptive in an authoritarian way that violently imposes its alleged moral remedies: ‘Cosmopolitanism is not or ought not to be a doctrinal mindset. One always has to resist the proclivity to turn cosmopolitanism into an ‘ism’ – that is, into a doctrine, a dogma, an all-purpose prescription, a fixed idea’ (Fine and Boon, 2007: 7–8). If cosmopolitanism is to be more than yet another metanarrative, then it should resist being categorised into a final and all-purpose prescription, and it should, rather, remain pledged to openness, universalism and radicalism in the sense of challenging and changing the status quo.

Whereas much scholarship has been dedicated to the investigation of cosmopolitanism as a normative perspective outlining the world’s potentialities, scant attention has been given to the characteristics of cosmopolitanism that show its capacity for critique. Cosmopolitanism does not only offer moral foundations to reality, it also serves as its critic. It is therefore significantly future-oriented and committed to changing the *status quo*. It is thus important that we look at what kind of social relations it envisages and its capability to critically reflect on unjust social conditions and to induce self-reflection of

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<sup>5</sup> See, for instance, Beardsworth (2011); Pierik and Werner (2010); Brighouse and Brock (2005); Dallmayr (2003); Chernilo (2009); and Kendall et al. (2009).

<sup>6</sup> Ferrara (2007) claims that cosmopolitanism is above all a normative concept. Such is, for instance, also Benhabib’s claim in her 2006 book *Another Cosmopolitanism* where she follows the Kantian tradition in thinking about cosmopolitanism as the norms for governing relations among people.

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agents. Cosmopolitanism as a social form has strong transformative power and, once emerged, it can completely change social life. As Fine (2007: xii) writes, cosmopolitanism ‘impacts upon the deployment of civil and political rights, on the exercise of moral judgements, on the practices of love and friendship, on the organisation of civil society and on the formation of the nation-state’. For all this to transpire and be transformed, one first needs to exercise an adequate critique and envisage a different possible reality.

What are those qualities and characteristics of cosmopolitanism that make it significant enough to exercise a critique? And which of these characteristics coincide with those of critical theory? First of all, what makes critical theory critical? Is it critical just because it criticises existing conditions? No, critical theory is not merely descriptive in that sense and so is not cosmopolitanism. They both aim at social change and some form of emancipation. They are both transformative in character and committed to the abolition of social injustice, war and violence. Moreover, they both perform all this from ‘within’. The first characteristic that is common both to cosmopolitanism and critical theory is therefore *immanence*. Critical theory is devoted to the principle of internal (immanent) criticism. As Geuss (1981: 64–5) writes:

‘Just as critical theory is supposed to contribute to the agents’ self-knowledge, so the proponents of the critical theory recognise as “valid criticism” only what could in principle be part of the self-criticism of the agents to whom it is addressed; if the proponents of a critical theory wish to enlighten and emancipate a group of agents, they must find in the experience, form of consciousness, and belief of *those* agents the means of emancipation and enlightenment’.

Solutions should not be sought outside the real world but in people’s this-worldly experiences and self-criticism. Even though critical theory is a very complicated conceptual object we can think of it and its role with the help of its three main constituent parts (Geuss, 1981: 76): (1) a part which shows that a transition from the present state of society to another desired state is inherently and either objectively or theoretically *possible*; (2) a part which shows that the transition is practically *necessary*; and (3) a part which asserts that the transition can happen only if the agents adopt the critical theory as their self-consciousness and act on it. Similar structure could be claimed for cosmopolitanism. The transition to a cosmopolitan state is possible and

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necessary if we ever want to live in the world of cosmopolitan ideals, and this can only happen if agents adopt a cosmopolitan outlook and act on it in order to realise it.

*Openness* or world openness is one of the general characteristics of cosmopolitanism (Delanty, 2012: 41) and the second attribute that is common both to cosmopolitanism and critical theory. Despite openness being general as well as one of the central features of cosmopolitanism, it has been often overlooked and not explicitly written about in cosmopolitan studies. Skrbiš and Woodward (2011: 53) claim that openness is not only central to the idea of cosmopolitanism but also its driving force. Together they engender something ‘positive and enabling, evoking acceptance and engagement rather than distance and rejection’. This same characteristic is also an important predisposition of a critical social theory. Openness is inherently connected to a reflexive style of cosmopolitan engagement – such engagement is an engagement with Otherness (Skrbiš and Woodward, 2011: 60). It shows a willingness to be challenged and learn from other cultural experiences and seek new, marginal forms of culture; it rejects the idea that the local or current is best and it acknowledges the potential of cultural immersion and exchange to enhance the self (Skrbiš and Woodward, 2011: 60). Openness and hence reflexivity enable one to go and think beyond one’s nation and opens up new possibilities and understanding. According to Bronner (1994: 3), the objective of critical theory is precisely ‘to foster reflexivity, a capacity for fantasy, and a new basis for praxis in an increasingly alienated world’. Critical theory, too, is committed to an openness of some sort because it is open to going to marginal places and rethink what is supposed to be normal and natural. Cosmopolitanism and critical theory have this important characteristic in common since they are both capable of imagining and considering different worlds and not only imagining them but also transforming the existing world into a new one through identifying emancipatory potential within the present.

That brings us to the third common characteristic, that of *transformation*. Cosmopolitanism’s capability to transform existing social conditions can change social life immensely as was mentioned earlier. We could even argue that not only does transformation take place but something even more far-reaching – world-creation. As argues Delanty (2009: 78), critical cosmopolitanism ‘should be seen as the expression of new ideas, the opening of spaces of discourse, identifying possibilities for translation and the construction of the social world’. Cosmopolitan processes are therefore world

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constituting – as are those of critical theory. Critical theory’s goals are transformation and to explain the process of the constitution of society by accounting for the mechanisms at play and its deformation, and to do so in a way that facilitates problem-solving and world creation (Strydom, 2011: 9). With criticism of the existing norms, institutions and conditions, both critical theory and cosmopolitanism not only passively describe what might be wrong and what can be improved, but at the same time also point to another possible form of social living, that is, they create a new world.

‘Critical Theory focuses by way of its cognitive interest in particular on problems or crises with a moral, ethical and political significance whose treatment could potentially lead to problem solving or crisis resolution as well as to world creation. The latter would involve the improvement or transformation of the world, for instance, a lasting or at least long-term enhancement of the moral quality of the constitution and organization of society or of the degree of sustainability of the relation of society to nature’ (Strydom, 2011: 12).

The fourth common characteristic is that of *dialogue* or, more generally, communication. Cosmopolitanism plays a critical role in ‘opening up discursive spaces of world openness’ (Delanty, 2009: 88). It has the capacity for critical dialogue and deliberation and can thus be related to Habermas’ critical theory (Delanty, 2009: 87–8). Consequently, there is already an obvious link to critical theory. Furthermore, cosmopolitanism possesses a clear communicative dimension because it engages with the perspective of the Other and this ‘is not merely a question of dialogue or understanding, but also requires deliberative reasoning and the critical scrutiny of cultural and political standpoints’ (Delanty, 2009: 261). Cosmopolitan inter-cultural communication has therefore a strong critical orientation: ‘Cosmopolitan inter-cultural dialogue has a critical trust in that it does not simply take for granted the normative claims of the cultures that are involved in the communicative process but requires a re-evaluation of positions’ (Delanty, 2009: 261). Inter-cultural dialogue thus leads to learning and opening up new horizons. In an ‘open and reflexive dialogue [...] subjects define themselves as engaged with the most distant other, as bound by a shared global fate and experience, by the need to reconstruct one’s own belief, perspective, and interest in light of how it relates to anyone affected, based on the shared capabilities that enable culturally situated global citizens to engage with one another in this context’ (Kögler, 2011: 239). Similarly, ‘critical theory judges social arrangements by their capacity to

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embrace open dialogue with all others and envisages new forms of political community which break with unjustified exclusion' (Linklater, 1996: 280). It, furthermore, 'maintains its faith in the enlightenment project and defends universalism in its ideal of open dialogue not only between fellow-citizens but, more radically, between all members of the human race' (Linklater, 1996: 296). This is also one of cosmopolitanism's main goals and it is to no surprise that cosmopolitanism and critical theory coincide so well precisely, though not exclusively, in the communicative dimension.

Finally, there is *emancipation*. Emancipation in the sense that Seyla Benhabib (1986: 353) describes it: 'the formation of communities of need and solidarity in the interstices of our societies. Such Utopia is no longer Utopian, for it is not a mere beyond. It is the negation of the existent in the name of a future that bursts open the possibilities of the present. Such utopia is not antagonistic to norm; it complements it'. Cosmopolitanism and critical theory are utopian in this sense, and here emancipation is closely connected to utopia. They both carry the promise of forming communities of solidarity, a promise that opens up in the present and carries with it norms that underpin this journey.<sup>7</sup>

## 1.2 Critical Cosmopolitanism: A Review

Now that we have looked at some general characteristics of cosmopolitanism that can be seen as critical, we must turn to those researchers who have already explicitly explored the idea of critical cosmopolitanism. We will focus on two related questions: (1) which characteristics have these authors emphasised?; and (2) which strand of critical theory have they associated critical cosmopolitanism with (if any)? To this end, we will attempt to identify what has been covered and what can still be advanced. It is important to distinguish between two kinds of critique with regards to cosmopolitanism: one that is used to criticising existing cosmopolitanisms, and another that is employed by

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<sup>7</sup> Comparing Arendt to the Frankfurt School, Benhabib (2011: 22) acknowledges that, despite differences, both are strongly united in faith in human emancipation. She writes: 'They never lost faith in human beings' capacity to "start anew" and change their collective conditions of existence (Arendt), or to anticipate the "wholly other" (*das ganz Andere*) and imagine a better future (Horkheimer). [...] Members of the Frankfurt School repeatedly evoked the hope that human emancipation would not only herald an empty but a concrete utopia. Hannah Arendt and members of the Frankfurt School are fundamentally united in their insistence upon the power of human beings to change their world, even in the face of developments where despair was more tempting'.

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cosmopolitanism in order to tackle social phenomena, practices and world order. Although they are not completely unrelated, this chapter aims to focus more on the latter.

Firstly, as is argued by critical cosmopolitanism theorists, cosmopolitanism should not be regarded as something pre-conceived in form or content if we are to consider it as a way of looking at the world that requires some sort of a perspective. This is something that authors such as Bhambra (2010; 2011), Pollock et al. (2000), Pieterse (2006), Mignolo (2000), Rumford (2008) and Walkowitz (2006), among others, emphasise, and they therefore try to take into account legacies of the past that still shape the present and should for this reason not be neglected. Pieterse (2006) claims that bringing history back into cosmopolitanism is necessary as a counterpoint to monocultural, corporate and hegemonic cosmopolitanisms. This could simply be understood as a critique of cosmopolitanism rather than an account of a critical version of cosmopolitanism. Even though his article also aims to be a critique of capitalist cosmopolitanism, as he calls it, and a critique of cosmopolitanism's alleged reflection of parochial order, he nevertheless acknowledges cosmopolitanism's critical position and its possibility to make a difference and to offer an emancipatory perspective. He therefore speaks of an emancipatory cosmopolitanism that is rooted in experience, action, history and practice from below. If cosmopolitanism is to be emancipatory, it must involve other cosmopolitan visions beyond Eurocentrism. A similar argument can be found in Mignolo's (2000) account of critical cosmopolitanism. The latter, in his opinion, can only exist if we re-conceive cosmopolitanism from the perspective of coloniality and within the frame of the modern/colonial world. In such a way, critical cosmopolitanism does not lose a historical dimension. Unlike some other cosmopolitanisms, critical cosmopolitanism is able to escape the ideological frame imposed on it by global designs and narratives that are driven by the will to control and homogenise 'either from the right or from the left, as in the Christian and civilizing mission or in the planetary revolution of the proletariat' (Mignolo, 2000: 723). Cultural differences are replaced with the colonial difference. 'Diversity' is no longer thought as a form of cultural relativism but as new forms of projecting and imagining, ethically and politically, from subaltern perspectives (Mignolo, 2000: 743). In such a critical and dialogic cosmopolitanism where everyone participates (cosmopolitanism from below), the abstract universal ideals that have helped to hold together the modern/colonial world system are replaced by diversity as a

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universal and cosmopolitan project. Such cosmopolitanism aims at the reconceptualisation of human rights, democracy and citizenship. Similarly, Chris Rumford (2008: 154) understands critical cosmopolitanism as post-western, consisting of multiple perspectives, voices and worlds, and criticising globalisation's claim that we all live in one world.

Beside the necessarily included historical aspect or multiple perspectives that make cosmopolitanism more critical, scholars also call attention to the emancipatory feature of critical cosmopolitanism, which is an important characteristic and aim of every critical theory. Pieterse's (2006) idea of emancipatory cosmopolitanism has already been mentioned although he does not explore the feature of emancipation fully and more comprehensively. He sees emancipatory cosmopolitanism as being able to rebalance corporate, political and social globalisation if it is ready to include other 'cosmovisions', that is, historical aspects and cosmopolitanism from below. Emancipatory cosmopolitanism's aim is to transform overall globalisation, whereas Kurasawa (2011) is more radical in embracing cosmopolitanism's quality of emancipation. What he aims to do in his article is to shift the conception of cosmopolitanism from being a set of subjective or attitudinal dispositions to other human beings towards a project of universal emancipation tackling structurally-produced sources of inequality and global injustices that block the exercise of individual and collective capabilities and the flourishing of human potential. In the spirit of critical theory, he thus looks at the gap between normative aspirations and their actualisation in the present world order. Nigel Rapport (2012a) also writes about emancipatory cosmopolitanism, which he understands to be a critique of culture and the artificial reduction of the world into simplistic classes such as nations, ethnicities, castes and others. Emancipatory cosmopolitanism would free humanity from this differentiation and free an individual to explore what he or she is and what he or she would like to become. Cosmopolitanism thus offers ontological and moral emancipation and 'a vision of individuals who may never be transformed into the 'camp dust' of Nazi ghettos and *lagers*, Stalinist *gulags* or Islamist *millets*' (Rapport, 2012a: 114).

Another significant aspect of critical cosmopolitanism that can be found in existing writings on this topic is the importance of cosmopolitanism from below. This is an important aspect of critical cosmopolitanism that connects it to critical theory with

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regards to agents who employ critical theory and exercise critique. If in Marxism the working class has been seen as being representative of humanity, in critical cosmopolitanism there is no single class or group of people that would single-handedly lead political action which could represent all people. In late-capitalist societies there are numerous actors that are capable of resisting and do so for various reasons and causes. As Benhabib (1986: 347) warns, thinking that there is one group or organisation of people that can act in the name of the whole can lead to the politics of collective singularity and such politics has authoritarian implications. The key to avoiding such politics is to replace it with a more ‘radical, participatory, and pluralist conception of politics’ (Benhabib, 1986: 348). And this is something that critical cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitanism ‘from below’ can offer. Kurasawa (2011: 281) claims that critical cosmopolitanism is able to draw attention to the existence of a worldly sensibility from below, grounded in ordinary ways of thinking and acting, and is not content with the liberal idea of multicultural diversity. In such a way, critical substantivism begins from below by making sense of the social labour of groups implicated in human rights struggles in historically specific socio-cultural contexts, and proceeds ‘upward’ to formulate normative reconstructions of what is required ethically and politically of these struggles to advance the work of global justice (Kurasawa, 2007: 10). Pieterse (2006: 1254) finds cosmopolitanism from below in diasporas, migrants, traders, itinerant artisans, pilgrims, and scholars who have been traversing the world for a long time. Therefore, in his (Pieterse, 2006: 1255) opinion cosmopolitanism from above is empty without cosmopolitanism from below, which is the actual experience of world citizenship. Bhambra (2010: 43) claims that such cosmopolitanism ‘would be made up of dialogues among a series of local perspectives on cosmopolitanism, with no unifying centre’. In another article, Bhambra (2011: 323) argues that the worth of provincialised cosmopolitanism is in its capability to learn from others wherein we recognise that what others contribute is not the confirmation of what we already know, but the bringing into being of new understandings relevant to the worlds that we inhabit together. ‘These new understandings both reconfigure our existing perceptions *of the world*, as well as inform the ways in which we live *in the world*’ (Bhambra, 2011: 323). A similar version of cosmopolitanism from below is found in Mignolo’s (2000: 741) proposal. Instead of cosmopolitanism managed from above (i.e., global designs), he puts forward a cosmopolitanism that is critical, dialogic and which emerges from the various spatial and historical locations of colonial difference. In this way, critical cosmopolitanism

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becomes inclusive and is able to investigate social practices as well as the beliefs of all agents in society. Following Geuss (1981), these are also the main rationales of critical theory.

Beside cosmopolitanism from below, the dialogic feature of cosmopolitanism seems particularly important for further discussion about critical cosmopolitanism. A lot of authors include dialogue or public deliberation as one of the characteristics of critical cosmopolitanism. For Gilabert (2006: 1–2), cosmopolitanism can be a form of social criticism only if it simultaneously combines a search for basic universal rights, sensitivity to contextual specificities, and the autonomous empowerment of all individuals. He claims that this can be achieved through the practices of public deliberation in which people enacting a critical cosmopolitan stance should engage. Discursive practices test the validity of claims, and most of all, with their help one is able to criticise, in a critical cosmopolitan manner, the unilateral approaches to universal rights, plurality and empowerment, and to defuse the epistemic risk of following false universals. Kurasawa (2007) suggests that public discourse is an important part of cosmopolitanism from below, that is, socio-political actions that escape formalism and open emancipatory possibilities. Public deliberation and dialogue foster criticism and expose different realities, and are therefore an important part of every conceptualisation of critical cosmopolitanism.<sup>8</sup> Engaging in a dialogue ‘always already’ entails a kind of critique. As Habermas (1990: 26) writes, in communicative action, no one is superior to another because it is impossible to decide *a priori* who is to learn from whom: ‘interpreters give themselves over to a process of reciprocal critique’. Within a process of interpretation and reaching an understanding, a correct interpretation is not finding the truth per se but explaining that which the interpreter is to understand. This then requires participation and not merely observation. Everyone becomes actively involved in a dialogue and everyone must ‘relinquish the superiority that observers have by virtue of their privileged position’ (Habermas, 1990: 26) and get engaged in negotiations about the meaning and validity of assertions. We could say that such understanding of cosmopolitanism to some extent relates to Habermas’ critical theory.

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<sup>8</sup> Delanty (2012: 42) writes: ‘As a dialogic condition cosmopolitanism can be understood in terms of critical dialogue or deliberation. A deliberative concept of culture and politics captures the cosmopolitan spirit of engaging with the perspective of the Other as opposed to rejecting it. This is where the tie between cosmopolitanism and critical theory is strong’.

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An author who does not speak of critical cosmopolitanism *per se* but nevertheless makes similar claims in the field of international relations and critical theory, is Andrew Linklater. In his book, titled *Beyond Realism and Marxism* (1990), he considers a form of critical theory that would be able to identify the prospects for realising human freedom across the world as a whole. Three main concerns of traditional international relations theories (realism, rationalism and revolutionism) are power, order and emancipation. The latter is especially pertinent in the context of critical cosmopolitanism. Specifically, revolutionism asserts that a ‘Cosmopolis’ which will realise the moral potential of the species is already immanent within the international system of states (Linklater, 1990: 8). The revolutionist tradition therefore most closely approximates the idea of critical international theory, which is to a certain extent similar to critical cosmopolitanism. Revolutionism, and a critical turn in international theory more generally, has been influenced by the Frankfurt School. It engages in a sociological analysis of conflicts which may give rise to a society in which there is a higher level of autonomy and which calls into question all institutions and power relations. It is action-oriented and it clarifies a range of possibilities that are feasible transformations of the existing world (Linklater, 1990: 28). In another work, Linklater (2001) similarly argues for a critical international relations theory but acknowledges its changing contours. Its aim, he claims, should be to increase social interaction with dialogue and consent rather than power and force, and to expand the number of people who participate in a speech community. Furthermore, the central feature and moral goal of such a critical theory should be to diminish exclusion and to lift restrictions ‘in which morally irrelevant distinctions based on class, gender, race, or ethnicity are used to deny groups access to the rights the privileged already enjoy’ (Bernstein in Linklater, 2001: 27). A similar claim can be found in Seyla Benhabib’s (2004) book, where she argues for a cosmopolitan theory of justice that incorporates a vision of just membership together with the distribution of resources. A cosmopolitan theory of justice would integrate citizenship claims into a universal human rights regime. Benhabib shows that the human right to membership is more general than the specific citizenship legislation of a country. She exercises an internal critique of institutions and in such a way gains a clearer understanding of people’s rights and freedoms. She does so from a cosmopolitan perspective and even though she does not explicitly speak of critical cosmopolitanism, one could argue that she does this in its manner.

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Seeing what critical cosmopolitanism stands for in the existing literature, we should now turn to critical theory and try to make some concluding remarks. In doing so we must acknowledge the importance of the Frankfurt School's critical theory for critical cosmopolitanism but at the same time recognise that it needs to be appropriated for today's worldly circumstances. Critical theory has new conditions to confront because the world has changed profoundly in the last decades. The world has grown larger in population, there are new societal conflicts and problems across the globe that need to be addressed, economies have grown bigger and more intertwined, new identities have emerged and new oppressions have taken place. McCarthy (1994: 92–3) sees a strong need for critical theory to become more global: 'I have wanted to underscore the need for critical theory to adopt a consistently global perspective, so as to locate the received problematics of the nation state in a broader web of interconnected histories'. Despite this need, there are some common characteristics between all strands of critical theories that can be found also in critical cosmopolitanism. It must be emphasised that critical cosmopolitanism not only brings a global component to critical theory but also acts as a critical theory of its own. From Hegelian Marxists to Habermas and the third generation of critical theorists with which Axel Honneth can be counted, critical theory has never been only descriptive but also a way to set social change in motion by providing knowledge of social inequality that can inform on political action aimed at emancipation or diminishing domination and inequality (Rush, 2004: 9). The difference, then, between traditional critical theory and critical cosmopolitanism is that the latter's main concern is with societal problems that are global in scope whereas traditional critical theory is more concerned with the critique of domination and is more Western-focused (Delanty, 2012: 43). Critical cosmopolitanism also has its own normative guidelines and distinct approach to enacting critical-social praxis. After reviewing the existing work in the emerging field of critical cosmopolitanism, the main general issues seem to be: emancipation; cosmopolitanism from below (provincialised cosmopolitanism); dialogue/public deliberation; and the inclusion of history into further development of critical cosmopolitanism. This final issue could also be understood to be a critique of cosmopolitanism itself, however, it was also shown in the chapter that the authors employ it as an aspect of critical cosmopolitanism.

Just as in critical theory, the central topics of critical cosmopolitanism are human agency, autonomy and reconciliation with the Other. Those authors of critical

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cosmopolitanism that follow Habermas (Linklater and Gilabert, for instance), who make the biggest quantitative leap in terms of a model of autonomy, also presuppose that social action is a subject-subject relation and as such, a form of communication. The important aspect of this model of activity, then, is human plurality and intersubjectivity. The former does not merely mean that we are different bodies in space and time, but that our identity, and the narrative history that constitutes our selves, gives us a unique perspective on the world (Benhabib, 1986: 140). Thus, the communicative dimension is one of cosmopolitanism's (as well as critical theory's) main features. Although 'traditional' Marxist critical theory focuses on production, future developments of critical theory posit communication as their core paradigm. Constructing a new critical social theory adequate to the task of elucidating the demands of late-capitalist societies, as Benhabib (1986: 12) argues, requires a paradigm shift in critical theory from production to communicative action, from the politics of the philosophy of the subject to the politics of radical intersubjectivity. On the other hand, authors who emphasise the importance of cosmopolitanism from below seem to adhere more to Axel Honneth's conception of critical theory. The struggle for recognition, as Honneth (1996) argues, is one that provides the motivation for social progress and can lead to social action. The objective is to create an alternative to the Machiavellian-Hobbesian idea of society as a selfish struggle for self-preservation. There are three primary dimensions to the intersubjective relations of recognition; namely, love (family and friendship), rights (universal, moral and legal principles), and esteem (solidarity and welfare of all people). Should any of these be denied, or if there exists any kind of disrespect or humiliation, then it is the task of the recognition theory to reveal the socio-structural causes accountable for that humiliation and disrespect, and to take into account also historical experiences of such disrespect. This theory is above all apt in the study of transnational movements, for instance, and it is especially pertinent for connecting it to cosmopolitanism from below – as it is found in Kurasawa's (2007; 2011) work on critical cosmopolitanism, for example.

### **1.3 The Future of Possibility**

Cosmopolitanism envisages a different social reality. The latter is a relational social reality and it is therefore important that we look at the kinds of social relations

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cosmopolitanism envisions and its capability to critically reflect on unjust social conditions as well as to induce self-reflection in agents. The interconnectedness of people and their relations in today's world testifies to the fact that we can no longer conceive of other people as essentially 'other', separated from us in fundamental ways. Given this global interconnectedness, detachment is no longer an option – on the contrary, a lot can be gained from taking a critical attitude that begins from, rather than denies, acknowledged connectedness and dependence (Kompridis, 2011b: 270). This is where cosmopolitanism is relevant – it recognises interdependence among people and the responsibility we have towards others while simultaneously performing a critique as it discloses alternatives that differ from the actual condition.

If we are thinking about cosmopolitanism as critique and its ontological implications, one form of critical theory seems especially pertinent that has not yet been associated with cosmopolitanism. That is the idea of critique as world-disclosure as it has been developed by, among others,<sup>9</sup> Nikolas Kompridis (2006). He argues that such a critical theory recognises conditions that obscure or foreclose our possibilities and conceives of itself as a possibility-disclosing practice. It is more pluralistic than its predecessors and is primarily concerned with 'disclosing novel forms of thought and action that might make possible a more productive practical orientation towards the future' (Sinnerbrink, 2011: 1054). Understanding cosmopolitanism as critique in this way means two things: firstly, that the idea of critical theory as world-disclosure enhances cosmopolitanism's existing critical orientation because it engages with the world in a manner of understanding;<sup>10</sup> and, secondly, that cosmopolitanism importantly supplements such a critical theory because it provides it with a normative direction.

If we are to focus on the implied idea of disclosure in cosmopolitanism then we must consider how and in what ways critical theory and disclosure are intertwined. Following Honneth's (2000: 123) claim, the conception of a critique can be understood as world-

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<sup>9</sup> Richard Rorty also endorses world-disclosing critique. He argues that the best way to approach a questionable practice in society is through the imaginative, creative and poetic articulation of a new practice (Strydom, 2011: 171). Even though such reasoning may be criticised because imaginative and alternative practices seem to be relatively easy to articulate but not implemented, critical cosmopolitanism can fill this gap by proposing viable alternative practices while at the same time retaining the imaginative impulse.

<sup>10</sup> Understanding here conforms to Arendt's (2005: 307–8) conception: 'Understanding, as distinguished from having correct information and scientific knowledge, is a complicated process which never produces unequivocal results. It is an unending activity by which, in constant change and variation, we come to terms with and reconcile ourselves to reality, that is, try to be at home in the world.'

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disclosure which attempts to change our beliefs about values by invoking new ways of seeing and highlights facts that were previously not perceived in social reality. Similarly, Kompridis (2006: xi) follows Martin Heidegger's idea of disclosure or world-disclosure, by calling for an alternative vision of critical theory 'that, in recognition of the various ways in which conditions of modernity obscure or foreclose our possibilities, conceives itself as a possibility-disclosing practice'. Both cosmopolitanism and critical theory have the ability to see things in light of possibilities, and both of them can be characterised as being open to as well as engaged with what is disclosed (Kompridis, 2006: 34). In critical theory, this requires both a reflective responsiveness to historical experiences as well as the ability to see something that is familiar or even taken for granted from a new perspective (Kompridis, 2006: 19). In a similar manner, cosmopolitan social theory reconstructs the history and traditions of social theory anew in terms of a universalistic concept of society, the recognition of differences within a universalistic frame, and the critique of methodological and political nationalism (Fine, 2007: x). This is one of the most important methodological features and claims of cosmopolitanism since it engages in understanding and criticising the world precisely from the perspective of universalism, which presupposes a single subject – that of humanity. This does not mean that cosmopolitanism subsequently eradicates all difference. On the contrary, it acknowledges all forms of difference and at the same time conceptualises them as internal to the substantive unity of all human beings (Fine, 2007: x). The conception of cosmopolitan social theory that is used in this thesis in connection to critical theory understands 'social relations through a universalistic conception of humanity and by means of universalistic analytical tools and methodological procedures. Its simple but by no means trivial claim is that, despite all our differences, humankind is effectively one and must be understood as such' (Fine, 2007: xvii). I believe that this normative and methodological component of cosmopolitanism would further enrich understanding of critical theory as containing world-disclosure.

When we speak of the concept of world disclosure, we can distinguish between two different kinds or levels of disclosure: 'At one level, it refers to the disclosure of an already interpreted, symbolically structured world; the world, that is, within which we always already *find* ourselves. At another level, it refers as much to the disclosure of new horizons of meaning as to the disclosure of previously hidden or unthematized dimensions of meaning' (Kompridis, 1994: 29). It is no surprise that cosmopolitanism

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connects so well with the notion of (world) disclosure. The second level of world-disclosure seems especially important to the discussion. It is linked to ‘a more reflexive conception of how our shared practices, linguistic interpretations and conceptual mappings can be as much *world-making* as *world-revealing*’ (Sinnerbrink, 2011: 1055) and as such closely related to cosmopolitanism’s ability of world-making and its imaginative quality.

## Conclusion

In this first chapter, a review of the literature on critical cosmopolitanism has been made and a new form of critical theory has been proposed to be associated with cosmopolitanism. In previous scholarship on critical cosmopolitanism several recurring topics have been found. The main general concerns and underpinnings of critical cosmopolitanism are emancipation, cosmopolitanism from below (provincialised cosmopolitanism), dialogue/public deliberation and inclusion of history into the further development of critical cosmopolitanism. The latter could also be understood as a critique of cosmopolitanism but it was shown how the authors use it to strengthen their idea of critical cosmopolitanism. The common characteristic that most authors ascribe to critical cosmopolitanism can be connected to characteristics of critical theories. From Hegelian Marxists to Habermas and the third generation of critical theorists, critical theory has never only been descriptive, but also a way to set social change in motion by providing a critique of social reality which inspires political action and emancipation (Rush, 2004). Critical cosmopolitanism encompasses various features of different strands of critical theory. However, none of the authors have linked it to a specific critical theory and developed it within its own frame, although this should be made if critical cosmopolitanism wants to be further advanced as a critical theory itself.

Besides Axel Honneth’s critical theory of recognition, which is the main critical theory that cosmopolitanism will be linked to, another form of critical theory seems especially pertinent for further development of critical cosmopolitanism and has not yet been related to it. That is the idea of critique as world-disclosure. Such a critical theory conceives of itself as a possibility-disclosing practice. It is more pluralistic, in the way that it not only focuses on reason or one form of domination. Like cosmopolitanism, it

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has the ability to invoke new ways of seeing and highlights facts that were previously not apparent in social reality. Cosmopolitanism and a type of critical theory that is both historically reflective as well able to see something from a new perspective are highly fitting to each other and will be explored further in the thesis, but let us first turn to the tradition of critical theory more generally in order to understand its main aims and operations.

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## CHAPTER 2

# THE CONCEPTUAL SOURCES OF CRITICAL THEORY AND ITS METHODOLOGY

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‘In general, to understand a philosophical argument and to evaluate its cogency, it is necessary to know the questions and puzzles which such an argument proposes to answer. To understand these questions and puzzles, in turn, it is necessary to reconstruct those social, historical, and conceptual contexts which form the horizon of inquiry of different theories. [...] Understanding always involves understanding from *within* a framework which makes sense for us. In this sense, *learning* the questions of the past involves *posing* questions to the past in light of our conceptual preoccupations in the present. The reconstruction of the history of theories proceeds like a dialogue in which one asks a question, seeks to comprehend whether this question is meaningful to the other, listens and reformulates the answer of the other, and in light of this answer rearticulates one’s original position’ (Benhabib, 1986: x)

**B**efore this thesis moves on to a more detailed exploration of cosmopolitanism as critical theory, the latter must be thoroughly studied first in order to identify its fundamental characteristics and operations. To this end, the main purpose of this chapter is to reconstruct the essential aims of critical theory, and put forward its conceptual structure and methodology. The chapter does not present a detailed history of critical theory’s legacy,<sup>11</sup> nor does it engage in critically assessing its possible flaws. Instead, it illuminates the way in which critical theory functions as a social scientific project and the way it may be employed to confront various societal problems, challenges or crises. Thus, this chapter prepares the ground for further research on cosmopolitanism as critical theory. Namely, it shows what conceptual principles cosmopolitanism as a social theory needs to fulfil in order to be able to operate as a critical social theory.

The chapter is divided into four sections. It begins with an investigation into the origins of critical theory. Early critical theory set the foundation for a rich tradition, and since its foundations define critical theory’s uniqueness, they are still very relevant to

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<sup>11</sup> For an account of critical theory’s legacy see, for instance, Jay (1973) or Wiggershaus and Robertson (1995).

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contemporary endeavours to renew the theory in the light of the current social reality. The second part of the chapter goes a step further and deeper into discovering critical theory's structure and deals with its architectonic structure. This consists of seven distinctive dimensions that constitute the system of critical theory: the transcendental; dialectical; normative; ontological; theoretical; epistemological; and the methodological dimension. The third section briefly touches upon one of the most important concepts of critical theory, that is, the concept of immanent transcendence – briefly, since this concept will be studied in detail later in the fourth chapter. Immanent transcendence is also one of critical theory's defining notions because it captures critical theory's essence and outlines its course of operation. The last part of the chapter discusses critical theory's methodology. It explicates how critical theory connects theory with practice, how it diagnoses the problem, engages with it, and exposes its work to public scrutiny and criticism.

## **2.1 The Origins of Immanent Critical Theory: An Overview of Early Critical Theory**

The first part of this chapter will not dwell on the detailed chronological history of critical theory but will provide the reader with an overview of the main themes and concepts that form early critical theory and create the foundation for its tradition. The discussion thus begins with the Frankfurt School and its theorists. Critical theory is usually associated with the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, which was established in 1923. Members of the institute are generally referred to as the Frankfurt School.<sup>12</sup> The Frankfurt School is not unanimous in their scholarship but, despite this, one can find harmony between the thoughts of different theorists which form some common ground to critical theory's endeavours. Specifically, its interdisciplinary character is bound to the emancipation of agents, the ending of social oppression or injustice, and the employment of reflective, instead of instrumental, reason. Critical theory is therefore not a set of fixed claims or a blueprint that could only confront particular historical circumstances. Or, as Max Horkheimer (1982: 223–4) writes, '[c]ritical theory is neither "deeply rooted" like totalitarian propaganda nor "detached"

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<sup>12</sup> Members include Max Horkheimer, Friedrich Pollock, Theodor Adorno, Erich Fromm, Herbert Marcuse, Franz Neumann, Otto Kirchheimer, Leo Lowenthal, Henryk Grossmann, Arkadij Gurland, among others (Held, 2013: 14).

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like the liberalist intelligentsia.’ It is neither foundationalist, on the one hand, nor completely relativist, on the other. It is based on a commitment to freedom and the need for revision in order to meet new questions posed by new historical situations (Bronner, 1994: 322). Critical theory challenges different forms of oppression, people’s suffering, systemic injustices, and tackles these issues in the spirit of freedom, hope and utopia. However, it has not been termed critical just because it criticises or condemns certain ways of social and political reality. Finding fault or discovering what is immoral means foremost reflecting upon disclosed circumstances and seeing well beyond tangible appearances. Critical theory therefore not only reveals possibly hidden meanings but also guides human action in order to surpass the conditions that inhibit subjects and their social being. Critical theory produces knowledge that contains enlightenment and emancipation. It is therefore important to emphasise that such a social theory does not only describe and criticise social life, but takes an active part in shaping, creating and reflecting on social knowledge and the future as well. It investigates social knowledge, meaning the beliefs people hold about their social reality. Critical theory is itself a part of such social knowledge and can or must thus be challenged and rethought when historical circumstances change: ‘The critical theory does not, then, like objectifying theories, purport merely to give information about society, its members, and their form of consciousness, it also purports to provide the criterion by which to evaluate whether or not the critical theory itself, and the information it provides are acceptable.’ (Geuss, 1981: 79). A part of critical theory’s methodology must therefore also be its subjection to public inspection.<sup>13</sup>

To understand where it all began and uncover those foundations of early critical theory that made it critical and distinct from traditional social theories, one needs to identify its main goals and means. Despite critical theory’s rich and wide spectrum, it is possible to pinpoint its sources. As Alway (1995: 23) writes, ‘as complex and ambiguous as Critical Theory might be, one does find within it a consistent emphasis, both institutionally and theoretically, on autonomy and independence’. The emphasis on autonomy is one of the key elements of critical theory, as is emancipation, and reflection. These three are all related to each other, with reflection facilitating a potential for self-determination or autonomy and only in this way enabling us to decide what a better and more

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<sup>13</sup> See section 2.4 on methodology.

emancipated life would look like (How, 2003: 6). Though not exhaustive, these three features were at the foundation of the Frankfurt account of critical theory and its normative agenda, that is, the emancipation of humanity from social injustice (Chambers, 2004: 221). Social totality consists of not just economic institutions, but also of forms of consciousness, social ideals and ideas of the good life (Geuss, 2004: 130). Critical theory proceeds from locating certain facts in the social world and subsequently identifying both positive and negative beliefs, structures or human works, and thereby criticising the present:

‘One important task of Critical Theory, then, is to extract from such traditional conceptions both positive images of the good life and negative images of lives that are not good, to translate them into a form which brings out as clearly as possible those parts of them that are no longer merely utopian, but could actually be reali[s]ed, and to compare our present society with those images. This confrontation is a critique of our present. Dialectical thinking critici[s]es existing institutions, practices, or states of affairs simply by contrasting what they are with what they could be, and are in some sense striving to be but are not’ (Geuss, 2004: 133).

Critical theory’s task is therefore to analyse the constitution of ideas in consciousness, explain and change human-made historical concepts, and to understand history and tradition in a critical and reflexive manner, and thus to recognise possible ideologies behind it (Held, 2013: 173). The Frankfurt School criticised positivism as the only valid form of gaining knowledge, its connection to instrumental reason and the creation of ideology. Though not entirely separate from natural sciences’ methodology, critical theory tries to avoid instrumental thinking and judgement, and instead focuses on understanding empowerment of individuals or groups with knowledge, and freedom.

*Autonomy* or *independence* of agents became one of the most important claims of critical theory. Without an autonomously thinking and acting agent, the demands of critical theory can never be realised. Theorists of the Frankfurt School were well aware of the social and political conditions which forced men and women into oppression and subordination. In the Preface of the book *Eclipse of Reason*, Horkheimer (2004: v) writes:

‘The hopes of mankind seem to be farther from fulfillment today than they were even in the groping epochs when they were first formulated by humanists. It seems that even as technical knowledge expands the horizon of man's thought and

activity, his autonomy as an individual, his ability to resist the growing apparatus of mass manipulation, his power of imagination, his independent judgment appear to be reduced’.

This was written in 1946 but could also be applied to the conditions of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Life in a rationalised world can mean a reduced degree of autonomy because everything is subordinated to limited and predetermined goals with precisely set means in order to achieve them. Men and women do not (need to) possess critical minds because everything is set out for them already. As Marcuse (1998: 49) claims:

‘Rationality is being transformed from a critical force into one of adjustment and compliance. Autonomy of reason loses its meaning in the same measure as the thoughts, feelings and actions of men are shaped by the technical requirements of the apparatus which they have themselves created. Reason has found its resting place in the system of standardi[s]ed control, production and consumption. There it reigns through the laws and mechanisms which insure the efficiency, expediency and coherence of this system.’

Subjects are deprived of the very conditions for autonomous agency/thinking and therefore lack the ‘capacity to engage in *critical-reflective discourse* concerning the justifiability of established or proposed norms and beliefs’ (Hoy and McCarthy, 1994: 44). Since human being’s autonomy has been privatised, he or she cannot participate in public criticism and other public activities that could result in reaching mutual understanding. In critical theory, autonomy is the basis of rational resistance to social and political domination (Jacobs, 2001: 139).

It is for this reason that *reflection* plays such an important part in achieving any critical theory’s aim. Being capable of reflection or reflective thinking is closely connected to fostering one’s imagination or fantasy, which can prompt imagining a different, better future: ‘One thing which this way of thinking has in common with fantasy is that an image of the future which springs indeed from a deep understanding of the present determines men’s thoughts and actions even in periods when the course of events seems to be leading far away from such a future and seems to justify every reaction except belief in fulfillment’ (Horkheimer, 1982: 220). The ability to understand and critically reflect on one’s conditions and beliefs enables one to change reality and the social knowledge that forms such a reality. Reflection is therefore closely related to the notion of autonomy because without possessing the latter an agent cannot employ a reflective

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mind: ‘Having given up autonomy, reason has become an instrument’ (Horkheimer, 2004: 14). If a mind’s function is reduced to a limited, instrumental use, it is more prone to being misused and not being employed in a way that would emancipate the subject. The notion of reflection is therefore different from consciousness, because the latter ‘projects systems, deductions, and conclusions, but reflection is always ready to relativise those conclusions once more. Reflection knows the individuality of the knower and of the known, so it is always ready to revise a standpoint as soon as it has reached it’ (Roberts, 2004: 69). The reflective attitude is therefore a way of retaining the critical faculties of the masses. It is contrary to objectification or an objectifying attitude, which is closely associated with a merely instrumental use of reason (Geuss, 2004: 119). The logic behind the critical theory, or its ‘cognitive structure’ as Geuss (1981: 55) calls it, is that it is reflective (it reflects on the social knowledge) and self-referential (it takes into account that critical theory is a part of (producing) such social knowledge as well). On the one hand, this means that critical theory is itself always a part of the world it describes and can itself be subjected to criticism (Geuss, 1981). On the other, it means that critical theory induces self-reflection in agents. With reflection ‘they come to reali[s]e that their own form of consciousness is ideologically false and that the coercion from which they suffer is self-imposed’ (Geuss, 1981: 61). In this way, critical theory helps agents see both that they hold an ideological world picture and also how their beliefs, consciousness and institutions are formed by it.

