

Global Redistributive Obligations
in the Face of Severe Poverty

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PhD Dissertation

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in the Face of Severe Poverty

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Acknowledgements

When I first started as a Ph.D.-student, I was very impressed with the sparkling water on tap in the canteen. I bragged about it whenever I could, and asked friends with higher paid jobs: 'Yeah, well do you have sparkling water on tap?' (which, usually, they didn't). Now, I am not gonna say that a sparkling water tap is not an amazing perk – it is – but, I will say that I have discovered many other things to be grateful about as a Ph.D.-student at the Department of Political Science and Government. Since I have mostly expressed my gratitude about the sparkling water (and, to be fair, the coffee machines) these last three years, I think it's about time I mention some of the *people* to whom I am grateful.

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Chapter 1.

Introduction

We see them often, the images of malnourished children, chaotic refugee camps, and entire villages plagued with diseases such as malaria or tuberculosis that could be cured without great effort or cost.¹ We hear and read about oppressive regimes, civil wars, and millions –billions even – of poor people living on less than one dollar a day. And even if we are not overwhelmed by moral outrage every time we encounter these injustices and instances of deprivation, most of us *are* moved – by pity, by compassion.

And so, we donate money to a charity, we sponsor a child, we buy fair trade coffee; we try to do our part. These contributions are all valuable, and the sacrifice can often feel significant from a household budget point-of-view. But compared to the fifty percent of our income we give to maintain the functions of our national state and as redistribution of resources to the poorer segments *within* our societal borders, the sacrifice seems trivial. So, even for a generous and globally conscious cosmopolitan, the discrepancy between what she gives to poor foreigners² and co-citizens³ is enormous.

Faced with this unambiguous, redistributive partiality towards compatriots on a backdrop of severe and widespread global poverty, one – at least, if one happens to be a political theorist – inevitably wonders *why*. It is this moral paradox that I explore in this thesis. In other words, the analyses that I undertake, the discussions I pursue, and the arguments I construe, all seek to provide input that might help answer the overarching question: *what are our redistributive obligations of justice towards foreigners in the face of severe poverty?*⁴

I do not propose to answer this question through investigations of our *legal* obligations towards foreigners as prescribed by national and interna-

¹ Malaria, for example, was eradicated in Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico in the 1950's through targeted, political interventions.

² By foreigners I refer to people living in other (poor) countries. I use non-compatriots, 'people with whom one shares only a cosmopolitan identity', or non-co-citizens as meaning the same.

³ I use co-citizens, compatriots, 'people with whom one shares a national identity', fellow country(wo)men, and concitoyens interchangeably.

⁴ Henceforth, when speaking of obligations, redistributive obligations or moral obligations, I will be referring to obligations of justice. Further on, I will elaborate on the difference between such obligations and other types of obligations – especially those of beneficence, humanity or charity.

tional law, nor do I mean to respond on the basis of empirical analyses of how much people and states *actually* give to charity (or believe they *should* be giving). Rather, my analysis will be rooted in normative arguments – that is, I am considering *moral* obligations or which redistributive obligations we *ought* to be fulfilling.⁵ And although empirical circumstances such as political institutions, human psychology, and actual policies of past and present are, in a manner of speaking, prominent and influential passengers in this exploration, normative considerations are in the driving seat. To clarify: political and psychological facts have a large impact on *how* I approach the overarching question, but they do not set the course or decide the limits of my enquiry. The overall theme of my thesis, then, is exploring our obligations of justice towards poor foreigners, and my answers are not constrained by people’s motivation to aid foreigners, the efficiency of development aid and poverty-relief, or political feasibility *in their current state* (although, they may be constrained by the limits of how these elements may, realistically, be altered).

The normative answer that I propose is twofold. First of all, I analyze a number of the main theories and arguments proposed in the literature on global justice, which hold that our redistributive obligations of justice towards foreigners are weak or non-existent. I show that these arguments are incoherent and thus, ultimately unconvincing – especially, when weighed against the normative force of the severe and widespread poverty with which many of our non-compatriots are burdened (the first three articles). This is the main contribution of the thesis, and it serves as a rebuttal of two of the main types of argument in the debate on global justice and distributive obligations. Thus, in a negative manner, I lend argumentative support to the contrasted claim; that we have strong and urgent moral obligations to alleviate world poverty. Secondly, I defend the positive claim that the object of our redistributive duties is to make people free from significant pressure against succeeding in life.⁶ This takes on a special significance in a world, in which many live in dire poverty, and thus, are under severe pressure against living a life that anyone would recognize as successful. The distributive principle that I propose (with Lasse Nielsen in the fourth article) vindicates the critical urgency of relieving the plight of those whose basic needs are unmet regardless of nationality or relation. Simultaneously, it questions the intrinsic importance of some of the notions that are often invoked to deny or limit our obligations towards for-

⁵ I will also touch upon political obligations, but these will mainly be founded in moral ones.

⁶ Note that I use obligations and duties interchangeably.

eigners such as responsibility, cultural incommensurability, and equality among the well-off.

The four articles, which make up this dissertation in conjunction with this introduction, are:

Axelsen, David V., 'The State Made Me Do It: How Anti-cosmopolitanism is Created by the State,' *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 21:4 (2013), 451-472 (henceforth *State*).

Axelsen, David V. & Mouritsen, Per (Working paper), 'The Limit to Your Love: Can Patriots be Cosmopolitans?' (henceforth *Limit*).

Axelsen, David V. (Working paper), 'I Would If I Could, But I Won't: Realism and Global Obligations,' (henceforth *I Would*).

Axelsen, David V. & Nielsen, Lasse (Working paper), 'Freedom from Duress: Sufficiency, Capabilities, and a Successful Life,' (henceforth *Duress*).

These articles constitute the main contribution of the thesis, and their main points of the articles are summarized briefly in chapters 7, 8, 10, and 13, respectively. The remaining chapters serve to introduce, contextualize, and link the articles and their respective contributions, although a few free-standing arguments are proposed (most notably, in chapter 11). Much could be said about redistributive obligations towards foreigners in the face of severe poverty, however, and the aspects upon which I concentrate do not cover the whole of this argumentative space. Nor should the answers I provide to the central question above be understood as answers in a complete or definitive sense. Much will still be left to say. My modest hope, instead, is that my answers may bring the debate (somewhat) forward by challenging standard assumptions and widely held arguments. In the following, I will describe the theoretical background in more detail and clarify how the overall theme of the thesis fits into this context and in what my contribution consists. The areas I examine, then, are at the heart of the matter of global justice, and below I will outline how I get there.

Chapter 2. Getting to the Heart of the Matter

The thesis intervenes in and contributes to three broad debates in political theory and philosophy. First and foremost, I bring new insights and ideas to the debate on global justice.⁷ That is, the debate about what constitutes a just *world* (as opposed to merely a just society), and which distributive obligations, institutions, and political policies such a world entails. Regarding my overall question, then, I look into different views on what redistributive obligations we must fulfill towards foreigners and how to get to a point at which the distribution and the distributive mechanisms may be considered just. Secondly, I intervene in debates about distributive justice, more generally. Especially, the question about what ideal we should aim for when (re)distributing resources, opportunities, capabilities, etc: equality, priority to the worst-off, or securing a sufficient amount for everyone (what has been called the ‘equality, priority, or what?’ debate).⁸ Thus, I take a closer look at what our redistributive obligations consist in – that is, which distributive ideal we should aim for.

