Social Inclusion
2025 • Volume 13 • Article 9220
https://doi.org/10.17645/si.9220

cogitatio

ARTICLE

Open Access Journal

Commoning Cosmopolitanism: Solidarity Beyond Capital, Borders, and Sameness

Óscar García Agustín and Martin Bak Jørgensen

Department of Culture and Learning, Aalborg University, Denmark

Correspondence: Óscar García Agustín (oscar@ikl.aau.dk)

Submitted: 27 August 2024 **Accepted:** 9 December 2024 **Published:** 6 February 2025

Issue: This article is part of the issue "Solidarity in Diversity: Overcoming Marginalisation in Society" edited by Matthew Mabefam (University of Melbourne), Kennedy Mbeva (University of Cambridge), and Franka Vaughan (University of Melbourne), fully open access at https://doi.org/10.17645/si.i417

Abstract

Approaches to situated and located cosmopolitanism offer the opportunity to think of the formation of a universal community, which demands equality and social justice and is rooted in urban and local practices. This article delves into this perspective by connecting the literature on cosmopolitanism, the commons, and solidarity. Based on a sociospatial conception of solidarity, the notion of "commoning cosmopolitanism" is developed as a framework to understand how solidarity forges relationships where both commonalities and diversity can coexist. Three aspects are important to consider: (a) class struggle, as a response to exclusion and domination and the need to think relations beyond the logic of capital; (b) space, since the relationships are constituted spatially, connecting local and global scales and questioning the logic of borders; and (c) community, opposed to closed identities and "sameness," and aiming to include previously excluded groups and establish a common ground whilst preserving multiplicity. Several examples are used to show how commoning cosmopolitanism allows us to consider the universal dimension of urban solidarity and the inclusion of migrants as part of the political community (the cosmopolitan "we").

Keywords

common; commoning; cosmopolitanism; local; solidarity; transnational

1. Introduction

In her comment on Will Kymlicka's article "Solidarity in Diverse Societies," Glick Schiller (2016), who proposes a global conjunctural analysis, criticizes Kymlicka's reflections on welfare states, solidarity, and migrants for two reasons: his advocacy on nationalism and the lack of attention paid to global modes of capital accumulation. According to Glick Schiller, Kymlicka's position would entail a form of progressive nationalism that maintains a

binary logic distinguishing between members of the national community—though not only native-born—and strangers. This criticism is buttressed by the perspective that Kymlicka's vision reproduces the illusion of the Westphalian system and the independence of the states and their economies.

Global capitalism has contributed to the dismantling of welfare states and creating new forms of accumulation by dispossession. To overcome this dual limitation, provoked by the restriction to the national framework and the omission of the impact of global neoliberalism, Glick Schiller points out that cosmopolitan sociability would be useful to theorize the politics of solidarity. While sociabilities reflect the everyday (urban) interactions among people, despite their differences, cosmopolitanism highlights how those interactions shape common spaces and aspirations of social justice by being together.

This article shares Glick Schiller's approach to combining cosmopolitanism, and its universal dimension, with an everyday dimension, in our case an urban dimension to be more accurate. Cosmopolitanism is quite often associated with global processes of homogenization, the imposition of universal values reproducing colonial values, and a top-down design implemented by the elites (Caraus, 2015; Mendieta, 2009; Mignolo, 2000). However, there is an increasing conceptualization of cosmopolitanism as critical and situated (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015) where the focus is put on questioning the exclusionary role of universalism, on paying attention to mobilizations, organizations, and interactions in place, and on the articulation of those local dynamics more globally by sharing their demands on social justice. The critical dimension opens a space of contestation to express dissent and to make social conflicts visible (Agustín, 2017; Caraus, 2015; Delanty, 2006). The spatial or urban dimension responds to the need to anchor cosmopolitanism in ongoing practices and avoid any type of abstract community that is based on a form of (exclusionary) universalism. The local approach allows us to ground cosmopolitanism in multiple spaces and to combine commonalities and diversity (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2018; Harvey, 2000; Mignolo, 2010; Sachs, 2010). Thus, cosmopolitanism is, basically, from below, fostered by civil society and social movements, produced socio-spatially, and aimed towards questioning existing forms of domination (and formations of an exclusionary community) by shaping an inclusive "we" and envisioning a just and equal society.

Moreover, Glick Schiller and Irving (2015, p. 5) stress this point by referring to critical cosmopolitanism as how individuals and groups decide to engage with other human beings:

> Cosmopolitanism turns out not only to be about belonging to the world, but also to be about belonging to it in a particular way, one in which a person's situated positioning creates a domain of commonality—however partial, fleeting or contradictory—across categorial identities such as ethnicity, class, sexuality, status, gender and religion.

Glick Schiller (2015) refers to the moments and places of struggle as "domains of commonality." These domains of commonality expand and increase the possibilities of being human together, even when we have our differences. Since cosmopolitanism emerges from social relationships, diversity (different identities) is compatible with commonalities as a consequence of solidarity practices. In this sense, the relational dimension of solidarity (and of cosmopolitanism, by extension) is relevant together with the spatial dimension, as people create common places through their meetings, encounters, and coexistence (Glick Schiller et al., 2011). It is precisely in the sociospatial relation of solidarity (in the formation of a "cosmopolitanism from below") that the creation of the common needs to be taken seriously into account.