The effect of a successful critical theory is enlightenment and possible *emancipation*. This means a social transition from an initial state of oppression or domination to a following state that is devoid of false consciousness. ‘Emancipation is not reduced to a formal possibility, but is viewed both as a matter of immediate struggle and a long-term goal’ (Antonio, 1981: 341). Despite this relatively narrow explanation, it is not always clear what is meant by emancipation. Emancipation can mean freedom from hunger and degradation or physical and social security; it can also mean juridical equality for oppressed people; or it can mean the expansion of democracy over markets and bureaucracies (Ray, 1993: viii). The members of the Frankfurt School must show that ideological beliefs are false in order to be able to achieve an emancipatory effect. The emancipation depends on the ability to make those who adopt it able to resist the pressure of the legitimate apparatus of society (Geuss, 1981: 94). The immanent critique depends on the possibility of emancipatory social change, which needs to be attainable

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(Wyn Jones, 1999: 38). Emancipation is therefore not some utopian, unreachable goal of humanity, but something that can well be achieved in the present social circumstances. The feasible alternatives from which emancipation stems need to grow out of the immanent, and this is achieved through immanent critique (Toros and Gunning, 2009: 99–100). Such emancipatory immanent critique aims at pointing to the possibilities for overcoming the contradiction between a crisis and ideals. This is not an idealist reduction because emancipatory immanent critique aspires to become a basis, not a substitute, for praxis (Antonio, 1981: 342).

## 2.2 Critical Theory's Architectonic Structure

Critical theory as an intellectual tradition is 'articulated in terms of a social scientific theoretical and research programme' (Strydom, 2011: 8). It contains both theoretical and empirical understanding of the world. It has its own methodology, which will be discussed at the end of this chapter, and an architectonic structure that conditions and facilitates its methodology. Strydom (2011) identifies seven dimensions of critical theory: transcendental; dialectical; normative; ontological; theoretical; epistemological; and methodological. These dimensions constitute critical theory and give it a distinctive character. The word architectonic is here used with good reason. It is used in a similar way that Immanuel Kant used it in his book *Critique of Pure Reason*. He (1998: 691) writes:

'By an architectonic I understand the art of systems. Since systematic unity is that which first makes ordinary cognition into science, i.e., makes a system out of a mere aggregate of it, architectonic is the doctrine of that which is scientific in our cognition in general, and therefore necessarily belongs to the doctrine of method. Under the government of reason our cognitions cannot at all constitute a rhapsody but must constitute a system, in which alone they can support and advance its essential ends. I understand by a system, however, the unity of the manifold cognitions under one idea. This is the rational concept of the form of a whole, insofar as through this the domain of the manifold as well as the position of the parts with respect to each other is determined *a priori*. [...] The whole is therefore articulated (*articulatio*) and not heaped together (*coacervatio*); it can, to be sure, grow internally (*per intus susceptionem*) but not externally (*per appositionem*), like an animal body, whose growth does not add a limb but rather makes each limb stronger and fitter for its end without any alteration of proportion'.

Critical theory, too, is understood to be a system in which its method plays an important part in determining whether critical theory forms a scientific system. The individual dimensions of critical theory can grow and be changed internally and together they form an articulated whole.

The meaning of transcendental in the context of critical theory does not mean that critical theory transcends or surpasses all existing knowledge or conditions. Its meaning connects to the connotation that Immanuel Kant gives to the notion of the *a priori* knowledge. ‘*Transcendental* knowledge is concerned with identifying the mind’s contribution to our various modes of knowing, or more exactly with isolating the tacit knowledge that is put to work when we know anything’ (Kitcher, 2006: 48). That is to say that our knowledge is not dependent on our experience but can be deduced cognitively and with the help of transcendental or *a priori* conditions of possible experience. In *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant (1998: 137) writes: ‘Experience teaches us, to be sure, that something is constituted thus and so, but not that it could not be otherwise’.<sup>14</sup> Kant claims that empirical concepts can demonstrate their objective reality more easily than *a priori* concepts. Even though the latter type cannot do that so simply, they still must not be determined to be as usurpatory as fortune or fate and must be admitted to have some legitimate application to experience despite not having resulted from it (Guyer, 2010: 119–20). The first constitutive element of critical theory is thus its transcendental dimension. As Strydom (2011: 9) argues, transcendentalism fundamentally distinguishes critical theory from other types of social science such as empirical, realist, and interpretative social sciences. Human beings are often seen as ‘practical, corporeal beings who engage with the world in a restricted number of ways which allow the opening up of different perspectives, interests in knowledge, categorical lines of questioning and constitution of corresponding objects of knowledge as well as intersubjective reflection in the form of argumentation or discourse’ (Strydom, 2011: 9). Critical theory, on the other hand, proceeds from transcendental knowledge which tries

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<sup>14</sup> Kitcher (2006: 48–9) writes: ‘To arrive at items of transcendental knowledge, we look for the conditions on which the possibility of experiential knowledge depends, and the key is to find what remains “if one abstracts from everything empirical in the appearances” (A 96). Hence the general feature of Kant’s “proofs” of the principles he hails as *a priori* lies in their starting with some form of knowledge and using some sort of abstraction or isolation method to strip away the contributions of experience and leave some element that could not have been supplied by experience’.

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to expose the future possibilities for the improvement of the human socio-cultural environment.

The dialectical critique treats the participants' views of their practices dialectically: 'the dialectical critique of reason does not abstractly negate ideas of reason but seeks critically to appropriate them and to enlist them in the struggle for a better world' (Hoy and McCarthy, 1994: 20). This means that the dialectical dimension of critical theory represents some kind of a faculty of judgement, a possible resolution of contradiction: 'Dialectics probes [...] between consciousness and being, subject and object. It did not, indeed could not, pretend to have discovered ontological first principles. It rejected the extremes of nominalism and realism and remained willing to operate in a perpetual state of suspended judg[e]ment' (Jay, 1973: 54). A disputation, as Rescher (1977) calls the background of the dialectic, shows how the validating mechanisms of knowledge work. In dialectics, there is always a proponent, an opponent and a determiner who judges over the conduct of the dispute (Rescher, 1977: 5).

Critical theory has a characteristically normative orientation. It does not stem from nowhere and has clearly set objectives, so it therefore also possesses a strong normative dimension that guides its actions and intentions. Critical theory's normative dimension distinguishes it profoundly from other social sciences and theories: 'Whereas empiricism potentially serves control, governance, planning and social engineering, and interpretativism the clarification of meaning and furthering of understanding, Critical Theory aims at enlightenment, emancipation and transformation, including self-transformation' (Strydom, 2011: 9). It is underlined with a normative basis which contributes to critical theory's broader aim of ending oppression and social injustice, and realising freedom for all. Or, as Honneth (2007: 4) argues: 'Since its primary task is the diagnosis of processes of social development that must be understood as preventing the members of a society from living a "good life," it relies upon criteria of an ethical nature'. But before Honneth's theory of recognition, critical theory lacked a more strongly elaborated normative foundation. Honneth transformed Horkheimer's understanding of critical theory into something that will bring about emancipation to those who are wronged and oppressed. Critical theory must be able to answer a different kind of question, namely, the question of how 'a moral culture could be so constituted as to give those who are victimi[s]ed, disrespected, and ostraci[s]ed the

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individual strength to articulate their experiences in the democratic public sphere, rather than living them out in a counterculture of violence' (Honneth, 2007: 78). What is more, Honneth suggests that critical theory must give an account of what is wrong in society – what the latter's social pathologies and possible moral remedies are. Or, as Finlayson (2009) argues, for this to be possible, the normative position must be broadly moral.

Understood broadly, ontology is concerned with the nature of being. And in this sense, critical theory assumes that social reality is socio-culturally organised 'in an open-ended process of constitution, organi[s]ation, transformation and evolution' (Strydom, 2011: 10).<sup>15</sup> Critical theory's ontological dimension deals with the perception and structure of social reality. Social reality is not understood either in a functional, completely empirical nor solely normative manner: 'This active, processual and temporal conception entails that society cannot simply be regarded as an empirical phenomenon made up, for instance, of regularities, as in empiricism, or of intentions and their expressions, as in interpretativism, but is to be treated as a complex that is dynamically structured by sets of rules and relations which are partly real yet hidden, non-empirical, unobservable and partly counterfactual' (Strydom, 2011: 10). Critical theory focuses on structure formation, its stability and transformation, while privileging those moments of tension, contradiction or conflict in which structure formation becomes a problem or crisis-stricken and therefore an at least potential issue with moral, ethical or political significance. If this issue is resolved through acceptable reasons, it could have a significant impact on the continuing process of constitution in a normatively adequate manner (Strydom, 2011: 10).

The theoretical dimension of critical theory focuses on the fundamental features of social reality and the relations among its components. It adopts the form of social theory to deal with: (1) the relationship between theory and empirical research; (2) the relationship between theory and values or between scientific inquiry and moral

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<sup>15</sup> According to Postone (2004: 166): 'Central to Critical Theory was the view that capitalism was undergoing a fundamental transformation, entailing a changed relationship of state, society, and economy. [...] Whatever their differences, they all shared a fundamentally historical approach to questions of the state, law, politics, and economics. They did not accord ontological status to these dimensions of modern social life, but regarded political, legal, economic, and cultural forms to be intrinsically related, and sought to delineate their historical transformation with the supersession of nineteenth-century liberal capitalism by a new bureaucrati[s]ed form of capitalism in the twentieth century'.

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judgement; and (3) the relationship between academic work and wider society, or between theory and politics (Turner, 2009: 4). Strydom (2011) emphasises critical theory's multidimensional theoretical character and how different theoretical versions of critical theory can be distinguished between. The distinction depends on the choice of the prism through which the theorist posits critical theory's ontology 'in both a concrete situational and a situation-transcendent direction' (Strydom, 2011: 11). One can differentiate between a reconstructive theory, on the one hand, and substantive historical-sociological or materialist theory on the other (Strydom 2011).

The epistemological dimension of critical theory is one of its most important dimensions because it concerns 'assumptions regarding access to reality, the process of cognition and knowledge production, the kind of knowledge sought of reality, the interest in knowledge guiding that search, the inferential modes at play in the acquisition of knowledge, and the intersubjective context in which knowledge is developed and justified' (Strydom, 2011: 11). To this, one may also add history's important relation to epistemology since immanent critique presupposes an understanding of how things stand in relation to tradition (Bronner, 1994: 262–3). 'Critical theories differ epistemologically in essential ways from theories in the natural sciences. Theories in natural science are "objectifying"; critical theories are "reflective"' (Geuss, 1981: 1–2). Strydom (2011: 12) calls critical theory's epistemological position 'pragmatic epistemic realism': 'It accepts that reality is knowable in principle but becomes visible only to the extent that we engage [...] with it through confrontation with problems, threats or challenges, or impact on it through our activities or practices in such a way that we are compelled by the consequences to take it into account'. Reality is neither something that exists completely independently of us and nor something that is completely objective. Critical theory proceeds from a pragmatist assumption, namely, that we experience reality when we 'run up against it under particular experiences and are compelled to form a concept or theory of it which could guide appropriate action; reality exposes us and we expose ourselves for the benefit of learning, problem solving and world creation' (Strydom, 2011). Similarly, Hoy and McCarthy (1994: 139) also warn against preoccupation with theory and the isolated epistemological vocabulary of truth and reality, which forgets to focus on practice and presence.

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Last but not least, the methodological dimension of critical theory plays an especially important role in understanding *how* critical theory works and produces knowledge in social research. The methodology must enable critical theory to criticise problematical or pathological states of affair with a practical effect in the real world. ‘The intersubjective testing and justification of theoretical knowledge and the explanation and critique made possible by it cannot be limited to the traditional positivistically conceived “context of justification” confined to the scientific community alone since, as both critical theorists [...] and pragmatists [...] understand, we are not dealing here with a purely intra-scientific process, but one which is social as well’ (Strydom, 2011: 13). Following Habermas, Strydom (2011: 14) designates critical theory’s methodology as ‘critical theoretical objective explanatory hermeneutic reconstructionism’. Critical theory does not only critically interpret meaning but its methodological nature suggests ‘the critical, interpretative reconstruction of real mechanisms in the context of the development of social structures in socio-historical process’ (Strydom, 2011: 14).<sup>16</sup>

### **2.3 Immanent Critique and Immanent Transcendence: The Future is Always Already in the Present**

#### *2.3.1 Immanent Critique*

Before discussing the concept of immanent transcendence, which is a key concept of critical theory (Strydom, 2011), we need to ask ourselves what immanent critique means. One of the models of critique is the immanent critique, the proponents of which were members of the Frankfurt School. ‘Immanent’ here means remaining within what is criticised. A transcendent critique could be at first glance understood to be the opposite of immanent critique, because something that is transcendent is usually contrary to the immanent. The former criticises an object from the outside, with its own appointed principles, whereas the latter ‘starts out from the principles of the work under discussion itself’ (Jarvis, 1998: 6). Therefore, immanent critique operates from the inside and it is precisely because of this that critical social theory is distinguished from other social theories: ‘The critique of unjust and oppressive social relations is neither unique to

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<sup>16</sup> See section 2.4 on methodology.

critical theory, nor the defining feature of its orientation. Critical theory seeks to identify the potentials for emancipation immanent in the needs of subjects and aims to provide an analysis of contemporary society that apprehends its developmental possibilities' (Browne, 2008: 7). Immanent critique is an essential characteristic of critical social theory: 'It is a methodology that underpins theoretical diagnoses of contemporary society, based on its linking normative and empirical modes of analysis. Immanent critique distinctively seeks to discern emancipatory or democrati[s]ing tendencies' (Browne, 2008: 5). It presumes that existing reality contains a reference to normative ideals, which can serve as an important basis to assess reality's rationality (Bernstein, 1994: 175). It does not appeal to some otherworldly ideals and pursue utopian promises that could only exist beyond humanity.

The immanent or reconstructive critique is neither objectivist nor constructivist. It not only interprets existing principles in a new light but also employs 'normative potentials, such as the potentials for a new society contained within workers' practices of solidarity, or within the shared experience of oppression. These potentials transcend the agreed-upon norms of a society, but are, in some way or another, nevertheless already "immanent" in social reality' (Stahl, 2013: 534). This means that immanent critique always begins its criticism from within society's conventional norms and beliefs or social practices. However, as Sabia (2010) argues, this does not mean that immanent critique is completely conservative since it supposedly tries to preserve established norms and standards. Rather, Sabia (2010: 698) claims that 'immanent critique need not be hostile to the possibility and possible efficacy of universal or cosmopolitan norms thought to be grounded in some culture-independent form of reasoning or foundation, nor to equally ambitious norms admittedly grounded in some alien culture'.

Central to the programme of immanent critique is the critique of ideology. Ideology distorts social reality by legitimising existing irrationalities and thus makes their own claims to truth and rationality – it acknowledges that reality should conform to certain normative ideals (Bernstein, 1994). It is the task of the critique of ideologies to unmask the discrepancy between reality and its ideals (Bernstein, 1994: 175). In doing so, immanent critique also embraces an explicit normative dimension and it is not value-free. It does so through highlighting the incongruity between societal beliefs and actual reality (Gotham, 2007: 96; Gross, 2009: 132). It does not reject the world-as-it-is but

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instead drives the factual reality toward its own highest possibilities, and seeks to turn mere potentiality into actuality (Gross, 2009: 132).

### 2.3.2 *Immanent Transcendence*

Immanent transcendence is the mechanism or methodology by which immanent critique operates. The concept will be briefly introduced here, with the emphasis put on its relation to the methodology of critical theory, but it will be more closely looked at in the fourth chapter. Firstly, a few distinctions must be made, namely, between the world and practices within the world, and between pragmatic presuppositions of communication/action and idealised pragmatic forms standing in tension-laden relation to one another within the world (Strydom, 2011: 97). The latter distinction means the dialectical difference between the world as it is and the world as it could be, and is normatively underpinned. These basic distinctions, as Strydom (2011) calls them, lay down the outer parameters of the concept of immanent transcendence and the basic framework of critical theory. Specifically, the world consists of real (experience, phenomenological, material world) and idealised dimensions, and therefore practices in the social world are driven and changed both by pragmatic presuppositions as well as transcendent ideas of reason. Pragmatic (materialist) presuppositions and transcendence inform on one another and together they build ground for ethical and political aspirations. This is how immanent transcendence works; its essence is in looking at both tangible, existing conditions and the imagination that stems from these conditions.

The world or socio-historical situation consists of three axes: the decisive one concerns the normative quality of the situation that is captured by the concept of immanent transcendence (the difference between the pragmatic presupposition of practices and the idealised presupposition of ideas of reason); the second is agency-structure or lifeworld-system which constitutes the world as a dynamic, structured action situation; and the third axis covers the scope and depth levels of the situation (from micro to macro). ‘[E]stablishment of transcendent pragmatic forms is achieved through social or discursive construction involving fantasy, reflexivity, distantiation and generali[s]ation or universali[s]ation. The resulting normatively potent ideas of redirection of the process

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produced by the actions and practices and of the reali[s]ation to some degree of the normative import guiding it' (Strydom, 2011: 100).

What is the ontological status and the consequent regulative function of transcendent ideas of reason? One must bear in mind that transcendent ideas are not the only ones possessing regulative function in society. Pragmatic forms or socio-practical ideas also play a regulative role in social life (Strydom, 2011: 101). So, if ideas of reason want to possess a regulative role, a balance between wholly transcendental and completely material extremes must be found. Not just balance, a transcendental project must specifically stem from material reality and take into account its socio-historical configuration in order to achieve social transformation. Stahl (2013) also argues that within immanent criticism there is a hermeneutic-type strategy that deals with accepted norms and beliefs, and there is a practice-based strategy that deals with social practices. There can of course be antagonism between immanent pragmatic presuppositions and transcendent counterfactual ideas, which results in tension-laden relation. The latter can be resolved in the actual situation only 'through action and practices of various kinds, depending on circumstances including social interaction, practical discourse, problem solving and transformative collective action, which in the best-case scenario serve as the vehicle of collective learning' (Strydom, 2011: 102). This can be conceived of as a process of practical realisation of the potential of ideas of reason. 'It proceeds by way of both problem solving and world creation, which are necessary for the constitution and organi[s]ation of society' (Strydom, 2011: 102). I would not argue that the relationship between the transcendent and immanent is necessarily tension-laden. It seems to me that the two inform on and need each other, and that the immanent or the immediate life is truly lived only if it is oriented towards what is yet to be, an idealised form of life (Haynes, 2012: 15).

However we look at the relation of immanence and transcendence, there must be a medium through which the practical realisation of reason's ideas take place, and that is usually communication. 'Both Critical Theory and pragmatism stress that it is necessary for the critique or knowledge they produce to be publicly tested or verified, yet the implied communicative framework making it possible is never adequately clarified' (Strydom, 2011: 103). The third-person perspective is often neglected, but the public is necessary for the establishment of the epistemic authority of the emerging rules or

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structures: 'It represents the party [...] who observes and monitors the participants by evaluating, judging and commenting on their communication and behaviour; thus exerting a significant influence on the definition of reality and the related decision making that emerges from the joint communicative process' (Strydom, 2011: 104). Critical theory cannot just appeal to unfulfilled normative claims in the existing social reality as concrete evidence for the necessity and justifiability of critique (Strydom, 2011: 104). The relation between immanence and transcendence must be understood in terms of a deeper dimension of social reality, where the latter means an abiding form of human engagement, experience, interests or practices which simultaneously makes social reproduction possible and points beyond all forms of social organisation (Strydom, 2011: 104). As has been mentioned earlier, previous variations of critical theory anchored their critical engagement in labour, human drives, communication and recognition.

Finally, critical theory can offer a practically significant critique if it successfully explains blockages or distortions of the immanent realisation of transcendent ideas of reason. The factors which prevent the practical realisation of reason's ideas must be identified in order to be surpassed. Such factors or threats cause problems and crises, and therefore usually possess a negative character; but critical theory must recognise in them also their positive role – namely, when identifying such forces, the structures and knowledge of reality are exposed. It is therefore crucial for the project of immanent transcendence that it engages in pinpointing to structural and other problems.

## **2.4 Critical Theory's Methodology**

One of the main vulnerabilities of critical theory is to the question of its scientific status (Morrow and Brown, 1994). Therefore, methodology is a very important aspect of critical theory that needs to be closely investigated, because it is a source of critical theory's credibility and at the same time provides critical theory with a research programme. Critical theory has always stressed the need for linking theory and practice (Forester, 1987), and this reflects also in its methodology. Despite the interdisciplinarity of critical theory's project, sociology has a strong case for centrality because it deals with problems of society as a whole (Morrow and Brown, 1994: 12). It is in a way similar to

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what C. W. Mills (1959: 11) calls sociological imagination: ‘The sociological imagination enables its possessor to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals. It enables him to take into account how individuals, in the welter of their daily experience, often become falsely conscious of their social positions’. This is something that critical theory deals with and its methodology tells us how this is done.

The concept of immanent transcendence, which was introduced in the previous section, represents the core of the methodological structure of critical theory (Strydom, 2011: 135). It dictates the way critical theory operates. Immanent transcendence consists of historically accumulated socio-practical reason and does not embody only some normative idea that resides outside of existing society. Rather, it is ‘emphatically regarded as always already operative in structuring social life by directing and guiding or potentially critically regulating social practices to some degree and in some way’ (Strydom, 2011: 135). Methodologically, then, the concept of immanent transcendence guides critical theory to focus on the dialectical tension between social practices and cultural models, that is, between social reality and transcendent ideas of reason (Strydom, 2011). Besides immanent transcendence, reconstruction is another concept that is crucial for the methodology of critical theory, and that mediates between immanent and transcendent (Strydom, 2011: 135). While immanent transcendence formulates the general methodological structure, reconstruction specifies the methodological direction of critical theory. This direction can be designated as ‘reconstructive explanatory critique’ (Strydom, 2011: 136). Critical theory’s research programme thus consists of combining a metatheoretical approach with a concrete set of empirical explanatory problems (Morrow and Brown, 1994: 86).

The function or methodological implication of immanent transcendence in critical theory’s methodology is threefold.<sup>17</sup> First, reconstruction identifies and makes explicit the structuring force of both pragmatic presuppositions and possibilities of the concrete situation, and the ideas of socio-practical reason, expressed in cultural models. Reconstruction transforms and relates the immanent interpretative moment and the transcendent constructive moment in such a way that the reconstructive-interpretative

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<sup>17</sup> These three implications will be illustrated in the eighth chapter where the application of critical cosmopolitanism is made.

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and the reconstructive-constructive moments support the taking of a critical view both of the concrete situation and of its normative framework (Strydom, 2011: 136–7). Therefore, reconstruction does not mean something final but requires reiteration in the form of moral revising of the move from immanent to transcendent. Reconstruction could perhaps be seen as more connected to the transcendental (because it identifies ideas of reason and structures of life such as communication or recognition) but it has an important role also within the immanent. Specifically, the role of reconstruction is to indicate the relevant possibilities in the actual situation and is therefore based on pre-theoretical knowledge. Reconstruction or reconstructive science is somewhere between purely empirical and transcendental. It rejects absolutist foundationalism and dogmatic antifoundationalism and, rather, tries to link *is* and *ought* in such a way that social analysis becomes connected to ethical imperatives (Morrow and Brown, 1994: 152–3). For instance, if cosmopolitanism claims that the rights and the needs of the marginalised (in whatever way) are not adequately recognised and realised, it is making an empirical claim. However, in such an empirical claim there is also a normative one, which implies that which ought to be. Reconstruction can do this in two forms of critique – a negative exposing and a positive disclosing critique:

‘Immanent reconstructive critique takes a negative form in targeting what is amiss with the self-understanding of actors, their orientations, practices, relations and institutions, and a positive form in disclosing new possibilities, interpretations, orientations, modes of organi[s]ation, or protest or transformative potentials available in the situation. Transcendent reconstructive critique takes a negative form in exposing distorted, ideological, naturali[s]ed or reified and such features of socio-practical ideas of reason or cultural models, and a positive form in disclosing surpluses of meaning contained in ideas of reason or cultural models that are ignored, only partially or selectively used in practice or not recogni[s]ed at all’ (Strydom, 2011: 137–8).

The second methodological implication of the concept of immanent transcendence refers to the theoretical significance of the concept and its explanatory ability. It concerns not only a concrete situation in the social world but also an instance of a force deeply rooted in concrete social life that determinedly exerts pressure towards transgressing, transforming and overcoming the status quo (Strydom, 2011: 138). Recognising a concrete problem in social reality is followed by an explanation which identifies the interferences causing that specific problem. For instance, the insufficient rights of the marginalised is a concrete problem in today’s world, and an explanatory

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critique's task is to find the interferences or blockages that are causing and upholding such a situation. It looks at the reconstructed structures and tries to find normative forces that have been corrupted. In the case of the rights of the marginalised the corrupted normative force would be deficient recognition, for instance. An example of an explanatory critique is, for instance, a genealogical critique which claims that power relations not only distort knowledge but that knowledge is rooted in power relations (Morrow and Brown, 1994: 135).

The third methodological implication of the concept of immanent transcendence is the nature of the socio-historical situation. This means that different contexts need to be taken into account methodologically in approaching a social situation that represents the object of critical theory (Strydom, 2011: 142). A situation is structured across three dimensions. First, immanent transcendence constitutes the normative dimension of the situation to which critical theory gives priority. Second, the lifeworld-system or agency-structure dimension represents the dynamic temporal dimension of the situation. And third, the micro-meso-macro dimension is the spatial dimension that captures the scope and depth of the situation. All these need to be taken into account when criticising an actual situation in social reality. This is because knowing the different dimensions of reality is very important methodologically. The dimensions stretch from the superficial empirical level, through the objective level of the actual concrete situation and its real structuring or generative mechanisms, to the level of reality as validated and collectively accepted as such (Strydom, 2011: 146). These dimensions also presuppose a particular engagement with reality. For instance, a social conflict affects the knowledge producer who undergoes sensations and has a vague perception of the situation. This qualitative impression opens up an access route to the object, and finally, the resulting concept, theory formation, critique and explanation are tested and validated in the communication community (Strydom, 2011: 149).

#### *2.4.1 Application of Methodology*

Critical theory's methodology mirrors the processes of knowledge and meaning production which form social practices whereby society is created and reproduced. As part of these social practices, critical theory contributes to problem-solving and world-

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creation to the extent that it is communicatively connected with its addressees (Strydom, 2011: 152). Strydom (2011) therefore develops three interrelated (through mediation and interpretation) methodological moments, which can, among other things, serve as a basis for demonstrating an application, and which will be used later in the thesis when making an application of cosmopolitanism as critical theory.

The first of these methodological moments is ‘problem disclosure and constitution’. The methodological priority is given to problems, crises, pathologies and threats, and this is where the process of critical theorising begins. However, critical theory does not commence its investigation simply with an arbitrary problem or some given challenge.<sup>18</sup> It ‘depends on some occurrence, development or change in the objective context of life or society itself to give rise to a phenomenon of some kind that offers those involved a glimpse of a relevant structural or generative aspect of social reality and thus a privileged access route to acquire an understanding of it’ (Strydom, 2011: 152). An instance of suffering, expression of moral indignation, resistance, struggle, conflict or the like opens up the possibility of gaining knowledge of the structural mechanisms generating social reality. When such knowledge is gained, the erroneous or taken-for-granted assumptions that build social reality are revealed and a new perspective on social reality is recognised. Knowledge production is connected to practice, and not only certain problems or conflicts are disclosed but also new perspectives on the possible structuration or production of reality open up (Strydom, 2011: 154). The world gets disclosed in a way that may begin a formation of new experiences, action and knowledge. To be able to do this, one needs to employ relational thinking, which connects agents and structure, micro and macro perspectives, and immanent and transcendent dimensions of social reality. Opening up reality to scrutiny is the main goal of the first methodological moment. Problems, crises, deformations and pathologies are identified and prepared for an adequate critique. An example of such problem disclosure would be the study of social pathologies which prevent people from living a ‘good life’ (Honneth, 2007). Examples of social phenomena would be depersonalisation, commodification, alienation and so on. These have become social living conditions

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<sup>18</sup> Critical theory allows us to make selective choices about what is regarded as an ‘appropriate’ problem to tackle. Following the concept of immanent transcendence, there is a preference towards ‘problems arising in the wake of the deformation or prevention of the historical process of the actual social reali[s]ation of reason’ (Strydom, 2011: 152).

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which prevent human beings' self-realisation. Such damaging social reality is in need of an analysis, both normatively and critically.

The second methodological moment is the so-called 'diagnostic reconstructive explanatory critique' which means an engagement with critical theory's object. Whereas the first methodological moment focuses on some quality of reality, the second one shifts to the identification of the problem in question in the context of the real social situation. The engagement with the object requires, firstly, a diagnostic analysis; secondly, reconstruction that involves both reconstructive explanation and critique; and thirdly, explanatory critique (Strydom, 2011: 158). The diagnosis begins with a comprehensive description (micro-macro, agency-structure, lifeworld-system dimensions) of the actual social situation. However, critical theory is not just interested in describing the actual situation but also in the structures and mechanisms that generate it. This is where not only description but also reconstruction is needed. Reconstruction, as discussed earlier, identifies and makes explicit structuring and generating forces. It can be employed in a genealogical manner. In this way, a corrupted normative idea can be made explicit. What precisely is reconstructed is dependent on what is recognised as the immanent force rooted deeply in concrete social life (labour, communication, recognition, for instance), which aims at transforming the *status quo*. Reconstruction also needs to relate the reconstructed immanent and transcendent structures of the situation in a manner that shows how they mutually contribute to the constitution of the social practices. The reconstructive explanatory model is methodologically important in two ways: 'first, it forms a basis for a reconstructive critique of the situation and, second, it opens the way for the culmination point of the second moment of Critical Theory's methodology, namely explanatory critique' (Strydom, 2011: 157). Explanatory critique has the task of accounting for whatever causes the social pathology. It focuses on what explains the problem, namely the real causal structure or mechanism representing the deforming factor or blockage that could be transformed to allow a more adequate and justifiable practical reali[s]ation of socio-practical rationality' (Strydom, 2011: 158). Explanation in such a critique is of a 'postempiricist' type, which means that it not only empirically depicts a situation and without resorting to common sense to make sense of it,<sup>19</sup> but that it also tries to avoid such interpretivist reductions. There are two types of explanatory

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<sup>19</sup> Critique should not only be concerned with empirical practices, because becoming absorbed only in micro analysis can lead to a loss of focus for macro analysis (Delanty, 2011: 71).

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critique or two explanatory strategies. The first one assumes a causal form, and the second one is more related to understanding (*Verstehen*) (Morrow and Brown, 1994: 249). The former identifies the generative mechanisms that underlie the historical production of a studied phenomenon; and the latter involves identification of empirical regularities as embodied in the narrative structures of texts and actions.

The third methodological moment works with the outcome of the first and second one, and it is called ‘scientific-public validation and practical application’. It is communicatively mediated and thus publicly oriented. What has been discovered in the second methodological moment needs to be subjected to (scientific) validation, which means that it needs to go through discursive practice and argumentation. This validation does not have consequences only in the scientific context; it also has social and public significance since critical theory contributes to problem-solving and world-creation in society. By undergoing the validity procedure, critical theory moves away from adopting a possible dogmatic position, and exposes itself to criticism and testing (Strydom, 2011: 158–60). Critical theory engages in communication as a form of action because it ‘communicates an ethical orientation for action, a context-transcendent reference point, a norm to follow in order to attain a problem-solving or world-creating goal which in some sense entails self-transformation and the transformation of reality’ (Strydom, 2011: 160). Critical theorists expose the questionable, taken-for-granted assumptions about social practice to the public. Everyday social practices do not change quickly, but with enough patience and critical stamina, such systemic critics can and do contribute to social transformations. In the end, it all depends on how the public receives and accepts constructive criticism and contributions to the moral development of societies, and how these contribute to the beginning of self-transformation.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, conceptual sources of contemporary critical theory have been studied. In the first part, an overview of the concepts that form early critical theory and set the foundation for its tradition was made. The discussion began with the Frankfurt School, and autonomy, reflection and emancipation were identified as the core and fundamental concepts of critical theory. The second part discussed seven unique

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dimensions that structure critical theory, and the third part dealt with the key concept of immanent transcendence. It was shown that the latter not only shapes the distinctive character of critical theory, but that it is also instrumental to its methodology and the way critical theory functions. The last part of the chapter showed that a conceptualised sense of critical theory's methodology is possible despite its usual fragmented and disunited character.

The next chapter will focus on a particular strand of critical theory, that is, Axel Honneth's critical theory and his conceptualisation of recognition. Recognition and thus Honneth's critical theory seem especially similar to cosmopolitanism in the way that they both possess a strong normative dimension that helps them identify people's plights as well as structural factors that prevent people from leading good lives.

**CHAPTER 3****ELEMENTS AND METHODOLOGY OF AXEL HONNETH'S  
CRITICAL THEORY**

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**A**xel Honneth is a critical theorist of the third generation of the Frankfurt School, and his normative project continues this tradition and at the same time importantly enhances it. Even though his critical theory does not form a coherent system, this chapter will nonetheless try to illuminate those elements of his theory that seem the most fundamental and constitutive of his thought. The aim is to understand how his critical theory works as well as what its goals and principles are. Such systematic exposition of Honneth's critical theory will give us an understanding of how and why it is different from preceding types of critical theory, as well as prepare the ground for further study of cosmopolitanism as critical theory. In this way, we will come to know which elements should be present in cosmopolitanism if we are to link it with Honneth's theory. The chapter starts with an analysis of the central approach that forms the basis of Honneth's critical theory, that is, social philosophy; and continues, following Deranty (2011), with identifying his theory's three main dimensions: normative, social and political. The chapter ends with an investigation of Honneth's methodology, where most importance is given to the concept of immanent transcendence.

**3.1 Social Philosophy as the Core of Critical Theory**

To define what social philosophy exactly means or does is rather difficult. It is not an all-encompassing theory or well-established discipline, but one that is actually always 'incomplete, relatively open and, therefore, [...] temporary, theoretically "imperfect", "non-systematic" and vulnerable' (Morkūnienė, 2004: 1). Nevertheless, social philosophy has an object of investigation, goals, functions, and methods of its own, and it is therefore distinct from other disciplines (Morkūnienė, 2004). We could (albeit, somewhat simplistically) argue that contemporary social philosophy possesses two main functions: first, it analyses social phenomena in theoretical terms; and, second, it articulates principles that play the role of methodological criteria in evaluating social

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progress and serve as a basis for action (Morkūnienė, 2004: 7). However, the principal exceptionality of social philosophy lies somewhere else. Namely, it looks for those occurrences in the social world that are often neglected by other disciplines, but it is nevertheless so important that without social philosophy's work, other similar disciplines would not be able to exist.<sup>20</sup> Or, as Morkūnienė (2004: 17) puts it: 'Social philosophy can begin asking the kind of questions which others might overlook, and it appreciates the fact that there are no strictly technical solutions for any of the social problems. The fundamental principles of social philosophy allow one to see the new forms, potentials and human developments that others do not see'.

Axel Honneth bases his critical theory on the subject of social philosophy. In his book, *Disrespect: The Normative Foundations of Critical Theory* (2007), he explicates the development of this field of study, identifies its current precarious situation, and therefore tries to counteract the latter by defining social philosophy as being concerned with 'processes of social development that can be viewed as misdevelopments [...], disorders or "social pathologies"' (Honneth, 2007: 4). Whereas in a Hobbesian understanding of the social world, the focus is set on questions of self-preservation and maintaining the social order, in social philosophy these shift to questions of the good life and the ethical dimensions of our social lives. Special importance is given to distinguishing between not only what is just and unjust, but also and especially under which conditions human beings can flourish.<sup>21</sup> Honneth (2007: 4) sees Jean-Jacques Rousseau as the founder of the tradition of social philosophy, a tradition that emphasises self-realisation instead of mere self-preservation. This means that if one wants to identify what is wrong or unjust in society, one must focus on those processes of social development that prevent members of society from flourishing and living a good life (Honneth, 2007: 4). Justice is therefore not something that only pertains to legal and moral principles that form a purportedly impeccable order of justice. In this way, understanding of justice is expanded – it includes consideration of the social conditions that make justice possible and those that make it impossible (Deranty, 2009: 320). Justice is therefore understood in the context of

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<sup>20</sup> As Gaus (1999) understands it, social philosophy sets the ground for political and legal philosophy, as well as links ethics with political philosophy. He (1999: xiii) writes that 'it [social philosophy] is not concerned with what is of value, with personal ideals, or with the evaluation of people's lives and characters. Its subject matter is those moral standards that can be justified to all, and that regulate social life among strangers'.

<sup>21</sup> Honneth (2007: 5) argues: 'Unlike political philosophy, it [social philosophy] would no longer seek out the conditions of a correct or just social order, but instead would attempt to ascertain the limitations that this new form of life imposed on humans' self-realisation'.

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social life, and not only as normatively correct if pertaining to chosen moralities: 'Social philosophy in this sense therefore entails a critique of the social-cultural order based on the idea that fateful directions in the development of modern society lead to distortions of human potentials and capacities, and produce socially induced suffering' (Deranty, 2009: 321). Honneth's understanding of social philosophy in this way therefore profoundly impacts upon his account of critical theory, its object and methodology.

As it is clear by now, critical social philosophy does not address distortions in social development simply in terms of a binary distinction between justice and injustice. To do so would mean to appeal to certain norms that unmistakably distinguish between what is just and unjust, but at the same time limit the understanding of why such distortions happen at all and what their consequences are. Social philosophy approaches the question of justice differently, that is, with a much broader understanding of what constitutes justice. It not only focuses on the criteria of justice/injustice (which can often be very narrowly defined and concern only redistribution, for instance), but expands its research scope by investigating social phenomena in their particularity.<sup>22</sup> The benefit of conducting research into social pathologies in this way can be summarised in two points: first, it brings to light the distorted social or institutional practices that led to injustice in the first place; and, second, it understands suffering in a much wider sense and therefore detects those forms of suffering that do not necessarily breach the principles of justice but nevertheless exist and are felt by subjects (Varga and Gallagher, 2012: 244).

The main task of social philosophy as a critical social theory is therefore to identify those social developments that can be deemed to be social pathologies – that is, being not only unjust but foremost preventing people from leading and living a good life. In order to identify such distortions of social life, social philosophy needs to possess a strong normative framework, on the basis of which it judges potential pathological social developments (Varga and Gallagher, 2012: 245). What exactly is meant by good life is

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<sup>22</sup> Sen (2009) distinguishes between two understandings of justice, the second of which seems to be very similar to the one of social philosophy. He presents an approach to justice, with emphasis given to the actual lives of human beings, and not to institutions or norms. He focuses on the lives that people are able to lead under certain conditions. The aim of one of the understandings of justice is to identify perfect and just social institutions for a given society. Such theory of justice can be named the 'contractarian approach' or 'transcendental institutionalism' (Sen, 2009: 5), because the idea is about a social contract and its institutions that would ensure social justice. On the contrary, a 'comparative approach' is aimed at 'making the comparisons between different ways in which people's lives may be lead, influenced by institutions but also by people behaviour, social interactions and other significant determinants' (Sen, 2009: xvi).

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of course very difficult, if not impossible, to outline. But the truth is that social pathologies can only be discovered if we already have an idea of which conditions are necessary for human self-realisation and how these conditions are constituted (Honneth, 2007: 34). Such a normative guideline in Honneth's critical theory is the 'feeling of injustice'. Since domination and oppression do not always appear in overt forms, it is necessary to acknowledge such a normative guideline that is able to overcome the structural prevention of suffering becoming explicit. It is important to know that the feeling of injustice is not some arbitrarily chosen personal feeling, and that it does not point to some 'vague malaise, or a superficial psychological discomfort or irritation' (Deranty, 2009: 318). Rather, it points to a breach of some normative dimension that injured the subject's dignity, and that a subject consequently experiences as an injustice. Not all suffering is of course also injustice. But when suffering, be it physical or of another kind, carries also some normative content and is disrespectful to a person's or group's dignity, then such suffering can be considered as misrecognition. Domination and exploitation understood in terms of misrecognition or a denial of recognition result in denying 'the moral value of the person, her integrity, rights or social value' (Deranty, 2009: 318).<sup>23</sup>

To emphasise the distinctiveness of the area of social philosophy, it is perhaps useful to contrast it with social theory and understand the main difference. Social theory usually begins its task with studying social reality and phenomena, and then drawing theory from it and theorising about it. On the other hand, social philosophy starts with theorising and remains at the level of theory, where it studies and clarifies the concepts used by social theory (Deranty, 2009: 332). Honneth's most important question in this regard is therefore how 'to obtain the conceptual framework for an analysis which is capable both of coming to grips with the structure of social domination as well as with identifying the social resources for its practical transformations' (Honneth in Pedersen, 2012: 634). Honneth uses recognition as a critical normative concept which is constructed for empirical analyses giving these investigations simultaneously a normative and a descriptive function – the task of social philosophy is therefore to

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<sup>23</sup> Deranty (2009: 322) identifies concepts that diagnose social pathologies and the destruction of those conditions that are necessary for human flourishing. Critical theorists have used different concepts, such as alienation, bifurcation, reification, nihilism, rationalisation, *anomie*, discipline, colonisation of life-worlds, and misrecognition.