Both these interventions rely on the normative presumption that the world is not currently just. In other words, I understand the global distribution of opportunities, resources, and capabilities to be unjust, and the redistributive obligations that we are currently fulfilling towards poor foreigners to alleviate these injustices (through development aid, loans, investments, political activism, and charity) to be insufficient. It will be clear from my analyses and discussions that this is the case, although I shall not allocate much space to the defense of this basic claim, since it is uncontroversial both in political theory and dinner table discussions. The disagreement, rather, lies in *how* much priority we may reasonably give to compatriots on this background of global injustice, *for what reasons* we may differentiate, and *on what principles* a just world order and distribution would be built, and indeed these are the themes on which I shall focus.

⁷ Seminal works and influential articles include: Abizadeh 2007, Beitz 1999, Blake 2001 and 2013, Caney 2005, 2008 and 2011, Cohen (ed.) 2002, Gilabert 2012, D. Miller 2007 and 2013, Nagel 2005, Nussbaum 2000, 2006 and 2011, Pogge 1989 and 2008, Rawls 1999, Sangiovanni 2007, Sen 1999, Shue 1980, Singer 1972, Tan 2004, Ypi 2012.

This leads me to the third theme of this thesis, in which I attempt to inform the debate about ideal versus non-ideal theory.⁹ This debate concerns how political philosophy ought to be conducted, and the degree to which it should incorporate the world *as it is*, when reasoning about how it *ought to be*. My main theme is doubly related to this debate. In the first respect, I discuss the degree to which our principles of redistributive obligations towards foreigners should be limited by people's current motivational capacities and the present institutional setup – how much our non-ideal world should influence the ideal principles and arguments that political philosophers develop when facing severe poverty. Secondly, and to a minor degree, because I consider how we may *come to live up to* our redistributive obligations given that we are not currently doing so. That is, I sketch and discuss some political and institutional possibilities of how we may move towards the redistributive ideal of global justice.

In this way, my thesis places itself in the intersection between three debates concerning the *scope* of principles of justice (societal or global?), the distributive *goal* of principles of justice (equality, priority, or sufficiency), and the *point* and proper *form* of principles of justice (ideal versus non-ideal theory). As a consequence, the overall theme is elucidated from three different angles which can be conceived as answers to the following three sub-questions:

Can we justify overwhelming redistributive partiality towards compatriots vis-à-vis foreigners and do such justifications stand up in the face of severe poverty?

What is the goal of our redistributive obligations and when are they fulfilled?

To what extent should empirical constraints influence the shape of fundamental principles of justice?

In answering the first question, I primarily analyze, evaluate, and criticize arguments that *defend* strict priority towards compatriots – so-called anti-cosmopolitan arguments. I take a closer look at some of the most prominent arguments of this kind and expose them to internal criticism (that is, criticism

⁸ For important works on the ideal of sufficiency, see especially, Arneson 1999 and 2000, Casal 2007, Crisp 2003, Frankfurt 1987 and 1997, Goodin 1987, Huseby 2010, Parfit 1997, Shields 2012, and Temkin 2003.

in which I grant the central assumptions and then show that even if these are correct, the conclusions do not follow).¹⁰ In this way, I reveal some significant weaknesses that put the plausibility and coherence of these arguments in question. In illuminating the first question, then, I primarily make a *negative* contribution to the debate on global justice by severely weakening influential arguments. Further, I offer some theoretical solutions and normative proposals that mark the outline of and point towards a positive contribution. The first question is primarily addressed in the introduction, *The State, Limit, and I Would*.

I answer the second question by defending a variant of the sufficiency principle. That is, I defend the claim that our duties of justice are fulfilled when everyone has *enough* (as opposed to claiming, for example, that justice requires equality or maximizing the position of the worst-off). The variant of sufficiency that I defend (with Lasse Nielsen) is founded on insights from the capability approach, notions of relational and positional goods, and ideas about the value of successful, human lives. We develop our ideal of sufficiency by combining these notions and applying them to the debate on 'equality, priority, or what?' We then go on to show how our ideal is more intuitively appealing than other variants of sufficiency¹¹ and question the importance normally attributed to equality. This is the main positive contribution of the thesis, and it is mainly addressed in *Duress*.

The third question runs as a central theme throughout the thesis. It is at the core of the points of critique that I direct towards anti-cosmopolitan theorists and arguments, in that I claim that their normative arguments are unduly contingent on empirical facts that could (and should) be altered – especially in *I Would*, in which this discussion plays a central role. I touch upon the question of how to conduct political philosophy and where to place our theoretical focus in several places – not least in the methodology section of this introduction – but a great part of the answer is given by the way I conduct normative argumentation and in the avenues of critique I pursue. Before I proceed to these arguments and criticisms, however, I will say a bit more

⁹ I.e. Blake 2001 and 2013, Gilabert & Lawford-Smith 2012, Estlund 2011, Jensen 2009, D. Miller 2013, Stemplowska 2008, Stemplowska & Swift 2012, Valentini 2009 and 2012, and Ypi 2012.

¹⁰ My critical gaze rests long enough for close and thorough scrutiny on the main arguments made by Blake 2001, 2012 and 2013 and D. Miller 1995, 1997, 2005, 2007, 2008 and 2013, but I take a skeptical glance at arguments made by Barber 2002, Canovan 2000, Glazer 2002, McConell 2002, R. Miller 1998 and 2012, Nagel 2005, Rawls 1999, Sangiovanni 2007, Tamir 1993, and Taylor 2002 as well.

¹¹ Such as the ones proposed by Frankfurt 1987 and 1997, Crisp 2003, and Huseby 2010.

about some of the central concepts of this thesis, after which I will draw up the contours of the debates that form the stage on which their parts are played.

Chapter 3. Central Concepts

Before continuing, I will briefly clarify some of the central concepts, which run through this thesis. Hopefully, this will help clarify my analyses and discussions as much by defining what I *am* talking about, as by clarifying what I am *not* talking about – that is, which debates I do not attempt to intervene in. The concepts are all intimately related to the overall research question of what redistributive obligations of justice we have towards foreigners in the face of severe poverty.

First, one may wonder what exactly is meant by *redistributive obligations*. To clarify, I am not simply referring to direct transfers of cash from the citizens of one country to the citizens of another. Securing the sustained development of a country is an extremely complex and varied long-term project, and simple cash transfers will presumably be both wasteful and ultimately unsuccessful in achieving this goal. Fulfilling obligations toward poor countries via development aid, moreover, has often failed to produce the desired effects and levels of growth, and has even been accused of being counterproductive by encouraging corruption and placing poor countries in dependency.¹² While I do not think that such accusations annul the import of moral arguments or entail that development aid is useless *per se* (but only in the short-sighted, uncoordinated, and often nationally-biased form it usually takes), the arguments made here are nevertheless not vulnerable to this critique for two reasons.