In this regard, our objective is to place our research within the existing paradigm of critical cosmopolitanism and contribute by introducing and highlighting the importance of solidarity as a sociospatial relation and commoning to conceptualize cosmopolitanism and its practices. This framework, drawing on the literature of critical cosmopolitanism, solidarity, and urban commons, is grounded in the following aspects: (a) by adding commoning to cosmopolitanism we stress a collective way of organization outside and beyond the capitalist logic (Huron, 2015; Stavrides, 2016); (b) it allows us to focus on spaces where both commonalities and diversity coexist; and (c) it is directly connected with a contentious and sociospatial definition of solidarity to account for how social relations take place and can scale up (Agustín, 2020; Featherstone, 2012).

Commoning cosmopolitanism is, then, defined by how people forge sociospatial relations of solidarity that, on the one hand, are opposed to the logic of capital and, on the other, contribute to shaping a community based on the production of commonalities and the maintenance of diversity.

The structure of the article is as follows. First, we present our framework on cosmopolitanism which introduces the notion of commoning to single out the relevance of three elements (class struggle, space, and community) to forge an inclusive and equal community. Next, we develop each of these elements by using cases that illustrate how cosmopolitanism is being produced. Our objective is, therefore, to show how commoning cosmopolitanism contributes to the literature on situated and critical cosmopolitanism by introducing the practices of commoning to emphasize how cosmopolitanism is socio-spatially forged by solidarity relations questioning the logics of capital.

2. Commoning Cosmopolitanism: Solidarity as Sociospatial Relation

To conceptualize cosmopolitanism, in line with the approaches of situated and critical cosmopolitanism, we consider it important to add two dimensions: solidarity and commoning. The former is defined within the spatial approaches to solidarity (Featherstone, 2012) and the latter within studies on urban commons (Stavrides, 2016).

Similar to what happens with cosmopolitanism, solidarity—in terms of universalism, common identity, or sameness—turns out to be problematic since it can (re)produce forms of exclusion and domination. Thus, it is important to consider solidarity as a sociospatial relation where the encounter between individuals and groups challenges and even modifies pre-existing identities, although it does not imply that a new common identity is necessarily going to be created (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). Sociospatial relations have different dimensions (territory, place, scale, networks) which again can be analyzed through different forms of structuration (e.g., bordering, proximity/spatial embeddedness, vertical differentiation, interconnectivity; see Jessop et al., 2008). Here we regard solidarities as rooted in local practices but that also can entail a transnational dimension by connecting diverse local practices and even by imagining a just and equal system where the local practices acquire an interconnected form of global contestation. In this regard, solidarity is essential to conceptualize critical and situated cosmopolitanism as a practice rooted locally that produces a universal dimension by connecting those practices.

Arampatzi (2017, p. 2156) refers to "the spatial practices of solidarity and struggle that unfold at the territorial, social and economy levels, and aims to further understandings of how people and communities contest crises." The increasing importance of cities in the global context leads to a major focus on cosmopolitanism from an

urban perspective, as well as the challenges of solidarity as a complex phenomenon (especially when compared to other forms of local solidarity like those of rural areas or small environments). When solidarity contributes to forging mutual relations that question both power relations and preexisting identities, cosmopolitanism faces the difficulty of how to create a commonality without blurring diversity and multiplicity.

To grasp the coexistence of commonality and diversity, we introduce the notion of "commoning" to cosmopolitanism to highlight that it is a socio-spatially produced relation (where space for commonalities and differences is enhanced) and that emerges from a social logic that questions and opposes the logic of capital (and the processes of inequality and domination resulting from it). We use "commoning" rather than "common(s)" to focus on the process and the relationship established between individuals and groups, and we apply it to "cosmopolitanism" to express the need for constant openness to avoid the risk of (re)producing closed and/or exclusive communities.

Hardt and Negri (2012) point out that commoning has neither to do with sameness nor with imagining a sole (common) identity by negating the existence of diverse identities. Furthermore, the action of commoning "must be oriented not only toward the access to and self-management shared wealth but also the construction of forms of political organization" (Hardt & Negri, 2012). As a process, social commoning, besides managing resources collectively, is "constituted by the coming together of strangers" (Huron, 2015, p. 964). As mentioned above, commoning is associated with the urban commons which makes the city the site of struggle against capitalism and the commons becomes the way of organizing, cooperating, and interacting outside the capitalist logic. The urban spaces and places, particularly, bring strangers together (Huron, 2015). The question is: How can commoning contribute to producing spaces and identities, where diversity is not replaced by commonality, and differences do not become obstacles to imagining new ways of life and an inclusive universal community? Although negotiating differences is not an easy task, since the relation is not exempt from asymmetric power relations, here we'll connect the notion of commoning with the social dimension of space by Massey (2005). Space entails the engagement with multiplicity and the (re)production of heterogeneity. This *can* imply relations of domination, subordination, conflicts, but we want to highlight how diversity, through the lens of solidarity as sociospatial relations, is (re)produced as compatible with commonalities. Commoning is not sameness, but it is not a predefined object either: "Commoning practices shape both their subjects and their means; commoning practices literally produce what is to be named, valued, used and symbolized as common" (Stavrides, 2016, p. 35). If we apply this to cosmopolitanism, what is universal, who the citizens of the world are, or who the universal community is cannot be predetermined, but they are shaped and constituted in places by individuals and groups. Something distinctive of commoning is that it needs to be free from the constraints and limits of capitalism imposed through enclosures and privatization (Stavrides, 2016). Commoning cosmopolitanism entails, then, imagining a community whose social bonds are made outside (and beyond) the capitalist logic.