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reconstruct critical normative concepts and make them appropriate for empirical use (Pedersen, 2012: 636).

### 3.2 Historical and Normative Underpinnings

As Deranty (2011) claims, the model of Honneth's critical theory rests on a historical-conceptual thesis about modernity. Modernity and normative progress within it are understood to be a historical fact, which means that Honneth sees modernity and the development of communities as moral progress. In such modern societies, social values and norms are not of transcendent origin anymore but are constructed in accordance with individual freedom and essential norms of value plurality (Deranty, 2011: 60–1). Honneth sees post-traditional communities as those that harbour and uphold these norms, and make democratic political life possible as well as guard the freedom of individuals. The debate of what community means, and what role is ascribed to it in relation to an individual is particularly lively among so-called liberals and communitarians. Each of these holds their own definition and priorities when it comes to the debate about community vs. individual. However, despite the differences in their viewpoints as to what is more important in society, Honneth claims that they do agree on one thing – that community must possess a normative character:

‘If we take a look at the current confrontation between liberals and communitarians, we will quickly reali[s]e that most of the representatives of both positions appear to have reached agreement on an essential point: without a certain degree of common attachment to overarching values, i.e., without what we might call a social community of value or, to take a less freighted term, a form of cultural life, a democratic society's ability to function cannot be guaranteed’ (Honneth, 2007: 254).

The integration of society no longer occurs via top-down values, that is, values that were imposed on society from above, either from some religious leaders or other political and authoritarian figures. Such metaphysical, strict norms were once indisputable, but in modernity the contestation over what norms should govern and form societies has become more overt and common. According to Deranty (2011: 61), a double structural transformation occurs: first, social integration does not happen vertically, ‘along the hierarchical scale of values and norms’ anymore, but horizontally through conflict of

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plural value statements competing for the recognition as valid ways of achieving the ethical aims; and second, while obtaining social esteem a process of individualisation occurs (Deranty, 2011: 61) because each individual is seen in his or her particularity. The ethical values get pluralised so acquiring the social status is no longer a matter of group possession (Deranty, 2011: 61).

The paradigm of recognition is a historical fact. Honneth (2007: 80) sees the link between normative theoretical intention and historically situated morality as a central issue of critical theory. He argues that both Adorno and Marcuse were unable to imagine a morality that arises from socio-structural conflicts, whereas he identifies the morality in struggles for recognition. In short,<sup>24</sup> the full identity of a subject is formed only through all three practical relations to oneself, that is, self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem. These can be acquired only intersubjectively and depend on the establishment of relationships of mutual recognition: relationships of love, legal relations of respect, and relations of solidarity (Anderson in Honneth, 1996: xi–xii). These relationships are not just ahistorically prearranged, but have had to be established through social struggles (Honneth, 1996). Honneth (1996) specifically emphasises that these struggles are not just utilitarian in nature and they do not just happen because of the certain interests of people. If we understood social conflicts, struggles and aspirations only in terms of peoples' interests, then the motivational factor would not be as strong – people rarely gather in groups and struggle for social change if only pragmatic interests are at play. Therefore, rather, Honneth explains such struggles in terms of moral feelings. Human beings encounter each other with some expectations for mutual recognition. Our moral experiences are consequently the basis of our social interaction and feelings of disrespect or injustice can therefore lead to collective action if they are experienced by 'an entire circle of subjects as typical for their social situation' (Honneth, 1996: 165).

Critical theory needs to possess a strong normative point of view that points to a desirable end-state. The latter does not have to be or, even, must not be an absolute and exclusive imposition from above, but has to be a less rigid, more democratic endeavour to build a better social world. Honneth understands such a desired end-state in the so-called ethical or good life. In this way, he departs from the Kantian understanding of

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<sup>24</sup> The paradigm of recognition will be more thoroughly explored in the fifth chapter.

morality, that is, the understanding of the moral autonomy of individuals, but, focuses, rather, on the conditions that make self-realisation of subjects possible. To avoid an authoritarian, historically particular conception of a good life, he (1996: 171–3) avoids identifying substantive values that should form a good life or a society, but rather stays on a formal or abstract enough level in order not to endorse any particular interpretation of good life.

‘Rather, it has to do with the structural elements of ethical life, which, from the general point of view of the communicative enabling of self-realisation, can be normatively extracted from the plurality of all particular forms of life. To this extent, insofar as we have developed it as a normative concept, our recognition-theoretic approach stands in the middle between a moral theory going back to Kant, on the one hand, and communitarian ethics, on the other. It shares with the former the interest in the most general norms possible, norms which are understood as conditions for specific possibilities; it shares with the latter, however, the orientation towards human self-realisation as an end’ (Honneth, 1996: 172-3).

Honneth derives his conception of such post-traditional, postmetaphysical, democratic ethical life from both early Hegel and Mead. He follows and in a way advances these two authors’ ideas in envisioning a society ‘in which the universalistic achievements of equality and individualism would be so embedded in patterns of interaction that all subjects would be recogni[s]ed as both autonomous and individuated, equal and particular persons’ (Honneth, 1996: 175). The relations of recognition are one of the ways in which this can be achieved. Through instances of recognition, subjects can attain their self-realisation, which is a precondition of fulfilled ethical life. And since relations of recognition are never ahistorical but develop precisely from within, in accordance with and through specific historical occurrences, the conception of ethical life, too, is historically grounded yet formal enough to retain its impartiality.<sup>25</sup> Such a

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<sup>25</sup> Petherbridge (2013: 168) writes: ‘Such an orientation towards ethical values is, however, not intended to provide a substantive notion of the “good life.” Rather, Honneth wants to account for a notion of ethical life in formal terms only: the three interdependent patterns of recognition are intended to account for successful self-realisation in an abstract manner in an effort to avoid embodying particular visions of the good life. The anthropological structures of recognition are intended to provide a context-transcending claim to validity that is universally applicable regardless of historical or socio-cultural context. The forms of recognition associated with love, rights, and achievement as Honneth presents them, therefore, “do not represent established institutional structures but only general patterns of behaviour, they can be distilled, as structural elements, from the concrete totality of forms of life.” Honneth suggests such a theoretical proposal cannot expect to determine once and for all which values might constitute an ethical life. The development of substantive values must be left open to historical change and to the future of social struggles’.

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formal conception of ethical life, which is expressed and realised through relations of recognition, offers a much broader understanding of what needs to be fulfilled in order for subjects to lead a good life. If we only speak of, for instance, individual autonomy, it gives us few guiding points of how to build an ethical life. Especially conventional theories of justice often focus only on redistribution of goods in order to supposedly ensure individual autonomy and enable one to lead their life as they wish. Honneth (2012: 39–50) thinks that such procedural theories of justice are not ambitious enough in considering what makes up a just social order. On the contrary, recognition possesses strong normative underpinning as well as fulfilling intersubjective conditions that are necessary for individual self-realisation. Autonomy is a relational entity and it is achieved intersubjectively (Honneth, 2012: 41). Honneth's 'own means of articulating the necessary structural conditions for a formal concept of ethical life is provided by the connection he makes between the necessary experience of the three forms of intersubjective recognition, the three corresponding forms of self-relation, and the forms of social organisation required to ensure successful self-realisation' (Petherbridge, 2011: 16).

### 3.3 Social and Ontological Elements

A strong social dimension is a very important element of Honneth's critical theory.<sup>26</sup> He argues that previous critical theorists have all tended to marginalise it,<sup>27</sup> and therefore his critical theory embodies a strong account of the social. The latter is much needed in order to be able to understand the reproduction of society through conflicts between social groups, which are themselves the products of members' struggles (Anderson, 2011: 48). He has been critical of the inclination to measure the apparent 'health' or 'sickness' of a society only in terms of the yardstick of rationality – the problem with such a perspective 'is that pathologies that do not pertain to the cognitive dimensions of human beings cannot come to light at all, thereby resulting in a one-dimensional philosophical anthropology and an inadequate basis for social critique' (Rundell et al., 2004: 15). Honneth (1991: 100) thinks that it is thus important for critical theorists to

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<sup>26</sup> Honneth thinks that the social should supply critical theory with normative and practical orientation (Baynes in Honneth, 1991: ix).

<sup>27</sup> Honneth (1991: 100) claims that 'critical theory seems to have renounced the theoretical possibility of determining whether, and to what degree, social groups actively participate in the integration of society'.

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take into account the struggles of social groups and he illustrates the reason with the following analogy:

‘A conception of critical theory that is connected to the disciplines of political economy and psychoanalysis in a merely external manner loses sight of the everyday cultural action of social groups in the same way that a psychoanalytically supported concept of the totally administered society loses sight of the consensual basis of administrative domination. Both ignore the cognitive and moral synthetic accomplishments of which social groups are capable through the cooperative interpretive efforts of their members’.

Of course, as Anderson (2011: 49) warns, a question remains as to how progressive group struggles for recognition are. However, Honneth is fairly optimistic about how such agonistic events propel progressive historical development. Nevertheless, the main point in arguing that critical theorists should take into consideration the social when evaluating the condition of society is that it offers one a much broader perspective into why and how pathologies occur. One also needs to take into account that both subjectivity and rationality cannot be studied in their isolated form anymore, but must be understood as being constructed intersubjectively and therefore their development be dependent on other people and other factors.

Honneth's critical theory embraces the intersubjectivistic turn proposed by Habermas (the detranscendentalisation of a subject), though he extends and further develops Habermas' paradigm of communication (Petherbridge, 2011: 5). While he endorses the move from instrumental to communicative reason, Honneth nevertheless does not ground his theory of intersubjectivity in linguistics like Habermas does, but instead bases it on recognition. As Petherbridge (2013: 14) observes, the difference between Habermas' and Honneth's project is that whereas the former mostly analyses speech, the latter understands intersubjectivity more anthropologically in terms of subject-formation. Intersubjectivity thus becomes an entirely new understanding of the social. Crossley (1996: 173) defines intersubjectivity as a generative principle of our identities, agency and society: ‘We are inter-subjects. Our actions and thoughts aren't reducible to us alone. They are moves in a game which has many players, responses to a call to action which is expressed in every gesture of the other. And their significance is precisely constituted through their place in that game’. Crossley (1996: 174) further thinks that to talk about intersubjectivity means to actually talk about social life:

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'To think about intersubjectivity and to tackle the problems it poses as a concept is to confront the very question of social life itself. It is to unpick the fabric of social life and to wonder how it ever fits together in the first place, how we ever manage to coordinate ourselves through time and space, sharing thoughts and meanings, agreeing enough at least to disagree. It is to wonder what thought, meaning and action actually are, such that they can be shared or joint. It is to wonder how the human organism can ever be involved in anything which transcends its spatial boundaries. These are not just academic questions, even if they have a strong academic aspect. They are ultimately also existential questions about our very being (my being and your being particularly). To confront the question of intersubjectivity is to consider the type of beings that we are and the sort of world to which we belong.

As Deranty (2009: 136–7) argues, we need to distinguish between two different dimensions of intersubjectivity which are essential for Honneth and stem from Husserl's writings: 'First, "intersubjectivity" designates the special problem of the constitution of the meaning of others, the mystery of the apperception of another body as a lived, intentionally enlivened organism. Secondly, intersubjectivity designates more generally the "intersubjective community" in which the ego is always already embedded and which already appears with the primordial forms of intentionality, at the level of passive genesis'. So, on the one hand, intersubjectivity refers to our perception and constitution of the Other and, on the other hand, it denotes the nature of the community where subjects are formed and conditioned by it. Besides different dimensions of intersubjectivity, the latter also possesses several meanings. Deranty (2009: 146–50) distinguishes its meanings with regards to 1) perception, 2) the Other, 3) the social, and 4) communication. Intersubjectivity as a perception understands the objective world as a consequence of multiple perspectives. Secondly, intersubjectivity can also be understood as an ethical encounter with the Other. In the realm of the social, the emphasis is given to the understanding of how a subject develops his or her autonomy in contexts that are always already pre-constituted. And lastly, intersubjectivity is connected to the communicative, where the focus is on the organisation of agents' actions through a process of communication that ideally results in understanding (Deranty, 2009: 150).

Intersubjectivity consists of the 'dimensions of sharing and commonality that are constitutive of the objective world' (Deranty, 2009: 137). Though sharing and commonality are important aspects of intersubjectivity, we must also emphasise that

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intersubjectivity and plurality<sup>28</sup> of the world are closely interconnected as well. The world is intersubjective when it is fabricated through people's thinking, actions, judgements and relations with other people. In this way, we construct our social and political world while the world also poses some conditions on us. Plurality is one such consequence, for instance. Whatever we do or make in the common world, we have to realise that we live together with other people. This is a political conception of plurality that allows us to re-establish the common world. The social world and its constitution are no longer understood through subject-object relations but through subject-subject relations.

For Honneth, practical relations-to-self (self-confidence, self-respect, and self-esteem) are 'not a matter of a solitary ego appraising itself, but an *intersubjective* process, in which one's attitude towards oneself emerges in one's encounter with an other's attitude toward oneself' (Anderson in Honneth, 1996: xii). The self in Honneth's critical theory is therefore intersubjectively conceptualised, in which the possibility of an undistorted relation to oneself proves to be dependent on three forms of recognition: love, rights, and esteem' (Honneth, 1996: 1). In this respect, he follows Hegel in asserting that the recognition of one's individuality can only be achieved intersubjectively (Honneth, 1996: 17). Such recognition of individuality does not only comprise of the recognition of the individual's autonomy but also of the individual's specific needs as well as particular capabilities (Honneth, 2004: 363). In connection to that, Honneth (2009: 25) understands social pathologies as deviations 'from the ideal that would be achieved with the social actuali[s]ation of the rational universal' and at the same time as the 'loss of prospects for intersubjective self-actuali[s]ation'. The concept of recognition actually has a double meaning – it accounts both for the individual's self-formation or self-realisation and 'more encompassing forms of sociali[s]ation and social institutions' (Petherbridge, 2013: 81). Recognition's normative foundation is grounded anthropologically by intersubjective conditions, which are the prerequisites for identity-formation and self-realisation on the one hand, and the development of ethical life on the other (Petherbridge, 2013: 81).

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<sup>28</sup> As Arendt (1978: 19) beautifully writes: 'Nothing and nobody exists in this world whose very being does not presuppose a spectator. In other words, nothing that is, insofar it appears, exists in the singular; everything that is meant to be perceived by somebody. Not Man but men inhabit this planet. Plurality is the law of the earth'.

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### 3.4 Political Aspects

Honneth's critical theory also carries a strong political connotation. As has already been mentioned in the previous section, the fact that Honneth builds his theory on a very political understanding of the social world, that is, through intersubjectivity, already attests to the political underpinning of his critical theory. The main two political goals or two political ideals of his critical theory are even greater autonomy of individuals and at the same time the elimination of oppression (Deranty, 2011: 70). Like in the Frankfurt School tradition, Honneth also focuses his research on finding the emancipatory interest within social reality. He looks for the possibility of emancipatory struggle and critique within the realm of everyday human experience, rather than in the detached, radical theory of intellectuals (Anderson in Honneth 1996: xi).<sup>29</sup> He does not look for sources of emancipation in often inaccessible ideals of reality, but is committed to locating it in precisely those conditions, phenomena or reason that have hitherto blocked it. If our rationality is distorted by capitalist society we need to start to administer therapy precisely where the pathology began: 'The forces that contribute to the overcoming of the social pathology are supposed to stem from precisely that reason whose actuali[s]ation is impeded by the form of organi[s]ation present in capitalist society' (Honneth, 2009: 36). Honneth draws the idea from Freud and acknowledges his significance for critical theory: 'It is from his psychoanalytic theory that Critical Theory takes the thought that social pathologies must always express themselves in a type of suffering that keeps alive the interest in the emancipatory power of reason' (Honneth, 2009: 36).

The political aspect of Honneth's critical theory is also expressed in the way he theorises subjectivity. Subjects are perceived as active and responsive agents that are capable of using their rationality to make changes in society. 'Without a realistic concept of "emancipatory interest" that puts at its center the idea of an indestructible core of

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<sup>29</sup> Petherbridge (2011: 2) writes: 'For the critical theorist to avoid claiming a privileged or paternalistic position, the emancipatory instance or experience that compels social change must be identified within the existing social order and must be of the same normativity or rationality that becomes manifest in new forms of social organisation. A pre-theoretical interest must "be regarded as a moment of socially embodied reason insofar as it possesses a surplus of rational norms or organizational principles that press for their own reali[s]ation". For Honneth this pre-theoretical condition is identified in a recognition-theoretical stance that provides the normative ground from which critical assessments of social life can be made'.

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rational responsiveness on the part of subjects, this critical project will have no future' (Honneth, 2009: 41–2). People have an interest in their own emancipation – such interest is namely 'entailed in the intersubjectivistic premise: if individuals, as intersubjectively constituted, are intersubjectively vulnerable, it follows that the subjects' interest in avoiding suffering entails the interest in freeing themselves from the social conditions causing their suffering' (Deranty, 2011: 71). This intersubjective constitution of a subject has for its consequence the 'communicative liquefaction of the ego', which means that the subject constantly moves from inner and outer reality in order to explore and find new aspects of his or her identity (Petherbridge, 2013: 158). In this way, that is, understanding subjectivity in communicative terms, the subject's possibilities are pluralised, as is his or her identity.

As Pilapil (2013: 49) acknowledges, the violation of recognition *can* be a strong motivation for political resistance, but at the same time he warns that this link is not necessarily so direct and obvious. The creation and development of political resistance are very complex and to claim that personal experience of disrespect automatically leads to political resistance is a bit too far-fetched. Of course the feeling of being disrespected or denied recognition must not only happen to an individual but must be something that is felt on a group level. Only when a group of people is marginalised and they can find a way to express their suffering together and publicly can the collective demand for recognition begin. Pilapil (2013: 58) puts it well when he argues that the birth of political resistance depends on many factors and is a result of different actions, relations and structural possibilities: 'engaging in political resistance cannot be regarded as the spontaneous effect of social or moral suffering. The emergence of any political struggle does not only depend on the existing political or institutional climate but also on the existential conditions in which political actors find themselves'.

Honneth's search for pre-theoretical emancipatory interest reflects his methodological commitment to intramundane or immanent transcendence. His form of transcendence in social immanence is the surplus of recognition that any society should attempt to achieve because it always fails at recognition in some regard – and such reasoning is not only theoretical in nature but also constitutes a political option (Deranty, 2011: 70). Here, the inseparability of theory and practice in critical theory are nicely exposed:

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‘The “interest in emancipation” is therefore the practical interest of those who suffer from oppression, and also the shared practical interest, with specific theoretical implications, of the actual theorist. [...] theory needs to be developed and judged according to the viability of its link to its ultimate ground, social reality and its emancipatory impulse. The validity of this link must be tested in both theoretical and practical terms’ (Deranty, 2011: 70).

This interest in emancipation can occur in so-called post-traditional communities, where social goals and ideals can be contested on a horizontal level. Traditional societies were hierarchically organised which meant that the norms and values were set in a top-down way. However, when a society is horizontally organised this means that everyone participates in constructing societal values. This consequently opens up the possibility for contesting the understanding of social norms, values and statuses – such horizontal extension of values can lead to either new kinds of oppression or to more individual and communal emancipation (Deranty, 2011: 71). And the second possible source or explanation for emancipatory interest lies in intersubjectivity. As mentioned before, intersubjectively constituted individuals are also intersubjectively vulnerable, meaning that it is in their interest to preserve their integrity and avoid suffering.

The political aspect of Honneth's theory has another important role. It does what previous critical theorists overlooked with their own paradigms: it is ‘true to the hermeneutics of injustice, that is, the full range of experiences of social suffering. It is not the conceptual deficiencies in Marx, Adorno/Horkheimer and Habermas that demand the establishment of a new paradigm, but their failure to respond accurately and exhaustively to the full range of social suffering’ (Deranty, 2011: 72).

An important political aspect of Honneth's critical theory is also the way in which he understands the role and characteristics of a community. Despite the commonalities he shares with communitarians, Yar (2003) emphasises Honneth's shared ground with communitarian critics as well. He argues that the struggle for recognition arises from the subject's experience of a lack of community, since a community offers subjects ‘a generalised social recognition of their selfhood, [...] participation in the forms and practices of mutual affirmation and [...] self-realisation’ (Yar, 2003: 123). Community is therefore of vital importance for subjects' self-realisation. Such understanding of the community's role could be perceived as communitarian, and to a certain extent it probably is, but at the same time it also speaks against conservative communitarianism.

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If we illustrate this with an example that Yar (2003: 124) provides, we can see this quite clearly. Black people's struggles and demands for the affirmation of their culture and history can be seen as the struggle 'oriented toward the expansion of community as a practice of recognition, extending it into a more inclusive form which responds more fully to social subjects' desire-for-selfhood'. As Yar observes, this goes against some communitarians' belief that would see such political practice as something that threatens the coherency of a community. The point is that Honneth's critical theory, based on recognition, offers an account of a community where solidarity, singularity and critique can coexist. Honneth's understanding of communality, according to Yar (2003), is in short characterised by the following dimensions: empirical phenomenology; not denying particularity of subjects; and understanding community as a structure of multiple relationalities.

Social solidarity in Honneth is understood in a similar manner, somewhere between liberal and communitarian theories (Pensky, 2011: 137). Modern societies cannot rely on religious or other imposed norms for social integrity anymore, but need to find ways for social integration elsewhere. Honneth understands solidarity as a sphere of recognition (esteem) and as an increasing expansion of the possibilities for personal self-realisation and its corresponding demands for recognition (Pensky, 2011: 151). 'The capacity to register the expansion of possible modes of life as a fulfilment of a justified normative expectation is itself more fully constitutive of a "shared set of social goals" than any number of efforts, well intentioned or not, to reanimate older ethical bonds' (Pensky, 2011: 153).

### **3.5 Honneth's Methodological Approach**

As mentioned in the second chapter, a methodology for critical theory is a very important feature that needs to be carefully considered, because it gives critical theory a sense of credibility and provides it with a research programme. Honneth's aim is to analyse society in such a way and with such concepts that we are able to understand the normative potential of socially oppressed groups. This shows Honneth's main methodological objective 'whereby not only the empirical but even the conceptual guidelines of critical social theory would be found in the experiences of social suffering

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and injustice' (Deranty, 2009: 101). Critical theory has always stressed the need for linking theory and practice (Forester, 1987), and this is reflected also in its methodology. We could therefore say that the tradition of critical theory relies on the same methodological standard, where 'the theoretical relies on a practical interest and can in turn inform this interest towards its political realisation' (Deranty, 2011: 85). Honneth's method is teleological (Deranty, 2011: 75) and also reflective in reconstruction. The approach to solving any social theoretical problems involves the reconstruction of previous theoretical attempts at solving it – such a method implies a definition of scientific truth as the history of the errors that have led to it (Deranty, 2011: 75). Methodologically this means that one's own position must be submitted to critical scrutiny with the understanding that it might be fallible. For this reason, Honneth's reflective methodology is a form of immanent critique since the empirical and conceptual criteria used in reconstruction are constructed and accepted by theorists themselves (Deranty, 2011: 76).

Honneth embraces the methodological turn that happens with the introduction of anthropology and sociology into historical studies. He (1996: 166) claims that such a form of historiography is able to perceive 'more broadly and more accurately the normative presuppositions of the way lower social classes engaged in conflict' and that it not only looks at the collective pursuit of interests. In this way, theorists obtain knowledge of everyday life's struggles and the moral norms that are involved in those actions. Honneth (2002: 500) admits that his thinking was shaped by the methodological attitude of philosophical anthropology which takes an empirical approach in reflectively analysing the structures of the lifeworld.<sup>30</sup> If struggle for recognition is to be seen as a critical framework for judging the ethical development of societies then we need a theoretically justified normative point of view that guides these struggles. Moreover, if such a normative point of view exists, it must point to an end-state that subjects caught up in struggles aim to achieve through their efforts to expand relations of recognition.

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<sup>30</sup> Honneth (2002: 501) sees the connection between philosophical anthropology and social theory in the normative conditions for social integration: 'individuals can become members of society only by developing, via the experience of mutual recognition, an awareness of how rights and duties are reciprocally distributed in the context of particular tasks. In this way, the use of the concept of recognition allows the normative implications that are necessarily inherent in every social theory to emerge from both directions: from one direction, individual opportunities for a positive relation-to-self depend on conditions that are social in character, since they comprise normatively regulated forms of mutual recognition; from the other direction, a given society's chance of meeting with the uncoerced support of its members depends on its ability to organi[s]e the relations of recognition in a way that enables the individual development of those positive forms of relation-to-self'.

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Therefore, claims Honneth (1996: 171), the normative theory must clarify its methodological status in order to enable it to depict the hypothetical end-state – and this can be done with the concept of the good or ethical life. The good life consists of three patterns of recognition which are abstract and formal enough not to promote a specific idea of the good life. On the other hand, says Honneth (1996: 174), the three patterns still explicate well enough what a successful life is or at least better than the general claims of individual self-determination. Recognition in the realms of love, rights and solidarity provides intersubjective protection of an individual's freedom, which allows the subject to realise his or her life-goals. These three patterns or relationships help us to identify the social pathologies. Since they are not 'established institutional structures but only general patterns of behaviour, they can be distilled, as structural elements, from the concrete totality of all particular forms of life' (Honneth, 1996: 174). Methodologically, Honneth identifies an empirical social pathology, and finds in it theoretical instances of recognition breaches which then point to structural impediments that lead to social injustices. Therefore, an interesting methodological aspect of Honneth's critical theory is his method of connecting a theory of justice with the diagnosis of social pathologies (Honneth and Markle, 2004). He uses an 'empirically informed phenomenology' (Honneth, 2002: 500).

The concept of immanent transcendence represents the core of the methodological structure (Strydom, 2011: 135) of also Honneth's critical theory. He also thinks that the dialectical method of intramundane or immanent transcendence is the defining characteristic of critical social theory (Petherbridge, 2013: 11). He first uses the Hegelian method that reconstructs a normative standpoint immanent within a certain social practice but then goes beyond Hegel to locate in this standpoint the potential for transforming and transcending existing social roles within contemporary society (Honneth and Markle, 2004: 383). In this case, reconstruction mediates between immanent and transcendent, a process that can be called reconstructive explanatory critique (Strydom, 2011: 135–6). Honneth, too, 'normatively reconstructs critical concepts which are then used to generate empirical investigations; empirical insights will in their turn inform and specify the reconstructively developed concepts' (Pedersen, 2012: 634). For instance, if Honneth's critical theory claims that rights and needs of the marginalised (in whatever way) are not adequately recognised and realised, it is then making an empirical claim. However, such an empirical claim also gestures to a

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normative one, in the way it implies that which ought to be. Reconstruction can achieve this through two forms of critique – the negative exposing and the positive disclosing critique. It first exposes what is wrong, and then offers solutions for it and discloses new possibilities of dealing with the issue. Therefore, reconstruction or reconstructive critique is somewhere between the empirical and transcendental, and never final because this move from immanent to transcendent needs constant revisions in order not to be dogmatic or too relativistic so that it can be in line with ethical laws.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has identified the main elements of Honneth's critical theory. Taken together, these elements distinguish it from previous types of critical theory and set its distinct agenda and methodology. It begins with a different understanding of the social world, that is, it emphasises individuals' self-realisation and therefore the ethical dimensions of our social lives. This means that it understands justice more broadly than simply in terms of principles of what makes something just/unjust. It seeks to identify those conditions under which human beings can flourish. In this way, such a theory can recognise social pathologies in places where before they were overlooked or not deemed important enough.

Critical theory needs to possess a strong normative point of view that points to a desirable end-state, which Honneth's theory does via a formal conception of ethical life. The latter can be achieved through the relations of recognition, which ensure an/the individual's equality as well as particularity. A second strong element in Honneth's critical theory is comprehension of the world in intersubjectivistic terms. These connote our mutual interdependence and dependence on one another, as well as the joint formation of our objective world. This already points to the political element of his theory, where the potential emancipatory interest can be located. These three dimensions of Honneth's theory are interrelated and sometimes overlap. The normative can be found in the social and the political, the political can be located in the intersubjectivistic understanding of the social world, and so on.

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The next chapter looks at one of the constitutive and most distinct methodological elements of Honneth's critical theory, that is, the concept of immanent transcendence. Presupposing that cosmopolitanism and Honneth's critical theory have a strong correlation in this concept, the next chapter will also look more closely at immanent transcendence in cosmopolitanism.



**CHAPTER 4****IMMANENT TRANSCENDENCE IN COSMOPOLITANISM**

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‘Man’s position in the world is defined by the fact that in every dimension of his being and behavio[u]r he finds himself at every moment between two boundaries. This condition appears as the formal structure of our existence, filled always with different contents in life’s diverse provinces, activities, and destinies. We feel that the content and value of every hour stands between a higher and a lower; every thought between a wiser and a more foolish; every possession between a more extended and a more limited; every deed between a greater and a lesser measure of meaning, adequacy, and morality. We are continually orienting ourselves, even when we do not employ abstract concepts, to an “over us” and an “under us”, to a right or a left, to a more or less, a tighter or looser, a better or worse. The boundary, above and below, is our means for finding direction in the infinite space of our worlds’ (Simmel, 2010: 1).

Whereas the second chapter dealt with the concept of immanent transcendence in a more systematic way, this chapter will look at the notion of immanent transcendence and its meaning for the social and political world, and in connection to cosmopolitanism and transformation within the cosmopolitan imagination. Immanent transcendence is inherent to cosmopolitanism and it is something that underpins social change. In this chapter, I will explore what types of immanent transcendence can be found in critical cosmopolitanism and how they relate to certain social change, be it between subjects, the world or the self.

This chapter will try to explicate the concept of immanent transcendence within critical cosmopolitanism, and try to show how it is manifested or expressed. The chapter begins with an exploration of the terms transcendence and immanent transcendence in a number of key philosophical and sociological texts. The second part of the chapter explores the substance of the concept of immanent transcendence, and it is followed by the third part, where the focus is on immanent transcendence within cosmopolitanism. Three types of immanent transcendence in the context of cosmopolitanism will be explored, which I call dialogical, disclosing and self-transcendent. The dialogical underpins critical cosmopolitanism and points to the growth of a moral sense and mutual recognition between human beings (Inada, 2008). The cosmopolitan condition

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emerges out of encounter, exchange and dialogue rather than by the assertion of predetermined truths (Delanty, 2012). It is therefore important to look at that transcendent aspect of cosmopolitanism which promotes the coexistence of different expressions of truths and thus creates the possibility of sharing the common ground of existence among previous strangers. The second type of immanent transcendence in critical cosmopolitanism, the disclosing, pertains to cosmopolitanism's ability to expand the imagination and consequently our sense of reality. It is a way of seeing that illuminates and discloses formerly hidden aspects of the object. The third type is self-transcendence or self-transformation, which means that a subject is capable of self-scrutinising with regards to the Other, and going beyond or altering boundaries between the Self and the Other. This categorisation of immanent transcendence in cosmopolitanism is of course not fixed or final. There may be more types and the three mentioned here have porous borders, because each of them partly occurs also in the other two. For instance, without openness for dialogue, disclosing transcendence and self-transcendence would hardly be possible.

#### **4.1 Transcendence and Immanent Transcendence in Philosophical and Sociological Texts**

It was Immanuel Kant who first conceived of or invented the term transcendental philosophy. In his *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant criticises dogmatic metaphysics, on the one hand, and on the other tries to establish a positive doctrine of the *a priori* elements of human knowledge (Guyer and Wood, 1998: 5). Transcendental in this context thus means that which does not directly involve empirical cognition, but denotes the possibility of our experience of empirical objects by examining the mental capacities that one must possess in order to have any cognition of empirical objects at all (Guyer and Wood, 1998: 5). That is not to say that humans possess some sort of inborn knowledge that is common to all, but that our cognitive faculties play an important role in conceiving of material objects and are thus a part of experience. One cannot grasp an object only with one's senses; to fully understand and experience something, there must be some *a priori* cognition that is independent of experience:

'Now what is especially remarkable is that even among our experiences cognitions are mixed in that must have origin *a priori* and that perhaps serve only

to establish connection among our representations of the senses. For if one removes from our experiences everything that belongs to the senses, there still remain certain original concepts and judgements generated from them, which must have arisen entirely *a priori*, independently of experience, because they make one able to say more about the objects that appear to the senses than mere experience would teach, or at least make one believe that one can say this, and make assertions contain true universality and strict necessity, the likes of which merely empirical cognition can never afford' (Kant, 1998: A2).

For Kant, time and space are empirically real yet transcendently ideal, which means that it is only from a human standpoint that we can speak of time, space and the spatiotemporality of objects. We can perceive or know these things not as they are in themselves but only as they appear under the conditions of our sensibility (Guyer and Wood, 1998: 7–8). This is Kant's transcendental idealism.

Simmel (2010: 9) argues that transcendence is immanent to life's essence and constitutive of its being. The eternally felt conflicts in life are an indicator of the essence of life, as they demonstrate one capable of setting one's own limits by reaching out beyond them: 'life is at once fixed and variable; of finished shape, and developing further; formed, and ever breaking through its forms; persisting yet rushing onward; bounded and free; circling around in subjectivity, yet standing objectively over things and over itself' (Simmel, 2010: 10). Life is made up of boundaries – boundaries that limit our lives but also boundaries that can be transgressed: 'The inherent displaceability and displacement of our boundaries means that we are able to express our essence with a paradox: we are bounded in every direction, and we are bounded in no direction' (Simmel, 2010: 2). We *know*<sup>31</sup> the boundaries because we set them ourselves and as such they can be changed, moved, removed. They are not set in stone and do not only limit our lives but also direct us to search for life beyond them:

'Our imagination and *primary* apprehension stake our areas from the infinite fullness of reality and the infinite modes of apprehending it, probably so that the magnitude of stimuli that are thereby delimited suffices as a basis for our practical conduct. But this very reference to such boundaries shows that we can somehow step over them, that we *have* stepped over them. Concept and speculation, construction and calculation induce us to move beyond the world

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<sup>31</sup> According to Simmel (2010: 2): 'Yet the essential fluidity of our boundaries immediately implies or signifies something further: that we also *know* our boundaries as such – first the particular boundaries and then the general ones. For only someone who stands outside his boundary in some sense knows that he stands within it; that is, knows it as a boundary at all'.

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that we have, so to speak, in sensible reality, thereby revealing this world to us as bounded, by enabling us to look at its boundaries from the outside. Our concrete, immediate life posits an area that lies between an upper and a lower boundary; but consciousness of this account depends on the fact that life has become more abstract and advanced, thus transcending its boundary, and thereby confirming the reality of a boundary. Life holds the boundary fast, stands on this side of it – and in the same act stands on the other side of it and views it simultaneously from within and from without. The two aspects belong equally to its establishment, and just as the boundary itself partakes of both its “this side” and its “that side,” so the unified act of life includes both boundedness and the transcendence of boundary, despite the fact that this, considered as a whole, seems to present a logical contradiction’ (Simmel, 2010: 3).

I include this lengthy quote to show that immanent transcendence is indeed possible and that it is the very essence of our lives. Boundaries, once they are recognised, are at once transcended – if we recognise that there is this side, we at the same time acknowledge the other side. We do not simply stand within the boundary, but by virtue of our awareness pass beyond it: ‘That we ourselves know our knowing and not-knowing, and that we again know this more embracing knowledge, and its infinite potential – this is the real infinity of the mind’s vital movement. Every limit is herewith transcended, but of course only through the fact that it is set; that is, that there exists something to transcend’ (Simmel, 2010: 5).

In relation to time, Simmel (2010: 8) also believes that life should not be understood as something that exists only in the present, but as something that forms a unity with the ‘not-yet’ of the future. Human beings anticipate, have hopes, plan, and project far into the future and the development of their lives therefore largely depends on the possibility of imagining the future. Such temporal transcendence<sup>32</sup> of the present or immanence is for that reason an essential part of life itself: ‘Its unique continuity is sustained outside of this separation – its past actually exists into its present, and its present actually exists out into its future. This mode of existence is what we call life’ (Simmel, 2010: 8).

In the phenomenological/existentialist tradition, we can refer to Jean-Paul Sartre and Edmund Husserl whose notions of transcendence differ but can nevertheless be mentioned here as stemming from the same tradition. Husserl claims that an object is immanent if all parts are a part of a single conscious experience. On the other side, an

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<sup>32</sup> The meaning of temporal transcendence (Haynes, 2012) will be discussed later in the chapter.

object that is transcendent always possesses something or some aspects that exceed particular experience (Richmond, 2004: vi). Sartre follows Husserl's claims but adds that Ego is also transcendent and that it cannot be completely perceived by the consciousness – Ego is not 'an "inhabitant" of consciousness [...] it is outside, *in the world*; it is a being in the world, like the Ego of another.' (Sartre, 2004: 1). One type of transcendence is especially significant in the existentialist tradition, and that is self-transcendence. The latter is related to the individual's freedom and becoming. It is a process of self-surpassing and (limited) creativity, and the ability of the self to see itself and its situation as a project and a perspective of possibilities (Haynes, 2012: 88). To simply submit oneself to what already exists (to bare immanence) is in a sense 'inhuman', since it repudiates one's freedom. Heidegger (in Chen, 2004: 51) claims that to strive for self-transcendence is not just a wish to realise ourselves, but foremost an ontological condition of the authenticity of being: 'In self-transcendence, a self is full of aspiration to a future and is a part of its future and its future is a part of its present' (Chen, 2004: 51). Sartre's claim is similar: he distinguishes between being-in-itself, which is identified with what is here and now, and being-for-itself, which is characterised by a lack of such self-identification. The latter does not manifest itself as self-alienation but as the self's relentless transcending of its present condition (Chen, 2004: 51).

## 4.2 This-Worldly Immanent Transcendence

The world in modernity faced an eclipse of the divine. The disenchantment of the world leads to upholding only the immanent, but to only speak of the world's immanence can give rise to emptiness, meaninglessness and possible nihilism.<sup>33</sup> If the silence of the imagination is reduced to a mere object, this potentially signals the collapse of the imagination in the face of that which we cannot transcend (Gosetti-Ferencei, 2010: 290). On the other hand, Gilles Deleuze (in Haynes, 2012) argues that there is only 'immanent Life' and nothing exterior to it. He thinks that all transcendent concepts establish their standpoint out of immanence, from where they dictate what Life should be, and are therefore absolute and resistant to critique. But is it not true then that the

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<sup>33</sup> Bellah (2011: 9) calls this 'dreadful immanence' and argues that transcendence is very much needed in individual's life: 'For the world of daily life seen solely as a world of rational response to anxiety and need is a world of mechanical necessity, not radical autonomy. It is through pointing to other realities, through beyonding, that religion and poetry, and science too in its own way, break the dreadful fatalities of this world of appearances'.

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processes of imagination and aspirations for the better become very limited? Life in its immediacy cannot be truly lived without aspiring towards an ideal that is yet to be (Haynes, 2012: 15). The immanent and transcendent must therefore necessarily be conceived of as working hand in hand – without immanence, transcendence becomes too abstract, or even empty, and radical immanence stays on its own, which in ontology means the loss of ethics, the remaining of ‘an “is” without “ought”’ (Schwartz, 2004: x):

‘While we have been told that there is no otherness that cannot be domesticated; nonetheless, [...] the dimension of transcendence is reintroduced as a crack in immanence, a resistance to it, a primordial inconsistency, a resistance to symbolization. Even those who claim to be radical materialists rediscover transcendence in new guises: the postmodern notion of transgression, the phenomenological notion of the other, the scientific notion of the impenetrable mystery of an infinite universe, the aesthetic notion of excess, the psychoanalytic notion of subjectivity, the political notion of revolutionary ecstasy’ (Schwartz, 2004: viii).

Immanent transcendence therefore holds a belief that we can transcend certain unfavourable material conditions ‘not by taking flight from the world, but by transforming it in ways that increasingly establish non-coercive relations between human beings, as well as between human beings and the wider environment’ (Haynes, 2012: 9). The ‘immanent’ in immanent transcendence is therefore not radically material – in a strict naturalistic sense that does not allow for any other but earthly life – but entails transcendence in its materialism. Haynes (2012: 151) shows how three chosen thinkers (Gilles Deleuze, Luce Irigaray and Theodor Adorno) articulate through immanent transcendence a non-reductive materialism, where matter is always already more than just matter – ‘transcendence does not designate exteriority or discontinuity but a movement of becoming and excess inherent in matter’. Similarly, Schwartz (2004: xi) describes transcendence as ‘a delirious rupture in immanence, an erotic claim made by it, a gap in the Real, a question put to subjectivity, a realm of the impossible that breaks into possibility’.

This is this kind of immanent transcendence that I am interested in in this chapter. I will call it this-worldly transcendence as opposed to an other-worldly one which could also be termed religious transcendence (especially in relation with Abrahamic faiths). This-worldly, or immanent, transcendence entails a kind of standing back and looking beyond – that is, a kind of critical, reflective questioning of the actual and a new vision

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of what lies beyond (Schwartz, 1975). By doing so, it undoubtedly has to possess a certain normative critical point of view, which cosmopolitanism certainly does. It therefore seems worthy to connect the two concepts, which seem to be almost naturally intertwined. The idea of immanent transcendence can be divided into two distinct types. First is relational immanent transcendence, which refers to ‘a material otherness that is specific, irreducible reality *within* the immanent whole’ (Haynes, 2012: 8). This type of immanent transcendence therefore acknowledges relations among people and is concerned with the social and the political. The second kind of immanent transcendence is temporal transcendence and it ‘denotes the power of becoming, a movement towards an open future: the new’ (Haynes, 2012: 8). This type reveals immanent transcendence’s dynamism and creativity. On the other hand, Schwartz (2004) offers a slightly different distinction of types of immanent transcendence: the vertical and the horizontal. The first one suggests leaving the immanent and phenomenal world and transcending into another one. While this could mean that immanence is denied, it is not completely. If one transcends into another world (metaphorically speaking), it means that the new world becomes immanent. Understanding vertical immanent transcendence in this way, such movement is only a passage from one world to another, which means that transcendence is not beyond the world (Schwartz, 2004: xi). The second sense of transcendence is horizontal. This type of transcendence is partly self-transcendence, which includes the realisation that we are incomplete and therefore grasping for possibilities. Furthermore, horizontal transcendence also includes ethical transcendence: here, the subject does not transcend his or her ego as is often the case in self-transcendence; rather, the subject is, in relation to the transcendent other, embedded in social life (Schwartz, 2004: xi).