First, the way, in which I use redistributive obligations here, these may be understood in a more general way as obligations to spend time, effort, and resources on this issue. This means that my account is fully compatible with a much more pluralist approach than one committed to mere resource transfers. Thus, the fulfillment of such obligations may be take the form of resource transfers, strengthening infrastructural and social capacities in poor countries, enacting global, institutional reforms, lower tariffs and barriers to trade, undertake research on how best to end poverty, cultivate greater redistributive motivation, attempt to convince others to do more, etc. – or, most likely, a combination of these methods. What *works* is, mainly, an empirical question and will not be settled here. Rather, the insights I provide to the question

¹² See for example, Bolton 2008, Easterly 2007, and Moyo 2009 for relatively well-founded accusations of this kind.

regarding our redistributive obligations to foreigners concern the comparative strength of such obligations *however these may (best) be fulfilled*.

Second, and relatedly, I do not discuss the issue of whether or not redistributive obligations *can* be fulfilled – that is, whether development can be influenced from the outside. I will make the modest assumption, however, that some such influence is possible (and that it is not *insignificant*). I will not go further into the effect of domestic vis-à-vis international factors, and my analyses and arguments do not depend such clarification. Thus, when discussing obligations to foreigners, I am concerned with the reasons for and against the existence of such obligations and the normative weight of such reasons. Thus, if it turns out (in some extreme case), that we can do nothing whatsoever to alleviate a specific instance of poverty, the considerations below should not, for example, be understood as claiming that we should transfer resources anyway. In other words, the reasons identified should, in turn, be weighed against feasibility or efficiency constraints to determine what we should do *all things considered*. One may note, however, that claiming that we have strong, redistributive obligations to foreigners (which I indicate here) would entail that we should be especially concerned over inability to alleviate poverty. This may, in turn, result in derived obligations to make greater efforts to find out how we may come to overcome this inability.

A second concept worth clarifying is the one entailed in having obligations *of justice*. Such duties are normally distinguished from *humanitarian* obligations (or, obligations of charity or beneficence). I will mention two characteristics that set the two apart: namely that, obligations of justice are stringent and enforceable, while humanitarian obligations are less stringent and non-enforceable.¹³ The first trait refers to the *weight* of obligations. Obligations of justice are stringent, in the sense that they are very important to discharge and difficult to avoid. One must, thus, have very weighty reasons against fulfilling them to avoid doing so. Humanitarian obligations are less stringent, in the sense that they are important to discharge and not easy to avoid, but *less so* than obligations of justice. When choosing which principles to embrace and which policies to enact, then, humanitarian obligations weigh less than obligations of justice in the balance of reasons. This distinction is not universally accepted, but it does seem to be implicit in the work of many anti-cosmopolitans that this obligational hierarchy exists – and certainly in theories of cosmopolitanism.¹⁴ As I use it here, then, obligations of justice

¹³ I will, thus, set aside other possible distinctions, such as perfect/imperfect, negative/positive and rights-based/non-rights-based – see Buchanan 1987.

¹⁴ See for example, Miller 2013, 222-225, and Gilibert 2012, 11-16.

are, generally speaking, thought to be more stringent than humanitarian obligations.

Another widely accepted distinction holds that obligations of justice are enforceable, whereas humanitarian obligations are not.¹⁵ Thus, if A does not fulfill an obligation of justice to B, C may force her to do so. If A neglects to fulfill a humanitarian obligation to B, however, C may not enforce the fulfillment. This takes on a special significance in political philosophy, in which the subject matter is most often principles which may guide such coercive measures. When speaking of obligations of justice, then, I will be speaking of enforceable duties – that is, obligations that *ought* to be enforced. For the remainder of this text, I will be referring to obligations of justice, whenever I speak of obligations (unless specified), and thus, the subject of this dissertation concerns the redistributive obligations we have that are normatively *stringent* and morally *enforceable*. I will now turn to some remarks about how I plan to analyze and discuss the questions and arguments of this thesis.

¹⁵ See Armstrong 2011, 18-23.

Chapter 4. Methodology

Much social science consists in making hypotheses about different political and social phenomena, and testing the ability of such hypotheses to accurately predict or explain these phenomena through an appropriate amount of relevant data collected in the social world. The aim is to either confirm or reject the hypotheses by evaluating how they fare with respect to one's data while the researcher herself attempts to stay neutral and unbiased letting the data speak for itself (this is, of course, an idealistic depiction). Often, hypotheses will be made in a deductive fashion – that is, they will be made on the basis of already existing research (although, it may take a more explanatory or explorative route). The goal of testing hypotheses, then, can be to expand or dismiss the applicability of a theory to other areas (for example, to expand the applicability of an evolutionary theory about the selection of leaders to the subject of parliamentary voting).¹⁶ Alternatively, the goal may be to improve or rectify a theory (for example, by showing that inequality can better explain and predict the outbreak of civil war if one distinguishes between overall and inter-group inequalities).¹⁷ In many respects, political philosophy is methodologically similar. Often it begins with a sense that something is amiss in a theory or that an area is not adequately well-understood. This sense may be based on intuition or new theoretical or empirical input. The problem is then thought through until an argument is formulated that seems to provide a solution. The argument may take the form of an *application* of an already existing theory to a previously unexplored area, thereby broadening its scope (for example, by showing how inequalities in oral health may be evaluated within a luck-egalitarian framework of distributive justice).¹⁸ Alternatively, it may consist in a *dismissal* of the applicability of an already existing theory to certain areas, thereby limiting its scope (for example, by showing that a specific theory of justice in health is not applicable to a series of cases, in which it has implausible implications).¹⁹ Finally, the argument may consist in the *clarification* or enhancement of a theory to solve problems previously thought to be beyond its scope (for example, by showing that a specific theory of distributive equality *can* account for the injustice related to

¹⁶ E.g. Laustsen 2013.

¹⁷ E.g. Bartusevičius 2013.

¹⁸ Albertsen (forthcoming).

¹⁹ Nielsen 2013a.

non-distributive inequalities such as status or recognition).²⁰ In either case, hypotheses are construed on the basis of already existing theory, and their validity is tested by applying them to new cases, after which the hypotheses are either rejected or confirmed. As in the social sciences, rejecting the hypotheses will provide grounds for limiting the scope of the theory (or dismissing it entirely) or enhancing the theory. Confirming the hypotheses, on the other hand, will serve to strengthen confidence in the ability of the theory to accurately illuminate social phenomena or provide grounds for broadening its scope. The logic behind the methodology of political philosophy, then, is similar to the hypothetical-deductive reasoning that underlies other empirically based social sciences.²¹ The way one approaches the data, one might say, is the same.²² However, political philosophy also differs in important ways. Most obviously, the *type* of data is different, relying heavily on moral intuitions instead of empirical observations. This, in turn, makes the *grounds* for rejecting or confirming hypotheses different, and, I will claim, influences the way we should consider the *purpose* of our inquiries. Below, I will describe this methodology leaning on John Rawls' theory of reflective equilibrium.