As being outside the logic of capital, urban commons are related to autonomy as a way of self-organization. However, we consider it more relevant from a cosmopolitan perspective to reflect on how to move from the local to the global or universal and avoid reducing the commons (or even cosmopolitanism) to a local phenomenon. Stavrides (2014) uses the metaphor of "threshold spatiality" to refer to expanding commoning as the setting of emancipating experiences of sharing, in opposition to capitalist society's enclosures. We find Stavrides' idea of expanding commoning very useful in thinking about cosmopolitanism, as he suggests both challenging the boundaries of established communities and extending egalitarian practices

outside the boundaries of communities. Stavrides (2014, p. 548) presents comparability and translatability as characteristics to be free from the constraints and limits: Comparability consists of "the ground of comparisons between different subjects of action and also between different practices" that is not based on homogenization but on multiplicity; translatability "creates the ground for negotiations between differences without reducing them to common denominators" (p. 548). Translatability also makes it possible to combine spatial practices with the possibility of fostering a common (global) ground where there is room for interwoven multiplicity and unity (Agustín, 2017). Mezzadra (2007) opposes abstraction to translation. Capital becomes global through abstraction and erasure of multiplicity, while social movements use translation to disrupt the "language of capital" through the creation of spaces for freedom and equality; the experiences and practices within these spaces are then defined as the definitive elements to be used as common ground.

Here, let us return to the notion of solidarity as sociospatial relations: it enables commoning cosmopolitanism as it social bonds and social imaginaries, rooted in justice and equality, that question exclusion and domination. In a previous work (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2020), we conceptualized three dimensions of solidarity practices: organization, space, and identity. The three dimensions find some parallelism with the three elements that characterize commoning cosmopolitanism: class struggle, space, and community. Class struggle must not be understood in a narrow sense (class as the working class) but in a larger sense including other types of identities opposed to capitalism such as gender, race, and sexual orientation. As Nancy Fraser says, capitalism develops forms of economic exploitation but also different types of domination related to gender, race, environment, and so on (Fraser, 2024). Thus, the notion of class, in a traditional sense, should be expanded to include other struggles such as anti-racism and feminism. The importance of class struggle is that it reflects the contentious nature of solidarity and critical cosmopolitanism to create spaces and social relations that are outside—and not determined by—the capitalist logic. Space highlights the creation of common spaces, where the private and public are appropriated collectively and there is room to express diversity and establish a common ground, although sometimes momentarily or temporarily. Community is shaped by sociospatial relationships locally, but also transnationally when the practices become interconnected and translated. Whilst the production of common spaces challenges national logics of borders, reproduced also as urban borders, the emerging community, forged through solidarity, contrasts with existing closed and exclusive identities. We summarize the three dimensions in Figure 1.

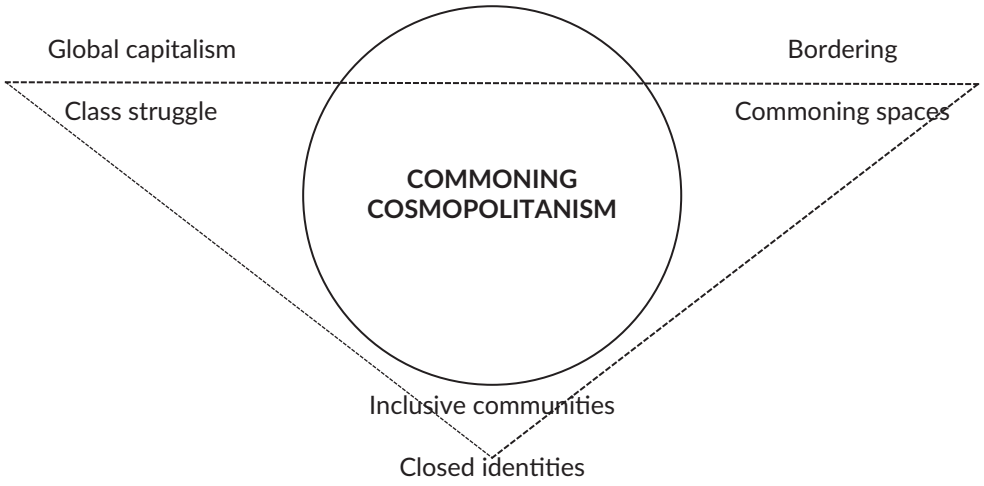

Figure 1. Commoning cosmopolitanism: A three-dimensional model.

We believe that the conceptualization of "commoning cosmopolitanism" could be useful in understanding how commonality and multiplicity can be produced through sociospatial solidarity relations. In the following sections, we want to illustrate these three dimensions with cases of migrant and civil society struggles and solidarity practices that enable commoning cosmopolitanism. Although we focus on one dimension in each section, it is clear that all of them are intertwined, but we want to highlight the functioning of every dimension in shaping cosmopolitanism.