At first glance, transcendence might be thought of as something otherworldly or religion-related, even unintelligible and unattainable in the real world, and therefore insignificant for critical theory, which operates within social reality. Indeed, the term transcendence can also be dangerous: terrible ‘crimes have been committed in the name of transcendent principles – principles held beyond question, beyond critique – and even in the name of a transcendent God’ (Schwartz, 2004: vii). To avoid such atrocities, the hegemony of the West or any other argument without reason, we must reject any kind of transcendence of authority or logos (Schwartz, 2004). On the contrary, the

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modern type of transcendence is understood as the ‘ground of humility’, be it in philosophy, politics, epistemology or ethics.

As said, the term itself has a long history both in philosophy and theology, but in its more general sense it signals the beyond, ‘with the noun form of the term denoting a reality beyond the world – *the transcendent* – and the verb form denoting the activity of moving beyond – *to transcend*’ (Haynes, 2012: 1). It might seem that concepts of immanence and transcendence are intrinsically opposed; indeed, they could be thought of in this way. In the case of critical theory though, materiality and transcendence are rethought of in a way that allows for a denunciation of this opposition: ‘Matter may then be conceived as that which possesses its own power of becoming, of self-transcending’ (Haynes, 2012: 3).<sup>34</sup> Immanent transcendence allows for changes in foundations for political, ethical, institutional and other social aspirations. Therefore, immanent transcendence does not simply mean some randomly imaginable unfulfilled goals and ideas. Following Honneth, Strydom (2011: 95) asserts that immanent transcendence is a prerequisite of critical theory’s fruitful endeavours. If one wishes to make critical theory successfully and validly engage in diagnosis and critique of a social pathology, then critical theory must be underpinned with a theoretical normative perspective. This can only be done through immanent transcendence – critical theory must identify a pre-theoretical foothold in social reality and ‘root its theoretical and critical endeavour in a moment or movement of immanent transcendence transpiring in social life or the actual situation itself’ (Strydom, 2011: 95).

This means that the concept of immanent transcendence entails a ‘going beyond’ that is rooted in the present and actual situation. But one must be careful: Sixel (1988: 32–3) shows how fundamentally different the notion of immanent transcendence is from merely ‘going beyond’. Whereas the latter only means a linear growth or movement, different from the present one, immanent transcendence leads to a qualitatively different future (Sixel, 1988; Desmond, 1995). Immanent transcendence means surpassing social contradictions or injustices by identifying possibilities in the present. Being in an in-between state, that is, in the process of transition, which is a consequence of dialectics, is

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<sup>34</sup> Strydom (2011: 96) similarly recognises that transcendent ideas present in all human forms of life are not completely transcendent, but that they point towards a state beyond the present, which could be realised.

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not defined by being in opposition of the univocal and equivocal. Rather, it is a 'togetherness that demands thinking that is more than these two, and a sense of being that sees their togetherness differently, togetherness because each is ingredient in a more encompassing process of coming to be' (Desmond, 1995: 145). With immanent transcendence, therefore, dialectics becomes pluralised in a way. In the case of immanent transcendence, the becoming processes are not of a mechanical nature: 'In mechanical relations terms do not inherently have relations to other terms, nor is there any dynamism inherent in the terms that would drive them into relativity to other terms. The mechanical whole, rather aggregate, is a putting together from the outside of parts that are essentially outside each other' (Desmond, 1995: 146). Rather, dialectics thinks of immanent transcendence as a more organic model: an organism implies that a new being has emerged which still retains its relativity to others but at the same time constitutes its own integrity (Desmond, 1995).

It is therefore not difficult to understand why immanent transcendence has become the key concept of contemporary critical theory.<sup>35</sup> It characterises critical theory and at the same time explicates its methodology:

'Immanent transcendence [...] refers to accumulated historical potential in the form of socio-practical ideas of reason and cultural models that reflection in the form of critical disclosure makes or could make apparent so that the potential is or could be reali[s]ed to some degree through appropriate social practices. Such historically accumulated socio-practical reason does not exhaust itself in a mere ought, normative obligation or idea projected outside of existing society, however, but is emphatically regarded as always already operative in structuring social life by directing and guiding or potentially critically regulating social practices to some degree and in some way' (Strydom, 2011: 135).

Over and above empirical manifestations, immanent transcendence is regarded to be located at a deeper dimension of social reality, and not as simply as at the level of

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<sup>35</sup> Adam and van Loon (2000: 23) write: 'As such, social theory has the capacity to connect science, technology, engineering and risk management to politics, media and economics. The critical function of social theory therefore does not stop with immanent critique, with critici[s]ing inconsistencies, empirical inadequacies, illogical conclusions and unverifiable hypotheses that constitute 'common sense', nor does it end with placing the full moral weight of informed political correctness behind the analysis. In the face of the risk society, social theory needs to redefine itself as an art of bridging, connecting, formatting as well as abstracting. This form of 'knowledge' allows political mobilization to team up with informed and sustained immanent critique, to broaden perspectives and articulate alternative interpretations; work on the multiplicity (collage) rather than the unity (narrative) of perspectives'.

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unfulfilled goals that are present in actual social conditions (Strydom, 2011: 99). This means that immanent transcendence must not be understood only in terms of empirical phenomena, and that even the latter should be comprehended in theoretical terms: ‘For instance, Marx and various of his followers emphasised labour, Marcuse the human drives, Habermas language, and Honneth the anthropologically rooted moral-psychological need for recognition’ (Strydom, 2011: 99). If cosmopolitanism or any other social theory wants to call itself a critical theory, it must understand immanent transcendence theoretically in a way that it locates the most suitable theoretical perspective within social reality.<sup>36</sup> To give another example of immanent transcendence comprehended in theoretical terms, we can take a look at the critical theory of justice (Pereira, 2013). Immanent transcendence in this case can be found in the theoretical perspective of the ‘normative potential of equality’. Specifically, the latter is a part of immanence because it constitutes the everyday moral experience of subjects in the world. However, at the same time its character is also transcendent because the normative potential of equality transcends subjects’ experience by providing a critical point of view that criticises the actual situation and suggests the required social transformation needed in order to actually achieve equality.

### **4.3 Immanent Transcendence in Cosmopolitanism**

Immanent transcendence within cosmopolitanism is not only possible but it is its constitutive part. It is also critical cosmopolitanism’s dynamic mechanism that does not turn cosmopolitanism into a passive sort of redemption or all-inclusive answer to the world’s plights, but continuously negotiates the actuality with what could be as well as its goals with what is possible and needed. Immanent transcendence faces up to and resists the hostile conditions and points towards resolution or redemption – not the kind that can arrive, though, because that could feed dangerous dreams of history being redeemed once and for all (Haynes, 2012: 82). Rather, the kind that can at least alter current conditions or relations for the better. The immanent transcendence in cosmopolitanism is understood similarly to that within critical theory – it is related to social transformation, that is, to pressure and plan change within existing social relations

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<sup>36</sup> This thesis posits that the theoretical perspective most suited to the context of cosmopolitanism is recognition.

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and institutions. Transcendence is therefore understood as ‘a supersession of the given, the accepted, the familiar, or the weight of circumstance’ (Aboulafia, 2010: 3).

I argue that cosmopolitanism is inherently related to the concept of immanent transcendence. The cosmopolitan imagination offers new ways of seeing the world, normatively as well as through people’s practices, solidarities, identities and ethics. In this way, it connects transcendent ideas and ethical, legal and political forces in actual experiences: ‘These dimensions represent the foundations for a new conception of immanent transcendence; it is one that lies at the heart of the cosmopolitan imagination in so far that this is a way of viewing the world in terms of its immanent possibilities for self-transformation and which can be reali[s]ed only by taking the cosmopolitan perspective of the Other as well as global principles of justice’ (Delanty, 2009: 3). Cosmopolitanism enables and undertakes the transformation of the social world, where new relations among the Self, the Other and the World develop: ‘This emphasis on the internal transformation of the social world highlights the relevance of cosmopolitanism as a form of immanent transcendence as opposed to an externally induced transcendence’ (Delanty, 2009: 53). Delanty (2009: 86–7) also identifies four dynamics that are part of the cosmopolitan imagination and which also show the capacity for immanent transcendence. These are: the capacity for the relativisation of one’s own culture or identity; the capacity for positive recognition of the Other which also involves self-transformation in doing so; the capacity for a mutual evaluation of cultures or identities, which includes critical dialogue; and, lastly, the capacity to create a shared normative culture.

Just like critical theory, cosmopolitanism also ‘seeks to identify the potentials for emancipation immanent in the needs of subjects and aims to provide an analysis of contemporary society that apprehends its developmental possibilities’ (Browne, 2008: 7). It does not derive these potentialities from some otherworldly, religious or supernatural source that has little connection to social reality. From an analysis of contemporary society, it develops possible solutions to global confrontations with regards to existing social norms, relations and institutions. In other words, ‘cosmopolitanism understood in terms of immanent transcendence refers to an internally induced social change whereby societies and social agents undergo transformation in their moral and political self-understanding as they respond to global challenges’ (Delanty, 2009: 251). It is important

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to note that cosmopolitanism does not strive for changes only in the external social reality but it aims also at self-transformation of agents as well. Changes in society cannot be achieved without initial shifts in moral and political self-understanding (Delanty, 2009). As such, cosmopolitanism is ‘a form of immanent transcendence whereby societies undergo change as a result of internal transformation as they respond to external and especially global challenges. It contains a strong ethical character and one that has a global frame of reference’ (Delanty, 2009: 89). Self-development calls for the development of a transcendental dimension within oneself, where the ‘transcendentally real self is not to be imported from heaven or religion’ (Giri, 2006: 1286). Such is reality as well as possibility in human lives as long as we keep establishing connections with others, and learn from them. Dialogue and communication play an especially significant part in making immanent transcendence happen. Immanent transcendence can be conceptualised as ‘an expansion in the communicative competence of society leading to societal transformation and subject formation’ (Delanty, 2009: 87). And cosmopolitanism is partly concerned precisely with this. It ‘concerns the broadening of horizons when one culture meets another or when one point of view is forced to re-evaluate its claims in light of the perspective of an Other. The cognitive logic at work in this is essentially a communicative relation and unfolds in diverse ways through processes of immanent transcendence’ (Delanty, 2009: 254–5).

There are at least three types of immanent transcendence in cosmopolitanism which will be more thoroughly considered. First is dialogical immanent transcendence, which can be seen as part of the relational transcendence that refers to ‘a material otherness that is specific, irreducible reality *within* the immanent whole’ (Haynes, 2012: 8–9). Dialogical immanent transcendence conveys a certain epistemological expression. The second type of immanent transcendence is disclosing, which concerns perception and the uncovering of previously hidden aspects of reality. And lastly, there is self-transcendence. This type of immanent transcendence concerns an individual or a culture. It involves surpassing given circumstances, reflexivity and/or self-transformation.

4.3.1 *Dialogical Immanent Transcendence in Cosmopolitanism*

Dialogical transcendence certainly has an important function in cosmopolitanism. Duara (2014: 49) understands dialogical transcendence not in an ontological way but rather from a meta-epistemic point of view: as a mode of knowing that is structured by historical and social conditions. Dialogical transcendence is therefore neither radical nor religious and it allows for the coexistence of different expressions of truth. Truth does not emanate from a single source or individual moral authority. Transcendence does indeed need some foundation of ideas and values but not in the sense of an omnipotent God (Duara, 2014: 49). In the secular age of a disenchanted world, a type of transcendence must survive even though it is not as radical as it once was in the form of a metaphysical yearning for salvation on the part of human beings. Duara (2014: 55–6) identifies four common characteristics of dialogical transcendence, in which immanence and transcendence are not separated. Firstly, the truth is always *negotiatory*. The transcendent power is used for different immanent aims, which involve some expressions of truth that are tolerated, whereas the ‘higher truths’ are always questioned by those who do not establish them. Secondly, relationships in dialogical transcendence are ones of encompassment and tolerance. The third characteristic is cultivation and discipline, with which one can achieve greater transcendence.<sup>37</sup> And, fourthly, the dialectic of immanence and circulation in dialogical transcendence gives significance to not only metaphysical but also a sociological perspective. However, the main feature of dialogical transcendence is the dialogical conception of truth – truth that is achieved through dialogue and different perspectives, and can always be challenged.

How people treat and relate to each other in social and political settings lies in the midst of cosmopolitan ideas, values and projects. The communicative or dialogical dimension of cosmopolitanism is therefore one of its most important, if not its most constitutive part. The crucial prerequisite to the possible creation of and participation in a cosmopolitan society is an open and uncoerced dialogue, which Kant called cosmopolitan right (Held, 2005: 11). To be able to interact with others is not a question

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<sup>37</sup> If we take an example of Chinese worldly transcendence, cultivation and self-discipline play a major role in achieving the critical stance with which to assess the mundane world. Chinese immanent transcendence is in a sense always personal and socio-political – through awareness of discrepancy between the ideal world and the reality, and trying to surmount personal tension when attempting to maintain the harmony, one develops a critical attitude towards the existing social and political order (Eisenstadt in Bellah, 2011: 478–9).

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of philanthropy but right, and it is the only way to realise peaceful community (Kant, 1991: 172). Dialogue therefore plays an essential role in cosmopolitanism. The latter has never been about reductions on the one hand or totalisations on the other; rather, cosmopolitanism tries to mediate between such extremes and is led by the aim of dialogic universalism, which negotiates the moral and the political, the moral and the ethical (Benhabib, 2006: 19–20). Dialogical cosmopolitanism, following Mendieta (2009: 243), is a type of epistemic and moral stance towards the world that is mindful of both its privileges and its limits, and which reflects on these from the standpoint of the Other, with whom it reaches to learn from and with. More concretely, cosmopolitanism's exercise is aimed at reflecting on the moral status of persons, the conditions of agency and collective decision-making, to name a few (Held, 2005: 16). And to be able to reflect on these issues, 'ground rules for communication, dialogue, and dispute settlement are not only desirable but essential precisely because all people are of equal moral value and their views on a wide range of moral-political questions will conflict' (Held, 2005: 16). The so-called principles of cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitanism's essence are built precisely on such premises of democratic dialogue.

The gist of dialogical immanent transcendence comes close to the meaning of Gadamer's concept of the 'fusion of horizons' (Gadamer, 2013). Like in the process of the fusion of horizons, so too in dialogical transcendence the presence of the Other is essential to the process of communication. Understanding something or finding its meaning cannot result in a single truth but is always the result of a multiplicity of interpretations and therefore requires dialogue: 'The fusion that produces a new thing cannot take place without the other that stands before us and through whose presence our prejudices are called forth, put into play, and revised. Coming to an understanding with another is the only way my own prejudices can become known to me and the only way that they can be transformed. The other is both an obstacle, in that he exposes the limits of my grasp of something, and also the means by which a new understanding of it emerges' (Walhof, 2006: 581). Coming to such understanding is crucial to envisaging a cosmopolitan community that is based on dialogue. The purpose and the result of such a dialogue with others is the need to understand (and not the need for consensus as is the case with Habermas), with this understanding taken to mean a way of seeing things 'in a new and shared light' (Jordaan, 2011: 2374).

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4.3.2 *Disclosing Immanent Transcendence in Cosmopolitanism*

Just like in Rilke's poetry, immanent transcendence here is not religious or about longing for an other-worldly realm that arrives after death (or some other final event). Rather, it is 'a crossing of horizons between perception and imagination or imagination and reality, by the disclosure and inventions of which [...] the more traditional notion of transcendence is usurped in distinct ways' (Gosetti-Ferencei, 2010: 275). Such immanent transcendence aspires to go beyond and at the same time stay within ordinary experience. In her article, Gosetti-Ferencei (2010) traces immanent transcendence in the poetry of Rainer M. Rilke and Wallace Stevens, and finds out that through criticism of the modern world and resistance to it they both expand our sense of reality. They do so through poetry and opening up our sense of the present beyond immediate time and space, and by imagining the loss of subjective boundaries (Gosetti-Ferencei, 2010). They 'entertain the possibility that a creative understanding of reality feeds back into the life of perceptive understanding, drawing out its poetic potential and transforming reality's configurations' (Gosetti-Ferencei, 2010: 279). To rethink and re-imagine ordinary perception in this way, that is, through illuminating (poetic) contemplation that changes reality from material to subtleness, means to understand it as a *disclosing* aspect of reality that is usually not available to us. Imagination and reality do not exclude each other; rather, they are interdependent. The creation of something new draws from the everyday world and in such a way stays connected to it: 'Yet in order to perceive imaginatively, [...] the outward looking and the inner seeing must converge, overcoming the parallax between perception and imagination, and in such convergence the light must be both self-illuminating and derive from elsewhere' (Gosetti-Ferencei, 2010: 283). Such perception or 'standing back from the world' (Gosetti-Ferencei, 2010) means that the viewpoint is still immanent to the world and that it comes from this world. The new is not something completely novel though – it is only an aspect of the world that has been for some reason previously hidden but that nevertheless transcends the world. Poets interconnect immanent and hidden aspects of the world through poetry and thus reinstate a world that is 'always already more than mere substance' (Gosetti-Ferencei, 2010: 281).

World-disclosure or a disclosing critique defines the tenet of the epistemological character of world-openness (Delanty, 2012: 40). Disclosure means new ways of seeing

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the world or seeing it from different viewpoints, which is the core idea of cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitan outlook urges us to learn from others, to see things also from their perspective, and especially to come to the realisation that we do not live only in one world but many different worlds (Rumford, 2008). Cosmopolitanism's task is therefore to facilitate or guide the emergence or recognition of a new world, and it can do so only by being receptive to the present and attentive to the present world's hidden aspects. There is a certain normative expectation that requires us always to aspire to the 'not yet':

‘we are obligated in some indeterminate sense to bring about the new beginning, obligated to help give “new form” to our form of life by apprehending the present in which we live as a time of “birth and transition.” Meeting that obligation requires that we apprehend precisely those possibilities within the present upon whose reali[s]ation the new form of the world depends. This attentive stance toward the present supposes a complementary stance of anticipatory openness toward the future, to how things might otherwise be. In taking such a stance, however, one is likely to discover that getting into the right relation to one's time may mean living and thinking “in contradiction” to one's time’ (Kompridis, 2006: 5).

In this lies cosmopolitanism's disclosing immanent transcendence. To reimagine perception through the cosmopolitan imagination means to disclose the critical agency of the material. Or, as Delanty (2009) puts it, the cosmopolitan imagination is a kind of normative foundation of a critical social theory that makes possible new ways of seeing the world: ‘Such forms of world disclosure have become an unavoidable part of social reality today in terms of people's experiences, identities, solidarities and values. These dimensions represent the foundations for a new conception of immanent transcendence; it is one that lies at the heart of the cosmopolitan imagination in so far that this is a way of viewing the world in terms of its immanent possibilities for self-transformation and which can be realised only by taking the cosmopolitan perspective of the Other as well as global principles of justice’ (Delanty, 2009: 3).

#### 4.3.3 *Self-Transcendence in Cosmopolitanism*

As was mentioned earlier, self-transcendence is especially significant in the existentialist tradition, where it is related to the individual's freedom and becoming. Besides

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existentialism, ancient Cynics and their cosmopolitanism espoused a similar viewpoint with regards to self-transcendence. Their attitude towards the world and external circumstances was that of radical individual freedom, surpassing the arbitrary systems and retaining their individual freedom of the soul: ‘Of this “community” they claimed to be citizens: citizens of the cosmos, at home here and everywhere because they were radically at home with their present selves. Anarchists, democrats, cosmopolitans, kings: all of these in a way, but most of all (to adapt Nietzsche’s phrase) “free spirits, *very* free spirits”’ (Desmond, 2008: 208). Self-transcendence is therefore a process of self-surpassing and (limited) creativity, and the ability of the self to see itself and its situation as a project and a perspective of possibilities (Haynes, 2012: 88). To simply submit oneself to what already exists (to bare immanence) is in a sense ‘inhuman’, repudiates one’s freedom and it is a moral failing.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, self-transcendence is of course not just limited to existentialist thought. Transcendence and subjectivity are inherently connected: the former structures the latter, ‘for the beyond is within the subject’ (Schwartz, 2004: ix). As mentioned before, self-transcendence is a project of the horizontal transcendence of grasping our possibilities (Schwartz, 2004). To realise one’s own inherent potentialities is to have the capacity to transcend the given circumstances and thereby transform oneself, which is at the same time also a process of self-determination (Aboulafia, 2010: 5).

Self-transcendence is thus connected to reflexivity and self-reflexivity, which together are a kind of presupposition of self-transcendence. A central focus of reflexivity or self-reflexivity is the awareness that every social and cultural order is to a certain extent arbitrary and this awareness is accompanied by a sense of ambivalence towards that order (Eisenstadt, 1995: 339; Fuchs, 2000: 80). This entails the capability of a certain mental distance from the culture or society that one inhabits, and an awareness of others. It also entails a contestation of assumptions about oneself and one’s social and political setting.<sup>39</sup> As Eisenstadt (2003: 30) claims, such questioning of the given is closely

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<sup>38</sup> In the same fashion and following Sartre’s argument about the need for self-transcendence, Simone de Beauvoir claims that women are trapped in their bodies and that means being confined to immanence (or lost to immanence) if they succumb to their own feminineness which make them unable to achieve transcendence (freedom) (Haynes, 2012: 89).

<sup>39</sup> Eisenstadt (2003: 30) says: ‘The reflexivity in the modern program focused not only on the possibility of different interpretations of the transcendental visions and basic ontological conceptions prevalent in a society or societies, but came to question the very givenness of such visions and of the institutional patterns related to them. It gave rise to awareness that many such visions and patterns existed and that such visions and conceptions can indeed be contested’.

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connected to two components of modernity: the recognition that there are many possibilities to undertake a great variety of roles beyond any fixed or ascribed ones; and the recognition that one belongs (or can belong) to wider translocal communities. This all leads to the greater autonomy of human beings. Such autonomy involves several changes: reflexivity and exploration; active construction; and mastery of nature and of society. It also involves the autonomous participation of members of society in the constitution of social and political order (Eisenstadt, 2003).

Cosmopolitanism can also be understood as a mode of self-transformation ‘which occurs when individuals and groups engage in concrete struggles to protect a common humanity and become more reflexive about their experiences of otherness’ (Nowicka and Rovisco, 2009: 6). This means that a subject is capable of going beyond or at least modifying boundaries between the self and the Other. It is the capability to scrutinise the self ‘with regards to the ways one positively engages the otherness of other cultures and people, and to the ways one is committed to the building of a more just world in conditions of uneven globali[s]ation’ (Nowicka and Rovisco, 2009: 6). Immanent transcendence is a part of the cosmopolitan imagination precisely insofar as it is ‘a way of viewing the social world in terms of its immanent possibilities for self-transformation and which can be reali[s]ed only by taking the cosmopolitan perspective of Other as well as a global principles of justice’ (Delanty, 2012: 41) into account. The struggles of cosmopolitan self-transformation can take many forms. They can be observed at the individual level, how a subject discloses and develops his or her ‘cosmopolitanness’; or they can be studied from an institutional and structural point of view, that is, how certain contexts and settings facilitate or restrict cosmopolitan self-transformation. Cosmopolitanism therefore contains self-transformation or self-transcendence whenever there is self-confrontation in terms of individuals examining their identity, culture, membership, and subjectivity. Of course, one of the characteristics of cosmopolitanism as a process of self-transformation is its communicative dimension (Delanty, 2012: 42). The self or the culture undergoes transformation in the light of the encounter with the Other, and this transformation can take on different forms: multiculturalism, re-orientation in self-understanding, or re-evaluation of cultural heritage and identity (Delanty, 2012: 42).

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Simmel's (2010: 1) quote in the beginning of the chapter – 'The boundary, above and below, is our means for finding direction in the infinite space of our worlds' – also points to the significance of boundaries in immanent transcendence, which is the same in cosmopolitanism. Even though borders are not an obvious choice for studying cosmopolitanism since the latter is supposed to be all about a borderless world, borders understood in a broad sense can be seen as 'key cosmopolitan sites' (Rumford, 2012). Borders should not be looked at as something that divides but as connectivity tissues and mobility patterns. They should not be understood in the sense of official and fixed state borders that draw unequivocal lines between two groups of people or political entities. Borders help us realise or require us to recognise that we are always global and local, self and other, individuals and members of communities, outsiders and insiders: 'Cosmopolitanism is about relativising our place within the global frame, positioning ourselves in relation to multiple communities, crossing and re-crossing territorial and community borders' (Rumford, 2008: 14). What borders do for people (or how they utilise them) is that they facilitate people's connectivity to different communities, distant collectivities or transnational networks, and therefore act as a connective tissue.

### **Conclusion**

Immanent transcendence is a concept that points to 'the beyond' or 'not yet' of the existing world and it is an integral part of critical theory. There are different kinds of immanent transcendence. We can classify them into horizontal/vertical with regards to the 'direction' of transcendence, or temporal/relational, which concerns transcendence's characteristics with regards to the object of transcendence. In this chapter, the concept was explored in different philosophical and sociological texts, its meaning was pinpointed, and it was linked with cosmopolitanism. It was argued that we could distinguish between three different types of immanent transcendence within cosmopolitanism: dialogical transcendence; disclosing transcendence; and self-transcendence. These three types are not fixed and completely independent categories; rather they are distinguished here for the purposes of showing the creativity of immanent transcendence. They were also distinguished for another reason: each type of immanent transcendence has a different effect in the phenomenological, that is, the social and political world. In this chapter the three types were only introduced; in the

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next three chapters they will be considered in detail, where applications will be made for each of them.

The next chapter will look at the concept of recognition more closely and make a connection between cosmopolitanism and recognition. In this way, a strong connection between Honneth's critical theory will be made and at the same time enhanced since the relationships of recognition will be cosmopolitanised.

## CHAPTER 5

### RECOGNITION AND COSMOPOLITANISM

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☞ The struggle for recognition is [...] a central feature of our lives, from our personal relations, through to our interaction with social and political institutions. We cannot make sense of social conflicts, and the way our embeddedness in the social world gives rise to moral and ethical dilemmas, without understanding the way in which our sensitivity to recognition orients us in the world' (McBride, 2013: 8). This chapter will explore the concept of recognition. Judging from McBride's quote, recognition (and consequently our struggle to achieve it) seems to be one of the central concepts to our understanding, interpreting and changing the social world we inhabit. The concept of recognition has recently also become dominant in academic scholarship, especially in fields of political theory/philosophy, social theory and critical theory. Its scope is vast; the issues that the notion of recognition influences and which are studied include bestowing of human rights, protection of multiculturalism, enhancement of self-realisation, ensuring equality among people – the list goes on. These are just a few examples of social and political matters where recognition plays or can play a central role in their being thought about. These issues and the reasons for desired recognition are manifold – and such is also the concept of recognition. There is no uniform definition of recognition, and perhaps that is one of its advantages since it resonates with recognition's character – it is, namely, never final, definitive or conclusive. It is always open to be contested, re-granted, earned or anticipated. Just as human relations can never be absolutely definite or conclusive, so recognition, too, always makes indeterminate claims (Kompridis, 2007). This is partly because no suffering can be completely and adequately articulated, and partly because recognition claims comprise of so many different elements – claims that are intertwined with justice, our identities, various goods that are pursued, and the context of a situation.

It is therefore no surprise that so many theorists have tried to pin down recognition's meaning. Among contemporary theorists there has been a lively debate especially between Fraser and Honneth (2003) – the former emphasising recognition as a matter

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of identity (although not limited only to it), and the latter disagreeing that recognition is only a sort of psychologically informed account of identity, and arguing instead that it should be seen as related to social status and *a part* of justice. Whereas in this case, the discussion was more or less binary (a disagreement about justice being either about recognition and/or distribution), some scholars turn to other possible meanings of recognition. For instance, Kompridis (2007) explores recognition in connection to freedom and emphasises the need for a more pluralistic and contextualist account of recognition. Patchen Markell (2003) turns to the politics of *acknowledgment* rather than the politics of recognition and argues for the renunciation of an “identity” characteristic (positive or negative) when talking about recognition/acknowledgement. Sybol Cook Anderson (2009) re-actualises Hegel’s conception of recognition in line with emancipatory demands and liberal principles, and shows how it surpasses the shortcomings of both Honneth’s and Kymlicka’s understandings of recognition. All these and other conceptions of recognition testify to the fact that recognition is a dynamic idea that, from Hegel onwards, has still not exhausted its potential for social and philosophical research.<sup>40</sup> What we are particularly interested in here is how this concept is used in critical theory, and later on in cosmopolitanism.

Therefore, this chapter will not trace the historical evolution of the concept but, rather, it will focus on contemporary theorising in connection to critical theory. The first part of the chapter focuses on Axel Honneth’s formation of recognition, and the second part will show its shortcomings through other authors’ understanding of the concept with a special emphasis on recognition’s critique from a global perspective. In this way, we will try to enhance the existing meaning of recognition in a way that will most pertinently appeal to cosmopolitanism. The goal is therefore to find a meaning of recognition that connects to cosmopolitanism in the most suitable way, and to see in what ways cosmopolitanism can enrich recognition theory. Such conception of recognition will form a paradigm of critical cosmopolitanism.

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<sup>40</sup> For an overview of recognition’s meaning and controversies see, for instance, Iser (2013).

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### 5.1 Honneth's Conception of Recognition

Honneth's critical social theory is grounded in the concept of recognition, which is a normative underpinning of social criticism. Recognition is not a unified concept; it possesses manifold meanings and can be used in many different social contexts. For instance, Honneth (1997) emphasises that justice is not only about the redistribution of goods, but also requires the inclusion of normative claims made by subjects.<sup>41</sup> Its meaning is therefore not definitive, not even in Honneth's account of it. He is aware of this (1997) and the numerous contexts recognition is used in: in feminist theory, discourse ethics, communitarianism, and so on. Recognition is used within such various moral perspectives and it is precisely because of this that justification as to 'the moral implications underlying each of the various forms of recognition' is needed (Honneth, 1997: 19). Whether there is a core to all these different situations that can be found in recognition is something that Honneth tries to find out.

Honneth's theory of recognition stems from early Hegel's Jena lectures<sup>42</sup> and he follows these ideas and naturalises them together with moral-psychological claims about the intersubjective constitution of the self. Honneth (1996: 132) tries to answer the following question: 'how is it that the experience of disrespect is anchored in the affective life of human subjects in such a way that it can provide the motivational impetus for social resistance and conflict, indeed, for a struggle for recognition?'. His conception of recognition therefore consists of a few different things: recognition is the source of emancipatory movements or actions; it accounts for the moral progress of a society; and it provides individuals with freedom and means for self-actualisation. So, recognition can impact upon several things at once: it is not only an acknowledgement of an individual's or group's particular claims to identity, it also stimulates social change and contributes to the moral development of society. Furthermore, it is also a paradigm of

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<sup>41</sup> He (1997: 17) claims that it is evident that 'the moral quality of social relations cannot be measured solely in terms of the fair or just distribution of material goods; rather, our notion of justice is also very closely linked to how, and as what, subjects mutually recogni[s]e each other'.

<sup>42</sup> Honneth follows Hegel's early work because he thinks that Hegel does not develop the ideas pursued in his early works, any longer in his later ones. As Honneth (1996: 63) says: 'neither the intersubjectivist concept of human identity, nor the distinction of various media of recognition (with the accompanying differentiation of recognition relations), nor, certainly, the idea of a historically productive role for moral struggle – none of these ever again acquires a systematic function within Hegel's political philosophy'.

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critical theory that offers productive access to the emancipatory potential of everyday social reality.

Honneth's theory posits that people must also want to acquire a positive practical relation-to-self. If such positive relation-to-self is taken away from someone or gets distorted for some reason, this means that the person has been disrespected or denied recognition. Such misrecognition affects the practical relation-to-self of a person, which in other words means that it affects an individual's personal integrity in the sense that it can be transformed into moral injury. Honneth distinguishes between three types of practical relations-to-self (self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem) and consequently three patterns of recognition relationships – love, rights, and solidarity – that make the mentioned practical relations-to-self possible at all.

### *5.1.1 Self-Confidence and Love*

The first pattern of intersubjective recognition is love. According to Honneth (1996: 107), this relationship of recognition is the fundamental one in enabling a person to acquire basic self-confidence. In other words, love, and recognition that stems from love, make possible a positive relation-to-self called self-confidence. Self-confidence in this context does not mean thinking highly of oneself or one's own capabilities; rather, it is connected more with a person's ability to express needs and desires without feeling fear of rejection. Honneth does not use love in a romantic sense but tries to use it in the most "neutral" way possible. He follows Hegel in designating love relationships as primary ones that are established among members of a small group and that offer people first relationships of reciprocal recognition. Through such relationships, a person learns about concrete others and their own dependence on them. For this reason, Honneth posits the intersubjective experience of love as a precondition for further developments of positive relation-to-self. In developing what love relationship means for recognition theory, Honneth mostly draws on object-relations theory and follows Donald W. Winnicott's and Jessica Benjamin's psychoanalytical ideas. He (1996: 95–107) shows that love as a particular relationship of recognition 'makes the success of affectional bonds dependent on the capacity, acquired in early childhood, to strike a balance between symbiosis and self-assertion'. This means that through relationships of love, a

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person learns to recognise and consider other people, and at the same time preserve his or her own integrity and singularity.

The disrespect or misrecognition in the sphere of love therefore pertains to an individual's physical integrity. Violations such as rape, physical abuse and torture are the utmost severe denials of the first pattern of recognition and causes of degradation of a person's sense of self. Such forms of disrespect not only cause physical pain but also make a person feel that they are losing the autonomy of their body and therefore their basic self-confidence.<sup>43</sup>

### 5.1.2 *Self-Respect and Rights*

The second pattern of recognition is legal recognition and the sphere of rights. Legal relations are very different to those of love. Again, self-respect, which legal recognition enables, does not pertain to some self-glorifying condition, but refers to the dignity of every human being. A person understands others and himself or herself as legal subjects that bear rights and duties in a shared community. This means that every subject possesses the same legal and moral status as everyone else in that system or community. An analogy can be made with love – just as in love relationships, children acquire the self-confidence to express their needs and desires, so, too, in legal relationships subjects acquire ‘the possibility of seeing their actions as the universally respected expression of their own autonomy’ (Honneth, 1996: 118). Rights enable the development of such self-respect.<sup>44</sup> The conditions in the social world must therefore be such that they enable rights to be granted equally to everyone – ‘only then will the individual legal person be able to see in them an objectivated point of reference for the idea that he or she is recogni[s]ed for having the capacity for autonomously forming judgements’ (Honneth, 1996: 119). In this section, Honneth (1996: 110–14) also explicates a distinction between self-respect and self-esteem. Even though they are both instances of some sort of respect, the former applies to a universal respect that is granted to people in virtue of their

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<sup>43</sup> As Honneth (1996: 133) writes: ‘[T]he suffering of torture or rape is always accompanied by a dramatic breakdown in one's trust in the reliability of the social world and hence by a collapse in one's own basic self-confidence’.

<sup>44</sup> Honneth (1996: 119) argues: ‘It is, of course, only with the establishment of universal human rights that this form of self-respect can assume the character associated with talk of moral responsibility as the respect-worthy core of a person’.

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humanity, and the latter to those instances of respect that pertain to particular characteristics of that person. Legal respect is therefore a type of respect that ‘on the one hand, is supposed to be detached from feelings of liking and affection and yet, on the other hand, can actually influence individual behaviour’ (Honneth, 1996: 110). On the basis of such respect, people recognise each other as moral agents (bearing moral accountability) and bearers of rights and duties. As van Hooft (2010: 41) notices, there is more at issue here than purely a legalistic/procedural affirmation of equality – there is reconciliation between the liberal ideal of autonomy and the communitarian ideal of mutuality, as well as reconciliation between minimalist and procedural conceptions of justice.

Of course the scope of legal recognition has changed throughout history. Rights have evolved, their range has expanded, people have struggled for new universal rights, and more and more people have been included into relationships of moral recognition. However, this unfortunately does not mean that this type of recognition is settled once and for all. There are still misrecognitions happening on a daily basis that undermine people’s sense of self-respect and their moral autonomy.

### 5.1.3 *Self-Esteem and Solidarity*

The last pattern of Honneth’s conception of recognition is solidarity. In such relationships of recognition, the specific qualities and abilities of an individual are recognised. Therefore, what is actually recognised is each individual’s particularity. If legal recognition acknowledges people’s equality, this type of recognition cherishes their unique characteristics. In Honneth’s (1996: 122) words:

‘this form of recognition demands a social medium that must be able to express the characteristic differences among human subjects in a universal and, more specifically, intersubjectively obligatory way. This task of mediation is performed, at the societal level, by a symbolically articulated – yet always open and porous – framework of orientation, in which those ethical values and goals are formulated that, taken together, comprise the cultural self-understanding of a society. Such a framework of orientation can serve as a system of reference for the appraisal of particular personality features, because their social ‘worth’ is measured by the degree to which they appear to be in a position to contribute to the reali[s]ation of societal goals.’

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The problem with evaluating someone's achievements or abilities in this way can be that such evaluation depends on those values that are prevalent or set up in a specific system or community and that do not recognise its members' contributions symmetrically. For instance, capitalism upholds profitable activities and the certain traits of people that are needed to achieve that, whereas those activities and people that do not produce profit are not recognised and can therefore be oppressed. In order to avoid such corporately attributed esteem, Honneth places esteem in 'the horizon of values of a particular culture' (Anderson in Honneth, 1996: xvii) so that values can be created together and in open contestation. In this way, values are pluralised. Solidarity makes it possible for someone to attain self-esteem, but solidarity here is not understood in an affectionate way. Relationships of esteeming one another are instances of solidarity because 'to esteem one another symmetrically means to view one another in light of values that allow the abilities and traits of the other to appear significant for shared praxis' (Honneth, 1996: 129). And this means that solidarity is not just toleration of someone else but felt concern for what is individual and particular about the other person (Honneth, 1996: 129). It means to acknowledge and praise an individual's achievement, which is not an attainment of that individual's private goals, but an acknowledgement of an individual's contribution to a realisation of society's values. This means that societal values need to be pluralised so that the recognition can be distributed more symmetrically and not predetermined with only some, prevalent ethical values in that society. Of course, this means that in modern societies there is constant tension and cultural conflict (Honneth, 1996: 127) in which the intersubjective value-horizon is constantly questioned and re-adjusted.

To sum up, Honneth's conception of recognition comprises of three distinct patterns of recognition (love, rights and solidarity) that, if properly realised, enable humans to flourish, the development of the individuals identity and the progression of ethical life. These are also intersubjective conditions for an individual's self-realisation, which is a precondition for their participation in a society. In other words, if we are to live in a just society, we must recognise each other's singularity, autonomy and particularity (Anderson, 2009: 86). Honneth's concept of recognition is also a form of behaviour, 'a specific kind of attitude or action' (Honneth: 1997: 503). Or, as he defines it later (Honneth, 2002: 513), 'we are to understand 'recognition' as a behavioural reaction in

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which we respond rationally to evaluative qualities that we have learned to perceive, to the extent to which we are integrated into the second nature of our lifeworld'. Recognition is therefore an action, behaviour, or phenomenon; and it is a normative response that enables moral progress, social change and self-realisation. It works both on an individual as well as a societal level, and both on empirical and normative level.

## 5.2 Globalising Recognition

Even though Honneth's concept of recognition has been widely theorised, its application to global relations has been relatively scant. There are two possible ways of thinking about recognition on a global level. First, we can look at how the concept of recognition itself can be 'globalised', that is, how patterns of recognition could be transnationally extended in order to better respond to global claims of justice (Heins, 2008). Second, we take recognition as it is and explore what it can do for existing theories of global justice. The two approaches differ significantly; whereas the first changes the characteristics of Honneth's concept, the latter keeps it as it is (more or less) and applies it directly to theories of justice. In this chapter, the first approach will be used in order to show how recognition patterns can be cosmopolitanised. I believe that recognition theory can gain a lot by letting cosmopolitanism broaden it, since it has not really incorporated a more global aspect yet and is therefore considerably unapt as a tool for analysing global phenomena and justice.

Schweiger (2012) uses the second approach, that is, he develops the recognition-based concept of global justice. He claims that a critique of social conditions needs a relative form of recognition, which means not absolute, ahistorical standards. However, at the same time he argues that this relative understanding of recognition rests on an absolute core of recognition which is truly universal. This absolute core of recognition is 'the idea of undistorted self-realisation as the universal element of a good life' (Schweiger, 2012: 87). In this way, claims for recognition or global justice can be made in every society and in a variety of circumstances.