Theories of empirical social sciences strive to predict or explain political phenomena, and good theories are ones that can predict or explain actions accurately, in a consistent manner and do so in a variety of different cases (or, for case studies, explain a specific case very well). Normative theories, in a parallel fashion, strive to *evaluate* political phenomena with accuracy, consistency, and applicability to a large and broad number of cases. And, like causal theories, they are judged on how well they match our assessment of reality. In other words, empirical social sciences attempt to shed light on *what* exactly has happened and *why* and predict *what will come to happen* in the future, while political philosophy elucidates *the values at stake* in different actions and states of affairs, and asserts *what ought to happen* in the future. Where predictions and explanations of the social sciences are based on empirical observations and theories explaining the underlying causality, normative evaluations are based on moral *judgments* or *intuitions* and moral *principles* explaining the underlying values. It is important to note that intuition, here, is not used in the same way as in ordinary language. That is, it is

²⁰ Hansen 2011.

²¹ Like such sciences, political philosophy may also take an explorative form, but instead of analyzing empirical data and constructing a theory on this basis, the political-philosophical version derives from a number of moral intuitions, and attempts to fit them together in a coherent whole.

²² This juxtaposition is inspired by the one spelled out in Nielsen 2013b.

not a 'gut feeling' or a spontaneous sensory reaction. Rather, it is a *considered judgment* about a specific case or series of cases. This entails that intuitions are judgments we make 'under conditions favorable to the exercise of the sense of justice, and therefore in circumstances where the more common excuses and explanations for making a mistake do not obtain.'²³ Thus, we should exclude, for example, judgments made when we are emotionally unstable or when we stand to gain (or lose) from a certain outcome. Further, making considered judgments is also a matter of training – it involves a good deal of learning-by-doing.²⁴ It involves distinguishing the different values at stake and how they relate, and it involves knowledge of the normative principles that may be used to weigh such values against each other. One might say that, the difference between gut feelings and considered judgments is similar to the one between 'anecdotal evidence' and statistical analyses. Anecdotal evidence may be biased and distorted by personal and situational circumstances, while statistical analyses attempt to avoid this. The same is the case for considered judgments when compared to gut-feelings. Furthermore, statistical analyses require knowledge of how to categorize empirical data, how to avoid spuriousity and autocorrelation (which may result in misinterpretations about which exact variable creates the observed effect), and the theories that may explain one's observations. The systematic approach and necessary theoretical background knowledge are what distinguish statistical analyses from mere anecdotal evidence and are comparable to what distinguishes considered judgments from gut feelings. These considered judgments or intuitions (henceforth, intuitions), then, may be said to be the *data* of political philosophy – that which must correspond to one's theoretical hypotheses.

Importantly, however, intuitions are *not* data in the same sense as observations in empirical sciences. Or, at least, the methodology outlined here is not committed to the notion that they are. Thus, for empirical sciences, observations tell us something about the world as it is, and if our theories cannot explain this discrepancy, something is wrong with our theories. For example, if an astronomer observes planets that do not conform to the laws of planetary motion, she must treat this observation as a fact. She will have to act as though her observations are true but are yet to be theoretically explained. If intuitions were data in the same sense, political philosophers would have to treat judgments about specific cases as authoritative even if they could not be reconciled with any principled moral framework, and support policies

²³ Rawls 1971, 47-48.

²⁴ See Cohen 2011, 225.

based on such judgments. However, as Dworkin, points out, 'men and women have a responsibility to fit the particular judgments on which they act into a coherent program of action or, at least, [...] officials who exercise power over other men have that sort of responsibility.'²⁵ In other words, because political philosophy is aimed at establishing principles of political guidance, they must be coherent since they must be justifiable to the ones affected by the principles – we must be able to account for the *reasons* behind our (in)actions.²⁶

But how are we to treat our data – our intuitions – when conducting political philosophy? John Rawls has famously described the methodology of normative theorizing as an attempt to reach *reflective equilibrium*.²⁷ This equilibrium is reached by bringing our intuitions about specific cases and our moral principles into accord. Thus, the political philosopher progresses by pondering different cases (empirical or hypothetical) and analyzing which values are at stake and, in this way developing a considered judgment (that is, an intuition) about the case – for example, *what* makes a certain state of affairs unjust. This intuition is then compared to different moral principles to see which of such principles best explains our judgment. It may very well be, however, that there are discrepancies between our intuitions and our moral principles. In this instance, we can either modify the *principle* to fit our intuitions better or revise our intuitive judgment of the case in light of the principle. This process continues until a proper fit has been achieved, in which our moral principles and intuitions provide similar conclusions, in which case they are in equilibrium. Through this process, further, the assumptions on which our principles are built become clearer, since we are constantly forced to rethink them. Finally, such principles, in which we have greater confidence because of their proven applicability, will serve us better when encountering new cases for which we need principled guidance.²⁸ The important point to note, then, is the emphasis on *coherence* – that is, striving for a point at which our principles and intuitions form a consistent framework. Let me illustrate by way of a (simplified) example.

Consider the following state of affairs:

- Anna is born in Norway and faces an average life expectancy of 81.3 years.

²⁵ Dworkin 1977, 160.

²⁶ These thoughts are inspired by Dworkin's reading of Rawls in Dworkin 1977, chap. 6.

²⁷ Rawls 1971, 20-21 and 46-53.

²⁸ Dworkin 1977, 155.

- Banji is born in Zambia and faces an average life expectancy of 49.4 years.

Based on these data, many will instinctively sense that something is unjust (in the gut feeling way). A considered judgment – or intuition as I use it here – is reached by pondering thoroughly over the example leading to different notions about what *creates* this injustice. For example, one might think that it is unjust that Banji is so much worse off than Anna. Perhaps, then, we can appeal to a general principle stating that ‘it is always unjust if someone is worse off than someone else.’ This, at least, seems to explain our judgment of the case in question. But this is, of course, not a viable moral principle, for consider the following state of affairs:

- Carola is Swedish and lives to be 92 years living on a healthy diet of fish and water to ensure a long and healthy life.
- Danny is also Swedish and lives to be 84 years, taking pride in choosing pleasure over health, which entails a fatty diet, a bit too much drinking, and an occasional cigarette.

Faced with these data, we may find that our principle from before is inadequate. Many will find that it is not unjust that Danny is worse off than Carola, since he (in some relevant way) has chosen the shorter lifespan. According to the methodology of reflective equilibrium, we may, then, either conclude that our judgment was wrong and that it is indeed unjust for Danny to be worse off than Carola or revise our principle. To ascertain which path to take, we may apply our principle to other cases and evaluate its implications. However, I will skip that step here and instead opt to revise the principle to ‘it is always unjust if someone is worse off than someone else unless this inequality reflects their informed choice.’ Note that this principle is in tune with the considered judgments in both cases and, thus, better explains our intuitions. This principle may, then, be further developed by applying it to more cases, by which one may discover that it adequately explains our evaluations or that it needs further refinement to achieve greater coherence. One might, for example, claim that inequalities do not matter above a certain level,²⁹ that responsibility or choice considerations are unimportant above³⁰ or below³¹ a certain level of well-being, or, more generally, that what matters

²⁹ Crisp 2003, 758.

³⁰ Nielsen & Axelsen 2012, 309-311.

³¹ Anderson 1999, 295-296.

is not distributive inequalities, but unequal *relations*.³² However, I will not pursue this route here as the above suffices to show the methodology of reflective equilibrium for the intended purpose.