3. Class Struggles: Beyond Capitalism

The following statement was released by the organizing collectives of the Swizz Feminist Strike in 2019. It offers an illustration of how we see commoning cosmopolitanism in practice:

> We all, women*, with or without a partner, in community, with or without children, with or without employment, and whatever the nature of that employment, healthy or sick, with or without disability, heterosexual, LGBTIQ, from the youngest to the oldest, born here or elsewhere, with different cultures and origins, we call for a feminist and women*'s strike on June 14, 2019. We want equality in the facts and we want to decide ourselves about our lives. For this, we will go on strike on June 14, 2019! (Frauenstreik, 2019)

The strikers identify a common anti-capitalist struggle while at the same time creating a new inclusive "we" transgressing gendered, citizenship-based, racialized, generational divisions. It allows us to discuss how the contentious nature of solidarity underpinning class struggle (in a broad sense), such as the feminist strike, creates a common space and social relations not determined by capitalist logics. The precarious positions of the strikers are also produced by global capitalist structures, reifying relations between capital and race, and through protest these subordinated subjects talk back. The 2019 Swiss feminist strike mobilized more than 500,000 people on the 14th of June 2019. It was the largest mobilization since the general strike of 1918. Young women of immigrant origin constituted a large share of the protesters (Prezioso, 2019).

In a European political economy characterized by borders/bordering and precarization of statuses and life conditions, the cosmopolitan "we" emerges as a challenge and rejection of such subordination. Immigrants without political rights make up more than a quarter of the population in Switzerland. As has been shown in the literature on precarity (Jørgensen, 2016), migrants' and refugees' experiences reveal the injustice and arbitrary nature of the social and political order, and the labor and border systems that repress these already vulnerable groups. And due to what we can uncover by studying their experiences, their stories hold within them the elements necessary that make the creation of a cosmopolitan "we" possible. In other words, migrants enable the identification of a "we" and a community based on commonalities and acknowledgment and embodiment of diversity set against the repressive and violent nature of the system, characterized by neoliberalism and global capitalism. The Swizz feminist strikes have over the years incorporated this diversity.

The strikes not only address workers' rights but also broader issues of social production and reproduction, constituting the commonwealth: sexism, care, and social justice. However, the feminist strike shows how sociospatial relations of solidarity between women workers in the public and private sectors have become part of a collective claims-making tool; this also includes sociospatial relations of solidarity particular to immigrant (female) workers, particularly those in the care and service sector. Additionally, the strikes have a

distinct urban dimension, as many of the contentious issues relate to cost of living, availability of care, etc. The feminist strike illustrates the possibility of thinking "class" as an expansive category, encompassing a number of identities opposed to capitalism, to unify the plurality of struggles into a new emancipatory project. This plurality of struggles can also include immigrants and refugees as they experience the same processes of exclusion and oppression through labor conditions and borders. Commoning cosmopolitanism thus is a way of forging social bonds within a common group to challenge a repressive system while maintaining and respecting diversity within the struggle, i.e., not eradicating particular identities.

We find feminist strikes in other national settings also. Here we also find examples of intersections between class, gender, race, citizenship (and the lack thereof) shaping new commonalities and imaginaries of social justice. In Denmark, the feminist strike in 2023 was organized and fronted by women with refugee backgrounds all being active in Trampoline House—a social community center especially catering to people living in asylum—or deportation centers in Denmark. In a similar way, collective campaigns like the 24h sans nous in France in 2010, where migrants stopped working and consuming to show what life would be like without immigrants (Jørgensen, 2016), and the earlier protest event "A Day Without Immigrants" in 2006 organized by Latino immigrants in the United States (see Longhi, 2013), demonstrate the emergence of new political subjectivities through an anti-capitalist project.

Commoning through class struggle (often) has a strong urban dimension combining commonalities and diversity in locally grounded settings, while at the same time allowing for comparability and translatability (Stavrides, 2014). A final example is the mobilization and organization of the Barcelona Popular Union of Street Vendors (*Sindicato mantero*; see Menna, in press). The street vendors are most often illegalized and racialized African migrants, referred to as *top mantas* for the blankets they often use to hold and carry their products. Their practice of street vending is regarded by the state as a criminal activity, which leads to their persecution, but it's worth arguing that this criminalization is radicalized. During the refugee crisis, street vendors organized themselves to highlight their socioeconomic position and marginalization in society. They weren't alone in this endeavor; other social actors in Barcelona, such as local activists from intersecting political spaces, mostly migrant and antiracist, who found commonality in their shared understanding of global capitalism and injustice stood with them. Quoting Menna (in press), who has discussed this mobilization in detail, the tools involved "[mapping] the here-and-now of street vending in Barcelona and paying special attention to working and living conditions of vendors' illegalized ways of life," moreover the coalition between migrants and antiracist groups made an analysis where challenges as "gentrification or securitization of public space were crucial, along with a critical eye on the global crisis of labour." The Union later started a designer clothes series appropriating the derogatory term *top manta*, making colonial violence visible, highlighting economic injustice and deprivation of rights. The mobilization articulates a critique of the capitalist-colonial structure while at the same time appropriating capitalist means to create a space where the vendors are part of the socioeconomic order without letting go of the critique of exclusivist practices and inequalities. Commoning practices here produce a community forged through contentious solidarity that transgresses racial and citizenship-based dividing lines and promote a logic outside/beyond capitalism.

4. Commoning Spaces: Beyond Borders

Borders are the cornerstone of capitalism. As argued by Walia (2021), borders are the nexus where capital and race formation intersect. Borders are deadly and cannot be understood as limited to the geographical

frontier of any nation-state, but emerging at different instances, moments, and places "wherever selective controls are to be found" (Balibar, 2002). Borders create enclosures that again create dividing lines. In this section we discuss how our understanding of commoning cosmopolitanism can create new common spaces and question national borders. Carving out the urban commons and the role of the city is important to pursue this argument. David Harvey depicts urban autonomy, as a form of self-organization, as a bulwark against capitalism. In *Rebel Cities*, he describes struggles for "the right to the city" as an anti-capitalist struggle (Harvey, 2012). This is an open process without any pre-determined meaning involving what we posit as commoning cosmopolitanism. Commoning entails new practices of sharing and caring being outside, or at least not constrained by, capitalist logics. Making the city a common space for all regardless of citizenship status also makes this a struggle for immigrant rights and moving towards moves us beyond borders and nations, towards a world beyond capitalism based on dignity and social justice with the urban as a central scale (Reyes & Russell, 2017).