Honneth (2012) himself deals with an international dimension of recognition in studying the moral element of international relations, that is, recognition between states. In this

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case, the subjects are states that grant each other (legal and moral) recognition. The state as a subject is very different to subjects like individuals or groups/movements. A state does not need to obtain respect in the same way as individuals do, and what individuals or groups demand is much clearer than in the case of states. Therefore, the direct conceptual transfer of recognition is quite difficult when it comes to states because we cannot speak about their mental or psychological needs but rather their national interests, foreign policy and so on. Because nations are not homogenous entities, to be able to elaborate on and differentiate between demands for recognition, recognition “claims” need to be understood as very vague and up to politicians to be able to interpret.<sup>45</sup> Such justification provides international relations with normative impetus: ‘If it is true that states can only define their international relations with the help of narratives of justification that contain a credible and convincing interpretation of the population’s interests in collective self-respect, then “political” relations of recognition at the international level indirectly take on decisive importance as soon as we seek to reduce conflicts between states’ (Honneth: 2012: 147). So, ‘needs’ and claims of a population can and do influence also political recognition among states. Foreign policy is formed on the basis of what citizens want and desire for their security and prosperity. And at the same time, states exercise also an indirect influence on how other states legitimise their own foreign policies, because they are able to influence public opinion from abroad: ‘The diverse tools used to signal recognition or disrespect constitute a means for casting doubt upon other states’ narratives of justification by demonstrating a divergent view of those states’ collective identity’ (Honneth, 2012: 149).

Heins (2010) tackles the question of internationalising the critical theory of recognition in a similar manner. Specifically, he (2010: 149) questions the premise ‘that recognition theory is all about ‘natural’ persons instead of ‘artificial’ persons such as states or peoples’. In order to include people as subjects in recognition theory he combines Rawls’ international theory with Honneth’s theory of recognition. He argues that the subject’s need to belong to a people is particularly strong and does not disappear in modern societies. Rawls shows that the desire to belong to a people is based on strong

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<sup>45</sup> According to Honneth (2012: 147): ‘What is decisive is not the type of recognition for which a certain population “actually” strives, but how political actors and rulers interpret its respective moods. The sense of a collective ‘We’ among the population, which will always have an influence on the definition of foreign policy objectives, is not an empirical but a hypothetical quantity. It arises when disordered and presumed expectations and moods are formed into a collective narrative that makes a certain type of international stance appear justified in the light of past humiliations or desired recognition’.

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expectations about how members of a community conduct themselves in relation with each other (Heins, 2010: 163) and therefore the subject of a people or a state is important for recognition theory – it shows that a people is not an artificial abstraction but ‘refracted in the consciousness and habitual responses of individuals’. Unlike Honneth (2012), Heins (2010) also argues that patterns of recognition (apart from love) can be directly applied also to a people.<sup>46</sup> Heins also claims that recognition of a people is similar to the recognition of minority groups in democratic societies, but that there are two major differences. First, a people do not seek a positive evaluation of their way of life from the outside; and second, they usually do not request funds from outsiders in order to be able to preserve the community.

Both Honneth and Heins frame their arguments in relation to the state, though. Staples (2012) shows that Honneth’s over-reliance on the state in his conception of recognition (and especially the attainment of self-respect where the state is the main guarantor) obscures political obstacles to recognition. This is particularly well seen in the case of stateless people: ‘In the state system as a whole, political recognition is contingent on deeply particularist structures of power. By introducing a normative conception of the state into his theory, Honneth risks a slide back into the problem faced by the stateless, as reconstructed by Arendt, in which the state is the gatekeeper of full personhood’ (Staples, 2012: 105). For this and other similar reasons, it is necessary for recognition theory to obtain greater global impetus.

### 5.3 Recognition and Cosmopolitanism

As we have seen, recognition has been theorised to a certain extent also on a global or international level but mostly in the sphere of global justice and the state system, and not in connection to cosmopolitanism *per se*. Before focusing on how cosmopolitanism enhances the conception and theory of recognition, it will first be helpful to highlight the similarity between the two. The way recognition and cosmopolitanism work (or the kind of logic that is behind them) is namely particularly alike and related. To borrow from

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<sup>46</sup> ‘Seeking and valuing membership in a people can be translated into already existing forms of recognition: the principle of esteem that justifies differential rewards based on merit for the cooperative members of society as well as of the principle of respect geared to expectations of equal treatment within a community of citizens’ (Heins, 2010: 163).

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Fine's (2007) characterisation of the cosmopolitan outlook,<sup>47</sup> its main characteristic is that it changes the status quo in many different respects. The same could be said for recognition within critical theory. Recognition as a paradigm of critical theory also does not leave the existing social world unchanged once it has been used for the critique of those conditions. Furthermore, the cosmopolitan outlook consists of theoretical, empirical and normative levels and it changes the status quo on all of these levels:

‘It confronts the boundedness of the methodological approaches of the social sciences not least through its critique of ‘methodological nationalism’. It refuses to accept the restricted understanding of our age in terms of essentialising particularisms (e.g. Germanness, Britishness, Jewishness) but rather explains national peculiarities through the general structural developments of modernity and the inter-subjective relations in which these particulars are inserted. It resists the reduction of either politics or science to a moral point of view that demonises the Other as it idealises the Self’ (Fine, 2007: 134–5).

Recognition, too, works on all three mentioned levels and it also changes the status quo on all of those levels as well. Theoretically, it advances older paradigms of critical theory with a paradigm that is grounded in the existing social world and in everyday experiences of people, and which is able to proceed not just from procedures but from the real, moral experiences of people. Furthermore, recognition offers a normative foundation for social criticism, enhances the ethical dimension of human relations and societies, and fulfils normative conditions for social integration. Last but not least, recognition is also an empirical phenomenon in the social world and a type of action that changes peoples' relations and behaviour, affirmations and attitudes, as well as the political and social landscape of a society.

Burns (2013) explores the connection between cosmopolitan political thought (Hegel) and contemporary recognition theory (Honneth). He first compares the historicity of both theories, that is, Honneth's recognition theory and Hegel's philosophy of history. Honneth's theory is historical (although not completely and solely historical) in the sense that it is characterised by particularity (ethics) and universality (morality). Furthermore, it incorporates the idea of normative progress. And, moreover, the struggle for recognition induces historical changes and development. However, it is not clear that ‘in

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<sup>47</sup> He (2007: 134) defines cosmopolitan outlook as ‘a way of seeing the world, a form of consciousness, an emerging paradigm of sociological analysis’ and ‘cosmopolitanism's interpretive moment’, whereas cosmopolitan *condition* is an existing social reality.

Honneth's theory of recognition the idea of the end of history [...] could be associated with that of a cosmopolis or world-state' (Burns, 2013: 79). Burns (2013: 80) further argues that Honneth does not envision his theory of recognition to be used on a global level and that therefore 'Hegel [...] is arguably of greater contemporary relevance than [...] Honneth'. Although this is to a certain extent true, this thesis will try to show that it is possible to use recognition theory also in the context of cosmopolitanism and that it is a useful concept that should be incorporated into cosmopolitan theory.

Delanty (2009: 87) and Stan van Hooft (2010) are to my knowledge the only authors that make a direct link between cosmopolitanism and recognition. Van Hooft uses the concept of recognition and its three patterns to expand on an understanding of justice as well as cosmopolitanism. He insists that cosmopolitanism should not only be understood as everyone possessing fundamental human rights, because bonds between people are richer than just the duty not to violate each others' rights. Therefore, justice as well as cosmopolitanism (or cosmopolitan justice) should take into account the aspect of relationality which can be done by integrating the concept of recognition into the existing understandings of justice theories and cosmopolitanism. In this way, a liberal understanding of freedom as non-violation of rights can be complemented with a more communitarian understanding that takes into account also solidarity bonds between people. The scope of justice consists of fulfilling three spheres of recognition: self-confidence (love), self-respect (rights), and self-esteem (achievement).<sup>48</sup> Recognition theory combines what is good and what is right – that is, both moral and ethical standards of justice. What cosmopolitanism 'gains' with the incorporation of recognition theory is a more substantive character. In this way, it is not only about the equal moral standing of each individual but also about a wider scope and profounder understanding of what justice necessitates. Or, in other words, 'this wider form of cosmopolitanism allows us to urge that a fuller range of human needs and capabilities be included in economic development goals and made the object of the care and political struggles of the world's peoples' (van Hooft, 2010: 46).

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<sup>48</sup> 'Justice consists in obtaining what one needs in the context of love and care, being accorded equal treatment before the law, and being given social status in ways that one deserves. In each case, justice consists in being accorded the appropriate kind of recognition' (van Hooft, 2010: 44).

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We have now seen that recognition is able to enhance cosmopolitanism, but can it also be the case the other way around? Can cosmopolitanism be used in order to enhance recognition theory? Honneth himself says that his recognition theory is not very useful on an international level. But despite that or even precisely because of that, cosmopolitanism can and should be integrated into recognition theory in order to make it ‘useful’ for application on a global level. The main challenge is therefore to theorise ‘cosmopolitan extensions’ of the three recognition patterns: love, rights and solidarity – that is, to provide them with a cosmopolitan aspect. In his article, Heins (2008) aims to broaden recognition theory by adding transnational extensions to the recognition principles of love, rights and solidarity. He strives to identify global equivalents to these three principles but discovers that on a global level they are backed only by weak institutions (unlike on the state level where there are already established institutions that let people realise their recognition needs). He does not seem to have any problem with transnationalising the recognition principles of love and rights but is reluctant when it comes to extending solidarity on a global level. Love is ‘scale-neutral’, he claims, and, besides personal forms of ‘transnational love’ such as transnational marriages, there are also non-personal forms of love that involve larger groups of people. He (2008: 147) speaks about the ethic of brotherliness or a love ethos that describes ‘an attitude of impersonal helpfulness or devotion to a “neighbo[u]r” in need, the term “neighbo[u]r” here being understood typically in the broadest possible sense as including people who are socially very distant or who have come from faraway places’. In the case of legal recognition, it is relatively easy to internationalise human rights because it has already been done with numerous declarations, institutions and human rights regimes. However, in the case of solidarity it is not so clear what counts as a contribution to a common good on a global level (Heins, 2008). He sees the transnational extension of solidarity especially in expanding market access and benefit-sharing, where such contributions to the social reproduction of global society are made within binding treaties and agreements between international subjects. In another article that has already been mentioned earlier, he (Heins, 2010: 163) thinks that belonging to a people can be integrated into an existing pattern of recognition: ‘the principle of esteem that justifies differential rewards based on merit for the cooperative members of society as well as of the principle of respect geared to expectations of equal treatment within a community of citizens’. He sees peoplehood as a special subject that ‘forms the interface between the domestic and international’ (Heins, 2010: 163).

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As these examples of scholarship show, there are either connections made between recognition theory and global justice or the recognition patterns are extended/internationalised; however, there are only two authors (van Hooft, 2010; Delanty, 2009) that directly enhance cosmopolitanism with recognition theory. What I want to show now is the opposite: that also recognition theory can benefit from the integration of cosmopolitan thought into its three patterns of recognition. Therefore, it will be shown how the three patterns work on a cosmopolitan level.

The recognition principle of love – and the corresponding positive relation-to-self of basic self-confidence – is perhaps the most difficult pattern to cosmopolitanise or to be integrated into cosmopolitanism. The reason for this lies in its moral-psychological character, which is difficult to reconcile with in cosmopolitan thought. To reiterate, Honneth (2007: 138–9) defines the first relationship of recognition as such where an individual's 'needs and desires are of unique value to another person'. Therefore, for such a kind of recognition, care and love are the concepts that correspond to it in moral philosophy. Looked at from the opposite perspective, misrecognition or moral injuries in this sphere happen when a person is robbed of his or her physical well-being. Examples of such loss of recognition are murder, torture, rape and any other physical abuse (Honneth, 2007: 136). Could an equivalent be found in cosmopolitanism that corresponds to this type of recognition? One that recognises a person's singularity and attributes to him or her self-confidence in order that they can express their needs and desires? The concept of care instead of love can also be found in cosmopolitanism. In cosmopolitanism, a stranger is not an abstract individual but a singular human being. What is more,

‘the cosmopolitan claims to aim as much at caring for her actual fellow citizen of a particular nation [...] as at caring for any other individual in the world. The equali[s]ation – or symmetry – of the object of care and the stranger leads to the identification of the object of care and the stranger, which is the same as the provider of care. The cosmopolitan individual cares for any other individual in the world – there is no absolute stranger for this care’ (Karagiannis and Wagner, 2013: 151).

In this way, the cosmopolitan extension of the recognition pattern of love manifests itself in recognising love or care not only to members of one's closest groups, but even to

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strangers. Being singular, just like in recognition theory, means being an individual person but that can become like this only in connection with others.

Another way to look at this pattern of recognition and to extend it in the manner of cosmopolitanism would be to look at misrecognition. Does cosmopolitanism respond to (physical) violence? Yes, it does; such response is even one of its main characteristics. To cite Fine (2006: 49; my emphasis) again: ‘While cosmopolitanism is usually understood as a reference to a worldly legal and institutional order, the cosmopolitan outlook is also *a mode of understanding the world, an ethic of responsibility and an ongoing exercise of political judgment in the face of violence*’. Here, cosmopolitanism also shares a point of connection with critical theory. Namely, both of them share a concern with war and violence and are seen as a response to them (Delanty, 2012: 43). Cosmopolitanism reminds us of the atrocities done in the twentieth century and is a response to them. Therefore, ‘[t]he cosmopolitan outlook is the attempt to keep both moments firmly in view: not only the experience of violence in the modern age but also the normativity of its non-acceptance’ (Fine, 2006: 51).

The second pattern of recognition is legal recognition and the corresponding rights that belong to each individual. It is almost self-evident already to claim that cosmopolitanism envisions as well as actualises the world in which human rights are the effective standards of justice. But one must be careful with such (wishful) thinking. Even though human rights can be said to be inherent to the idea of cosmopolitanism, the latter, first of all, is not only about human rights but has other agendas as well. Secondly, we must not abandon the critical potential of cosmopolitanism. Therefore, in the context of rights, cosmopolitanism can and should warn us against ‘the temptation that faces the cosmopolitan imagination [...] to turn itself into an endorsement of the existing order of human rights without a corresponding critical analysis of the roots of contemporary violence’ (Fine, 2009: 8).<sup>49</sup>

‘From a cosmopolitan point of view we do not defend human rights as a natural law substitute for a post-traditional age, nor do we reify the legality of human rights in the juridical sense of the term. But because we do not turn the

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<sup>49</sup> See also Nascimento (2014) who claims that cosmopolitanism does not necessarily reduce human rights to state-centric and liberal approaches, but is compatible also with contextual sensibilities, contemporary global challenges and critical theory.

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idea of human rights into an absolute, we also do not suffer the disillusionment that may arise when it becomes apparent that it is not absolute. Our endeavour is to create what I would call a “human rights culture” – one that allows us to understand human rights as one element in a larger system of right, an emergent form of subjectivity in a global age, and to make political judg[e]ments in a way that neither over-values nor de-values its subject matter’ (Fine, 2009: 20).

Cosmopolitanism can also enhance the second pattern of recognition in such a way that human rights are not only something given by the state. As mentioned before, Staples (2012) warns against this risk in the case of stateless persons, who find themselves to be without the possession of rights because they do not belong to any of the states. Membership, and hence the right to have rights, should not be limited to national citizenship. Membership should be interpreted, and this is especially so in the case of human rights, more widely, in order to include asylum seekers, refugees, immigrants, newcomers, and others in existing polities (Benhabib, 2004). What cosmopolitanism then does for legal recognition is to expand the understanding of a political community in which membership is understood much more broadly than solely in terms of nationality.

According to Brunkhorst (2005: 3), solidarity is not the other of justice but the democratic realisation of individual freedom. In the context of cosmopolitanism, solidarity is sometimes understood as being highly associated with cosmopolitanism, and sometimes it is argued that solidarity and cosmopolitanism are incompatible or less compatible than solidarity in smaller communities where membership and belonging are more easily defined (Pensky, 2007). However, tying solidarity only to the notion of membership can be problematic because a member can undoubtedly very fast become a non-member when circumstances change. Throughout history, many people have been displaced and deprived of their national community, for instance. It is therefore important to look at the kind of solidarity that does not take identity markers for its main standpoint, but, rather, to look at how solidarity is thought about in the context of cosmopolitanism.

In the case of the third pattern of recognition, solidarity, it can be given a cosmopolitan aspect and is not necessarily only limited to smaller groups or communities.

Cosmopolitan solidarity<sup>50</sup> is a political principle, and it is connected to the political and not to the emotional or personal realm: ‘Principles work by inspiring action from outside the self, not from within, as motives do. They are general and thus cannot give specific goals, but they allow us to judge any particular action. The principle shares a common meaning with action in that it arises through the performing of the action’ (Parekh, 2008: 115–16). Cosmopolitan solidarity is not mercy but a modern combination of freedom and politics. It is as radical and fundamental as freedom or equality. It moves beyond the terms of the identity politics debate and stems from the condition of plurality. Unlike compassion, it also acknowledges plurality and guards it. Cosmopolitan solidarity is political by nature and it is distinctively intersubjective in character. This means that it is neither subjective nor objective but constructed through our actions, thinking and judging. It is created in struggle and belongs to society, not to the individual (Fine, 2012). Political understanding of plurality is therefore very important for cosmopolitan solidarity. Cosmopolitan solidarity also surpasses the identity debate but at the same time does not also stem exclusively from non-identity. In order for cosmopolitan solidarity to remain political it must act in accordance with plurality and with the realisation that we live together with other people.

It was Arendt who saw solidarity that is based on the fear of causing pain or global destruction as negative solidarity. Solidarity can be meaningful in a positive way only if it is combined with political responsibility (Arendt, 1968: 83). Positive solidarity can follow two distinct directions: it can either follow the path of the superficial unity of mankind and homogenisation; or it can follow the path of communication and action which in turn enables the creation of a solidarity that acknowledges our shared human condition whilst respecting the key features of this condition: plurality, diversity and difference (Arato and Cohen, 2010: 168). It is clear by now that the community of solidarity is never pre-given but always created in struggle. Such social movements are always fighting to achieve justice, social and political rights, and at the same time trying to combine the logic of justice with that of solidarity (Benhabib, 2011: 189). According to Kurasawa (2004), cosmopolitan solidarity comes into existence through ways of discursively mediated socio-political action. It is ‘a transnational mode of practice whereby actors construct bonds of mutual commitment and reciprocity across borders

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<sup>50</sup> Cosmopolitan solidarity will be more closely explored in the next chapter as a part of cosmopolitan ethics.

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through public discourse and socio-political struggle' (Kurasawa, 2007: 160). Kurasawa (2004) takes alternative globalization movements (AGM)<sup>51</sup> as an example of a form of global solidaristic politics. Through such movements we come to understand 'that social bonds with distant others are not solely derived from normative principles or institutional arrangements, since they must also be constructed out of public discourse and socio-political struggle' (Kurasawa, 2004: 236). Kurasawa further claims that what is especially interesting about the AGM is its world-view, which is deeply rooted in the right to cultural difference and the idea that strength lies in diversity. The AGM does not try to adopt the perspective of a single group as representative of the whole and the diversity of its membership makes such generalisations practically impossible (Kurasawa, 2004: 241). Cosmopolitan solidarity seen as action can thus be characterised by three features: it is necessarily dialogical because it is formed through a communicative exchange and the mutual recognition of different actors; it is a publicly practiced; and, lastly, as social action it is transnational in scope (Kurasawa, 2007: 169). The example of AGM clearly shows that cosmopolitan solidarity is not a set of subjective or attitudinal dispositions to other human beings but a political project that tackles structurally-produced sources of inequality and global injustices that block the exercise of individual and collective capabilities and flourishing human potential (Kurasawa, 2011). It draws attention to the existence of a worldly sensibility from below in particular, grounded in ordinary ways of thinking, acting and participating.

## Conclusion

In the first part, this chapter outlined Honneth's theory of recognition. It then analysed some of the criticisms of it from a global perspective, before, finally, trying to show that the three patterns of recognition can and do entail cosmopolitan aspect. Honneth's theory of recognition understands the concept of recognition as a form of action and behaviour with a normative underpinning of social criticism as well as an empirical phenomenon in the social world, and also as a means available to an individual for self-realisation and their consequent ability to participate in a society. However, what is missing is a more global characterisation of recognition that could then be applied also

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<sup>51</sup> Kurasawa (2004) gives the examples of the 1994 Zapatista rebellion in the Chiapas region of Mexico; Seattle protests that played a part in the collapse of World Trade Organization negotiations in 1999; and the massive protests against the US-led invasion of Iraq.

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to contemporary global challenges. And this is where cosmopolitanism can enhance it. With ascribing each pattern of recognition a cosmopolitan aspect, it was shown that cosmopolitanism works well together with recognition and even enhances it in order to be more apt for use at a global level. With its specific ethics and agenda, cosmopolitanism can complement recognition theory and make its critical potential even stronger.

The questions for further research remain: does cosmopolitanism possess these or similar elements as well? How does it understand the social world? How does it find social pathologies and how does it constitute its own justice? The next chapter will deal with cosmopolitanism's normative foundations and its capacity for solidarity.

## CHAPTER 6

# THE NORMATIVE FOUNDATIONS OF CRITICAL COSMOPOLITANISM: TOWARDS THE CONCEPT OF COSMOPOLITAN SOLIDARITY

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*'[...] in which differences, of the Other, of Others, the Other of the Others, develop to with-one-another and also to shared insight'.  
(Gadamer, 1999a: 8)*

**E**thics concerns the vast pool of ideas about how to live. People have always needed ethics and its standards, because we live with one another and relate to each other. We need those standards to assess our obligations to others and to society, and to know what other people's duties to us consist of. Unlike morality, ethical ideas do not try to merely separate the good and the bad. If it were for morality the world would consist of merely black and white; ethics sees the world in colour. There is no one answer to the question of how to live our lives. Ethics concerns the question of how to lead a good life, which of course varies from society to society. Therefore it does not offer some kind of a prescription or a blueprint. In order not to be given in advance and thus be biased, ethics must entail using faculties to judge and guide actions with reference to principles that surpass the deliberation of individuals in particular communities (Devenney, 2004: 163). Finding an ethical theory that could be deemed universal is difficult, but both recognition theory and cosmopolitanism endeavour to sketch and realise this ambition in their pursuit of justice. Ethics, justice and critical theory are all inextricably connected. Ethics can help us build a more just world, and even though justice is such a disputed and incomplete concept or phenomenon, nevertheless it plays a very critical role in achieving a better world. Justice 'sustains its critical function for the present precisely because it is *not* exhausted by its determination' (Bankovsky, 2012: 2). One could argue similarly about ethics.

Ethics' essential concern pertains to concepts such as freedom, rights, community, self-realisation, recognition, human nature, rationality, happiness, justice, equality and so

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on. These, sometimes contradictory, elements of ethics and the way they are systematised construct the ethical climate of a society and tell us what is the best way to live. Ethics guides us in the way we handle interpersonal relations and build our political world. It is therefore essentially concerned with human relatedness and consequently also solidarity.<sup>52</sup> But ethics, like any other belief system that deals with human relations and the organisation of the human world, is susceptible to being misused for ideological or other purposes. As Parker (1998: 5) warns: ‘It is reasonable to concede that ethics *can* be ideological [...]. Ethics can be unconsciously masculinist or bourgeois, unwittingly privileging a certain sort of gender-biased conception of autonomous rationality or certain class-biased conceptions of social order’. Besides being ideological, ethics can also be judgmental, or, in other words, moralistic. However, despite the fact that ethics *can* be distorted in a way that can privilege or degrade certain groups of people, it is still necessary to retain it and to foster it, because only with a strong ethical vocabulary is it possible to ‘articulate the humanly destructive impulses that can lurk precisely in the thirst for righteousness’ (Parker, 1998: 7). For this reason it is tremendously important to develop such an ethics that can express solidarity, is universal in character and fair in its deeds.<sup>53</sup>

There are many types of and approaches to ethics. From the first systematic treatment of ethics in Western philosophy, Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, which belongs to the field of virtue ethics, to utilitarianism, consequentialism, distributive justice, and normative ethics, which I am most interested in. Normative ethics upholds substantive moral claims about a just society. It is a branch of ethics that tells us what is right and good, and discusses norms of behaviour and organisation (Sher, 2012: 237). Cosmopolitanism as a normative theory extends the claims about a just society to a global level. Linklater (2007: 20) asks, can cosmopolitanism ‘achieve neutrality between rival ethical

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<sup>52</sup> Émile Durkheim understands solidarity in a functional way, that is, as something that holds people together. He sees it as a form of social cohesion that is based upon the dependence individuals have on each other (Durkheim, 1960). As society progresses, solidarity becomes based on some sort of a functional interdependence between people of different occupations. Division of labour produces social cohesion and solidarity because it creates a system of rights and duties, which link them together in a durable way (Durkheim, 1960: 406).

<sup>53</sup> Manners (2008) sees the European Union as such a normative power that is capable of achieving a more just, cosmopolitical world. He claims that through its principles and objectives (sustainable peace, social freedom, consensual democracy, associative human rights, supranational rule of law, inclusive equality, social solidarity, sustainable development, and good governance), the EU must lead a transparent normative ethics ‘that accommodate the social rights and perceptions of the member states with those of the EU and its citizens, together with the universal individual rights of non-Europeans, no matter where one might live’ (Manners, 2008: 60).

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traditions'? Can it locate ethics somewhere between communitarianism and liberalism, for instance? In this chapter, I will try to develop critical cosmopolitanism's ethical stance. In the first part of the chapter, I will look at critical theory, particularly Axel Honneth's recognition theory, and the way it conceptualises good life, that is, what is the underlying ethics that guides it in pursuit of social justice. In this way, it will be possible to compare it to critical cosmopolitanism's sense of ethics, which will be the topic of the second part of this chapter. The focus of the third part of the chapter will be on the concept of cosmopolitan solidarity, where the principles of cosmopolitan ethics can be applied best and be most visible.

### **6.1 Good or Ethical Life in Recognition Theory**

Critical theory's underlying aim or purpose is a concern for social justice. It is therefore inherently normative, trying to bring about emancipation for subjugated persons and to make the world a better place. Critical theory therefore never only moralises, that is, engages in moralistic criticism where it would try to firmly separate the good from the bad. In what it tries to achieve, it is unavoidably guided by certain norms that are immanently formed. Critical theorists avoid using external moralising principles or scientific methods, and have therefore developed their own method of critique, immanent criticism, which was discussed in previous chapters. In order to change the social conditions for the better, critical theory needs to provide a vision of a good life. This vision needs to be thick and consistent in order to be able to efficiently criticise the pathologies in societies. But how does one come up with the 'right' conception of a good life? How does a society or an authority form this notion? As Geuss (2004: 131) warns, there is no simple empirical path to these answers. One cannot just conduct a poll and seek an answer in people's feelings and thoughts. In fact, he argues that '[t]he conception of the good life in question is supposed to be the one really embedded in a historical formation of society, not whatever people *think* is the good for people in their society'. One of the ways this can be achieved is through dialectical thinking, the task of which is to contrast the state of reality with what the latter could be in better circumstances.<sup>54</sup> However, because the tradition of Critical Theory is so broad, it is

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<sup>54</sup> 'One important task of Critical Theory, then, is to extract from such traditional conceptions both positive images of the good life and negative images of lives that are not good, to translate them into a form which brings out as clearly as possible those parts of them that are no longer merely utopian, but

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difficult to identify one and only one vision of good life that critical theory supposedly proposes. Different theorists have had different ideas about how the world could or should be changed and therefore they have had different ideas as to what counts as good life.

Honneth (1996: 171) uses the designations of good life and ethical life interchangeably. In any case, he wishes to develop such an understanding of ethical/good life that would not be tied to any ‘particular, historically unique visions of the good life’ (Honneth, 1996: 173).<sup>55</sup> In trying to avoid being biased and in determining an impartial moral standpoint, Honneth follows Hegel. The latter, like Honneth, does not think that a moral standpoint should be completely abandoned but instead that it should be freed of its abstractness (Honneth, 2014: 818). Honneth, too, creates the conception of good life within the social world. For him it stems from relationality among people, and he therefore posits intersubjectivity as a precondition to forming such a conception: ‘The intersubjectively obligatory conception of the good life – to which one has, as it were, become ethically accustomed – can only be construed as giving all members of the community the opportunity to determine their way of life for themselves, within the framework of the rights accorded to them’ (Honneth, 1996: 90). What Honneth understands to be leading a good or ethical life in a society is for each individual to be able to reach self-realisation. This does not mean that everyone is free in an unlimited sense since the rights that are given to us bound the actions of us all. Society’s task therefore is to expand this spectre of rights in such a way as to ensure the individuals’ chance to achieve self-realisation.

In establishing a formal conception of ethical life, the three patterns of recognition (love, rights and solidarity) play the most important role. They are appropriately abstract and formal in order not to adhere to any particular idea of the good life. On the other hand,

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could actually be reali[s]ed, and to compare our present society with those images. This confrontation is a critique of our present. Dialectical thinking critici[s]es existing institutions, practices, or states of affairs simply by contrasting what they are with what they could be, and are in some sense striving to be but are not’ (Geuss, 2004: 133).

<sup>55</sup> On why we cannot build a model of ethical life that would be acceptable for the generations to come, Honneth (2014: 822) says that individual’s inclinations and outlooks change and therefore the ethical norms once intersubjectively accepted can lose their motivational power and their objective validity. Therefore, ethical life must not be something set in stone but historically open in order to allow for the norms to change and gain acceptance in different historical and societal contexts.

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however, their content is also not empty nor too abstract to be applied to societal life. In Honneth's (1996: 174) words, they are:

‘detailed enough to say more about the general structures of a successful life than is entailed by general references to individual self-determination. The forms of recognition associated with love, rights, and solidarity provide the intersubjective protection that safeguards the conditions for external and internal freedom, upon which the process of articulating and realizing individual life-goals without coercion depends. Moreover, since they do not represent established institutional structures but only general patterns of behaviour, they can be distilled, as structural elements, from the concrete totality of all particular forms of life’.

The concept of good or ethical life therefore includes all those intersubjective prerequisites that make the self-realisation of any person possible at all.<sup>56</sup> Ethical norms must be mutually accepted and upheld in order for them to be valid. And because people's preferences change, and are not the same as others' in the first place, ethical norms have to always remain open to contestation. Again, Honneth (2014: 823) is following Hegel: ‘We saw that on Hegel's view, merely given, habitually practised norms are transformed into ethical obligations when the participants in the relevant practice mutually accord each other the authority to hold their respective actions to certain fundamental standards’. Therefore, Honneth thinks that the ethical sphere and institutionalised moral action are necessarily established in connection to the relations of mutual recognition:

‘Thus there can be no ethical sphere, no institutionalised domain of moral action, that is not anchored in relations of reciprocal recognition. This individual empowerment gives each participant the right to cite reasons that in light of a collectively shared norm speak against one person's or several other persons' particular way of putting that norm into practice. Generally speaking it is therefore part of the everyday exercise of an ethical practice that despite the emergence of shared habits, the application of the standards inherent in

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<sup>56</sup> Honneth (2014: 819) writes: ‘Each act of recognition consists in according to one or several other persons the authority to judge the normative aptness of one's own actions. In offering recognition, the recogni[s]ing agent ‘infringes on’ his ‘self-love’ insofar as he now knows himself to be bound by the norm with respect to whose application he has granted the other agent or agents a say. Thus on Hegel's account a practice deserves the label ‘ethical’ only if a group of persons, which may vary in size, follows a norm to which each among them may in principle appeal to evaluate the actions of one of the other participants. This condition excludes both unilaterally enforced interactions and action from mere routine, and only when the condition is met does social reality exhibit the interplay of self-determination and normative obligation that Kant thought could be understood only as an isolated act of reflection removed from everyday practice’.

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the practice remains subject to contestation since there is a continual stream of novel objections and reservations' (Honneth, 2014: 823).

This ethical stance of recognition theory therefore envisages a different kind of justice than mere fair distribution of goods. Because it is based on intersubjectivity (each person's consideration of another, and vice versa) relationality, and the ever-present interdependence among beings, the justice it purports to cannot be based only on the materiality and utilitarianism of the exchange of commodities. The normative aim of recognition theory is not the eradication of material inequality anymore, 'but the avoidance of humiliation or disrespect', where central categories become dignity and respect (Honneth, 2004: 351). Such social justice is plural because 'subjects in modern societies are reliant in their identity formation on three forms of social recognition, founded in the sphere-specific principles of love, of equal treatment in law and of social esteem' (Honneth, 2004: 358).

It would be a difficult task to try to designate Honneth's or recognition theory's ethics as deontological, utilitarian (consequentialist) or even as virtue ethics. The Good for Honneth is the possibility of the individual to achieve self-realisation, which is a broad term that encompasses everything from being able to participate in society to feeling content. In this sense, it adheres to some sort of a utilitarian, if not even consequentialist, ethics since it strives to realise the end goal and with it the Good in life. On the other hand, we could say that the ethics on which recognition theory is based also fits in well with deontological theories, which emphasise our duty to fellow human beings. Because consequentialist theories sometimes allow anything in order to attain the Good (the Good before the Right), they need to be balanced with deontological ones. Recognition theory does precisely this. The pursuit of the good is equal to the duty not to disrespect anyone. So, besides its normativity, recognition theory also displays characteristics of deontological and utilitarian ethical theories.

Honneth (1996: 91) admits that such a formalistic conception of ethical life does not explain why people would feel the motivation to be in solidarity with others. Consequently, there needs to be some sort of incentive in order for people to feel the need to act in solidarity with others. Such a positive motivating force in a society could be an orientation to shared goals and values. To recognise somebody in the spirit of

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concern or solidarity, one needs to possess the common experience that warns them against certain threats. Possessing knowledge about what the threats might be also means possessing knowledge about what is the good life within this community (Honneth, 1996: 91). In this way, the orientation towards shared goals and values makes it possible to exercise solidarity and also social integration. Honneth believes that negative solidarity has already linked us together, but what is missing in societies is a more positive type of solidarity. He sees the answer in commitment to realising shared values and building a good life. Of course there are competing views about how viable this is – liberalists argue for a more individualistic approach, and communitarians put community and shared values before the individual. For Honneth, solidarity is not something that one does for someone else out of sympathy or friendliness. He sees it as part of a more general societal climate where common values are identified in a way that everyone can contribute to realising them and are therefore able to acquire self-esteem.

## 6.2 Critical Cosmopolitanism's Ethics

When we talk about the ethics of world politics or global affairs, it is important to distinguish between two approaches that I will be trying to combine in order to overcome the shortcomings of each of them. There are many opposing camps when it comes to discussions about cosmopolitan or global ethics. These include, for instance, cosmopolitan vs. communitarian<sup>57</sup> or normative vs. realist debate. But, as Brassett and Bulley (2007) point out, we need to go past these totalising dichotomies and not settle just for one of the options. They think that in the mutual engagement of the cosmopolitan and critical perspectives on ethics in world politics there is a chance of moving beyond such dichotomies.<sup>58</sup> Whereas the cosmopolitan approaches to ethics usually emphasise suffering and builds its ethics around it, critical approaches take into account relationality<sup>59</sup> and future-orientation. Critical cosmopolitanism's underlying

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<sup>57</sup> Jones (1999), for instance, explores the debate between cosmopolitans and communitarians in the area of international distributive justice.

<sup>58</sup> They see a connection in suffering. Cosmopolitan approaches try to expand the scope of what is thought as meaningful suffering (or to expand our ethical concern), whereas critical approaches warn how assumptions of ethics can in fact produce the ethical limits of a problem.

<sup>59</sup> See, for instance, Vaughan-Williams' (2007) relational view of singularity.

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ethics tries to combine the two approaches. It does not abandon the notion of suffering, nor does it lack critical engagement with social ontology and relations among people.

Honneth's recognition theory is founded on a universalistic and formal ethical theory. The ethics of critical cosmopolitanism is similar in some respects yet a bit different. Cosmopolitan ethics is most commonly understood as the rejection of 'arbitrary distinctions with regard to which persons have equal moral standing' (Franceschet, 2005: 114). Such formulation pertains mostly to legal recognition, though. Just like in Honneth's approach, cosmopolitanism offers a more substantial approach to ethics, the kind that is linked to justice and therefore obligation. There is of course evidence of some cosmopolitan ethical values present in the everyday world community, but, as Shapcott (2010) calls it, this is nothing but the spirit of charity. The true ethics of cosmopolitanism is found in its doctrine of obligation. It is also true that cosmopolitan ethics is about treating others with respect and the idea of a common human community (Shapcott, 2010), but critical cosmopolitanism as an analytical tool needs additional characteristics explained.

I argue that critical cosmopolitanism's sense of ethics consists of three distinct characteristics that separate critical cosmopolitanism from cosmopolitanisms, which may contain some ideological traits. Critical cosmopolitanism's sense of ethics and therefore justice is premised on the belief that there can be no blueprint for a certain way of life or the good life. Something that is good for somebody could be oppressive for someone else. Therefore, critical cosmopolitanism tries to judge each social situation in its particularity and remain impartial – not neutral in the sense of not adhering to any of the existing beliefs but resorting to judgement, moderation and stemming from the idea of human interrelatedness and interdependence. Critical cosmopolitanism is not a totalising, prescriptive set of ideas that are outlined in advance and applied to the social world. It does indeed consist of principles and beliefs but it is not dogmatic in its treatment of social reality. Its critical dimension condemns certain social and political situations but what is the ground on which it does so? What makes critical cosmopolitanism ethical and a critical analytical tool? Which are those attributes that must always be a part of its analytical and critical method? I claim that these are moderation, judgement and singularity. With these three traits, critical cosmopolitanism analyses and criticises the existing social world.

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### 6.2.1 *Mediations and Moderation*

Critical cosmopolitanism does not reduce norms, principles, and justice to the ‘right’ ones. It does not proclaim the correct kind of life. It also does not serve any particular interests except those of social justice, moral inclusion and an ethical commitment to the improvement of the world. Benhabib (2006), too, understands cosmopolitanism in a similar manner. In order to retrieve dialogic universalism, which is one of the undertakings of (critical) cosmopolitanism, one must not resort to totalisations but seek mediations – to combine seeming opposites, to shed new light on a matter from a non-standard perspective, to seek new ways of engaging with and understanding the world:

‘Unlike communitarians who reduce the demands of morality to those claims that are deemed valid by specific ethical, cultural and political communities, and unlike realists and postmodernists who are skeptical that political norms can ever be judged in the light of moral ones, I will insist *on the necessary disjunction as well as the necessary mediation between the moral and the ethical, the moral and the political*. The task is one of mediations, not reductions. How can one mediate moral universalism with ethical particularism? How can one mediate legal and political norms with moral ones? Such a strategy of mediation is crucial to reclaiming dialogic universalism. Cosmopolitanism then is a philosophical project of mediations, not of reductions or of totali[s]ations’ (Benhabib et al., 2006: 19–20).

Critical cosmopolitanism’s ethical position is therefore somewhere in the middle or between two or more extremes. However, although a middle position can sometimes be perceived as meek, critical cosmopolitanism is not at all a passive or submissive position. It is a position of constant activity of judgement and trying to evade the tyranny of absolutes. It is also not a purely philosophical procedure. It is not sterile but takes into account humanness. Just like Camus (2000) says when he describes a rebel – a rebel does not act in a sterile manner and pursue sterile goals but does so also because of his or her own passion, feelings, love. Comparably, critical cosmopolitanism also does not advocate sterile norms but, rather, allows for the humanness that is inevitably a part of our decision-making, our desire to change the world and to revolt. Delanty (2009: 14–15) similarly claims that cosmopolitanism should be understood as an orientation, allowing for our imagination to change and orient itself according to the social circumstances. Critical cosmopolitanism, just like Honneth’s concept of recognition, strongly takes into account people’s experiences and their feelings, observations, and perceptions.

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Moderation is therefore a sort of rebellion. In order to avoid extremes, which we all so easily fall into, there needs to be constant rebellion, contestation, and questioning. Thus, there exists a continuous tension in order to retain that middle position and not to fall in into either of the two extremes. As Camus (2000: 264–5; my emphasis) so eloquently writes:

‘[...] excess is always a comfort, and sometimes a career. Moderation, on the one hand, is nothing but pure tension. It smiles, no doubt, and our convulsionists, dedicated to elaborate apocalypses, despise it. But its smile shines brightly at the climax of an interminable effort: it is in itself a supplementary source of strength. [...] Moderation is not the opposite of rebellion. Rebellion in itself is moderation, and it demands, defends, re-creates it throughout history and its eternal disturbances. The very origin of this value guarantees us that it can only be partially destroyed. Moderation, born of rebellion, can only live by rebellion. It is a perpetual conflict, continually created and mastered by the intelligence. *It does not triumph either in the impossible or in the abyss. It finds its equilibrium through them.* Whatever we may do, excess will always keep its place in the heart of man, in the place where solitude is found. We all carry with us our places of exile, our crimes, and our ravages. But our task is not to unleash them on the world; it is to fight them in ourselves and in others’.

Cosmopolitanism, too, is a kind of moderation and (therefore) a rebellion. Dissent is a foundation of cosmopolitanism (Carauş, 2015: 20). Such cosmopolitanism is not grounded on something given but on something that constantly moves – it presumes ‘a perpetual withdrawal of the ground of any political power/authority and, indirectly, of any ground. The human being as conceived through dissent is not an entity fixed once and for all but is reaffirmed through an endless questioning of the given. Through such questioning, dissent keeps open the possibility of “true” universality and cosmopolitanism and points to the human subject’s fundamental indeterminacy and openness’ (Carauş, 2015: 20). Critical cosmopolitanism is therefore post-foundational, defying the foundations that are supposed to regulate the social world, and trying to find some balance in the midst of ever-moving and changing social conditions.

### 6.2.2 *Judgement and the Common World*

A big part of critical cosmopolitanism and its methodology represents the faculty of judgement. The capacity for independent judgement is crucial for critical cosmopolitans because, as was stated immediately above, critical cosmopolitanism does not rely on

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stable foundations that would offer answers in each situation. The capacity to judge independently or reflectively must therefore come from our shared world and values, and then be applied to a particular situation. Judging is a very worldly activity which acknowledges and at the same time establishes our common world. It recognises plurality and allows for it, and is very public in character.