The point of the examples above has been to clarify the methodology of reflective equilibrium that underlies this thesis. I do not always use it in as straightforward a manner as the one depicted above, just as the steps will usually be performed in a more elaborate way. The idea remains the same, however. That is, aspiring for greater coherence between moral principles and intuitions. In some cases (for example, in *The State and I Would*), this consists in showing that certain principles are *incoherent* when the considered judgments and empirical assumptions on which they are based are clarified and analyzed. In other cases (for example, in *Duress*), it consists in demonstrating that a specific principle of distributive justice provides a better fit with our intuitions than other competing ideals when applied to certain scenarios. One might argue that some of the cases and examples in this thesis are unnaturally simple or unrealistic. For example, with the above case of Carola and Danny above in mind, one might claim that inequalities are never actually that simple – that there are never such clear-cut cases in which one person has *chosen* to live for 84 years while another has *chosen* to live for 92 years. In reality, one might continue, such differences are never instances of pure choice, as people have different levels of information, live under different circumstances, and usually do not make such clear black-and-white choices (that is, between pleasure and health), but choose something in between. Certainly, I agree that most – if not all – real-life policy choices are more complex than this one, and that the relatively simple principle sketched above could not, for example, be implemented directly in day-to-day politics. Rather, it would have to be adapted to the specific political, empirical, and social context to function as a principle of direct policy guidance. The object of this thesis – and of analytical, political philosophy more generally – is to clarify *reasons* that come into play when assessing such political issues. In other words, it is an attempt to shed light on *what* we should be concerned about and *why* when formulating political strategies and interventions, and to do so we simplify cases and remove all but the relevant information, so that we can test our intuitions about a single factor, keeping everything else constant. It may be worth noting, further, that similar methods are used and considered standard in empirical sciences – for example, when using distilled water as opposed to regular water in chemical experiments or when conducting specially-designed social or psychological

³² See Anderson 1999 and Scheffler 2003.

experiments. Like in political philosophy, the underlying rationale is a simplification of the circumstances to increase the measurability of a hypothesized effect.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, my input to the overall question of this thesis is not to determine *which* policies will end world poverty (although, I do offer some more concrete proposals in *The State and Limit*) but, rather, to argue that we have strong moral reasons to attempt to do so (however it is done) and that several of the reasons normally given against prioritizing the needs of foreigners are incoherent and, thus, should be given less weight than often assumed. But the reasons I provide must, of course, be weighed against other considerations of efficiency, feasibility, how best to achieve this goal, and so on. The purpose, then, is to make clearer why and to what degree we should consider global poverty (and inequality) unjust and what this means for our obligations of alleviation. This, in turn, is related to a more general point about my conception of the purpose of political philosophy, about which I will make some brief remarks below.

As mentioned above, my methodology is not committed to the claim that there is a moral reality 'out there' that we must attempt to uncover (although, it is compatible with that view). Rather, I see political philosophy as more of a practical endeavor. Thus, while I stated above that analytical, political philosophy does not provide direct political guidance, I *do* hold that political philosophers should be attentive to the general purpose of informing politics (which, of course, all social sciences should). By this, I mean that the reasons and principles formulated should largely pertain to actual, political problems. Like other branches of the social sciences, then, political philosophy is fundamentally about solving political problems and improving public policy. And just like research in other social sciences, it is often enormously specialized and seems far from actual political dilemmas but is best when it pinpoints and clarifies actual social issues and latches on or relates to existing divisions in the public debate. Thus, political philosophers (and social scientists, more generally) should see themselves, not just as neutral observers of a moral reality, but as participants in political dialogue, which they *can* and, at least to some degree, *do* influence.³³ This means that political philosophers should be aware of *how* they influence the political reality through their research, and that they may even sometimes have a duty to attempt to influence politics in a specific way (because of their privileged position).³⁴ This approach, then, has an essentially activist element, which has implications

³³ Smith 2002, 199.

³⁴ See for example, Ypi 2012, 61-66, on this point.

for how I conduct my work.³⁵ Most prominently, it directs the *focus* of my research, in that I concentrate on clear instances of injustice and attempt to formulate reasons that *identify* such cases as unjust.³⁶ This, for example, directs my criticism of arguments claiming that our duties to alleviate global poverty are not as strict as some perceive them to be (in *The State, I Would, and Limit*). Thus, on the background of the enormous disparities that characterize the global distribution and with the potential influence of political philosophers on politics in mind, I find such arguments to be both incoherent (which is the basis of my criticism) *and* misdirected – that is, influencing politics in the direction of what is clearly the minor of two injustices (discharging special obligations to compatriots).³⁷ Note that, this does *not* mean that I believe that political philosophers should not care about the validity or coherence of the arguments they make or of those of their fellows and merely seek to convince citizens to end world poverty with all argumentative means available. There are different ways to understand such neutrality, however, and even if one should strive for neutrality when evaluating arguments (and in teaching), this does not automatically entail that one should be neutral when choosing research subjects or routes of criticism.³⁸

Having clarified the methodology of reflective equilibrium and my mild activist agenda, and thus, how I analyze and evaluate different arguments (and which ones I select), I will now move on to the main subject of this thesis: the debate on global justice.

³⁵ This seems to be the general strategy of Pogge as well – see Pogge 2010, 180-181.

³⁶ This point resonates with Raz' argument for focusing on 'the hunger of the hungry' rather than on principled inequalities (1986, 240), and with Sen's argument against contractualism: that justice should focus on '...what actually happens (rather than merely on the appraisal of institutions and arrangements)' (2009, 410).

³⁷ I think this point is similar to one of the very important, and often overlooked, points of Anderson 1999.

³⁸ Simon Caney makes this point in Caney 2012, 193.

Chapter 5. The Global Justice Debate

The numbers on global poverty and deprivation are staggering. More than a third of the world's population – almost 2.5 billion people – live in severe poverty (on less than 2 dollars a day), 1 billion people are undernourished, and 50.000 people die each day - and this constitutes a third of all human deaths – from poverty-related causes that could easily be avoided.³⁹ This, then, is the severe poverty to which my central research question refers. At the same time, we live in a world of great and increasing affluence, and so, lifting the burden of global poverty seemingly becomes a smaller sacrifice by the day. But, as mentioned in the introduction, our efforts to do so are limited and nowhere near what we would undertake to relieve similar deprivation within the borders of our own society. This disparity has been the subject of much philosophizing, and much thought has been put into understanding and explaining the moral grounds for the difference between our redistributive efforts within these two spheres – the national and the global. The question of how this difference can be justified (or *if it can*) is at the center of the debate on global justice, which has received much attention from political theorists in the last 15-20 years. This debate provides the context for the four articles of this dissertation (especially, the first three), and thus, to clarify and delineate the contributions they seek to make, I will outline the main points of this debate below.