That said, the main tendency we now see globally, in terms of global governance structures and nation-state responses, is not one of openness but restrictions and deterrence when it comes to welcoming and accommodating people on the move who do not arrive with work or study permits. Although we do see an openness from European countries and the EU towards Ukrainian refugees, this is on a broader scale an exception and more than anything else shows how "protection" and "deservingness" also are racialized categories establishing systems of inclusion and exclusion. The inclusion of Ukrainian refugees from a perceived proximity also paves the way for the exclusion of previous refugees. As we have shown elsewhere, the "normal" is rather what happened across Europe in 2016 and onwards where we saw governments enter a "race to the bottom" in terms of developing deterrence policies to prevent refugees from entering their particular country (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). Over a very short period, EU member states initiated "exceptional measures" legitimized by a "state of emergency" that in practical terms breached the principles of the Schengen agreement and thus the European framework for free mobility. Thus, we could identify a total lack of solidarity between member-states, intersecting with and strengthening a humanitarian crisis, a political crisis, and a crisis of mobility.

When we turn the gaze to the urban scale and look at how refugees and illegalized migrants are included in the political and social structures, in contrast with the national scale, it's easy to identify an openness for accommodating these groups. We recall the words of the Mayor of Palermo Leoluca Orlando, in Bauder, 2019:

> We cannot say today that Palermo respects the rights of migrants. Because we have no migrants in Palermo. If you ask how many migrants are in Palermo, then I do not answer 100,000 or 120,000, but none. If you are in Palermo, you are a Palermitan.

These words came from the then Mayor of Palermo and signals a type of municipal resistance as well as commoning of space. Orlanda articulates a politics of presence indicating that anyone residing in Palermo regardless of status is part of the spatial inclusive "we" identity Palermitan offers. It should be emphasized that that is not only a discursive maneuver but also pursued in (policy) practice. Also, in Northern Italy, several municipalities signed an agreement—the "rescue-migrants" pact—setting up a registry of asylum seekers to bypass rules established by the decree. The contestation between the local scale (as the city and municipal scale) and the national one has grown during "the long summer of migration" in 2015. Cities all over Europe

engage in formulating welcoming policies towards refugees, diverging from restrictive national frameworks. The website Moving Cities (https://moving-cities.eu) lists more than 700 European cities that actively support solidarity-based migration policies. We can find good examples of European cities challenging the distinction between migrants and non-migrants and creating a common urban "we" through urban policy frameworks accommodating all regardless of ethnicity and status. One of the cases we have worked with in detail in our prior work is Barcelona. In 2015, the City Council, led by the platform Barcelona En Comú, launched the Barcelona's Refugee City Plan. The plan is conceived as "a citizen space to channel urban solidarity and to set up coordinated ways of participating in its application" (Barcelona Ciutat Refugi, n.d.). It is a reaction against the restrictive politics towards refugees carried out by the Spanish government. The idea of a "refugee city" activates already an imaginary of the city as a place of solidarity, in contrast with the hostility shown by the national government, and connects with the multiple forms of solidarity expressed by civil society (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). It emphasizes mutual care as a foundation for urban and common space. The recent book *The Revolution Will be Caring* explores what the future could look like from the perspective of radical municipalism (O'Brien & Abdelhadi, 2022). This effort has seen support from the European Solidarity Cities Network, a network born out of the initiative of Giorgos Kaminis, the former mayor of Athens. The aim of the network was presented as an attempt at institutionalizing efforts on the trans-local scale: to bypass the national scale where possible, prefiguring post-national networks of urban solidarity and cooperation (Reyes & Russell, 2017).

The Seebrücke movement in Germany has mobilized hundreds of thousands, enlisting dozens of German municipal authorities in declaring their cities "safe harbours" for refugees rescued in the Mediterranean (Schwiertz & Steinhilper, 2021). Along the same lines as the Seebrücke network and the Solidarity Cities Network, another interesting initiative showing how a common space for solidarity can emerge comes from From the Sea to the City Initiative. As a response to migrant deterrence policies of European member-states, the network wants to make visible how cities are becoming agents of change for a solidary Europe, taking responsibility for protecting human lives. "Welcoming municipalities are growing in number all over the continent," the network states (From the Sea to the City, n.d.). The network provides institutional solutions at the local scale and does advocacy work at the European scale, but it also seeks to reimagine a welcoming Europe as such:

> The From the Sea to the City Consortium aims to join forces to reimagine the European stance on migration with cities and human rights at the center. With this vision we want to send a strong signal to European institutions that a welcoming and human-rights-based migration and refugee policy is not an option but an obligation.

The above statement parallels Glick Schiller's (2015) claim that "being human together" is a constitutive element of cosmopolitanism anchored in moments and places of struggle. Solidarity manifests through such sociospatial relations as the ones articulated by From the Sea to the City. The network is comprised of the International Alliance of Safe Harbours (IASH), which is a city network focusing on migration and reception. It emphasizes the role of the trans-local scale. The network is transnational but more so grounded in and connected through local actors seeking to develop an inclusive common space for welcoming immigrants.