Thinking independently is of course connected to the faculty of judgement, because the two supplement each other in an important way. Judgement needs thinking to be able to come into existence in the first place, and thinking needs judgement in order to be revealed in the world instead of being abstract and detached from it. So, there is a major difference between the two – thinking is private and dwells on matters that are not present to our senses, whereas judgement always deals with actual phenomena and particular things nearby (Fine, 2008: 161). Judging involves autonomous thinking but it must be done publicly: ‘thought without public expression and response loses its way. To think is also to be prepared to think things through with others’ (Deutscher, 2007: xiii). It was Arendt who took Kant’s cosmopolitan conception of enlarged thought and used it to illuminate the shift from experience to critique which means a change from thinking privately to thinking from a public standpoint (Disch, 1993: 682). Thinking allows judgement to get rid of pre-established, conformist principles and thoughts, and helps an ‘individual to judge for him or herself instead of being carried away by the actions and opinions of the majority’ (d’Entrèves, 2000: 249). Similarly, Steinberger (1990: 812) claims that the exercise of political judgements corresponds to a specifically political form of thinking in the presence of other subjects. The presence of others is therefore very important when it comes to judging the world. Judgement can be validly exercised only if a subject thinks representatively, which means only when he or she looks at matters from the perspective of everyone else. To be able to do so, one must always exercise judgement in the public common world, where subjects get an uncoerced opportunity to discuss their thoughts with others (d’Entrèves, 2000: 253–4). Put differently, judging necessitates ‘worldliness’ which means cultivating an interest in worldly matters and other people, alongside with the capacity to appropriately assess their viewpoints (Benhabib, 2003: 191).

Therefore, judgement is plausible only when it gains the support of a plurality of autonomously thinking individuals. The sources for judgement cannot be of a

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transcendental nature because transcendental standards are already a matter of judgement and are themselves established on intersubjectively derived criteria (Parekh, 1981: 89). Judgement of the world must come from within that world and is therefore a worldly action. It ‘reflects a commitment to the world insofar as it implies a concern with worldly conditions. Judging requires the presence of others to whom one can appear and with whom one can “visit” and, moreover, judg[e]ments are made about worldly phenomena’ (Taylor, 2002: 163). I believe that critical cosmopolitanism contains similar forms of judgement – the latter should always be about the world and activities in the world. The criteria for judging in the spirit of cosmopolitanism should not be fixed or transcendental but built in public and within the context of that particular phenomenon. The normativity of critical cosmopolitanism is therefore not principle-based because principles change, they can be biased and they are not applicable to every particular social or political situation. The normativity of critical cosmopolitanism is judgement-based (Ferrara, 2007). Reflective judgement is a way of assessing the state of an identity’, which means that in order to avoid the ethical or political dominance of one group over another, for instance, the issue should be judged ‘from the standpoint of the affirmation of the identity of humankind, the one which by definition encompasses all other identities in conflict and cannot be transcended’ (Ferrara, 2007: 63).

‘Our reflective endorsement of what is reasonable, however, only *starts* from our parochial self-conception, but by no means remains hostage to it. The contribution of others within the common exercise of public reason may change our self-conception by pointing to new and as yet unexplored alternatives. The reasonable then is inherently a critical and transformative force. Within its implicit claim to fit more exemplarily than the alternatives with our shared premises and (since fit cannot be understood in merely logical terms) within its implicit claim to better fit with our sense of who we could be at our best, is embedded a potential critique of the “actual acceptance” of norms, institutions, policies, and so on – a critique not based on principles that transcend who we are *qua* political community but on the authenticity of a modern identity in which we partake *qua* free and equal citizens respecting each other’ (Ferrara, 2007: 61).

It is interesting to see what role judgement plays also in cosmopolitan solidarity. Chouliaraki (2012) sees judgement and imagination<sup>60</sup> as preconditions for cosmopolitan

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<sup>60</sup> Chouliaraki (2012: 92) sees imagination of the Other as crucial to solidarity, with this imaginative mobility making it possible for the voices of vulnerable people to be heard.

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solidarity. Through judgement, helping the vulnerable or those in need becomes ‘a matter of public justification rather than private preference’ (Chouliaraki, 2012: 90). In the previous chapter we have already seen why this is so important. Solidarity must not (just) come out of private feelings of pity and compassion. It must have a public justification. Judgement makes it possible for solidarity to become a question of the social values that induce action and to problematise human vulnerability as a question of global injustice, collective responsibility and social change (Chouliaraki, 2012: 91).<sup>61</sup>

### 6.2.3 *Relationality and Singularity*

The normative underpinning of critical cosmopolitanism must take into account one more characteristic of the social world in order to be able to judge and criticise human relations and institutions. The social world is not comprised of independent, isolated human entities. We are all interrelated and interdependent upon each other. We have to talk about a shared reality and to understand that it imposes obligations upon us. Our obligations are to creating the conditions that make life possible, not to life itself, and these conditions are both our political responsibility and the matter of our most vexed ethical decisions (Butler, 2009: 23). In order to create these conditions to make life possible, we must be aware of the relationality that characterises our common world. Cosmopolitanism is essentially related to the common, shared world. The cosmopolitan common world is intersubjectively built, and it is a world of plurality and mutual engagement. It is not only a world in which we collectively face the same destiny and problems; it must also be understood in a positive way – it is built by us, political and ethical responsibilities stem from it, and men and women are conditioned by it. The cosmopolitan subject cannot be completely ‘rootless’, that is, to exist without any sense of belonging. Being rootless would not only mean that we do not feel any kind of belonging to anyone or any place, but also that we are completely detached from the common world and unable to relate to other people. We therefore need to look at human beings and how they relate to each other from a different aspect, one that does not presuppose any membership or non-membership of any kind of political, religious

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<sup>61</sup> Chouliaraki (2012: 91) says: ‘It is by carving out the communicative space wherein the radical plurality of these standpoints becomes the object of politics, that is to say the object of public deliberation and collective judgement, that agonistic solidarity may be able to galvani[s]e the sensibilities of Western publics towards other-oriented, rather than self-oriented, expressions of solidarity’.

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or other entities except humanity as such. But how is this possible? We need to understand that what we all share is the (bodily) precarity of our lives and the consequent interdependence and interconnectedness among people. If we accept such understanding, then we can characterise relations between people as being primarily marked by interdependence without essentialising or making false generalisations and universalisations.<sup>62</sup>

Such ethical and political relationality must also presuppose a certain type of subjectivity. Vaughan-Williams (2007) posits that if we want to achieve a more critical approach in cosmopolitan ethics, we should understand subjectivity in relational terms. This relational view of subjectivity is called, following Jacques Derrida, singularity. What exactly singularity means is difficult to identify. It is not identical, as Vaughan-Williams (2007: 116) writes, to citizen, political subject or even human being: ‘Derrida opens up the possibility of conceiving ethico-political relations between all forms of life, irrespective of conventional distinctions such as citizen/non-citizen, human/animal, and so on. Such categorisations are far from somehow stable, natural or neutral’. But the “usefulness” of such a concept lies precisely in its openness. As soon as singularity is defined in positive, negative or any other way, it loses its singularity and is therefore not singular anymore. On the other hand, Vaughan-Williams (2007: 116) believes that for something or someone to be singular ‘it has to be, even in a very minimal way, like something – or indeed everything – else’. Therefore, nothing can be absolutely or purely singular because we would not even be able to recognise it (Thomson in Vaughan-Williams, 2007: 116). What does this mean? It means that singularity cannot be understood on its own, but must always be seen ‘*with* or *in relation* to the other singularities that make it singular’ (Vaughan-Williams, 2007: 116). Singularity captures individuality and plurality at the same time. Such a conception of subjectivity is similarly

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<sup>62</sup> Butler (2009: 13–14) writes: ‘Precariousness implies living socially, that is, the fact that one's life is always in some sense in the hands of the other. It implies exposure both to those we know and to those we do not know; a dependency on people we know, or barely know, or know not at all. Reciprocally, it implies being impinged upon by the exposure and dependency of others, most of whom remain anonymous. These are not necessarily relations of love or even of care, but constitute obligations toward others, most of whom we cannot name and do not know, and who may or may not bear traits of familiarity to an established sense of who “we” are. In the interest of speaking in common parlance, we could say that “we” have such obligations to “others” and presume that we know who “we” are in such an instance. The social implication of this view, however, is precisely that the “we” does not, and cannot, recogni[s]e itself, that it is riven from the start, interrupted by alterity, as Levinas has said, and the obligations “we” have are precisely those that disrupt any established notion of the “we”’.

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thought of in connection to the cosmopolitan subject in anthropological writings. There, the cosmopolitan subject, or *Anyone* as Nigel Rapport (2012b) calls him or her, also possesses a singular value in the sense that they are both individualistic as well as universal, everyone possessing singularity, and therefore human:

“‘Anyone’ is distinct from both ‘Everyman’ and ‘homo sacer’ in that it collapses the distinction between *zoë* and *bios*. The human individual does not need to be or do any particular thing – whether engage in conventional exchanges or do good in conventional ways – in order to accede to a full humanity. Being human is Anyone’s birthright. It is not the place of others to define what activities or what ideologies Anyone needs to practise in order to exhibit human dignity. Nor, indeed, can anyone else define for Anyone what dignity feels like or how it is to be interpreted: this is something that Anyone must know for himself or herself. Anyone’s humanity precisely is this capacity to feel, interpret and come to know for himself and herself. Anyone’s birthright, it might be said, is his or her futurity: the capacity to define the human in the context of his or her individual life. The tie between Anyone and humankind – microcosm to macrocosm – is immanent and irreducible’ (Rapport, 2012b: 4).

However, the difference between Rapport’s and Vaughan-Williams’ (or Derrida’s) account of singularity is that the former does not think that engagement with others is a prerequisite to being or becoming singular. But then how will the subject attain that humanness which comes with singularity if not also by interacting with other singularities?

### 6.3 The Concept of Cosmopolitan Solidarity

And if I cried, who'd listen to me in those angelic  
orders? Even if one of them suddenly held me  
to his heart, I'd vanish in his overwhelming  
presence. Because beauty's nothing  
but the start of terror we can hardly bear,  
and we adore it because of the serene scorn  
it could kill us with. Every angel's terrifying.  
So I control myself and choke back the lure  
of my dark cry. Ah, who can we turn to,  
then? Neither angels nor men,  
and the animals already know by instinct  
we're not comfortably at home  
in our translated world.

R. M. Rilke, *Duino Elegies*, *The First Elegy* (Rilke and Poulin, 1977)

As in the first line of Rilke's *Duino Elegies*, so too we must sometimes ask ourselves: *And if I cried, who'd listen to me in those angelic orders?* That is to say, who would help one in one's time of need? Help them, but not subsume them under our being. Help them, but not make them vanish in pity? Thus, are angels, or those who can help, capable of responding according to a stranger's cry of need? This is a widespread dilemma in a world where everyone is a stranger to each other and, to a certain extent, to oneself as well. This part of the chapter deals with the idea of cosmopolitan solidarity, a concept that tries to reconcile strangeness and relatedness in spite of the oft-alienating world, on the one hand, and a too personal one, on the other. Today's world of mass societies is becoming increasingly characterised as apathetic, if not insensitive. Contemporary economic and social crises, the rise of extreme right movements, the proliferation of ethnic and religious conflicts, oppressed peoples' suffering, and the clash of global ideologies all call for stronger solidarity, including 'solidarity among strangers', as conceived of by Habermas (2001: 16) – a kind which surpasses the borders of conventional nation-states. Although there is wide-ranging academic research on the notion of solidarity (Stjernø, 2004; Bayertz, 1999; Rorty, 1989; Sturm, 1998; Brunkhorst, 2005; Pensky, 2008; Hechter, 1987; Turner and Rojek, 2001), much less scholarship has been dedicated to studying the concept of cosmopolitan solidarity (Fine, 2012; Kurasawa, 2004; Wilde, 2013; Derpmann, 2009; Jabri, 2007; Stevenson, 2006; Ward, 2013). Our interconnected world, which inevitably draws attention to our

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commonalities, calls for a sense of solidarity that is able to transcend physical and mental boundaries, while still remaining committed to (cosmopolitan) ideas and using them as guidance for action.

The way cosmopolitan solidarity is conceptualised here focuses on the way people relate to each other, engage with the Other, and understand themselves and the world. A concept of cosmopolitan solidarity is one that will take into account the differences among people but still be able to hold people together. Or, in the words of Brunkhorst (2005: 4–5), ‘the concept of solidarity – and here we connect to Durkheim – is rooted “not in *community* [*Gemeinschaft*], but is an inherent element of *society* [*Gesellschaft*].” Solidarity dialectically combines opposites, contradictions, and differences. The difference, heterogeneity, and fragmentation that “can still be held together” are the “criterion for solidarity”. Cosmopolitan solidarity is substantiated by three characteristics that express a cosmopolitan disposition: engagement with otherness and respect for difference; acknowledgement of the common world; and (self-)understanding. These three characteristics make for an understanding of solidarity that is particularly apt for conceptualising cosmopolitan solidarity.<sup>63</sup>

As David Hoy (Hoy and McCarthy, 1994: 257) observes, solidarity is a difficult notion. On the one hand, it can be seen as a form of an ‘admirable social ideal’. On the other, it can be taken as fundamentally exclusive. More specifically, with each affirmation of *we*, *them* becomes a necessary ramification. It is therefore no surprise that solidarity is a concept held in suspicion especially when it is thought of in connection to cosmopolitanism which tries to avoid a discriminating categorisation of people or universalisation of one ideal: ‘On epistemological grounds, many doubt that there is a shared, universal human nature that could provide common ground among diverse human communities and individuals. And when solidarity does seem to emerge, it is often interpreted as either a contingent confluence of individuals with a shared cultural or ethnic inheritance, or an enforced uniformity that merely gives the impression of

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<sup>63</sup> In comparing national and cosmopolitan solidarity, I would emphasise three main differences. First, national solidarity is in a way pre-given, that is, we are connected to and in solidarity with each other because we share the same nationality. Nationality is the common denominator that can work in either a positive or negative way if it turns into extreme nationalist sentiments. Second, national solidarity is backed by strong institutions that can ensure it gets realised and fairly ‘distributed’. And third, national solidarity does usually not acknowledge the common world that we live in since it is limited in scope in terms of the groups of people it concerns.

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solidarity' (Cladis, 2005: 386). It is perhaps for reasons like these that it becomes difficult for one to envisage a form of solidarity that could be called cosmopolitan. Ideally, cosmopolitan solidarity should, in accordance with cosmopolitanism's claim to the equal moral status of all human beings, consider everyone with an equal eye and not form binary camps. Such solidarity would be guided by the idea of cosmopolitanism, which lies, as Fine (2007: x) argues, in the belief that humanity must face common difficulties together and that this is the way that people create communities with others. However, this appears to be an arduous, if not an impossible, task.

The concept of solidarity is both prescriptive and descriptive. It describes the network of communal relationships from which we originate and that define who we are, and it prescribes our moral and political obligations towards this network (Capaldi, 1999: 39). However, solidarity is a modern and highly contested concept. It can be appraised from a moral, political, institutional or social perspective; it can be related to emotion, struggle, politics, or norms. Despite its manifold connotations, one thing is clear: solidarity imposes a moral and political obligation on us to promote the well-being of other fellow men and women. According to Brunkhorst (2005: 3), solidarity is not the other of justice but the democratic realisation of individual freedom, and thus not a mercy but a right. As such, it is inherently intersubjective in character because it must be constructed in struggle, but also in collaboration, with others, and therefore it does not belong only to the individual: 'Solidarity is developed through communicative action and the ability to take the role of the "other(s)". [...] Thus, solidarity means a readiness for collective action and a will to institutionalise it through the establishment of rights and citizenship. It is normally expressed through relating to others who are engaged in struggle' (Stjernø, 2004: 326).

What about cosmopolitanism? It can be understood as 'a way of being in the world, a way of constructing an identity for oneself' (Waldron, 2000: 227) as well as 'a form of consciousness that involves an understanding of the concept of cosmopolitanism and a capacity to deploy this concept in imaginative and reflective ways' (Fine, 2007: xiii). Cosmopolitanism thus concerns the Self and a way of being in the world, and if this is the case then it inevitably also includes the Other. Cosmopolitanism is therefore unavoidably about relations to others, which means that it always tries to negotiate and incorporate the viewpoints of others. Thus, it is in the relationship between the Self, the

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Other and the World that cosmopolitanism comes into play (Delanty, 2009: 14–15). As mentioned earlier in the chapter, Delanty understands cosmopolitanism to be an orientation which permits the subject to distance him- or herself from their own viewpoint and ‘requires in some way a problematisation of one’s own assumptions as well as those of the Other’ (Delanty, 2009: 16). One’s ability to self-problematise, be reflexive and distanced from one’s own customs and outlook that exemplify the cosmopolitan imagination.

We live in a world of ‘interrelated foreignness’, asserts Gadamer (1999a: 4), and in this situation we need to ask ourselves what an avowed solidarity should be. When Gadamer talks about solidarity, he first turns to the idea of friendship conceived by the ancient Greeks. Even though one cannot equate friendship to solidarity, there are certain connections between them which can illuminate the nature of solidarity and where it stems from. Of course, we cannot argue, and nor would we want to, that friendship among all people or citizens of the world is possible or even desirable. But there are certainly links between the two notions, and therefore it is useful to explore them in light of how Gadamer develops the notion of solidarity from the concept of friendship. So, one cannot talk about Gadamer’s account of solidarity without thinking about the notions of friendship and otherness as well. The latter two concepts are inherently connected to solidarity as understood by Gadamer. In a short essay, titled *Friendship and Solidarity* (1999a), where he deals with the question of solidarity most comprehensively though still not entirely consistently, he begins with a discussion of how the ancient Greeks thought about the idea of friendship. He writes, ‘it is worth it to make clear how we all share in both, in friendship and solidarity, and that we have to defend this inseparableness’ (1999a: 4–5). However, even though he posits that there are undeniable similarities between friendship and solidarity, he does not want to equate them. There are of course drawbacks to tying friendship with solidarity – such a move can even be questionable. For instance, our friends (or ‘I’ as a friend) can indeed value our distinctiveness but at the same time, can also be blinded or overwhelmed by their admiration and love for us to the point of glossing over our wrongdoings. Gadamer is aware of this but tries to find an underlying base that makes friendship among strangers possible in the first place. The question is not how it is possible to be united with another person but how to relate to them without also be subsumed under their being. Gadamer (1980: 8) asserts that ‘the question of friendship is aimed at uncovering what the just

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community is'. Thus, there are three important characteristics of friendship that (can) translate also into solidarity, and that, as I will argue, express a certain cosmopolitan sensibility. These are: engagement with otherness and consequential respect for difference; the common world and interdependence; and (self-)understanding.

Gadamer holds that the characteristics of friendship translate also into solidarity. The first characteristic of friendship that can also be found in solidarity is that of a certain engagement with others and otherness, and a resulting respect for difference. The way Gadamer conceptualises the Other and otherness is especially relevant and interesting in the light of cosmopolitanism. As said earlier, he explicitly states that friendship is not based on 'like finding like' and, rather, that the opposite is true. This shows that it is not necessary to establish a shared identity in order to build friendship or solidarity with another person or group. Cosmopolitanism works in a similar manner. It tries to avoid the '*postmodern* identification of universalism as such with the suppression of difference and exclusion of the Other' as well as the '*modernist* identification of the universal with some socially selected particular' (Fine, 2007: 135). To understand solidarity as it is comprehended by Gadamer, and especially by way of its first characteristic, it is perhaps useful to look at it in relation to the idea that stands in opposition to it. Take, for instance, Richard Rorty's (1989) understanding of solidarity. Gadamer rejects Rorty's conception of solidarity because it is still tied to the recognition that we all share certain characteristics (Walhof, 2006: 575): 'For Rorty solidarity is the *consequence* of identification; it proceeds from a knowledge that those included in the "us" have something in common. This is what allows Rorty to advocate the creation of new, broader forms of solidarity. Contrastingly, Gadamer counter-argues that, we cannot *create* solidarities because they are not the consequence of a consciousness of similarities' <sup>64</sup> (Walhof, 2006: 575). Gadamer's political thought allows us to conceptualise solidarity and otherness without making the Other the same as us or leaving the Other completely other (Walhof, 2006: 569). Gadamer rejects solidarity based on the identification and the expansion of 'us', which is Rorty's approach. For Gadamer, solidarity is connected to practice, which means using reason to make choices

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<sup>64</sup> Solidarity, for Gadamer, is 'a form of world experience and social reality that one cannot plan for by forced objectification or produce through artificial institutions. For, on the contrary, solidarity precedes all possible concerns and effects of institutions, economic systems, judicial systems, and social mores, sustains them, and makes them possible' (Gadamer, 2002: 123).

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and to ‘identify with the universal’ (Gadamer, 1998: 48).<sup>65</sup> He disconnects solidarity from any necessary grounding in pre-existing affinities such as religion and nationality (Warnke, 2012: 8). To be in solidarity with others does not mean that we recognise others as being like ‘us’ but that we recognise them at all – that we see them as distinct others with specific differences that pick them out from an undifferentiated homogeneity (Warnke, 2012: 11). It is a form of recognition, just as human rights are a certain social form of recognition and are therefore relational (Fine, 2012).

In solidarity, as it is conceptualised by Gadamer, one therefore acknowledges the identity of both the concrete as well as the generalised other in a very cosmopolitan manner. Seyla Benhabib (2011) claims that in order to recognise a being that is entitled to rights one needs to acknowledge both standpoints. She (2011: 69) argues that if someone recognises another person because they are alike in some sense, then the first person denies that the other is an individual and unique. On the other hand, if someone grants recognition to another because the latter is so different, then the former denies their common humanity. This is precisely where Gadamer’s conception of solidarity excels and shows its cosmopolitan merit: the Other is not perceived of as only a generalised other, that is, abstracted from individuality and integrated into boundless togetherness, but also as a concrete other, respecting their differences and individuality. A sense of togetherness is, however, just as important for Gadamer: ‘the task of learning to recogni[s]e the common in another and in something different, is more pressing than ever. In our ever smaller world, cultures, religions, customs, and values of the most different variety are encountered. It would be an illusion to think that only a rational system of utilities, so to say, a religion of world economy, could regulate human coexistence on this constantly smaller planet’ (Gadamer, 1992: 219).

The acknowledgement of a common world or life together is the second characteristic of solidarity. Solidarity is a presupposition of life together, of that ‘self-evident communality which alone allows for the common establishment of decisions which each

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<sup>65</sup> Gadamer (1999b: 116) writes: ‘It remains uncertain whether some future world culture will succeed in overcoming all distances and relativities, unifying the moral concepts and moral systems of humanity in one common ethos, perhaps in view of the ecological crisis or the danger of atomic war that threatens the future of all humanity. But it seems clear that only then will it become possible for practical philosophy to communicate the universal validity of its insights to the normative consciousness and its concretion in the consciousness of each person. This would return practical philosophy to its ancient privilege of not merely recognizing the good, but demanding it as well’.

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considers to be correct in the areas of moral, social, and political life' (Gadamer, 1992: 218). The interconnectedness of people and their relations in today's world testify to the fact that we can no longer conceive of other people as essentially other, separated from us in fundamental ways. Given this global interconnectedness, detachment is no longer a viable option. On the contrary, a lot can be gained from taking a critical attitude that begins from, rather than denies, acknowledged connectedness and dependence (Kompridis, 2011b: 270). This is where cosmopolitan solidarity is relevant – it acknowledges interdependence among people and the responsibility we have towards others while simultaneously disclosing alternatives that differ from the actual condition. The importance of the common world for cosmopolitan solidarity is therefore indisputable. It is conditioned by it and at the same time cosmopolitan solidarity builds it. Cosmopolitan solidarity has an inherent connection to the common world because only in this common world do people have a vested interest in the honour and dignity of all human beings. It is world-building. It provides a means by which a relationship can be established between people who suffer and people who decide to remove this suffering, by establishing a community of interest with the oppressed (Reshaur, 1992). Solidarity makes us put aside our private interests and participate in a non-hierarchically structured common world (meaning that all can participate, not only the powerful, wealthy or unharmed) (Parekh, 2008: 120). The common world relates people and so it is not only a setting for rational debate and decision-making but also a setting for the development of solidarity (Calhoun, 2002: 148). Cosmopolitan solidarity not only transforms the existing social conditions, it also creates a common world between people in a political way. By confronting the existing norms, institutions and conditions, both cosmopolitanism and solidarity not only passively describe what might be wrong and what can be improved, but at the same time they also point to another possible form of social living. That is to say, they create a new world.

Another matter in relation to the common world that we also share should be stressed. Namely, together with the ontological point of departure of with-one-another also comes that of for-one-another which means that not only do we live with other people but that this also produces certain obligations that we have to one another: 'Life together can be established on no other basis than binding solidarities' (Gadamer, 1998: 111). We cannot claim that one can rely completely on oneself or the other way around, that one is entirely dependant only on others. It is the same with solidarity: 'the tasks

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presented to us are to be just as much one with oneself and to be united with Others' (Gadamer, 1999a: 12) which means that one needs to rely on their own self-knowledge as well as lean on and learn from Others. We should therefore not try to include more people under the notion of us but strive to recognise them and change the norms that allocate this recognition so disproportionately. To understand our shared reality imposes an obligation upon us and 'invites a more robust universalis[ing] of rights that seeks to address basic human needs' (Butler, 2009: 28–9). Cosmopolitanism is essentially related to the common world. The cosmopolitan common world is intersubjectively built, and it is a world of plurality and mutual engagement.

Thirdly, a certain type of understanding, self-understanding and mutual insight underlie both solidarity and cosmopolitanism. Like friendship, solidarity is similarly revelatory. We certainly live in the age of anonymous responsibility, a term that Gadamer (1999a: 4) borrows from Karl Jaspers, and this age, thanks to the way it is being organised, leads to a world of 'interrelated foreignness'. Gadamer suggests that solidarity frees individuals from such anonymity by exposing their particularity to others with whom they are engaged in common endeavours (Warnke, 2012), which is very similar to Honneth's understanding of solidarity. This commonness or common world that we build together refers not only to the second characteristic of solidarity, but also to the third since it enables us to get to know one another, build understanding and challenge our own self-understanding: 'Those with whom we are in solidarity are no longer faceless to us nor are we any longer faceless to them. [...] Freed from obscurity as an indistinguishable part of an undifferentiated bulk, we become distinct individuals for one another and recover the ability to act in concert' (Warnke, 2012: 10). However, this process is also complemented by the deepening and changing of our self-knowledge and self-understanding. As Gadamer (1999b: 139) puts it, 'one begins to feel and recogni[s]e oneself. What is thus communicated is not just sentiment or disposition; it signifies a real embedding in the texture of communal human life.' How does this express a cosmopolitan outlook? According to Delanty (2009: 77), '[r]ather than find cosmopolitanism embodied in a supra-national identity, it makes more sense to see it expressed in more reflexive kinds of self-understanding'. Cosmopolitanism concerns changes in self-understanding and self-problematisation in light of the encounter with Others. This means that 'cosmopolitanism perspective does not simply involve accepting the views of the Other but requires in some way a problemati[s]ation of one's own

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assumptions as well as those of the Other' (Delanty, 2009: 16). Without mutual criticism and self-problematisation, cosmopolitanism loses its force and becomes reduced to the mere condition of diversity' (Delanty, 2009: 16). It seems that Gadamer's conception of solidarity is imbued precisely with this kind of cosmopolitan standpoint on self-understanding and encounter with the Other. Furthermore, although not explicitly stated, a specific understanding inspires and underlies Gadamer's conception of solidarity, which accentuates its cosmopolitan sensibility. Understanding, according to Arendt (2005: 308), is 'the specifically human way of being alive; for every single person needs to be reconciled to a world in which he was born a stranger and in which, to the extent of his distinct uniqueness, he always remains a stranger'. Gadamer's solidarity and engagement with otherness are not attempts to understand something unquestionably or in a scientific manner, but precisely an attempt to understand which is 'clearly, and perhaps primarily, also a process of self-understanding' (Arendt, 2005: 310). Understanding is closely connected to judging, and when one consciously decides to act in solidarity, and authentic solidarity must always be conscious (Gadamer, 1999b: 11), one unavoidably makes judgements. And this must be done in a cosmopolitan spirit, that is, it 'must have a universal and timeless validity over and beyond its origins' (Fine, 2007: 126). Or as Arendt (1992: 75–6) writes,

'One judges always as a member of a community, guided by one's community sense, one's *sensus communis*. But in the last analysis, one is a member of a world community by the sheer fact of being human; this is one's "cosmopolitan existence". When one judges and when one acts in political matters, one is supposed to take one's bearings from the idea, not the actuality, of being a world citizen and therefore, also, a *Weltbetrachter*, a world spectator'.

Judgement and understanding do not happen from nowhere, because one is always situated in one's own community, which is also something emphasised by Gadamer and the field of hermeneutics. But nevertheless, this community can be a world community and reason's identification with the universal.<sup>66</sup> The presence of the Other is essential to understanding Gadamer's account. The fusion of people's horizons that produces something new cannot occur without the Other that 'stands before us and through whose presence our prejudices are called forth, put into play, and revised' (Walhof, 2006: 581). To engage with the Other and come to an understanding with him or her is

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<sup>66</sup> Reason here does not imply its infallible power, but the capacity of 'not blindly insisting on what one holds true, but engaging critically with it' (Gadamer, 1998: 48).

the only way to reveal (to oneself and others) and change one's own prejudices: 'The other is both an obstacle, in that he exposes the limits of my grasp of something, and also the means by which a new understanding of it emerges' (Walhof, 2006: 581). Such understanding is crucial for envisaging a cosmopolitan community which is based on dialogue. The purpose and the result of such a dialogue with others is the need to understand (and not the need for consensus as is the case with Habermas), with this understanding taken to mean a way of seeing things 'in a new and shared light' (Jordaan, 2011: 2374).

### **Conclusion**

Critical cosmopolitanism does not prescribe abstract standards of morality or some sort of a metaphysical ethics. There is no predetermined set of mores or ideal moral order that could guide and judge our actions, but critical cosmopolitanism's ethics nevertheless needs to stem from somewhere: the foundation for its ethical considerations always comes from an awareness of the condition of plurality and of our shared world. In dealing with ethical considerations, one must always assume a cosmopolitan existence and therefore judge and act according to our shared condition and predicaments. Such ethics is moderate in its character and it understands subjectivity in terms of singularity, that is, that each individual exists only in plurality with others. In contact with others, an individual must not only embrace acknowledgement of the Other but also self-problematisation, self-criticism, self-understanding and therefore self-transformation. Approaching ethics in this way leads to concern for human dignity and a cosmopolitan solidarity that presupposes understanding and engaging with the Self, the Other, and the World.

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**CHAPTER 7****CRITICAL COSMOPOLITANISM'S UTOPIANISM AND  
WORLD-DISCLOSING CRITIQUE**

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'It is self-evident that the times in which we live have become inhospitable to the practice of critique – especially to self-critique. Closely observed, all models of social and cultural criticism, regardless of normative or methodological orientation, bear the marks of this inhospitality. What I am speaking of is a dimly perceived process of self-restriction and accommodation, at once the outward adjustment to new conditions and an unrecogni[s]ed expression of normative despair. In short: resignation to the contracting space of possibilities; resignation to the thought that our possibilities might be exhausted, that the future may no longer be open to us, no longer welcoming'. (Kompridis, 2006: 245)

When we think about cosmopolitanism as critical theory and about its ontological implications, one form of critical theory seems especially pertinent. That is the idea of critique as world-disclosure as developed by Nikolas Kompridis (2006).<sup>67</sup> He argues that such a critical theory recognises conditions that obscure or foreclose our potentials and perceives itself as a possibility-disclosing practice. It is more pluralistic than its predecessors and primarily concerned with 'disclosing novel forms of thought and action that might make possible a more productive practical orientation towards the future' (Sinnerbrink, 2011: 1054). Such critique is also underpinned with a strong sense of utopianism which has been to a certain extent lost in previous critical theories and especially in the ever-sceptical postmodernism. Understanding cosmopolitanism as critique in this way means two things: firstly, that the idea of critical theory as world-disclosure enhances cosmopolitanism's existing critical orientation because it engages with the world in a manner of understanding and not the pursuit of scientific

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<sup>67</sup> This type of world-disclosing critique seems to be similar to yet a bit different from Honneth's understanding of world disclosure. Honneth understands world disclosure as a thick, multi-layered, totalising description of society that does not set any ideals but nevertheless shows us society's injustices and erroneous beliefs. Similarly, Seel (1994: 77) argues that world-disclosure takes place 'when changes in our access to a field of reality are accompanied by changes in fundamental conceptions about the phenomena of this reality'. This means that it opens up reality by making a whole field of phenomena known. 'In this case, world disclosure [is] a genuine revelation of a new thing and a new view at the same time' (Seel, 1994: 77).

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knowledge;<sup>68</sup> and, secondly, that cosmopolitanism importantly supplements such a critical theory because it provides it with a normative direction.

This chapter will look at critique as a world-disclosing practice and its important utopian underpinning. The first part of the chapter will analyse the contemporary concept of utopia with an emphasis on its *critical* and *transformative* characteristics. The second part of the chapter will then discuss the meaning of world-disclosure for contemporary critical theory and how this enhances critical theories that understand critique only as a process of revealing the truth. In the third part, cosmopolitanism is linked to utopia, and in the last part of the chapter it is argued that critical theory must renew its utopian impulse in order to avoid nihilism.

## 7.1 Sociological and Critical Concepts of Utopia

Utopia is a well-contested concept. Despite perhaps a common understanding of this concept or at least one of the sociology dictionaries' (Subberwal, n. d.: U5) definition of utopia as an image that is 'considered to be so far drawn from the reality that it can not be a realistic guide for the future', this section is about utopia being considered as feasible or at least something that we can strive for. Another dictionary (Burden, 2003: 716) depicts it more appropriately for our use, though it still does not present utopia's full capacity: 'Utopian thought appears to flourish during times of social insecurity and the breakdown of established authority. Utopias often reflect the boundaries of possibility established by an existing society, including its productive capacity, its conception of the extent of the malleability of human nature and the relative emphasis given to the public sphere as against the private'. Yes, utopias do reflect on what is possible, but what is their function? Are they only hopes and wishes that might one day get realised and for which until then we patiently wait?

Very often utopias are understood in terms of a non-existing yet ideal *place*. But, as Couton and López (2009) argue, utopia should not be conceived of in such spatial terms since one of its constitutive tropes is precisely the opposite, *movement*. It is therefore no

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<sup>68</sup> This is not to say that a conservative position must be taken up; understanding does not mean to simply acknowledge the world as it is but to look at it from a critical perspective (which is very closely related to Kompridis' (2006) notions of receptivity or reflective disclosure that will be discussed in this chapter.

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surprise that ‘contemporary utopian thinking has been concerned with signifying the transcendence of the encaging places of modernity’ (Couton and López, 2009: 101). The authors also emphasise that utopia today is a processual mode where movement plays an important part. Couton and López (2009) connect this processual mode of contemporary utopia with an emphasis on movement to global and free mobility, and call it ‘utopia of itinerancy’. Such utopia that stems from movement rather than a physical place, envisages a detachment of an individual from place but also an emergence of alternative subjectivities – postnational citizens with cosmopolitan subjectivity. As Rothstein also (2003) suggests, it is the quest or the process that matters. Utopias should be pursued, worked for, and since they are visions for the existing world, they also provide us with a programme, ‘giving direction and meaning to the idea of progress’ (Rothstein, 2003: 3). However, such a programme does not mean that utopia should prescribe a remedy or even that there is only one utopia.<sup>69</sup> Utopia must remain flexible in the sense of not becoming an outline of humanity’s future, because ‘problems come up when the utopian dream is treated as the model against which the real is sternly judged’ (Rothstein, 2003: 19). Utopia should adapt to the real world not the other way around. It must always stem from the world, remain in the world and transform it within possible means. This is close to the sociological conception of utopia, which understands utopia as the motivation for people to exercise agency and shape or change history (Starkey, 2012: 24). Similarly, Bloch (1996: 12) claims that utopia stems from the here and now, the materiality that surrounds us:

‘Utopian consciousness wants to look far into the distance, but ultimately only in order to penetrate the darkness so near it of the just lived moment, in which everything that is both drives and is hidden from itself. In other words: we need the most powerful telescope, that of polished utopian consciousness, in order to penetrate precisely the nearest nearness. Namely, the most immediate immediacy, in which the core of self-location and being-here still lies, in which at the same time the whole knot of the world-secret is to be found’.

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<sup>69</sup> Mannheim (1998: 224) writes that there can be antagonisms between different kinds of utopias and that they have to change and adapt to the social processes which presuppose them: ‘[...] conditioned by the social process, there develops a relative departure from the utopia at many points and in various forms. This process, which has already a dynamic quality of its own, is accelerated even further in its tempo and intensity by the fact that different coexistent forms of utopian mentality are destroying one another in reciprocal conflict. Such a reciprocal conflict of the various forms of the utopia does not necessarily lead to the annihilation of utopianism itself, for struggle in and by itself only heightens the utopian intensity’.

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Utopia has another important constitutive characteristic: its critical capacity.<sup>70</sup> Moylan (in Lancaster 2000: 111) argues that utopia with its critical characteristic challenges and weakens hegemonic structures of political power and at the same time fights for emancipation and warns against totalising visions. Or, in the words of Lancaster (2000: 11): 'Critical utopias are not blueprints for ideal societies, but expressions of the aspiration for human fulfillment towards which our political practice should always be directed'. They are not plans for ideal societies anymore but 'rather a tool for criticism in the present' (Lancaster 2000: 112). Cosmopolitanism, too, is not a plan for a perfect global society but a critical tool as well. With regards to the attainability of utopian critical projects, it must be said that they have a strong connection both to the past and the present and can therefore be used to imagine the possible future in a feasible manner since they are grounded in the reality of both past and present.<sup>71</sup> Utopia must be understood as a critical framework 'within which concepts are contested and alternative ways of life explored through the perspective of the ironist' and that 'provides a context in which to develop thoughtful, positive political projects without succumbing to foundationalism or radical relativism' (Lancaster, 2000: 118).

Utopia or utopian counter-narratives also possess subversive and transformative capabilities (Moyaert, 2011). They make explicit and public a differentiated perspective and thus challenge the shared framework of orientation and homogeneity and uncover victims of such hidden ideological violence.<sup>72</sup> 'It is a struggle to break open society's closed ideological discourse that denies them full membership in society by preventing them from contributing to the symbolic order and society's self-understanding' (Moyaert, 2011: 99). Utopian counter-narratives uncover such injustice and challenge the *status quo*, but at the same time also offer alternatives. Therefore, they do not only uncover truth but also propose transformation. What is missing in Honneth's critical theory of recognition is precisely such critically utopian analysis of his recognition

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<sup>70</sup> As McLennan (in Couton and López, 2009: 96) argues, critical thinking is inherent in utopianism: '[C]ritical thinking is an "actually existing" practice of utopia, since every aspiration to greater levels of equality and respect within civil society implies consciousness of a better ordering of identities and relations. Utopia is thus implicit in every particularist group claim that is couched in the languages of inclusion, justice or aspiration'.

<sup>71</sup> Lawson (2008: 882) calls such utopias 'realistic utopias' that function through analysis of the present and past and therefore 'build from history to mid-range abstractions rather than universal utopias which work from general abstractions to events on the ground'.

<sup>72</sup> By ending ideological violence, Moyaert (2011: 98) means not to merely 'maintain structures of privilege just by letting a few more people in but rather to plurali[s]e society's symbolic order without losing the perspective of a common social vision, enabling the relation of solidarity'.

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relationships. Honneth's solidarity, the relationship of esteeming one another, or even the relationships of legal equality, are indeed inclusive but Moyaert (2011: 92) argues that mere integration with granting certain rights is not enough: 'Recognition becomes dependent on the willingness of the *other* to *reproduce* the already existing value pattern of the society'. This is problematic if a minority, for instance, wishes to integrate into a society but does not want to relinquish their cultural particularity or risk for the latter not to be fully recognised. Honneth does not really offer any solutions for that and this is where utopian narratives become important. They envisage a different kind of future, a 'transformation of the symbolic order so that the relations of solidarity can be expanded in a more inclusive direction' (Moyaert, 2011: 93). In this way, recognition theory's emancipatory potential becomes much greater. Honneth does not take into account the predominance of ideological and symbolic violence that results from symbolic imagination, which is monocultural. Therefore, utopia plays an important role in advancing Honneth's recognition theory. As (Moyaert, 2011: 101) aptly writes:

'utopian narratives are emancipatory narratives that mediate between particular group identities and universalistic moral claims, providing new frameworks that allow those who are not members of the group to expand their own self-conceptions and their definitions of civil society. That is why utopian narratives have the power to both perform identity claims and institutional transformations. Utopian narratives are no end in themselves. Their final goal and purpose is transformative action. They are told to bring about change'.

## **7.2 World-Disclosure, Utopianism, and the Future-Orientation of Critical Theory**

In the previous section we saw that utopia possesses a critical dimension, but it is also the other way around: utopia is also critical theory's constitutive part. Benhabib (1986: 226) emphasises the so-called *anticipatory-utopian* dimension of critical theory, which provides for a normative aspect of a critique:

'When explicating the dysfunctionalities of the present, a critical social theory should always do so in the name of a better future and a more humane society. The purpose of critical theory is not crisis management, but crisis diagnosis such as to encourage future transformation. A critical social theory views the present from the perspective of the radical transformation of its basic structure,

and interprets actual, lived crises and protests in the light of an anticipated future. In its *anticipatory-utopian* capacity, critical theory addresses the needs and demands expressed by social actors in the present, and interprets their potential to lead toward a better and more humane society'.