Broadly speaking, theorists fall into two categories when confronted with the above figures on poverty and global inequality. Anti-cosmopolitans claim that we have *basic* obligations of justice towards foreigners (or only humanitarian duties, in some cases), by which I refer to redistributive obligations to ensure the basic rights or needs of foreigners.⁴⁰ Cosmopolitans, on the other hand, hold that we have *comprehensive* obligations towards foreigners, by which I mean obligations to ensure *significantly more* than the fulfillment of basic needs – i.e. global equality of opportunity or a high level

³⁹ See The World Bank Handbook on Poverty & Inequality 2009, Shaohua Chen and Martin Ravallion, 'An Update to the World Bank's estimates of consumption poverty in the developing world,' 2012, and WHO (World Health Organization). *The Global Burden of Disease: 2004 Update* (Geneva: WHO Publications 2008), table A1, pp. 54-9.

of capabilities for everyone (which is the aim of the ideal presented in *Duress*).⁴¹ This distinction can be rediscovered in the first three articles. Even if they disagree about our cross-border obligations, anti-cosmopolitans and cosmopolitans are in agreement about the strength and type of obligations towards *compatriots*, which they both hold to be comprehensive – in tune with the general consensus in mainstream political theory and philosophy.⁴² Anti-cosmopolitans, then, differentiate between our domestic and global obligations and hold these to be categorically and fundamentally dissimilar, while cosmopolitans hold them to be of the same nature. Below, I will sketch the positions within the spectrum of cosmopolitanism.

5.1. Cosmopolitanism

‘How can one change the world if one identifies oneself
with everybody? *How else can one change it?*
Arthur Koestler: *Darkness at Noon*

As mentioned, cosmopolitans agree that we have comprehensive obligations to foreigners – that is, they agree about the *conclusions* to the question of which redistributive obligations we have towards foreigners in the face of severe poverty. However, they differ in the reasons they cite for this conclusion. First, *associational cosmopolitans* hold that the strength of our obligations to foreigners stems from facts about the global institutional structure which give rise to comprehensive obligations. Thus, they rely on an *empirical* premise stating that the interactions between non-compatriots have characteristics which would normally generate more demanding duties of justice. This may be based on a claim that international interaction is empirically similar to the one found in domestic societies, which, as the general consensus goes, breeds comprehensive obligations. This, for example, is the position of Charles Beitz, who claims that the increased level of international interdependence and economic cooperation has made domestic principles of jus-

⁴⁰ I consider Blake 2001 and 2013; Nagel 2005; D. Miller 1988, 2005, 2007 and 2013; R. Miller 1998; Rawls 1999; Sangiovanni 2007; and Tamir 1993 to be in this category.

⁴¹ I regard Beitz 1999; Caney 2005 and 2011; Gilibert 2012; Nussbaum 2000 and 2011; Pogge 2008; Singer 1972; Tan 2004; Unger 1996; and Ypi 2012 as examples of cosmopolitan works.

⁴² Here, I disregard libertarian and conservative views, which are not the subject of this thesis.

tice applicable to the global arena.⁴³ Thus, because the actions and decisions of people and states significantly affect citizens of other countries they must be justifiable to these citizens as well. And more importantly, since cooperation across borders generates a surplus, the advantages of this enterprise must be divided fairly among the cooperating parties. Note that these principles are very similar to the ones used to ground principles of domestic justice.⁴⁴ For Beitz, then, our comprehensive obligations to foreigners stem from empirical facts about the level and form of global, economic interaction.⁴⁵ Alternatively, an associational cosmopolitan may claim that the international order generates more demanding duties of justice, not because it is similar to its domestic counterpart, but because of other empirical characteristics – for example, because it effectively *harms* the world's poor. This is the position of Thomas Pogge, who claims that international institutions work to create and uphold global poverty by keeping corrupt dictators in power, creating incentives for coup d'états, and prolonging civil wars. Thus, Pogge claims, we are partly *responsible* for the poverty of third-world citizens via our participation in upholding the international institutional regime. Our comprehensive duties, then, are not positive duties, but rather *negative* obligations to stop harming the poor – i.e. *making* and *keeping* them poor. We all have a duty to work to change these institutions (or compensate the poor for our failure to do so) and were we to succeed in doing so the world would be significantly closer to the cosmopolitan ideal of distributive justice.⁴⁶ Like Beitz, then, Pogge relies on an empirical observation about international interaction, which leads him to cosmopolitan conclusions.

Another type of cosmopolitans may be termed *humanity-centred cosmopolitans*. While they share their cosmopolitan conclusions with associationalist cosmopolitans, they premise the existence of comprehensive obligations on other grounds. Thus, they claim that we have redistributive obligations of justice towards others *regardless* of the relation or association that we share, and merely because they are fellow human beings.⁴⁷ Thus, their cosmopolitan stance is not prompted by empirical features of the global or-

⁴³ Beitz 1999, part 3. See also Tan 2004, who holds a similar view.

⁴⁴ For example, the point is very similar to the one that motivates Rawls' principles of domestic justice – see Rawls 1971, 3-11.

⁴⁵ Note that Beitz has a further principle of international distributive justice based on the access to natural resources. This does not seem to give rise to comprehensive obligations, however.

⁴⁶ See Pogge 2008 – especially, 'General Introduction,' chap. 4 and chap. 7. See also Wenar 2008 for a similar argument.

⁴⁷ I take Caney 2005 and 2011; Gilabert 2012; Nussbaum 2002, 2006 and 2011; Sen 1999; and Singer 1972 and 2010 to belong to this group.

der. Rather, they make the *normative* claim that global redistributive obligations are fundamentally similar to domestic ones *however* the empirical features of the global order may be shaped. Underlying this idea is a notion of *commonality* that is universally held by defenders of humanity-centred accounts.⁴⁸ Namely, that all human beings have certain characteristics in common, which ground redistributive obligations *in themselves*. Thus, at the most basic level, humans suffer from physical pain, need food, shelter and water, and are vulnerable to insecurity, sickness, and malnutrition. If we can prevent such universally bad things from happening without incurring morally significant costs, the theorists claim, we should do so regardless of relation or association with the person or group in need.⁴⁹ Humanity-centred cosmopolitans go further than this, however, and argue that our common humanity gives rise not only to obligations to secure the fulfillment of these basic commonalities, but to ones that require significantly more. Thus, some claim that our shared humanness by itself generates obligations to ensure equality of opportunity, since it is unjust if someone is faced with inferior opportunities merely because they were so unlucky as to be born in a poor country.⁵⁰ This, one might add, runs counter to the basic ideal of equal human worth. Other humanity-centred cosmopolitans base their accounts on a broader notion of human commonality. Thus, some theorists have pointed out that a number of goods (or capabilities) are central to all humans across cultural divides. For example, Martha Nussbaum argues persuasively for a list of ten central, human capabilities to which everyone should have access. These include: life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses, imagination, and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation; other species; play; and political and material control over one's environment.⁵¹ In the same vein as other humanity-centred cosmopolitans, Nussbaum argues that everyone is entitled to the possibility to function at a proper level within these areas regardless of their relation with others, and based merely on their humanity. I will discuss the relation between these two types of cosmopolitanism, the grounds upon which they base their view on the scope of justice, the relation to my account in more detail in chapter 11, and why I find a humanity-centred account more convincing. For now, I will turn to anti-cosmopolitanism.

⁴⁸ See Caney 2005, 39.

⁴⁹ Caney 2005, 36.

⁵⁰ Caney 2005, 122-123.