Returning to our initial argument, these initiatives well illustrate how the urban scale can create a common space where commonalities and diversity coexist. It is a contentious space challenging both capitalist

enclosures and borders based on grounded local approaches that are shared and scaled up in networked forms of solidarity.

5. Expanding Community: Beyond Sameness

Expanding the racial, social, cultural, political exclusivist boundaries of existing communities and closed identities is a challenge. We identify the means to do so and the aim to constitute inclusive communities in the kind of cosmopolitan framework we outline in this article. To illustrate this, we will introduce brief examples taking different approaches to community-building to show how they are shaped through sociospatial relationships forged through solidarity.

The (European in our case) Welcome Refugees movement is one example. As other studies have shown, migrant struggles illustrate "a new area of protests" (Ataç et al., 2016). Angela Davis went as far as to claim that "the refugee movement is the civil rights movement of our time. In most countries across the world migration and refugee issues have come to the fore as well as struggles for justice" (as cited in Chelliah & Petterson, 2016). Her statement illustrates our argument also. Refugee struggles are not only *for* refugees; they expand into a community through transversal solidarities. Looking at the "welcome refugees" movements and actions both broadly, their localized forms show new experiments of sharing (e.g., time, housing, commodities, knowledge) and extend egalitarian practices to include the newcomers and people on the move. As we have shown elsewhere, we can identify turning points during the long summer of migration, which also point towards the articulation and practices of developing inclusive political communities, i.e., an inclusionary "we" as a community (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). The emergence of this development can be traced back to key events fostering this kind of "we-ness." One such event took place on 12 September 2015. In more than 85 cities, in 30 countries across Europe, hundreds of thousands of protesters marched under banners of "Refugees Welcome" and "Europe Says Welcome." Citizens participated in marches, demonstrations, and other events during the day of action. The message was equally clear: Refugees are welcome here. In different countries, initiatives have since then sprung up, developing new forms of everyday politics and acts of solidarity (Della Porta, 2018; Guma et al., 2019). Such initiatives illustrate the emergence and maintenance of inclusive communities developing as a counter-force to closed national identities. These forms of inclusion also challenge the capitalist logic of the larger asylum order.

In several cities we find examples of house-sharing initiatives, in some cases formalized through house-sharing platforms, offering people on the move free accommodation for shorter or longer periods. Regardless of the national context we see a universalist inclusion transgressing national distinctions. The everyday politics of the Welcome Refugees movement contests political configurations such as the borders, the asylum regime, the integration policy regime, etc. The movement has managed to create common spaces for daily practices and establish a political community, where commonalities and diversity coexist, again expanding the existing community beyond sameness. Solidarity becomes a means for mitigating differences and creating a common space. Everyday activities such as providing legal aid, medical support, language training, job-seeking assistance, transportation, and everyday donations, including raising funding for family reunifications, etc., all are part of creating an inclusive community. At the same time, differences and diversities are not negated. While the movement articulates the commonalities between people, refugees, and national citizens and "natives" alike, it also emphasizes the importance of personal stories: urging people to listen openly and engage with the experiences of the other and allow stories that

are different from one's own (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). It illustrates a process of social commoning shaped by the "coming together of strangers."

The 2015 "refugee crisis" has since been followed up with new crises. The Russian invasion of Ukraine in early 2022 so far has led to more than six million Ukrainians fleeing to Europe. Again, we have witnessed a massive mobilization in civil society in most European countries. The welcoming of Ukrainian refugees, however, also has shown the distinctions within solidarity practices themselves. Several studies show how Ukrainian refugees are framed differently from other refugee groups, often framed to be culturally "closer" to European communities (e.g., Ajana et al., 2024; Alsbeti, 2023). A perceived sameness may paradoxically spur and reproduce exclusivist practices towards other groups. It shows how closed identities are detrimental to inclusive communities. Nevertheless, anti-solidarity practices can also foster the development of inclusive community-building through the enhancement of a common space for commonalities and differences. The mobilizing of right-winged political actors in cities across the UK in the summer of 2024 is an example of the latter. In the aftermath of a tragedy where a 17-year-old youth, born in Wales to Rwandan parents, killed three children and wounded others, rumors spread that the killer was an asylum-seeker. This prompted right-wing attacks on facilities housing asylum-seekers and properties, spaces of denominations, and shops owned by members of non-British ethnic communities. As a reaction to the racially motivated violence, we saw a counter-movement stand in opposition to the polarizing actions and discourse. A broad coalition of anti-racist movements and organizations, trade unions, feminist organizations, local communities, and religious communities all mobilized together and put tens of thousands of people on the street to protest the far-right attacks against asylum-seekers and immigrants in general. Rallying under the slogan "Welcoming Refugees" and calls like "We Won't Be Divided" and "Standing Together" shows how new inclusive commonalities are forged, expanding the understanding of who is part of the "we." Thus, migration and cosmopolitanism are consubstantial. It shows, through everyday politics that manages to forge a notion of an inclusive community, a "we" that stands in contrast to but also serves as a bulwark against far-right channeled hostility and violence, which spurs exclusion, inequality, and segregation.