A critical theory that acknowledges and uses its utopian character is a world-disclosing critique. If we are to focus on the implied idea of disclosure also within cosmopolitanism, then we must consider how and in what ways critical theory and world-disclosure are intertwined. Following Honneth's (2000: 123) claim, a critique can be understood as a type of world-disclosure when it attempts to change our value beliefs by invoking new ways of seeing and by revealing facts that were previously not perceived in social reality. Similarly, Kompridis (2006: xi) follows Martin Heidegger's idea of disclosure or world-disclosure by calling for an alternative understanding of critical theory 'that, in recognition of the various ways in which conditions of modernity obscure or foreclose our possibilities, conceives [of] itself as a possibility-disclosing practice'. Both cosmopolitanism and critical theory have the ability to see things in light of possibilities and both of them can be characterised as being open to as well as engaged with what is disclosed (Kompridis, 2006: 34). In critical theory, this requires both a reflective responsiveness to historical experiences as well as the ability to see something that is familiar or even taken for granted from a new perspective (Kompridis, 2006: 19). In a similar manner, cosmopolitan social theory reconstructs the history and traditions of social theory anew in terms of its universalistic concept of society, the recognition of differences within a universalistic frame, and the critique of methodological and political nationalism (Fine, 2007: x). This is one of the most important methodological features and claims of cosmopolitanism since it engages in understanding and criticising the world precisely from the perspective of universalism, which presupposes a single subject, that of humanity. This does not mean that it subsequently eradicates all difference. To the contrary, it acknowledges all forms of difference and at the same time conceptualises them as internal to the substantive unity of all human beings (Fine, 2007: x). The conception of cosmopolitan social theory that is used in this thesis in connection to critical theory understands 'social relations through a universalistic conception of humanity and by means of universalistic analytical tools and methodological procedures. Its simple but by no means trivial claim is that, despite all our differences, humankind is effectively one and must be understood as such' (Fine,

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2007: xvii). I believe that this normative and methodological component of cosmopolitanism can further enrich understanding of critical theory as world-disclosure.

Critical theory and the practice of critique should be above all comprehended as a possibility-disclosing practice. Achieving or uncovering truth should not be the goal of critique as it is not science or purely theoretical reason (Kompridis, 2006: 251–2). The main aim of critique is disclosure of possibilities, but, as previously said, such disclosure is not the revealing of a single truth or a quest for finding the truth: ‘Disclosure is not truth itself, but enables truth to emerge in reflection, in second-order discourses about the disclosures themselves’ (Bohman, 1994: 93). Therefore, disclosure and truth in criticism are not identical. On the contrary, disclosure means questioning or reevaluating the truth in different cultural settings: ‘In the process of world disclosure, doubts about the truth of previously held beliefs lead to corrections of previously adopted positions and attitudes and compel us to redefine rightness in confrontation with new insights’ (Seel, 1994: 77). Therefore, focusing solely on some kind of truth would even be counterproductive for possibility-disclosing practice, which retains its focus on many different interpretations and revaluations of the ethical and social worlds. By doing this, it can stimulate new kinds of thinking, new hopes and normative beliefs. It therefore involves learning – learning not only about our surroundings in a factual manner, but mostly learning about ourselves, our self-perception and self-understanding, our worldly sensibilities and what possibilities we have for action (Kompridis, 2006: 137). Like learning, disclosure also necessitates the autonomy of an agent who is able to enter the dialogical relations with others and change the conditions for their action (Bohman, 1994: 95).

The most valuable function of disclosing practice is that it requires from us to think anew and try seeing things as well as ourselves in a new light. However, this new stance from which we think does not come from nowhere; rather, it must be such that it elucidates both the past and the present, so that the problem that we are dealing with becomes illuminated with understanding as to how to continue and whether this new stance answers the need to do so (Kompridis, 2006: 13). A critique assesses the existing conditions and in doing so it is illuminated by our past experiences as well as our future hopes. In the processes of world-disclosure we therefore experience a re-orientation twice: ‘with regard to the standards of orientation as well as with regard to that which is

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grasped, discovered and regulated by these standards. World disclosure is not simply like the appropriation or learning of a new language for things which we already know; rather, it is like learning a new language for things not yet known' (Seel, 1994: 77). World-disclosure should therefore not be sought outside this world but must be found in our everyday practices.<sup>73</sup> The everyday here is not understood to be something that we already entirely know. It is thus important to search in the familiar everyday for those instances that have not yet been discovered and are as yet unfamiliar to us. The extraordinary in the everyday exists; we just need to uncover it, make it visible and use it. But in order to be able to do that, we must reorient and therefore re-find ourselves. What Kompridis (2006: 113–14) means by the reorientation is that we get refocused on the everyday and the familiar in a way that we discover something that we do not yet know or are familiar with. It means to get reoriented to the eventual everyday, which is connected to our existing everyday yet distinct from it. It is in the existing practices that we must discover the new and re-find ourselves. According to Kompridis (2006: 113–14), world disclosure is best accomplished by critical theorists if they speculate about it by way of everyday practice as opposed to mulling over it in a sphere that is disconnected from everyday life. This, for him, is a venture that looks at the everyday with new eyes, recognising that the ordinary is combined with extraordinariness. This way, the practice of world disclosure becomes more pregnant with 'meaning and possibility'.

When we speak about the concept of world-disclosure, we can distinguish two different kinds or levels of disclosure as was already briefly mentioned in the first chapter. To reiterate, at the first level the disclosure refers to the act of disclosing of an already interpreted, symbolically structured world, within which we always already find ourselves. At the second level, and this concerns us more in this thesis, the disclosure points to new meanings and their previous hidden dimensions (Kompridis, 1994: 29). It is no surprise why cosmopolitanism links so well with the notion of (world) disclosure. The second level of world-disclosure seems especially pertinent to the discussion. Specifically, it is linked to 'a more reflexive conception of how our shared practices, linguistic interpretations and conceptual mappings can be as much *world-making* as *world-revealing*' (Sinnerbrink, 2011: 1055) and as such closely related to cosmopolitanism's

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<sup>73</sup> Bohman (1994: 95) argues that critique best captures the 'Janus-face of disclosure' since it points to new possibilities, but always in relation to the limits of existing possibilities of meaning and expression.

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ability of world-making. Cosmopolitanism is a mode of world-disclosure and as such 'offers critical social theory a normative foundation that makes possible new ways of seeing the world' (Delanty, 2009: 3).

Such world-disclosure is inherently connected to utopia. Kompridis (2006: 251–2) argues that such critique is necessarily utopian. This utopianism does not mean that the critique sets a definite utopia for which it then strives, but that it remains open and depends on this openness in order to be susceptible to the possibilities that the future holds. Critique is therefore a practice of receptivity and reflective disclosure (Kompridis, 2011a: 1068). Receptivity here is not taken to mean passive reception of whatever is happening around us. It is also not pure openness or mere sensory experience. No, receptivity, which has to be a characteristic of every critical theory, is a normative attitude and relationship that stresses and requires a relation of obligation between oneself and the Other as well as between one's existing and subsequent, possible self (Kompridis, 2011a: 1066). Receptivity carries a sense of obligation because it forces us to make ourselves more comprehensible through trying to be so to the Other. By responding to the Other's normative demands, we make an effort to better understand ourselves, others and things that surround us. This means that receptivity is an inherently reflective activity that demands agency and self-transformation. Kompridis (2011a: 1066–7) also argues that besides such conscious receptivity there is also a 'pre-reflective' receptivity that is constantly happening in the background, and also serves as world-disclosure. But such pre-reflective receptivity does not disclose the world to us fully, only selectively. For this reason, we must employ a reflective kind of receptivity in order to find and acknowledge the previously excluded persons, things and occurrences, and take on the normative demands that they impose on us and that we impose on them.

The idea of disclosure importantly transforms critical theory into 'a more pluralistic form' of critique which does not deal with the procedures for validating conventional rational practices and norms, but is concerned 'with disclosing novel forms of thought and action that might make possible a more productive practical orientation towards the future' (Sinnerbrink, 2011: 1054). In its primary sense, world-disclosure refers to the conditions of intelligibility and possibility (Kompridis, 2011a: 1074). Here, possibilities are not understood in the same way as certainties, rather, they are something that come

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with normative demands to which we must respond (Kompridis, 2011a: 1076). Critique must abolish the overpowering scepticism which rules so many postmodern theories. Scepticism can be good and useful to a certain extent if it can initiate doubt but not leave us in its grip. For, what constant scepticism does is annihilates all hope. We were once much more hopeful about the future and possessed a much broader choice of possibilities than we do now. But how do we then continue our pursuits and what do we renew if the future seems to be hopeless? Critique must therefore possess utopian content, it must be utopian in order to bring back that hope and open up the horizon of possibilities. This is because critique is not scientific since it does not search for the one and only possible truth. The truth is not the aim of critique and neither should it be because critique loses its utopianism this way. Critique therefore aims at reflectively disclosing the possibilities where its recipients can verify these only retrospectively (Kompridis, 2005: 332). This means that critique is inevitably utopian because it 'depends on the openness and receptivity of the future to utopian thought – to the genuine possibility that things might be otherwise than they are' (Kompridis, 2005: 332).

Critique's task should not just be to uncover the truth, that is, to show that something is disguised as something else and that it is causing oppression, for instance. Critique needs to do that, but at the same time also identify a novel normative and interpretive stance, 'in light of which what is familiar is defamiliari[s]ed, seen again, as if for the first time' (Kompridis, 2005: 334–5). In its character, it needs to be world-disclosing and therefore transformative and not just ironist (Kompridis, 2000). The goal of critique is reflective disclosure which uncovers meanings and possibilities and causes self-decentring. The latter is 'an activity that involves a normative transformation of sensibility and belief' and it is a kind of learning activity that necessarily involves an interaction with others, which then causes self-correction or self-transformation (Kompridis, 2005: 337). Therefore, critique should become less and less identified with universality and all-knowing reason because of the circumstances of pluralism and diversity that we face in today's world. It must acknowledge this and make its task more about encountering others, self-transformation and transformation of collective sensibilities and beliefs. Kompridis (2005: 339) accurately argues that the practice of critique should be normatively committed to the second speaker, since 'it is in the voice of the second person, not in the voice of the first, that critique must speak'. Because of this, Kompridis (2005: 340) designates such a critique as 'intimate', based on *recognition*, and 'a practice of

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critical dialogue that aims to preserve and renew trust, and to facilitate commitment to ongoing processes of cooperative problem solving'. Cosmopolitanism works in a similar manner, invoking a sense of openness, and cosmopolitanism's orientation towards world-openness transpires in the relationship between Self, Other and World (Delanty, 2009: 14). The world is a frame of reference for interactions between Self and Other that makes it possible for both Self and Other to initiate self-transformative and self-reflexive moments.

### **7.3 Possibility Rather Than Validity: An Enlarged and Pluralistic Conception of Reason**

Utopia can lead to the conceptual formation of ideal societies, but such idealism may be another man's totalitarianism. Postmetaphysical thinking tries to avoid the trappings of metaphysical theories, which can promote totalising thinking that aims at the one and the whole (Habermas, 1992: 33), and can be in this way very absolutist and conclusive. It recognises the shortcomings of human knowledge and reasoning, and offers the establishment of standards for judgement and action without resorting to foundationalism or pre-existing truths. According to Habermas, postmetaphysical thinking is substantiated by four, closely interrelated characteristics: procedural rationality; situating reason; linguistic turn; and deflating the extraordinary.

The first characteristic of postmetaphysical thinking is its procedural rationality. Metaphysical issues can no longer be resolved by resorting only to religion or religious-like, totalising thought. They must be approached with the willingness to communicate on the basis of reason, which unites human beings and possesses authority for them (Reder and Schmidt, 2010: 10). Without communication such issues can become fundamentalist and absolutist. Reason that moves from metaphysical thinking to a more communicatively facilitated postmetaphysical reason must therefore find its place somewhere between 'natural' reason and autonomous morality. Habermas proposes a so-called procedural rationality which can no longer 'guarantee an *antecedent* unity in the manifold of appearances' (Habermas, 1992: 35). Such rationality does not depend directly on preceding moral values anymore but tries to build a social order where social agents are guided by mutually recognised good reasons: 'In this way, reason specifies a

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“procedure” [...] for testing claims of whatever kind. Yet reason is not merely formal but, in its characteristic unconditionality, has substantive import, for its form contains the foundation of freedom and morality and the concrete development of its universal (thus still formal) content must take its orientation from itself and is always subject to its own critical verification’ (Schmidt, 2010: 61). Reason or philosophy must not claim privileged access to a predetermined truth, but must embrace the ‘fallibilistic self-understanding and procedural rationality of the empirical sciences’ (Habermas, 1992: 38).

The second feature of postmetaphysical thinking is situating reason. This development was brought about by the historico-hermeneutical sciences (the humanities) (Puntel, 2012: 7), which go against the foundationalism of thought.<sup>74</sup> ‘The extramundane position of transcendental subjectivity, to which the metaphysical attributes of universality, supratemporality, and necessity were transferred, initially collided with the premises of the new cultural sciences’ (Habermas, 1992: 40). Habermas (2003: 84) wants to detranscendentalise the Kantian rational subject or reason in a way that is connected to linguistic turn, which is the third characteristic of postmetaphysical thinking and will be discussed later. Situating reason is the effect of such a process in which the knowing subject is detranscendentalised: the finite subject exists in the world without completely losing its world-constituting spontaneity (Habermas, 2003: 84). This means a shift to a new paradigm, that of shared understanding, which presupposes a type of reason that is embodied in communicative action. Language does more than just open horizons of different worlds in which subjects find themselves. It also forces the subjects to their own independent accomplishments, to an innerworldly practice oriented towards validity claims, ‘a practice in which projected world-disclosing meanings are subjected to an *ongoing test* in which they can prove their worth’ (Habermas, 1992: 43). The pragmatic function of speech is thus to bring conversers to a mutual understanding and to establish intersubjective consensus. This function has a priority over its function of denoting the way the world is (Finlayson, 2005: 33). Finlayson (2005: 34) also argues that Habermas does not reject the truth-conditional theory of meaning, but denies that it represents a

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<sup>74</sup> Habermas (2010) argues: ‘Finally, with the emergence of the humanities since the early nineteenth century, a historical thought, which devalues – up to a point – even the transcendental approaches, forced its way through. Furthermore, the results of hermeneutics confront us with a split in our epistemic access to the world: the lifeworld that discloses itself to our understanding only as (at least virtual) participants in everyday practices, cannot be described from the natural-scientific perspective in such a way that we are able to recogni[s]e ourselves in this objectifying description’.

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general account of meaning – Habermas argues instead that meaning and understanding are best approached through an analysis of the pragmatic function of speech.<sup>75</sup>

The third characteristic of postmetaphysical thinking is the so-called linguistic turn in philosophy that paved the way for postmetaphysical thinking, and enabled situating reason in the first place. By such designation of philosophical reorientation it is not just meant that a turn to language has occurred and that at the same time a turn away from the philosophy of consciousness has transpired. The transition resulted in advantages both in method and contents, as well as in moving on from the problem of toing and froing between metaphysical and antimetaphysical thinking, that is, between idealism and materialism (Habermas, 1992: 44). Philosophy of consciousness labels a very broad philosophical domain that can be described in a few characteristic ideas (Finlayson, 2005: 28–30): Cartesian subjectivity; metaphysical dualism; subject-object metaphysics; foundationalism; first philosophy; social atomism; and society as a macro-subject. These are the characteristics that postmetaphysical thinking tries to avoid or to appropriate in such a way that their trappings are eschewed. More specifically, philosophy of consciousness holds the view that the world is a totality of objects standing over and against a plurality of thinking and acting subjects, where the latter are not seen as being part of the world in which they function (Finlayson, 2005). Furthermore, according to Finlayson (2005) such philosophy is characterised by foundationalism, which refers to the epistemological quest for certainty and that grounds knowledge in sense data. Theory over practice is another postulate of the philosophy of consciousness. Specifically, the task of philosophy according to metaphysical thinking is to establish the criteria of correct knowledge. Habermas (1992: 32) compares such reasoning to a kind of religion that prescribes salvation: ‘Each of the great world religions stakes out a privileged and particularly demanding path to the attainment of individual salvation [...]. Philosophy recommends as its path to salvation the life dedicated to contemplation

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<sup>75</sup> Habermas (2003: 101) writes: ‘As finite minds, we have no way of foreseeing changes in epistemic conditions; hence we cannot rule out that a proposition, no matter how ideally justified, will turn out to be false. Despite these objections to an epistemic conception of truth and even after abandoning foundationalist justifications, the idea of a process of argumentation that is as inclusive as possible and that can be continued at any time has an important role in explaining “rational acceptability,” if not “truth.” As fallible, situated beings, we have no other way to *ascertain* truth than through discourses that are both rational and open-ended’.

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– the *bios theoretikos*'. Not only is such access to truth, proposed by metaphysical thinking, closed to many, but it also makes a theory absolute and self-justifying.

The last characteristic of postmetaphysical thinking is deflation of the extraordinary, which deals with the diminishing superiority of theory over practice. Habermas (1992: 34) asserts:

‘The *classical precedence of theory over practice* could no longer hold up against the mutual dependencies that were emerging ever more clearly. The embedding of theoretical accomplishments in the practical contexts of their genesis and employment gave rise to an awareness of the relevance of everyday contexts of action and communication. These contexts attain a philosophical status in, for example, the concept of a *lifeworld background*.

Philosophy must therefore abandon its privileged access to truth and the redeeming substance of theory (Habermas, 1992: 48).<sup>76</sup> It must stay connected to social reality and thus preserve access to epistemic reality by considering the everyday practices of subjects. These practices cannot be described only from a theoretical point of view or objectified by natural sciences. A balance must be found, because scientific knowledge is fallible and knowledge, generally, cannot stem from only one source. There is no knowing subject in general (Chernilo, 2013: 267), there is no ‘God’s eye perspective’ that could account for all-encompassing knowledge about our world. Philosophy’s task is therefore to mediate between ‘expert knowledge and everyday practices’, and is thus critical by nature (Habermas, 1992: 50–1). Philosophy must not be engaged only with the scientific system, but must also look upon the life-world, and vice versa. Only in this way can it discover the reason that is already operating in everyday communicative practice. In reaching mutual understanding, a communicative rationality occurs which provides a standard for evaluating systematically distorted forms of communication and

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<sup>76</sup> According to Brieskorn (2010: 26–7): ‘Reason – by which is meant practical reason – is the faculty that wants to orient human life to a final horizon, and this more in a general and fundamental way than in detail, where reason also takes the conditions of the orientation into consideration. Thus reason would not be merely power which determines a social form of life in an ethical and legal sense but also shows it to be guided by principles, but which [...] not only seeks to guard against errors concerning the conduct of life but also to discover the truth concerning life and to feed it into social life. To these conditions also belongs the fact that reason, on the human side, involves participating in the one reason and that those who participate are fallible, finite beings who are in many respects needy and in many ways open to improvement. This participating reason should know this and take it into consideration. It must take the “veto” of reality seriously if it is not to fall into error and to commit itself to too little or too much. This participating reason can overtax or undertax human beings; it can assume that they are endowed with a form of self-possession which they never had or with an incapacity which they falsely assume to be insurmountable. In orienting itself to as much reason, it has the power to correct’.

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of life (Habermas, 1992: 50). Our practical understanding of the world and linguistic knowledge should be seen as co-dependent<sup>77</sup> – language cannot entirely determine what we can know of the world or what the world is for us. We also learn from experience, and this empirical knowledge can lead us to revise the meanings of the terms we use (Fultner, 2003: xiii–xiv).

All mentioned characteristics of postmetaphysical thinking are of course closely interrelated. Habermas' postmetaphysical thinking follows Kant in ending the practice of applying categories of understanding which are cut out for inner-worldly phenomena to the world as a whole – a devaluation of essentialist statements about nature and history (Habermas, 2010). His notion of postmetaphysical thinking is procedural and historically situated, frugal, fallibilistic, and more humble in its claims than metaphysical thinking. Language creates meaning, reason is no longer understood as an omniscient saviour, and more emphasis is given to intersubjectivity rather than the philosophy of consciousness. What remains are knowing, speaking, and acting subjects that use postmetaphysical reason. The latter 'can defend itself against a postmodern and scientistic-naturalistic defeatism concerning reason; thus it is not a scientistic, but a critical reason which is able to reflect on its possibilities and limitations and its various forms' (Ricken, 2010: 56).

There are several problems with a proceduralist (postmetaphysical) understanding of reason. First, such understanding makes it seem self-evident that only right procedures will solve the problem of cultural self-confidence and trust (Kompridis, 2005: 330). By cultural self-confidence and trust, Kompridis means the confidence to hope again and to be able to recognise and see the future possibilities, which have been foreclosed from our sensibilities. Secondly, proceduralism possesses a purist element which preserves the belief that the final agreement is always the best one (Kompridis, 2005: 335). And lastly, critical theory that is based solely on postmetaphysical thinking is missing a connection to modernity's time consciousness<sup>78</sup> and hence utopian potential. The utopian potential

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<sup>77</sup> Honneth (1995: 292) writes: 'If, therefore, with the overcoming of metaphysical thinking, the legitimating source of the sciences has also dried up, then it becomes evident for the first time that no form of knowledge is, by nature, equipped with a superior epistemological competence; rather, numerous linguistically articulated forms of knowledge confront one another in social reality, and it is not possible on the basis of reason to decide which of them can raise a legitimate claim to validity'.

<sup>78</sup> Kompridis (2006: 26) argues that critical theory's utopian traits got partly erased because of Habermas' proceduralism, which is designed to decide about procedures and validation of the norms. In this way,

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cannot be produced solely from a conception of reason that possesses its own logic or from reason that is understood in terms of rational procedures (Kompridis, 2006: 228). The reason for this is that, understood in this way, reason cannot provide for any new orientation in critique since it is oblivious to modernity's relation to time, something which is absolutely necessary to finding a new orientation. Therefore, modern reason lacks utopianism since it does not take into account 'historically disclosed sources of meaning and possibility' (Kompridis, 2006: 228).

#### **7.4 Cosmopolitanism and Utopia**

Today's critical thinking is deep-rooted in postmetaphysical thinking to supposedly avoid finalism or totalitarian utopianism. Even Honneth identifies only a formalistic conception of good life but the problem with something which is supposed to have substance having such exceedingly impartial characteristics is that they are 'unable to arouse the ethical imagination and [...] lack motivational and justificatory power' (Cooke, 2004: 416). So if a critical theory is to retain the utopian impulse, which is absolutely necessary for it to be able to fulfil its emancipatory vision and imagine a better world, it should not dismiss the metaphysical characteristic of utopian thinking. Utopian thinking means envisioning the substantive ethical imaginings of a good society 'that would be possible only if certain currently hostile social conditions were transformed' (Cooke, 2004: 419). Social critique always entails a metaphysical moment, because envisaging good society inherently possesses the characteristic of metaphysics: 'Insofar as the static, ahistorical, absolutist – metaphysical – moment of its [social criticism's] emancipatory perspective is unavoidable, the challenge facing critical social theory is how to accommodate this metaphysical moment without falling prey to the dangers of "bad utopianism", on the one hand, and "finalism" (with its tendency towards "totalitarianism") on the other' (Cooke, 2004: 419). Contemporary critical theory must therefore adopt this utopian moment, together with its metaphysical characteristic, in a way that will make it apt for picturing a better future but not in terms of either finalism or delusional, unachievable dreams.

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claims Kompridis, Habermas incorporated science into philosophy and critique since his method is in a way searching for a kind of truth through procedures. But the drawback for critique was that it lost its connection to time – critique is not open to historical experience anymore, and nor does it possess the utopian impulse which would help it imagine future possibilities.

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Cosmopolitanism has often been associated with utopianism but unfortunately usually not the good kind. Its distinctive future-orientation makes it prey to bad utopianism but also false accusations. For instance, Kendall, Woodward and Skrbiš (2009: 151) believe that the cosmopolitan imagination should spring from realism and that 'that identifying cosmopolitan bonds with utopias is politically and sociologically naïve'. The mentioned authors are not the only ones who avoid connecting cosmopolitanism with utopia. Some think that utopia is only a bad thing and calm their readers that their cosmopolitanism is not the kind that would be utopian. To provide a few examples: Nowicka and Rovisco (2009: 4) assure us that the cosmopolitanism from below discussed in their book is not utopian; Linklater (2010: 26) writes that 'it is easier to understand how cosmopolitan principles might yet be embodied in the individual self – in basic emotions and drives – as opposed to being treated as well-meaning but utopian aspirations that are remote from daily existence'; and Stivens (2008: 90) warns that 'feminist scholarship is now wary of the perceived universalisms and utopianisms of cosmopolitanisms in their many guises', etc. In all these and other similar cases utopianism is understood as something unattainable, a wishful thinking that may produce horrible results and is therefore best avoided. The problem with merely stating that utopianism is bad is that either an assumption is made or only the bad version of utopianism is considered. For this reason, it is necessary to first conceptualise utopia, which has been done in the first part of the chapter, and only then decide whether it can complement cosmopolitanism or whether it hinders it.

There are other authors who openly acknowledge and embrace the much-needed connection between utopianism and cosmopolitanism. Hayden (2009: 51–2) claims that the utopian impulse can be located at the heart of cosmopolitanism, and that it can already be found in the classical worldview of cosmopolitanism. Diogenes the Cynic and the Stoics express the utopian impulse with the idea of the citizen of the world and the wish to 'connect all persons together into a civic whole'. Reflexive utopianism's impulse in today's cosmopolitanism plays the role of rehabilitating and self-reforming the first modernity's ideals of human rights, justice, autonomy and democracy in order to make them suitable for the post-national era of the second modernity (Hayden, 2009: 53). As such, the utopia in cosmopolitanism does not stem from nowhere, and nor does it build its ideals from scratch; rather, it tries to *re-imagine* the old ideals that may still work but not well enough for the needs of the post-national world. We must therefore judge

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cosmopolitanism not in terms of its feasibility but its ability to creatively imagine (Hayden, 2009). Douzinas (2007: 148) also thinks that cosmopolitanism and utopia are inherently linked; he even claims that cosmopolitanism ‘belongs to one of the noblest Western traditions, that of utopia’, which means that cosmopolitanism has been a part of utopianism from the very beginning. Cosmopolitanism is not some sort of institutional blueprint in order to move away from which it must re-acquire ‘its imaginary power and rediscover its classical radical urge’ (Douzinas, 2007: 148). Its imaginary power should not just be limited to what is feasible here and now, but, as Hayden (2009) correctly points out, it should be used to radically reimagine concepts and modernity’s heritage for use in a postnational world.

### **Conclusion**

The significance of utopia to critical cosmopolitanism is high – it enhances cosmopolitanism’s ability to imagine things anew and comprehend the world through new eyes, but also evokes rich ethical vision of a good life. Yet there is another important role that utopia has and that is its resistance to nihilism: ‘Without utopia, we are only left with simple nihilism’ (Douzinas, 2007: 286). Nihilism can take two forms – it is either a denial of the existing world and the creation of an illusory one, where there is no pain or conflict, or it can take the form of being content with the actual world and giving up passions and values (Diken, 2009: 3). Utopia and cosmopolitanism tackle both forms of such desperateness. They resist hopelessness on the one hand and try to build a better future while acknowledging reality on the other. Utopia in cosmopolitanism gives us hope; hope that remains alive even after the atrocities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and those that still wound our world today. Cosmopolitanism not only gives us hope in hopeless times but also in times when social conditions seem insurmountable. There may be times when conditions can be considered relatively good, but they can always be better, no matter how unimaginable this may appear. As Douzinas (2007: 298) rightly points out, the battle now takes place between the law and desire, both in their widest senses. The law tells us what exists and can exist within the boundaries made by it, whereas hope points to the beyond, the not-yet, to different possibilities:

‘If cosmopolitanism was an early utopia, the opposition between cosmos and polis has now become the struggle between law and desire, in their widest

meaning. Law, the principle of the polis, prescribes what constitutes a reasonable order by accepting and validating some parts of collective life, while banning, excluding others, making them invisible. Law (and rights) links language with things or beings; it nominates what exists and condemns the rest to invisibility and marginal existence. As the formal and dominant decision about existence, law carries huge ontological power. Radical desire, on the other hand, like the cosmos of old, is the longing for what does not exist according to law; for what confronts past catastrophes and incorporates the promise of the future. Following Diogenes, Zeno and the utopian tradition, the 'cosmopolitanism to come', this being together of singularities, is constructed here and now with friends, in acts of hospitality, in cities of resistance. This cosmopolis brings together here and now the just *polis* and the principles of resistance of the *cosmos* already incarnate in our present cities' (Douzinas, 2007: 298).

Nihilism is not just associated with fatalism but in its origin it is also 'an inability to accept pain, conflict, and antagonism' (Diken, 2009: 2). However, because such a world does not exist, nihilism at the same time denies the world as it is, which is completely contrary to cosmopolitanism or even utopia. Nihilism therefore invents an unreal world that does not and can never exist, because it has absolutely no connection to the existing one. In order to resist such nihilism, it is important to remain worldly. Fine (2007: 120), following Arendt, says that nihilism is an omnipresent danger of thinking – while thinking '*may* clear the path for judgement, it may equally engender a mere reversal of old values'. Therefore, thinking '*needs* judgement to save itself from itself' (Fine, 2007: 121). This means that it must be connected to the world and action, and it must become a worldly activity. And worldliness is a

'cosmopolitan virtue par excellence that refuses to rationalise the division of the life of the mind into reified faculties or its separation from the life of work and politics. The spectre of nihilism is never far from the surface of the life of the modern mind because *worldlessness*, which is akin to subjectivism /.../, isolates the mind from the world, gives even to the life of the mind a barbaric and nihilistic aspect. We cannot conceive of cosmopolitanism without the life of the mind but neither can we conceive of it without facing up to the worldlessness that affiliates the life of the mind to the logic of destruction' (Fine, 2007: 131–2).

We cannot just invent new concepts and consequently find a new way of living. No, we must get oriented in the present and disclose its hidden aspects, and connect it to both the future and the past. Or, as Kompridis (2005: 342) writes, 'it is the capacity to be receptive to what has been lost or to what we are now losing that makes us capable of

calling upon concepts that can generate, not just register, experience'. I believe that critical cosmopolitanism can deliver a critique that is underpinned by utopianism in a transformative and critical sense, and which functions as a world-disclosing critique disclosing new possibilities and at the same time importantly contributing to our self-transformation and self-decentring.

## CHAPTER 8

# HOSPITALITY: CRITICAL COSMOPOLITANISM'S CRITIQUE AND A WAY FORWARD

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The aim of this chapter is to show how critical cosmopolitanism works and criticises real life's pathologies. I have chosen the concept of hospitality for a number of reasons. Firstly, it combines normative, political and social elements and thus allows us to demonstrate how critical cosmopolitanism tackles all these dimensions in a critique. Secondly, hospitality is an outstandingly ethical concept that prescribes a way of orientating towards others. This is an apt basis for critique because critical cosmopolitanism as well as recognition theory build their identity predominantly on ethical considerations and developments. And thirdly, hospitality offers us a good terrain, on both theoretical as well as societal levels, to emphasise those imperfections or impediments that prevent people from leading a better life.

There are certain negative features belonging to hospitality – its concept and the way it manifests itself in the contemporary world. Even though there are aspects that work relatively well, such as offering some hospitality to strangers at all, its manifestation and political realisation often prove to be a failure. Consider the recent examples of the refugees that reached the Italian island of Lampedusa. In one weekend in May 2015 more than 5,000 migrants were saved from boats (Jones, 2015), whereas the total number of refugee and migrant arrivals to Europe (mostly to Italy and Greece) across the Mediterranean has already surpassed 100,000 (UNHCR, 2015). These people are accommodated in detention centres or sent back to their home countries. The Italian and Greek islands that see the largest number of arrivals in this part of the world lack proper capacities, services, personnel and resources to properly accommodate the guests and the island communities. Hospitality as we implement it today is therefore a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it is of course much better than no hospitality at all; but on the other hand, people – guests and local hosts – affected in these processes are often inadequately taken care of, integrated and respected. The chapter will try to tackle those incoherencies in the concept of hospitality that often distort its full potential.

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The chapter follows Strydom's (2011) methodological structure, which was introduced in the second chapter of this thesis. To be able to see critical theory work in action, the first part of the chapter will disclose the problem of hospitality and in this way constitute an object for critical theory to tackle. In this particular case the internal contradiction within the concept of hospitality is emphasised, which among other things worsens the political manifestation of hospitality in the real world. In the second part of the chapter, a diagnostic reconstruction and explanatory critique will be pursued, where I will be attempting to show how cosmopolitanism's normative dimension helps us to diagnose social pathology in the case of hospitality, and then to implement a theoretically based explanatory critique.<sup>79</sup> The last part of the chapter will re-examine the components of critical cosmopolitanism and assess whether they were satisfactorily used in the critique of hospitality.

### **8.1 Problem Disclosure and Object Constitution: Hospitality's Contradictions**

Hospitality is a well-disputed and much-debated concept as well as a regular occurrence in social reality. Hospitality's task is a demanding one; in its implementation, it needs to relate ethics with politics, particularity with universality, as well as communities with outsiders, and vice versa. It can take place on a daily basis on a micro level, among friends who invite people into their homes, or on a larger scale among refugees or migrants and host countries. The gist of hospitality lies in inviting someone, who appears to be an outsider, into your home and offering him or her help, shelter, and other material assistance. In short, hospitality is about welcoming otherness. Thus, hospitality is not just about materiality but also, and primarily, about social relations – how these get formed and sustained among complete strangers. In other words, analytically, the concept of hospitality provides us with an understanding of peace relations and the refugee crises, whereas normatively it furthers our comprehension of the place and significance of the stranger in the social world (Baker, 2013: 1).

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<sup>79</sup> The third methodological moment of critique, the scientific-public validation, will not be pursued in the chapter. For this, we would have to engage in public deliberation, test out the criticism and thereby try to change the everyday social practices.

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There is no doubt that in the contemporary world, hospitality is a concept that still fails to bring about its potential promise in its entirety. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2014), at the end of 2013 there were more than 51 million individuals 'forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, generalised violence, or human rights violations', which is the highest number on record so far. The forcibly displaced people include refugees, asylum-seekers, returnees (refugees and internally displaced people), stateless people, internally displaced people, and others of concern. One of the main pathologies in today's understanding of hospitality is what Bonnie Honig (2001) calls the re-inscription of foreignness as a problem, as something that needs to be solved because it threatens the stability, identity and cohesiveness of societies. Perhaps the most illustrative case of such an understanding of foreignness in the context of hospitality is the recent 'human ping-pong' in Southeast Asia, where Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand all turned away migrant boats that came from Myanmar and Bangladesh and were stranded in the Andaman Sea for days (BBC, 2015). More generally, hospitality often gets used metaphorically and in a negative sense when talking about national border and asylum policies. Gibson (2007: 159) offers an example of Britain's mobilisation of hospitality as a way of 'justifying increasingly fortified border controls into the nation. Hospitality is invoked precisely as a way of curtailing Britain's hospitableness. The metaphor of hospitality, together with tolerance and generosity, functions as an alibi in order to protect Britain's own interests and self-image'. It seems that hospitality, though inherently a highly respectable concept and practice, generates its own terrors and contradictions.

Besides understanding foreignness as a problem, another difficulty with the concept of hospitality can be identified. That is, it is constructed in a way that is internally contradicting. Even the word itself, which stems from the Latin *hostis* and its derivations can mean either host, guest or even enemy (Wills, 2005: 289). The concept of hospitality therefore faces at least two fundamental contradictions. Firstly, from Derrida (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000: 25), the law that governs hospitality is a paradoxical one because it prescribes absolute (unconditional, hyperbolic) and conditional hospitality at the same time. The former is unattainable and potentially harmful<sup>80</sup> but undeniably

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<sup>80</sup> Derrida (Derrida and Dufourmantelle, 2000: 25) argues that 'absolute hospitality requires that I open up my home and that I give not only to the foreigner [...], but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, and that I *give place* to them, that I let them come, that I let them arrive, and take place in the place

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necessary for the concept to even exist, whereas the latter is not real hospitality anymore since it imposes conditions upon the guest and can therefore easily become violent. This apparent contradiction is most visible when the ethics of hospitality is applied to political reality, where unconditional hospitality cannot and does not exist and the conditional kind causes violence too often, be it in the case of the refugees who seek hospitality in foreign countries or in the case of humanitarian intervention and the just or unjust (in)hospitality towards the guests. The second fundamental contradiction in the concept of hospitality lies in the issue of difference/sameness. Do we treat others as fundamentally different from ourselves or do we acknowledge our similarities and even sameness? When treating others as completely different subjects from us, we fail to recognise our connectedness and interdependence, and to treat them fairly because we immediately establish a hierarchical relationship. On the other hand, treating others as completely the same, caused by a difference-denying logic, prevents us from understanding others' plights contextually and each case singularly. I believe it is these two internal contradictions of (un)conditionality and difference/sameness that contribute to the pathologies of contemporary ethical and political expressions of hospitality on a global level.

The point of cosmopolitan critique is not to develop a correct ethics of hospitality but to point to those contradictions and inconsistencies in the concept that cause social pathologies. The next section of the chapter will thus perform a reconstructive critique (which is also Honneth's method instead of immanent critique), where these contradictions and future possibilities will be identified and researched more in detail.

## 8.2 Diagnostic Reconstruction and Explanatory Critique

The primary function of reconstruction in critical theories is to 'identify, recover and make explicit the structuring force of both pragmatic presuppositions and possibilities of the concrete situation' (Strydom, 2011: 136). Reconstruction therefore embodies immanent transcendence – it brings together the immanent interpretative moment and the transcendent constructive moment, where reconstruction is not completed once and

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I offer them, without asking of them either reciprocity (entering into a pact) or even their names. The law of absolute hospitality commands a break with hospitality by right, with law or justice as rights'.

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for all but must be reconsidered and revised regularly (Strydom, 2011: 137). Reconstruction does not only make empirical observations or interpret an event in order to give it some meaning, but 'identifies the deep-seated, formal, generative and regulative set of elements and relations that lay down the parameters of what transpires in the actual concrete situation' (Strydom, 2011: 137). On the basis of pre-theoretical knowledge, a reconstructive explanation must find the possibilities for betterment within the actual situation. It does so in forms of both negative and positive critique. In the case of the former one, it criticises negatively, that is, emphasises all that is wrong and fails, whereas the latter one discloses available opportunities that have so far been neglected or overlooked. In this latter way, it is a world-disclosing critique. The positive and negative critiques take place in both the immanent and transcendent moments of critique:

'Immanent reconstructive critique takes a negative form in targeting what is amiss with the self-understanding of actors, their orientations, practices, relations and institutions, and a positive form in disclosing new possibilities, interpretations, orientations, modes of organi[s]ation or protest or transformative potentials available in the situation. Transcendent reconstructive critique takes a negative form in exposing distorted, ideological, naturali[s]ed or reified and such features of socio-practical ideas of reason or cultural models, and a positive form in disclosing surpluses of meaning contained in ideas of reason or cultural models that are ignored, only partially or selectively used in practice or not recogni[s]ed at all' (Strydom, 2011: 137–8).

Thus, in order to exercise the reconstructive critique, we must look at both its immanent and transcendent moments. Immanently, we will criticise the existing practices or actors and what they have been doing wrong, and try to suggest what should be changed or thought of in a new light in order to avoid past failings. On a transcendental level, those ideas of reason need to be exposed that have so far been reified, ideological or distorted in some other way, and then be complemented with the revelation of the surplus of meaning (for instance, recognition) in ideas of reason or cultural models that has previously been overlooked. Besides this reconstructive moment, explanatory critique also needs to take place in order to clarify what causes something to remain hidden or get distorted, that is, what are those factors or mechanisms that cause such failings.

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8.2.1 *Immanent Reconstructive Critique*

One of the main constraints to altering immigration and hospitality practices is the everlasting tension between sovereignty and cosmopolitanism, which often works in the favour of the former. Strengthening the sovereignty of a country usually, but not necessarily,<sup>81</sup> means tightening the immigration laws. But as Valdez (2012: 103) argues, following Kant, strengthening sovereignty may not restrict cosmopolitanism if non-European (that is, non-colonialist countries) strengthen their sovereignty. This can only enhance the cosmopolitan realm since non-European countries become more equal to European ones and thus can respond better to their power. Such understanding of strengthening sovereignty is important in the case of humanitarian interventions where the countries in need often lack sovereignty powers or are asymmetrical with the more powerful countries.

Cosmopolitan and sovereign rights should therefore act in complementary ways, which means that institutional changes are absolutely necessary in order to make this happen. A legal framework that would make it possible for cosmopolitan and sovereign rights to act in complementary ways requires the creation of cosmopolitan spaces, 'in which immigrants' political action can lead to a gradual transformation of the regime of sovereignty. Cosmopolitan spaces of politics emerge when immigrants act politically to alter the conditions of admission and incorporation, thus requesting to be part of a *mutual* agreement. These spaces exist whenever immigrants engage in the task of challenging the conditions of incorporation in favo[u]r of inclusion' (Valdez, 2012: 110). These cosmopolitan spaces must be gradually institutionalised in order to guarantee the right to freedom and place to all newcomers and remove the fear of being an impostor or being deported (Valdez, 2012: 111). Or, as Dikeç (2002: 244) aptly claims, it is important to denounce seeing a stranger as a disturbance and rather 'to provide for the social, cultural, institutional, ethical *and* political spaces where we could learn to engage with and learn from each other, while being able to constitute our subjectivities free from subordination, in democratic ways'. Hospitality is found in such open spaces that allow for recognition among participants but also contestation.

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<sup>81</sup> For instance, Singapore announced that it needs highly skilled and qualified workers in order to boost their economy (Beaugé, 2010). On the one hand, they increased the influx of such kind of workers, but on the other hand tried to reduce the number of immigrant workers in mid-level positions with stricter employment pass rules (Reuters, 2011).