⁵¹ Nussbaum 2002, 78-80 and Nussbaum 2011, 33-34. See also Wolff and De-Shalit 2007, 36-62 who affirm most of Nussbaum's list empirically and discuss four further items: complete independence; doing good to others; living in a law-abiding fashion; and understanding the law.

5.2. Anti-Cosmopolitanism

As mentioned, anti-cosmopolitans hold that we have only basic obligations towards foreigners. Simultaneously, however, they (or, at least the ones I discuss here) hold that we have comprehensive obligations towards compatriots. To relate this to the distinction above, anti-cosmopolitan theories are not humanity-centred (in the sense described), since they do not hold that we have comprehensive obligations to all human beings. Rather, they are associationist or take a hybrid position (I will return to this distinction in chapter 11). Thus, they agree with associationist cosmopolitans that institutional structures and interactional ties matter to obligations of justice. However, they disagree with their cosmopolitan *conclusions*. Instead, they claim that there is a fundamental, moral difference in strength and kind between redistributive duties owed to fellow countrymen and to non-compatriots. To justify such a claim, anti-cosmopolitans must identify some moral property that gives rise to comprehensive obligations and assert that this property is *present* in the domestic sphere but *absent* in the international sphere. They must, in the words of Simon Caney, propose a *disanalogy* argument, which shows how the two contexts differ, and why this difference is morally relevant.⁵² I will return to different versions of this argument in the next chapter, but for now, I look at three different reasons for why anti-cosmopolitans believe that we should treat this disanalogy as *authoritative* – that is, why this disanalogy should translate (more or less) directly into our redistributive obligations.

First, anti-cosmopolitans disagree with associational cosmopolitans about their depiction of the institutional order. Thus, even if they perceive the global order to be unfair, it does not, they claim, involve the level of injustice which Pogge postulates, nor are states engaged in a cooperative venture as ‘thick’ as the one proposed by Beitz.⁵³ If this were the case, these institutionally generated obligations might, indeed, make our obligations to foreigners take a comprehensive form. Thus, their theories contain an *empirical* disagreement with associational cosmopolitans. This discrepancy is the subject of some attention in *Limit*. However, it is not subject to careful study in this work, since its resolution would require extensive empirical analyses, which, as noted, is not my main purpose.

Second, anti-cosmopolitans hold that we should treat the disanalogy between the domestic and international context as authoritative because agents and institutions *actually* treat this disanalogy as authoritative. Thus,

⁵² See Caney 2001, 118 and 2008, 488-490.

⁵³ I.e. Blake 2013, 99-100 and 116; Miller 2007, 55 and 238-247; and Risse 2005.

the nation-states *are* able to enforce distributive obligations between compatriots, but no such international institutions exist, and there *are* national bonds, which make people motivated to redistribute resources to fellow countrymen, but no such bonds exist globally. Anti-cosmopolitans hold that we should not abstract too far from these circumstances if we are to *guide political action* in the right way.⁵⁴ In this sense, anti-cosmopolitans are *realists* (see chapter 9 below). On this point, they differ from cosmopolitans who claim that theories of what we ought to do in terms of obligations should not be restricted by the current lay-out of institutions and ties of solidarity. Such factors *could*, cosmopolitans hold, be changed and political action-guidance should take such possibilities into account. Cosmopolitans, then, are *idealists* (or *activists*). Anti-cosmopolitan disanalogy arguments, then, refer to the *current* setup of different social facts, which gives rise to different obligations domestically and globally. Another reason for treating the disanalogy as authoritative regarding our redistributive obligations, then, is a methodological disagreement with cosmopolitans regarding the degree to which we must incorporate the facts of the world *as it is* in our theories about how the world *ought to be*. We should treat the disanalogy as authoritative, anti-cosmopolitans claim, because we should, more generally, treat major social facts as authoritative when theorizing about political principles. I will say more about this difference in chapter 9, and the disagreement is the central theme in *I Would*, in which I argue that it is incoherent. Furthermore, it plays an important role in the argument made in *The State*. It is important to note that one might agree with anti-cosmopolitans that the disanalogy exists empirically and that it is normatively relevant, but still be a cosmopolitan, since one could claim that we have obligations to change this state of affairs to include greater levels of global equality of opportunity.⁵⁵

Third, anti-cosmopolitans hold that institutionalizing comprehensive obligations is incompatible with upholding the value realized in domestic contexts. As mentioned, when making disanalogy arguments anti-cosmopolitans point to a feature, which exists domestically and is absent globally, and which they take to be morally relevant with respect to generating comprehensive obligations. Furthermore, however, they take this feature to be *value-generating* since by giving rise to comprehensive obligations it allows for better life prospects. To put it simply, people's lives are improved by compre-

⁵⁴ See for example, Blake 2001, 261-266; and 2013, 44-49; D. Miller 2007, 17 and 264-269; and 2013, 178; Rawls 1999, §1.1; Sangiovanni 2007, 36; Tamir 1993, 7 & 118-121.

⁵⁵ This position, which I refer to as 'activist' in *I Would*, is the one taken in *The State* and *Limit* and is also held by Bohman 2004 and Ypi 2012, for example.

hensive obligations in the domestic context and pursuing cosmopolitan policies (i.e. institutionalizing comprehensive obligations globally) might undermine this possibility of life improvement. Thus, we should take the disanalogy as authoritative, since attempting to change it by institutionalizing comprehensive obligations on a global scale would undermine the value created in relations between co-citizens.⁵⁶ The point is, then, that we cannot have comprehensive obligations both domestically and internationally. An important point to note, in this respect, is that anti-cosmopolitans do not hold that basic obligations to foreigners should be fulfilled *before* one turns to comprehensive obligations to compatriots just because they are *basic* (i.e. they are not taken to be more morally *urgent* in any fundamental sense). Rather, anti-cosmopolitans hold that the importance of fulfilling basic obligations to foreigners must be weighed against the importance of fulfilling duties to compatriots (either explicitly or implicitly), which will sometimes entail prioritizing compatriots even when foreigners are deprived of their basic needs.⁵⁷ This is a consequence of the value anti-cosmopolitans place on the political circumstances of the state. In *Limit*, I criticize the idea that pursuing cosmopolitan goals is incompatible with upholding the value that exists in domestic contexts (which I refer to as patriotism), and argue that the weighing of the two (when they conflict) must depend on a number of empirical factors that could be changed (e.g. how much the sense of national community is affected by constructing international institutions). In this criticism, I draw on the fact that this third point is intimately related to the second one – that we must take social facts *as they are* when theorizing in order to guide political action. Thus, the claim of incompatibility between upholding the value of national communities and pursuing cosmopolitan policies is based on empirical facts about such communities and policies. But claiming that this incongruence gives us reasons to consider a disanalogy argument *authoritative* requires the further argument that these empirical facts should be incorporated into our normative theories as they are and not as they could be or ought to be.

I have identified three reasons, which underlie anti-cosmopolitan arguments, for considering disanalogy arguments authoritative with respect to redistributive obligations. Or, in other words, they are *preconditions* for the disanalogy to be morally and practically relevant. The three preconditions state that:

⁵⁶ For variants of this claim, see Fletcher 1993, 20; D. Miller 2007, 18, 40, 55 and 265; and 2013, 175-179; Scheffler 2001, chap. 4, 5 & 7; and Tamir 1993.