6. Conclusion

The approach developed by critical and situated cosmopolitanism offers two important contributions: as critical, cosmopolitanism entails a contentious dimension and the possibility of contesting existing forms of injustice, inequality, and exclusion by expanding the cosmopolitan community by/for those who are excluded; as situated, cosmopolitanism is not just a mere abstraction but produced locally, although the local practices and struggles become connected in order to imagine a universal community (still rooted locally). We adopt this approach by adding the idea of "commoning" to overcome the dichotomy between commonality (not sameness) and diversity (or multiplicity). We argue that the process of "commoning cosmopolitanism" is defined by the interplay between class struggle, spaces, and community, and solidarity becomes essential in understanding how sociospatial relationships are forged and contribute to establishing a common ground while maintaining, at the same time, diversity. As far as commoning cosmopolitanism implies expanding the political community as well as envisioning a more just and equal world, it also entails a contentious dimension (which is the basis for solidarity relationships). Therefore, the proposal for a global community and a situated universalism is made in opposition to exclusive universalism (global capitalism, colonialism). We refer to it as "class struggle" where "class" refers to the interconnection and/or articulation of multiple oppressed identities against the processes of accumulation and expropriation by capital.

The creation of common spaces enables the possibility of conceiving the city as a space for solidarity and developing relationships that question the regimes of borders. Finally, the community emerging from solidarity encounters is inclusive and pluralistic. It can be seen as a community through sameness, founded on shared common ground and the preservation of diversity. The cases we used illustrated how this framework for commoning cosmopolitanism works in practice.

We believe that this approach to cosmopolitanism and solidarity can benefit from further research in analyzing the production of cosmopolitanism at the local and transnational scales. There is also one aspect that has not been fully developed in this article but would be worth addressing: continuity and stability. How this sense of community, emerging from solidarity relations, the questioning of borders, and the search for alternatives to capitalism, can gain continuity and be developed? Placed cosmopolitanism is shaped by the unevenness of the situation (Akoka et al., 2021), since the solidarity relations established do not mean that inequality and subordination are totally suspended (not just outside the common places but also within them). In other words, how can "institutions of expanding commoning" be created (Stavrides, 2014) or how can established alliances of the commons be shaped (Hardt & Negri, 2012)? While we have focused on how commoning cosmopolitanism can contribute to configuring a just and equal society at the local and global levels, the question of how to give continuity and stability to emerging forms of organization, inclusive communities, and transnational connections remains open and requires further reflection and studies.

References

Agustín, Ó. G. (2017). Dialogic cosmopolitanism and the new wave of movements: From local rupture to global openness. *Globalizations*, *14*(5), 700–713.

Agustín, Ó. G. (2020). New municipalism as space for solidarity. *Soundings*, *74*, 54–67.

Agustín, Ó. G., & Jørgensen, M. B. (2018). Transnational solidarity and cosmopolitanism from below: Migrant protests, universalism and the political community. In T. Caraus, & E. Paris (Eds.), *Migration, protest movements and the politics of resistance: A radical political philosophy of cosmopolitanism* (pp. 133–151). Routledge.

Agustín, Ó. G., & Jørgensen, M. B. (2019). *Solidarity and the 'refugee crisis' in Europe*. Springer Nature.

Agustín, Ó. G., & Jørgensen, M. B. (2020). On transversal solidarity: An approach to migration and multi-scalar solidarities. *Critical Sociology*, *47*(6), 857–873.

Ajana, B., Connell, H., & Liddle, T. (2024). "It could have been us": Media frames and the coverage of Ukrainian, Afghan and Syrian refugee crises. *SN Social Sciences*, *4*, Article 135. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43545-024-00943-4

Akoka, K., Clochard, O., Polyzou, I., & Schmoll, C. (2021). What's in a street? Exploring suspended cosmopolitanism. In N. Trikoupi, C. Lejeune, D. Pagès-El Karoui, C. Schmoll, & H. Thiollet (Eds.), *Migration, urbanity and cosmopolitanism in a globalized world* (pp. 101–110). Springer.

Alsbeti, D. (2023). A double standard in refugee response: Contrasting the treatment of Syrian refugees with Ukrainian refugees. *Human Rights Brief*, *26*(2), Article 4. https://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/hrbrief/vol26/iss2/4

Arampatzi, A. (2017). The spatiality of counter-austerity politics in Athens, Greece: Emergent 'urban solidarity spaces.' *Urban Studies*, *54*(9), 2155–2171.

Ataç, I., Rygiel, K., & Stierl, M. (2016). Introduction: The contentious politics of refugee and migrant protest and solidarity movements: Remaking citizenship from the margins. *Citizenship Studies*, *20*(5), 527–544.

Balibar, E. (2002). *Politics and the other scene*. Verso.

Barcelona Ciutat Refugi. (n.d.). *El plan*. http://ciutatrefugi.barcelona/es/el-plan

Caraus, T. (2015). Cosmopolitanism of dissent. In T. Caraus & C. Parvu (Eds.), *Cosmopolitanism and the legacies of dissent* (pp. 1–18). Routledge.

Chelliah, L., & Petterson, C. (2016, October 29). Angela Davis: 'The refugee movement is the civil rights movement of our time.' *Green Left*. https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/angela-davis-refugee-movement-civil-rights-movement-our-time

Delanty, G. (2006). The cosmopolitan imagination: Critical cosmopolitanism and social theory. *The British Journal of Sociology*, *57*(1), 25–47.

Della Porta, D. (Ed.). (2018). *Solidarity mobilizations in the 'refugee crisis.'* Palgrave Macmillan.

Featherstone, D. (2012). *Solidarity: Hidden histories and geographies of internationalism*. Zed Books.