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Thus, another problem that occurs in practices of hospitality and does not only pertain to the tensions between 'sovereignty, self-determination of a (political) community, belonging and citizenship, on one hand, and cosmopolitan norms, on the other', is the lack of rights to democratic participation (Friese, 2010: 335). These are not only insufficiently given to guests but also to people in the local arena. In order to change the ill side of practices of hospitality, local communities need to get involved in co-creating hospitable spaces, and decisions about these issues should not be taken only elsewhere. The local community needs to be fully involved in this process if we want to renew hospitality practices in order to be more rooted, stem from below and not just remain a 'normative-moralistic academic exercise' (Friese, 2010: 336).

### 8.2.2 *Transcendental Reconstructive Critique*

The first difficulty in the contemporary understanding of hospitality that cosmopolitanism can effectively address is the fact that a lot of migration scholarship still depends on and stays within national boundaries and frameworks (Levitt, 2012: 493; Savić, 2005). Instead of methodological nationalism, thinking about hospitality and related topics should resort to methodological cosmopolitanism or at least to transnational methodology. However, using the latter, one must be careful not to look only at two places – the source and destination country – 'without stopping to consider how these are also influenced by other places and scales of social experience where co-nationals or fellow believers have settled' (Levitt, 2012: 495). Hospitality studies should therefore 'open their gaze' and examine how different processes of incorporation transpire at the same time and reciprocally inform on each other, which means to look at how people still stay a part of the economy and politics of their homelands and at the same time participate in and become connected to the multitude of new places (Levitt, 2012: 495).

So, it is important to keep in mind the multiplicity of spaces involved in hospitality and migration manifestations as well as the various reasons and factors that lead to migration on the one hand, and those that influence the way a guest is received in the host country, on the other. This means that besides economic factors, a much wider

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array of socio-cultural considerations needs to be included. The nation-state understanding of inclusion and belonging is not adequate anymore in order to respond to immigrants (Shabani, 2007: 96), since it only works within a citizens/aliens distinction. Another moral standpoint must be adopted that takes into account the 'analyses of the determinants and processes of migration' (Zavediuk, 2014: 177).

The second problematic assumption of much of the hospitality practices that partly derive from the above-mentioned problem is that the foreigner is always seen as a threat to the established order or welfare of the people. Rundell (2004: 93) writes that the relations between absolute strangers and outsiders<sup>82</sup> are often one-dimensional and full of discomfort, anxiety and stigmatisation. This is completely against the logic of a cosmopolitan way of relation to the Other, which prescribes engagement with the Other and learning from him or her. The cosmopolitan attitude is an attitude in which the 'gestural dimension of unconditional hospitality comes from a capacity to recogni[s]e the other *qua* other as absolute stranger and not merely as an outsider. In this way, the mobili[s]ing category is not a *right* that is legali[s]ed and can be instituted, and into which one either does or does not fall, but rather is one of the movement from outsider to absolute stranger' (Rundell, 2004: 96–7). The foreigner must therefore necessarily be reconsidered in more democratic terms (Marchi, 2014: 622), which means to acknowledge his or her potential manifold roles in a positive sense and not only consider him or her from the position of the border. Guests can be seen as the liberators of their hosts (Marchi, 2014) or as Honig (2001: 4) so aptly puts it, when she speaks about foreign-founders:

'The novelties of foreignness, the mysteries of strangeness, the perspective of an outsider may represent the departure or disruption that is necessary for change. The foreignness of the founder might also be a way of marking and solving a perennial problem of democratic founding in which the people must be equal under the law and cannot therefore receive it from any one of their own number. Some theorists, such as Julia Kristeva, speculate that stories of foreign-founders are a culture's way of marking its inextricable relation to otherness, its

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<sup>82</sup> Rundell (2004: 92) makes a clear distinction between absolute strangers and outsiders: '[T]he notion of the absolute stranger is one that is constituted through the open contingent condition of modernity. So too is the category of the outsider. However, the category of the outsider has an additional dimension in that it is generated from the position of a boundary that is marked between "us" and "them", and as such is not generated only from a position of existential contingency. [...] In this context of the juridically-instituted and legitimated boundaries of the nation-state, a distinction can also be made between absolute strangers and outsiders. *Outsiders are those absolute strangers without legal entitlement to either arrive or settle within a given territory*'.

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strangeness to itself. Finally, the foreignness of the foreign-founder might be a way of modeling the impartiality, breadth of vision, objectivity, and insight that a founder must have. Who but an outsider could be trusted to see beyond the established lines of conflict and division that make shared governance difficult?

Benhabib (2004: 90), too, believes that migrants do not necessarily disrupt people's political culture but can transform and revitalise it in important ways: 'the multicultural challenge posed to political liberalism by the influx of new immigrant groups leads to a deepening and widening of the schedule of rights in liberal democracies. The "rights of others" do not threaten the project of political liberalism; quite to the contrary, they transform it toward a more inclusionary, dynamic, and deliberative democratic project'.

The third difficulty or tension that characterises hospitality is its unbalanced handling of identity and difference. In the spirit of cosmopolitan moderation, hospitality must find the right non-dialectical approach to identity and difference. Gideon Baker (2009: 108) finds both the statist and globalist understandings of political community to be characterised by a dialectical approach to the question of how to find place for both identity and difference, because they try to synthesise the two by incorporating the particular within the universal. Such logic denies difference, but can hospitality transcend the tension between identity and difference or at least turn that tension into something beneficial?

'Since identity and difference are mutually constitutive, attempts to transcend the dichotomy in the direction of singularity, as much as in the name of universality, are fundamentally flawed. Is it then possible to articulate a cosmopolitanism that resists the false hope of a "beyond" to the binary of identity and difference? Can we articulate a cosmopolitan ethics that denies neither universals nor singularities and which opens up the political space necessary to negotiate between them? [...] The *productive* tension between identity and difference at the heart of cosmopolitan ethics is captured by the ethics of hospitality, where our awareness of the identity of the stranger as a fellow human being seeking refuge is opposed by the irreducible difference of the stranger as Other – someone who, as a guest in a home not his own, suffers the violence of assimilation' (Baker, 2009: 108–9).

This means that hospitality is not essentially only about the host but also about the Other. Therefore, hospitality must not concern itself with only one or the other, but must engage with both. That is because hospitality should never prioritise one over the other; it must always keep them in tension and make this tension a productive one that

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would resist dialectics. Instead of dialectics, a decision must be pursued. Making a decision in this case does not mean a reductive one that once and for all decides which side should win: 'For a hospitable ethics defined by responsibility for the Other, the decision is a *sine qua non* of acting ethically' (Baker, 2009: 120). Following Derrida, Baker shows that a decision, if it is taken singularly each time, like a kind of judgement, keeps in tension 'the ideal and the real, the ethics and the politics, and the universal and the particular' (Baker, 2009: 120). Such 'decisionistic quality of cosmopolitan obligation', which is ethically hospitable, gives us 'a practice rooted in ethical universality that does not merely accommodate difference [...] but which begins with it and must remain open to it' (Baker, 2009: 120). Welcoming others does not just mean accepting their difference but also a realisation that this encounter definitely entails also some modification of our world and ourselves. Hospitality must also be looked at from outside the state domain of law. It is a relationship in which not only openness to the Other is found, but also 'acknowledgement of my primary alienness both as regards the other and as regards myself, my own identity: the acknowledgement of myself as a stranger with respect to the person I am prepared to accept, and of myself as a stranger to myself, just as a person who lives in permanent otherness to his own separate, particular, finite identity' (Marci, 2013: 193). Therefore, when encountering the Other and entering into hospitable relations with them the basis for construction of a common world is instigated. Still (2012: 50) follows Luce Irigaray's conception of hospitality and argues that such hospitality 'goes beyond a moral response to an other's needs (sharing shelter, food or money) to reach towards an intimate sharing in difference [...]. It is this intimate sharing in difference that would create a future world, constructed together, to share'.

Last but not least, there is another, perhaps the biggest, tension in the concept of hospitality that often causes social pathologies. This is the tension between conditional and unconditional hospitality, which constitutes the concept but is at the same time a source of many mishandlings and violations of hospitality. Despite the inability of conditionality and unconditionality in hospitality ever to be reconciled, there must remain a constant tension between the two in order to be able to practice conditional hospitality and at the same time not to let go of the unconditionality that makes the conditional possible at all. The relationship between the two must once again be a non-dialectical one. We must understand the two senses of hospitality as 'heterogeneous and

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indissociable' (Baker, 2009: 124), which means to never completely close the gap between them 'by any law or rights, by any political or juridical means', and at the same time to realise that 'without laws, rights, and so on there can be no opening of the door to the Other, nothing determinate or concrete to give whatsoever'. The two are never to be reconciled or synthesised; the two laws must keep pulling each other in their own direction, one emphasising the necessary, unconditional underlying ethics, and the other making it possible in reality. Such practice of hospitality is characterised by 'undecidability' (Baker 2009, 2010).

Undecidability does not mean adopting a passive manner in which nothing ever gets decided. It is a prerequisite for responsibility (Baker, 2010: 89) because a decision needs to be made anew and singularly each time, be it in cases of domestic hospitality or humanitarian intervention. It is therefore a condition of ethical action and not an obstacle to it, because its uncertainty becomes a site of strategy and decision-making rather than non-action (Baker, 2010: 92). Baker (2010: 100) calls such undecidability 'bounded undecidability', 'in which each pole both calls to and challenges the other; it is manifestly not a blind leap in the dark. The fact that two very different moral imperatives weigh on us with equal force is very far from relativism'. Such practice of undecidability brings the political back into cosmopolitanism since it means having to decide uniquely and responsibly each time how to offer a hospitality that treats the stranger as a guest in the home (Baker, 2009: 125):

'This problematic, or double-bind, of hospitality is the deconstruction in practice of any attempt at stabili[s]ing the binary of identity-difference in cosmopolitanism; and it turns cosmopolitanism from a pure ethics into an *ethico-politics*. "Defying dialectics," it turns out, is at once the ethical imperative and the political practice of a hospitality that is cosmopolitan, indeed, of a cosmopolitanism that is hospitality'.

### 8.2.3 *Explanatory Critique*

The explanatory moment of critique 'accounts for whatever contingent material, structural or real forces, factors or mechanisms cause what is amiss and goes unnoticed in the actual situation' (Strydom, 2011: 138). The question in the case of hospitality is why its potential is deformed or treated unsatisfactorily.

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‘Of particular importance here, theoretically, are those contingently intervening, interfering, impeding, retarding, deforming or blocking forces, factors, structures, mechanisms or related processes which only a historical-sociological materialist or realist theory of society is able to specify and identify and thus make available as *explanans* in a casual explanation that can contribute to a critique of an undesirable, unjustifiable, pathological state of affairs’ (Strydom, 2011: 138).

So, the point of an explanatory critique is to identify those societal structures or mechanisms that block the practical realisation of socio-structural possibilities. We must therefore identify those interferences to a practical realisation of hospitality that prevent it from developing to its full potential. Such a process of identification is not a mere empirical one; it is post-empirical (Strydom, 2011: 139) in the sense that it does not refer to ordinary empirical experiences, but rather to the mechanisms underlying them. These mechanisms can range from transformative, to generative, to relational (Strydom, 2011: 140). The task of identification of such mechanisms is not only to point to the interferences that they cause, but also to indicate the juncture that could possibly lead to transformation. I believe that one of the most visible mechanisms or system imperatives that prevent hospitality from being realised in a better way and to a fuller extent is the nationalist framework which exclusively dictates and determines forms of hospitality and who is entitled to rights of freedom and place. Nationalism makes a clear distinction between ‘us and them’ and therefore inhibits hospitable relations. This relational impediment must therefore be transformed in a cosmopolitan manner, that is, in a way that would allow for an enrichment of solidarity relations among strangers and for exploring the identities of both or several groups. Benhabib (2004) calls for not open but *porous* borders that would allow for a more democratic understanding and assignment of membership. This is only possible through ‘democratic iterations’<sup>83</sup> that are able to make the distinction between us and them more ‘fluid and negotiable’. Such transformative mechanisms could open up more democratic spaces, which would allow for local people to participate and co-decide in the process of hospitality. It is in such collective learning that we must look for opportunities to create new normative ideas, new postnational conceptions of membership or solidarity and new kinds of subjects.

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<sup>83</sup> Benhabib (2004: 19) defines democratic iterations as ‘complex processes of public argument, deliberation, and learning through which universalist right claims are contested and contextuali[s]ed, invoked and revoked, throughout legal and political institutions as well as in the public sphere of liberal democracies’.

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### 8.3 Elements of Critical Cosmopolitanism Revisited

Just like Honneth's critical theory of recognition, cosmopolitanism as critical theory takes its bearings from the ethical turn in critical theory. In the case of hospitality, it therefore does not focus only on the obstacles to realisation of reason but mostly on obstacles to self-realisation of subjects. Social pathologies here are not understood as merely pathologies of rationality, but are believed to be found in those places where human beings cannot attain the status of equal membership of a community, that is, pathologies are found pre-theoretically in the everyday life. Despite the similarity to Honneth's critical theory in finding normativity in self-realisation, critical cosmopolitanism importantly departs from it as well and stays loyal to critical theory's tradition of 'critically transforming the meaning of reason, and thereby the normative substance of critique' (Kompridis, 2004: 331).

What cosmopolitanism and Honneth's critical theory of recognition do share in common is the social-philosophical approach to justice rather than the political-philosophical one. Whereas the latter tends to identify the correct and best order of justice, the former focuses on realisation of the good life, that is, the self-realisation of subjects. Critical cosmopolitanism understands justice in this wider sense, not just in distributive terms but also in terms of suffering. It focuses on those social conditions that cause suffering on the one hand, and those that make justice possible on the other. Critical cosmopolitanism does not look for technical solutions, but focuses on discovering new potentials for human development and ethical aspects of our social lives. In the case of hospitality, critical cosmopolitanism therefore emphasises the prerequisites and conditions in which human beings (in this case, migrants or those whose state is being intervened, for instance) can flourish. Critical cosmopolitanism therefore does not make any general claims about justice, but investigates social phenomena in their particularity. It brings to light those social pathologies in the practice of hospitality that lead to injustice or unethical relations between hosts and guests, and comprehends these in the wider sense of suffering. The unequal treatment of migrants, for instance, is not necessarily a violation of legal justice but suffering nevertheless exists and is felt by subjects. In such cases, a normative dimension of justice is breached, that is, misrecognition or a denial of recognition, which injures the subject's dignity and causes him or her injustice. Migrants' denial of full recognition is a denial of

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‘the moral value of the person, her integrity, rights or social value’ (Deranty, 2009: 318). With the approach of critical cosmopolitanism we can see that merely state boundaries and state jurisdiction are not capable of dealing with claims of justice and therefore a move away from statism is needed (Shabani, 2007: 87) in order to, firstly, understand injustice and, secondly, to address it with a cosmopolitan approach.

An important inherent element of critical cosmopolitanism that has major methodological consequences in practising critique is the concept of immanent transcendence. This concept plays a major role in the critique of hospitality. The dialogical immanent transcendence in cosmopolitanism reminds us that there is no single truth, and when it comes to hospitality this is especially important to bear in mind. Specifically, it is often wrongly perceived that the foreigner is the disturbance in a coherent, closed system, but this is just one side of the story (and even this one might be wrong). Hospitality must consider multiple sides of the truth and must therefore be achieved through dialogue and taking the different perspectives of both hosts and visitors into account. Another important characteristic of dialogical immanent transcendence is that the truth can always be challenged and is never set in stone. Hospitality must always reconsider its position and be ready to change it. The dialogical immanent transcendence in cosmopolitanism also concerns how people relate to each other in social and political settings. Hospitality shapes identities and relationships between individuals and groups and it is a way of understanding encounters with strangers (Brun, 2010: 342), and without some sort of a dialogue this is not possible. On the other hand, hospitality from such a dialogical perspective can be understood also as a condition for intersubjective communication – rather than seeing hospitality as something that definitely leads to cosmopolitan justice or citizenship, we can understand it as ‘the normative requirement necessary to establish an ethical condition for intersubjective communication at the global level, where discursive communication regarding the substance of a future condition of cosmopolitan justice is to be subjected to global public reason’ (Brown, 2010: 310). Hospitality therefore does not mean justice *per se*, but a beginning from which justice can be built. This is a very minimalistic interpretation of hospitality but it must certainly be considered to be a beginning in every attempt to establish hospitable relations.

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Cosmopolitanism's disclosing aspect in terms of an immanent transcendent reading of hospitality can be found in ordinary experience, that is, in the pre-theoretical everyday reality that can open up the beyond. Cosmopolitanism's task is to facilitate the emergence of a new world or the discovery of previously hidden aspects of the current world. Critical cosmopolitanism's critique importantly highlights the inadequacy of the nation-state framework within which hospitality is usually considered. This is of course not to say that states do not play any important role in managing migrant crises. The state is still the most important and most competent entity that can provide for and implement migration laws. Because migration is a complex global phenomenon, why not open up our analytical tools and study the phenomena and our options for enhancing hospitality arrangements more comprehensively and appropriately?

Perhaps the most evident type of cosmopolitanism's immanent transcendence in analysing hospitality is self-transcendence or self-transformation. Hospitality does not only change those who are forced to migrate but also and especially hosts. Individuals or groups undergo a process of self-transformation whenever they are exposed to examining their identity, culture, membership, and subjectivity. A good example of this would be the case of northern Sri Lankan Muslims that have become internally displaced persons after the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam expelled them from the region. The majority of the northern Muslims sought refuge in the Puttalam district, where the majority of the population is also Muslim. Both groups needed to assume new roles, those of hosts and those of guests even though they practised the same religion, or perhaps precisely because of this: 'The maintenance of the identity as guest becomes an important boundary marker to the host. In fact the hospitable engagements resulted in a number of boundary markers becoming more explicit: the troubled relationship between Muslims and Sinhalese in the area [...], the relationships between Muslims and Tamils in the north, the various regional identities of Muslims in Sri Lanka and the relationship between local and international humanitarian discourses of assistance to those displaced by the war' (Brun, 2010: 349). The identities of both groups were negotiated through their interaction and under the influence of external factors.

The concept of recognition of course plays a very important role in critical cosmopolitanism addressing the issues of hospitality. Recognition here is not interested only in identity; rather, here, it is mainly related to justice. The first relationship of

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recognition, that is, love (or care in the cosmopolitan sense) is used when criticising the perception of migrants as a homogenous, victimised group of people with the same story, difficulties and needs. What critical cosmopolitanism does in this respect is two things. Firstly, it tries to judge each event singularly and to find balance accordingly between conditional and unconditional hospitality; and, secondly, it recognises each person's singularity, which means that a stranger is not an abstract individual but a singular human being. It also recognises that hospitality necessarily entails a kind of violence and tries to mitigate it precisely through constant decision-making and questioning of the suitability of (un)conditional hospitality. It must retain its quality of 'an ongoing exercise of political judgement in the face of violence' (Fine, 2006: 49). The second relationship of recognition, legal recognition, is especially pertinent for a discussion about hospitality. Because human rights are usually something given exclusively by the state, stateless persons are in danger of becoming right-less just because they do not belong to any political community or have been for some reason expelled or forced to leave theirs. What critical cosmopolitanism does is urges us to expand our methodical tools when it comes to re-thinking hospitality in such a way as to not be thought of only within national frameworks. The sense of political community must therefore be expanded and cosmopolitan citizenship understood in a way that enlarges our moral capacity to be concerned not only about our fellow citizens but also those who are outside our immediate political community (Nussbaum in Benhabib, 2004: 95). The last pattern of recognition, cosmopolitan solidarity, works in the political and intersubjective realm and not on an emotional level. Cosmopolitan solidarity in the case of hospitality tries to make sure that hospitality is not initiated out of some kind of a feeling of pity; rather, it always acknowledges our shared human condition while respecting plurality, diversity and difference (Arato and Cohen, 2010: 168) and therefore follows the path of communication and action. Such solidarity precedes institutions, but importantly paves the path for the establishment of them and also continually sustains them. To be in solidarity with someone, cosmopolitanism teaches us, is not to identify him or her as one of us but to recognise them at all.

Critical cosmopolitanism's ethics again moves beyond the dichotomy between cosmopolitan vs. communitarian or normative vs. realist debates. This proves to be useful in the case of hospitality, which entails complex factors and issues that need to be approached from different angles – suffering, as well as the relational aspect, for

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example. Critical cosmopolitanism of course adheres to common cosmopolitan ethical norms, such as a sense of obligation, treating others with respect and the idea of a common human community. Besides these, critical cosmopolitanism also adheres to three distinct ethical premises: judgement; moderation; and human interrelatedness and interdependence. The constant activity of finding the most suitable solution in relation to hospitality is due to cosmopolitanism's moderation – that is, retaining that constant tension between conditional and unconditional hospitality, and avoiding falling into either of the two extremes. Critical cosmopolitanism understands that hospitality can never be grounded on something given and solid, and that it should be grounded on something that constantly moves and requires new positioning all the time. The second ethical premise is connected to the first one. The capacity to judge each situation independently and reflectively is required in order to retain the middle position. Undecidability in the context of hospitality is a perfect example of such judgement. The latter must come from our shared world and values, which is the third ethical stance of critical cosmopolitanism, and it must then be applied to a particular situation. Because of our interconnectedness and shared reality, we all have an obligation to create the conditions that make good life possible. We must enhance our hospitality practices not only because we collectively face the same destiny and problems, but first and foremost because the shared world is built by us, political and ethical responsibilities stem from it, and we are conditioned by it.

Critical cosmopolitanism's critique of the concept of hospitality functions on three levels: social; political; and normative. The social here plays an especially important role. Social life must be understood in terms of intersubjectivity in the sense that subject- and identity-formation as well as formation of our agency all depend on society and interaction between people. In hospitality, the creation of the meaning of others also stems from intersubjectivity, and the perception of the Other as someone who threatens us and our system can change only through engagement and ethical encounter with the Other. In this way, sharing and commonality become the main qualities of intersubjectivity and the prerequisites for building a common world. The latter is the condition for sustaining plurality and constructing a common political world as well. Critical cosmopolitanism aims to change the *status quo* on all three – social, political and normative – levels and points to the beyond, where it is possible for current circumstances to be different. This is important because critical cosmopolitanism's

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utopianism and the ability to imagine things differently makes it immune to the criticism that as a critical theory it does not possess the important dimension of possibilities. Critique is important but so is imagining what comes after: 'Sometimes [...] we get too wound up in critique without charting a way forward. We phrase the question as one of good versus bad, in versus out, rather than *when*, *under what circumstances* and *for whom*. [...] Critical analysis is important, but we also need a way out' (Levitt, 2012: 499). In the case of hospitality, critical cosmopolitanism shows facts that were previously hidden from us when it looks for the extraordinary in everyday life and changes our sensibilities and self-conception. Criticising the concept of hospitality from the vantage point of cosmopolitanism is a possibility-disclosing practice.

### **Conclusion**

Critical cosmopolitanism's critique of hospitality points to those contradictions that prevent hospitality from being realised to its fullest potential, and identifies those possibilities that can that may have the ability improve our practices of hospitality. The reconstructive critique thus uncovers those elements that impede or distort hospitality. These have been identified as follows: seeing the Other as a problem; making a strict distinction between 'us and them'; remaining within a strong nationalist framework; the inability to find balance between conditionality and unconditionality, and universality and particularity; and not emphasising the relational aspect enough. At the same time, however, the reconstructive critique also points to possible changes within the mentioned areas. Critical cosmopolitanism highlights the importance of relationality and the building of ethical relations among strangers when considering hospitality. It also highlights that this is the basis from which we must build our imperfect practices for the imperfect world. To be able to reimagine the failed practices of hospitality in a new light, critical cosmopolitanism urges us to step away from limiting nationalist analytical frameworks, which cannot adequately attend to the problems of an increasing numbers of displaced people and poorly prepared host environments in which they seek refuge. There are no unambiguous answers possible to offer but not due to an attempt to avoid the responsibility to change, but, rather, because it is absolutely necessary for it to be like this. Cosmopolitanism must never prescribe final and therefore totalising solutions to

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anything, and so hospitality, too, must become a practice that needs always to be reconsidered, renewed, contextualised and reimagined in the spirit of cosmopolitanism.

‘We need to reconsider hospitality in all its illogicality and contradictions; a hospitality which remains a real hospitality only if it is entirely open to the possibility of its own negation, ready to welcome the inhospitable, that which pushes it irrevocably towards its own elimination; a hospitality that, at the very moment it is being offered, accepts the possibility of being contradicted, repudiated, disintegrated, and overthrown in its self-reflecting transformation into the hostility that forever threatens it and forever maintains a necessary state of tension with it’ (Marci, 2013: 191).

## CONCLUSION

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At the core of this thesis lies the argument that cosmopolitanism can be used and understood as a critical theory that contributes substantially to judging and assessing the ideas as well as the experiences of the political and social world. What this thesis has aimed to highlight is cosmopolitanism's unique contribution to accounts of intersubjectivity and normativity that to a certain extent differs from both traditional critical theories as well as second wave critical theories such as that of Habermas. Critical theory as we know it today lacks the cosmopolitan normative underpinning to guide us in reconsidering our practices and beliefs about human interaction. Perhaps the major issue or area that is addressed only in a limited way in previous types of critical theory but enhanced both by Honneth and cosmopolitanism is justice. Whereas Habermas' sense of justice is limited to the contradiction between abstract principles and social situations, Honneth and theorists of cosmopolitanism understand justice and hence the experience of injustice in a much broader sense.

This thesis' objective was therefore twofold: on the one hand, cosmopolitanism was used to enhance critical theory, more precisely, Honneth's theory of recognition; and, on the other, cosmopolitanism was introduced as a self-sustaining type of critical theory containing all the necessary elements of a critical theory. The aim stemmed from two concerns: first, that critical theory lacks an overt cosmopolitan incentive to addressing pathologies; and, second, that cosmopolitanism is inadequately comprehended to be only a subjective feeling, moral stance or political reality. If we want cosmopolitanism to be an illuminative and analytical tool with which to guide, assess and shape our social actions, and if we want it to be something more than a western, prescriptive, totalising ideal, cosmopolitanism must itself be subjected to criticism and appropriated in a way that allows room for self-criticism and changes in self-understanding. Specifically, the principal and one of the most necessary characteristics of critical theory is that it must look at itself just as critically as it looks at the world. The same goes with cosmopolitanism and its theorising. Cosmopolitan theorists must be aware that cosmopolitanism is always a part of the world it describes and criticises and as such must be able to change and adapt to different contexts and changing times.

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Even though cosmopolitanism is usually thought as something that already exists in the world, be it a sentiment, institution or everyday practice, its critical aspect should be emphasised in order to be able to circumvent its often inaccurate absolute manifestations. We could say that there is an emerging field of critical cosmopolitanism, but that it has not been comprehensively articulated except in some cases such as Delanty (2009; 2012), Kurasawa (2011), Mignolo (2000) and Rumford (2008). The first chapter saw that there are instances in recent scholarship that underline the critical characteristics of cosmopolitanism in order to avoid it being turned into a doctrine or ideology as well as in order to make it more suitable for critical reflection upon the world. However, it was seen that none of the scholars connected cosmopolitanism directly to critical theory and this is a gap that the thesis aimed to close. Cosmopolitanism inherently possesses characteristics – such as openness, emancipation and emphasis on dialogue – that are all prerequisites for the operation of critical theory. In order to understand cosmopolitanism in terms of a critical theory, these and similar characteristics should be further cultivated and emphasised as key cosmopolitan elements. Understanding cosmopolitanism as critical theory must also contain a move away from Eurocentrism and the cultivation of cosmopolitanism as a critical outlook which is just as critical of itself.

Before connecting cosmopolitanism to critical theory, the latter needed to be studied in order to understand its elements, methodology, and objects. Critical theory as a social scientific project has a rich tradition and several different strands. The second chapter identified three general main sources of the Frankfurt account of critical theory: autonomous agency; emancipation; and reflection. These three sources build the basis for critical theory's endeavours and methodology. Methodologically, the concept of immanent transcendence was identified as the principal concept of contemporary critical theory. The emphasis in critical theory's endeavours has always been on immanent critique, which means that critical theory must find the resources to change the world for the better immanently in existing circumstances even though they might not be so favourable. One cannot look for salvation in external worlds but must come to terms with the world that we live in, not in a conservative sense but in the sense of engaging with it and finding those instances in it that could hold answers to possible changes.

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I decided to look at Honneth's critical theory of recognition more closely because of its contemporariness and similarity to cosmopolitanism. Honneth's critical theory, especially his theory of recognition, offers a helpful framework for thinking about cosmopolitanism as critical theory. They share similar presuppositions about the social world such as relationality and interdependence among people and social justice as the ideal of ethical life, for instance. One of the fundamental features of Honneth's critical theory is its social-philosophical character. The task of critical theory in his opinion is to contribute to social justice, which itself must be understood much more broadly than in just liberal or distributive terms. This includes identifying social pathologies on the one hand and leading and living a good life on the other. Normatively, the moral feeling of injustice is the one that points to such pathologies and obstacles to the realisation of ethical life. However, most importantly here is to know that critical theorists must engage with social reality and phenomena, and draw theoretical implications from it in order to unearth the resources needed for social reality's practical transformations. To be able to do this, critical theory should follow – as Honneth does – the dialectical method of intramundane or immanent transcendence. He ascertains that recognition is one such theoretical resource found in social reality that can animate social transformations.

Because the concept of immanent transcendence proved to be such an important and perhaps even the most constitutive part of critical theory, it was studied more closely in the fourth chapter. Generally, it could be argued that people and their lives always exist and transpire somewhere in-between numerous boundaries that get crossed and established over and over again. The immanent and transcendent must inevitably be comprehended as working together since the latter can only come into existence if we do not abandon the former. This-worldly transcendence involves a kind of standing back and looking beyond, which means that it definitely possesses a certain normative critical standpoint. Cosmopolitanism, too, works by a method of immanent transcendence. If it is to nurture its critical stance, then cosmopolitanism must renounce simple immanence, which only looks at the empirical manifestations of cosmopolitanism in the contemporary world. It should also avoid being completely transcendent because that would mean that it communicates and actualises single truth and that it is beyond any critique. I identified three types of immanent transcendence found in

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cosmopolitanism: dialogical, which conveys certain epistemological implications; disclosing, which exposes previously hidden possibilities and carries a utopian impulse; and, lastly, self-transcendence, which involves self-transformation or changes in self-understanding that result from encounters with others.

To be able to talk about cosmopolitanism as critical theory, there needs to be a paradigm through which cosmopolitanism can identify resources in social reality that could stimulate social change. Even though communication could very well work with cosmopolitanism as such a paradigm, I chose the concept of recognition partly because it already contains communication to a certain extent, and partly because the consequences of using recognition as a paradigm carries with it implications that are more in line with cosmopolitanism's own principles and workings. Although recognition is a rich concept that possesses many different meanings, the fifth chapter analysed Honneth's concept of recognition because it is linked directly to critical theory. Honneth's understands recognition as a form of action and behaviour, as providing a normative underpinning to social criticism and ethical life, as an empirical phenomenon, and as a resource to be used to aid an individual's self-realisation. However, one possible criticisms of his understanding of recognition and its application could be how it focuses on a state framework. This is where cosmopolitanism expands on recognition relationships, applies them at a global level, and offers them its own normative framework. The relationships of love (confidence), rights (respect) and solidarity (esteem) can be 'cosmopolitanised' and it was shown that such steps are necessary and that cosmopolitanism can contribute substantially to further our understanding of recognition on a global level.

After showing how recognition fits into cosmopolitanism, and how the latter can make use of the former, it was necessary to tackle the question of ethics and normativity, which are the basis of every critical theory. In order to fulfil the aim of the thesis – to establish cosmopolitanism as critical theory – there needs to be a thorough engagement with the normative and ethical underpinnings of critical theory. The potential problem with determining ethics is that it can very easily become too totalising and restricting. So, in order to avoid a transcendental kind of ethics, ethics needs to be formal enough not to oppress different communities and different people's lifestyles within those communities. Cosmopolitanism's approach to ethics takes into account human suffering

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and obligation to others as well as relationality and future-orientation. It does not adhere to any dogmatic beliefs but resorts to judgement, moderation and stems from the idea of human interrelatedness and interdependence. How these three features work is perhaps most visible in cosmopolitan solidarity. I think that solidarity is the most profound expression of ethics. It combines and holds together opposites, contradictions, and differences; it creates new spaces and worlds; it strives for a good or better life; it combines individuality and communitarianism; it creates a horizon of values that a society tries to actualise; and it emphasises our duty to fellow human beings. Cosmopolitan solidarity was theorised in the sixth chapter and it was shown that it resonates closely with Gadamer's understanding of solidarity. Specifically, it was substantiated with three characteristics that express a cosmopolitan disposition: engagement with otherness and respect for difference; acknowledgement of the common world; and self-understanding.

What cosmopolitanism possesses and Honneth's critical theory does not to such an extent is a strong utopian element. Utopianism becomes apparent through cosmopolitanism's capacity for world-disclosing critique, which not only exposes social pathologies but also points to future possibilities. Utopianism therefore becomes a kind of tool for criticism and possesses strong transformative capabilities. Like cosmopolitanism and critical theory, utopianism challenges the *status quo*. It is world-disclosing critique that perhaps expresses such utopianism most explicitly making us think anew and in connection to both past and present, and making us see things as well as ourselves in a different light. It makes us become aware of things and people that previously we may not have noticed and become receptive to their normative demands. Such critique has a lot to do with changes in self-understanding and is therefore closely related to self-transcendence. Utopianism in critical cosmopolitanism allows for a re-imagining of the old ideals that may not be appropriate enough anymore for the needs of the post-national world. It also makes us acknowledge pain, conflict, and hostilities in the contemporary world and engage with them in a way that shows us a possible way out.

The last chapter looked at critical cosmopolitanism 'in action', that is, how it works and engages in critique when faced with a real world phenomenon such as the (non)practice of hospitality. Hospitality was chosen for numerous reasons: it combines normative,

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political and social elements; it is a particularly ethical concept that prescribes a way of orientation towards others; and it offers us good ground upon which to assess those impediments that prevent people from leading a better life. Methodologically, the first step was problem-disclosure and object-constitution, which pointed to the apparent problem of denying hospitality to refugees and migrants in the contemporary world, and to internal contradictions in the construction of the concept of hospitality. After that, I engaged in reconstructive and explanatory critiques, which uncovered those elements and mechanisms that impede or distort hospitality. Critical cosmopolitanism underlined the importance of relationality and building ethical relations among strangers in hospitality relations.

Throughout the dissertation we have hopefully seen that critical cosmopolitanism can be designated as a kind of critical theory. If we follow the identified (following Strydom, 2011) seven dimensions of contemporary critical theory – the transcendental, dialectical, normative, ontological, theoretical, epistemological, and methodological – we can argue that critical cosmopolitanism does indeed consist of all these dimensions. It was shown that cosmopolitanism entails immanent transcendence and that it operates with its use. Critical cosmopolitanism also engages in dialectical critique, which means that it resorts to a faculty of judgement in order to arrive at a decision. Normatively, critical cosmopolitanism does not serve some kind of plan but aims at illumination, emancipation and transformation, including self-transformation. On an ontological level, critical cosmopolitanism deals with the perception and construction of social reality, it looks at real world phenomena and those tensions in it that could have some ethical or political implications. It also possesses a multidimensional theoretical character, which means that cosmopolitanism can be understood as a social theory that deals with reconstructive, materialist, historical or sociological themes. The epistemological dimension in critical theory is quite an important one because cosmopolitanism allows for a dialogical immanent transcendence which brings together many views and does not favour one over another from the beginning. It is reflective and presupposes the openness required to learn and create new worlds. Methodologically, critical cosmopolitanism follows the concept of immanent transcendence and finds those instances in social reality that could change the development of social structures in socio-historical processes for the better.

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### **Limitations of the Study and Implications For Future Research**

As with every work, this thesis has also had to face some limitations to what it could address and resolve. First of all, Honneth's critical thought is not a completely coherent or monolithic theoretical work. Whereas his early works concentrated almost solely on the concept of recognition, his recent works, such as his 2010 book, *The Pathologies of Individual Freedom: Hegel's Social Theory*, and his 2013 book, *Freedom's Right: The Social Foundations of Democratic Life*, focus more on social justice in connection to realising communicative, personal and moral freedom. As such, Honneth's use of engagement with the themes and objectives of critical theory do differ through his rich and extensive academic endeavours. Therefore, to engage only with one aspect of Honneth's work on critical theory might be limiting and insufficient to a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of how his critical theory works and how it connects to cosmopolitanism. Being limited by space, I decided to focus on one part of his theory only – the one that I thought most connected and similar to cosmopolitanism. Another possible limitation is that the study could have taken some other forms of critical theory as its basis and may then have produced somewhat different results. One such pertinent option would be to connect cosmopolitanism with Habermas' communicative ethical framework, which seems inherently compatible with cosmopolitanism's dialogical dispositions. However, as Habermas' theory is itself imbued with cosmopolitanism, I chose Honneth specifically because it does not usually strictly speak of cosmopolitanism let alone explicitly use it. In this way would not only cosmopolitanism be enhanced by critical theory's attributes but also recognition theory would benefit from cosmopolitanism's enhancement.

The implications of this study for future research are twofold. First, it engaged in a fairly new understanding of cosmopolitanism as a critical tool which could help us look at the world critically and through universal values and norms. By doing so it also showed that variants of cosmopolitanism that exist out there in the social world and in academia need to be critical of themselves as well. Cosmopolitanism should therefore not be understood as a blueprint for a better society but as a constant engagement with social reality in a critical manner. Second, incorporating cosmopolitanism into critical theory generally or seeing cosmopolitanism as a critical theory might help answer some of the plights that critical theory has had to face from its very beginning. Some critics have argued that critical theory does not engage enough with practical political questions

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since it only tries to develop latent (class) consciousness (Held, 2013: 25). Contrary to this, cosmopolitanism does engage with actual political issues and does not even shy away from imagining new political institutions and practices. It is not only a process of self-emancipation and self-creation and as such this is where contemporary critical theory – Habermas and especially Honneth included – could benefit from cosmopolitanism.

### **Cosmopolitan Hope in a Non-Cosmopolitan World**

I would like to conclude this thesis by reading one of Primo Levi's short stories called *A Tranquil Star* (2007). This is 'a fable that awakens echoes, and in which each of us can perceive distant reflections of himself and of the human race' (Levi, 2007: 157). It is also an allegory; the 'tranquil star' may be interpreted as a metaphor for reason. The story describes how there was once a peaceful, big, hot, bright star somewhere in the universe. Levi writes that its characteristics were hard to describe precisely; not because the star was too difficult to observe, but because our language lacked the proper words to be able to embody all its grandiosity and exceptionality. It was tranquil by nature but one day it became unusually restless: 'Of this restlessness Arab and Chinese astronomers were aware. The Europeans, no: the Europeans of that time, which was a time of struggle, were so convinced that the heaven of the stars was immutable, was in fact the paradigm and kingdom of immutability, that they considered it pointless and blasphemous to notice changes. There could be none – by definition there were none' (Levi, 2007: 158). However, Levi continues, an Arab observer persisted and kept observing the changing star, and even named it 'the capricious one'. After the death of the Arab, the star did not attract much attention anymore, partly also because it was reduced to a barely visible dot. Levi (2007: 159) writes, 'But in 1950 (and the message has only now reached us) the illness that must have been gnawing at it from within reached a crisis, and here, for the second time, our story, too, enters a crisis: now it is no longer the adjectives that fail but the facts themselves'. Humanity still does not know much about the convulsive death-resurrection of stars and their explosions – the latter are among the most catastrophic events in the sky, but we understand only the how, not the why. Eventually, the star exploded. An observer would have seen his gentle sun swell tremendously. After that, he would have been forced to seek shelter, because the

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consequences were disastrous: ‘After ten hours, the entire planet was reduced to vapo[u]r, along with all the delicate and subtle works that the combined labo[u]r of chance and necessity, through innumerable trials and errors, had perhaps created there, and along with all the poets and wise men who had perhaps examined that sky, and had wondered what was the value of so many little lights, and had found no answer’ (Levi, 2007: 160). After that, in the present times, the reader meets Ramón Escojido who lives and works at an observatory. One evening, whilst developing a photographic plate in the darkroom, he notices something unusual, something new: not a big thing, a barely perceptible spot, which could very well be a speck of dust, ‘but there is also the minuscule probability that it’s a nova’ (Levi, 2007: 162).

This short story can serve as an illustration of the capabilities, wrongs and future possibilities of reason and of man-made theories. Levi is suggesting that bright, highly admired and all-knowing (European) reason has failed humanity, but at the same time he also implies and perhaps believes that nevertheless there is still a bit of hope left. Most of all, one must be wary of science, people or systems who claim to be omniscient. Embracing the human mind’s limitations and all its potential weaknesses, Levi dwelled on his experience in Auschwitz and despite the unprecedented horror managed to find intimations to counter it. He rethought of the Holocaust in light of the removal of certainty and the dried up authority that clings to ‘common sense’, and replaced it with more fluid, evolving paths of knowledge that are built up in dialogue with others and are sensitive to historical and, especially, individual experiences (Gordon, 2001: 202). Levi (2000: 477) therefore urges us to

‘be cautious about delegating to others our judgements and our will. Since it is difficult to distinguish true prophets from false, it is as well to regard all prophets with suspicion. It is better to renounce all truths, even if they exalt us by their splendour or if we find them convenient because we can acquire them gratis. It is better to content oneself with other more modest and less exciting truths, those one acquires painfully, little by little and without shortcuts, with study, discussion, and reasoning’.

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