Fraser, N. (2024). A critical theory of society for our time. Reply to my critics. *Ética & Política/Ethis & Politics*, *2*, 225–236.

Frauenstreik. (2019). *Appel de bienne*. https://frauenstreik2019.ch/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/appel-de-bienne.pdf

From the Sea to the City. (n.d.). *About*. https://fromseatocity.eu

Glick Schiller, N. (2015). Whose cosmopolitanism? And whose humanity? In N. Glick Schiller & A. Irving (Eds.), *Whose cosmopolitanism? Critical perspectives, relationalities and discontents* (pp. 31–33). Berghahn Books.

Glick Schiller, N. (2016). The question of solidarity and society: Comment on Will Kymlicka's article: "Solidarity in diverse societies." *Comparative Migration Studies*, *4*, Article 6. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-016-0027-x

Glick Schiller, N., Darieva, T., & Gruner-Domic, S. (2011). Defining cosmopolitan sociability in a transnational age: An introduction. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *34*(3), 399–418.

Glick Schiller, N., & Irving, A. (2015). Introduction: What's in a word? What's in a question? In N. Glick Schiller & A. Irving (Eds.), *Whose cosmopolitanism? Critical perspectives, relationalities and discontents* (pp. 1–22). Berghahn.

Guma, T., Woods, M., Yarker, S., & Anderson, J. (2019). "It's that kind of place here": Solidarity, place-making and civil society response to the 2015 refugee crisis in Wales, UK. *Social Inclusion*, *7*(2), 96–105.

Hardt, M., & Negri, A. (2012). *Declaration*. https://antonionegriinenglish.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/93152857-hardt-negri-declaration-2012.pdf

Harvey, D. (2000). Cosmopolitan and the banality of geographical evils. *Public Culture*, *12*(2), 529–564.

Harvey, D. (2012). *Rebel cities: From the right to the city to the urban revolution*. Verso.

Huron, A. (2015). Working with strangers in saturated space: Reclaiming and maintaining the urban commons. *Antipode*, *47*(4), 963–979.

Jessop, B., Brenner, N., & Jones, M. (2008). Theorizing sociospatial relations. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *26*(3), 389–401.

Jørgensen, M. B. (2016). Precariat—What it is and isn't: Towards an understanding of what it does. *Critical Sociology*, *42*(7/8), 959–974.

Longhi, V. (2013). *The immigrant war. A global movement against discrimination and exploitation*. Policy Press.

Massey, D. (2005). *For space*. SAGE.

Mendieta, E. (2009). From imperial to dialogical cosmopolitanism. *Ethics & Global Politics*, *2*(3), 241–258.

Menna, L. (in press). Mantero's voice and political imagination (or how fiction sustains antiracist politics). In Ó. G. Agustín & M. B. Jørgensen (Eds.), *Radical imagination on migration in turbulent times*. Edward Elgar.

Mezzadra, S. (2007). Living in transition. Toward a heterolingual theory of the multitude. *EIPCP*. https://transversal.at/transversal/1107/mezzadra/en

Mignolo, W. D. (2010). Cosmopolitanism and the de-colonial option. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, *29*, 111–127.

Mignolo, W. D. (2000). The many faces of cosmo-polis: Border thinking and critical cosmopolitanism. *Public Culture*, *12*(3), 721–748.

O'Brien, M. E., & Abdelhadi, E. (2022). *Everything for everyone: An oral history of the New York Commune, 2052–2072*. Common Notions.

Prezioso, S. (2019, August 13). Women's/feminist strike in Switzerland: A step forward on the road of the internationalization of feminist struggles. *CATDM*. https://www.cadtm.org/spip.php?page=imprimer&id_article=17614

Reyes, O., & Russell, B. (2017, March 8). Eight lessons from Barcelona en Comú on how to Take Back Control. *Open Democracy*. https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/eight-lessons-from-barcelona-en-com-on-how-to-take-bac

Sachs, W. (Ed.). (2010). *The development dictionary. A guide to knowledge as power*. Zed.

Schwiertz, H., & Steinhilper, E. (2021). Countering the asylum paradox through strategic humanitarianism: Evidence from safe passage activism in Germany. *Critical Sociology*, *47*(2), 203–217.

Stavrides, S. (2014). Emerging common spaces as a challenge to the city of crisis. *City*, 18(4/5), 546–550.

Stavrides, S. (2016). *Common space: The city as commons*. Zed Books.

Walia, H. (2021). *Border and rule: Global migration, capitalism, and the rise of racist nationalism*. Haymarket Books.

About the Authors

Óscar García Agustín is a professor of democracy and social change at DEMOS at the Department of Culture and Learning, Aalborg University. He has published *Solidarity Without Borders* (Pluto Press, 2016) and *Solidarity and the "Refugee Crisis" in Europe* (Palgrave, 2019), both co-authored with Martin Bak Jørgensen. He is the author of *Sociology of Discourse* (John Benjamins, 2015) and *Left-Wing Populism: The Politics of the People* (Emerald, 2020).

Martin Bak Jørgensen is professor of processes of migration at DEMOS at the Department for Culture and Learning, Aalborg University, Denmark. He has published *Solidarity Without Borders: Gramscian Perspectives on Migration and Civil Society Alliances* (Pluto Press, 2016) and *Solidarity and the "Refugee Crisis" in Europe* (Palgrave, 2019), both co-authored with Óscar García Agustín. With Carl-Ulrik Schierup he co-edited *Politics of Precarity* (2016) and *Contending Global Apartheid* (2022) on Brill.