- The global order is not as unjust or interrelated as presumed by associationist cosmopolitans and, thus, such considerations do not make our basic obligations to foreigners comprehensive.
- Disanalogy arguments largely take important social facts as they are (instead of how they could be) and this is necessary to guide political action. If we take social facts as they ought to be (as cosmopolitans do), we are unable to guide political action in the right sense.
- Institutionalizing comprehensive obligations globally would undermine the value created by the scheme of comprehensive obligations that exists domestically.

These three preconditions, then, affirm that disanalogy arguments are not outweighed by other considerations (1), realistically able to guide political action (2), and serve to uphold a valuable state of affairs (3). Having grounded the authority granted to disanalogy arguments by anti-cosmopolitans, I now turn to some specific versions of disanalogy arguments.

⁵⁷ For the most explicit version of this claim, see D. Miller's thoughts in 2005, 71-79; 2007, 44-50; 2010, 561-566; and 2013, 175-179.

Chapter 6. Disanalogies

To show that it is morally justified that our redistributive obligations vary in strength and kind between the domestic and the global context, anti-cosmopolitans must provide a disanalogy argument. As mentioned, this entails identifying a property, arguing that it gives rise to comprehensive obligations, and then showing that such a property is present domestically but absent globally. All anti-cosmopolitan arguments generally follow this form. Overall, there are three categories of such disanalogies, which correspond to three strands of anti-cosmopolitanism: political, national, and cooperative anti-cosmopolitanism. I will portray the two first positions below. However, as I describe them rather thoroughly in *The State, Limit, and I Would*, I will provide only brief outlines, which may serve as theoretical context. Furthermore, my depiction of cooperative anti-cosmopolitanism will be even more succinct as my arguments against anti-cosmopolitanism focus on the two former types.

First, political anti-cosmopolitans hold that *coercive institutions* give rise to comprehensive obligations, while the absence of such institutions entails that only basic obligations apply.⁵⁸ Since one partakes in creating and upholding the distributive pattern through such coercive institutions, one is duty-bound to ensure that this pattern is fair. What gives rise to comprehensive obligations, then, is coercion of a certain kind and strength – and this type of coercion is only found within states. Globally, on the other hand, coercion is less impactful, indirect, and does not target individuals. Thomas Nagel puts it in the following way: ‘given that [the state] exercises sovereign power over its citizens and *in their name*, those citizens have a duty of justice toward one another through the legal, social, and economic institutions that sovereign power makes possible.’⁵⁹ Thus, since we effectively partake in *determining* the opportunities and prospects of our compatriots – since their opportunities are set and altered under laws of which we are co-authors – we owe them obligations of a strong and fundamental kind.⁶⁰ Furthermore, coercion endangers the important value of autonomy, since it replaces someone’s will with the will of another. To avoid undermining autonomy, coercive institu-

⁵⁸ I place Blake 2001 and 2013; Nagel 2005; Risse 2006; and Seleme 2011 in this category.

⁵⁹ Nagel 2005, 121 (my emphasis)

⁶⁰ See Seleme 2011 for a position similar to the one held by Nagel.

tions must ensure that the distribution enforced is *fair*. This, however, is not possible on a global scale since some states are powerful enough to escape such enforcement, potentially undermining the autonomy of citizens of weaker states, since coercion would, in this case, not lead to a fair distribution.⁶¹ Thus, we owe comprehensive obligations to compatriots because we coercively enforce rules and laws, which determine their opportunities on them. Since we do not coerce foreigners in this way, we owe them significantly less – namely, basic obligations. Note that political anti-cosmopolitans affirm the preconditions discussed above. That is, they claim that the empirical features of the global order do not give rise to comprehensive obligations (since coercion is absent in the relevant form), that we should be realists regarding social facts when establishing principles of justice (since they take institutions and their level of coercion as they are, instead of how they might be), and that pursuing cosmopolitan policies is incongruent with upholding the value created by states (since they hold comprehensive obligations on a global scale to undermine autonomy).

Political anti-cosmopolitans have been criticized from many sides. Thus, they have come under attack for not taking the impact and coercive nature of national borders seriously, which affects people's life prospects in a very significant manner by (coercively) denying them the possibility of taking advantage of opportunities open to others.⁶² Further, they have been criticized for failing to ask the more fundamental question of who should engage in coercion in the first place – that is, they consider only *what* makes coercion justified, but not *when* we should create coercive structures (which, as we saw, may enhance autonomy by ensuring a fair share for everyone).⁶³ Additionally, they have been criticized for disregarding that, even if coercive institutions give rise to comprehensive obligations, this does not entail that such obligations can *only* arise in this way – there may be other characteristics of the global order that generate comprehensive or similarly strong duties.⁶⁴ Finally, they have come under scrutiny for overlooking a key aspect of liberal justice – namely, that institutions must continually work to ensure that the background on which trade and interaction is made is just – which might not be in place globally, thus, altering our obligations of justice.⁶⁵ While I find much of this criticism convincing, the arguments I make take a different approach. Thus, in *Limit*, I argue that we *can* (to a large degree) fulfill compre-

⁶¹ Blake 2013, 44-49.

⁶² Abizadeh 2007, 348-349; Tan 2004, 176-177; and Van Parijs 2007, 651-652.

⁶³ Gilibert 2012, 168-170. Julius 2006, 183-184, also touches upon this point.

⁶⁴ Caney 2008, 500-501 and 504; Cohen and Sabel 2006, 154-156.

⁶⁵ Ronzoni 2009.

hensive obligations domestically, while doing so globally as well. This is the case if we take the conditions set out by political anti-cosmopolitans for the fulfillment of compatriot obligations seriously, and if we understand the notion of coercion in a different and more plausible way (i.e. as only being a danger to autonomy when it amounts to *domination*). Furthermore, I argue, in *I Would*, that the political anti-cosmopolitan account is incoherent, since its stringent realism hinders the fulfillment of basic obligations to foreigners, which it claims to protect. Thus, I show that the framework provided by institutions and the current level of coercion as *they are* cannot plausibly accommodate the basic rights fulfillment of poor foreigners and, thus, must be changed (or, alternatively, they must give up the task of alleviating basic rights underfulfillment).

Another category of anti-cosmopolitans hold that we only have redistributive obligations of justice towards those with whom we share a common culture or identity (*national* anti-cosmopolitans).⁶⁶ The underlying rationale is that comprehensive, redistributive obligations are a necessary component in certain relationships (such as the relationship between co-nationals), and that these special associations have intrinsic value to individuals as they shape life chances in important ways, convey a sense of belonging, and facilitate collective self-determination. Thus, it is in people's interest to uphold such relationships, and without engaging in comprehensive, redistributive obligations these features – and thus, the intrinsic value of the association – would falter and be lost. These obligations are, in other words, a constitutive element in these special and intrinsically valuable relationships between co-nationals. This is not the case with the relationship that one shares with foreigners based merely on common humanity, and so, as people do not reap the same intrinsically valuable benefits from this association, they do not have redistributive obligations of justice towards foreigners. Note again that national anti-cosmopolitans affirm the preconditions discussed above. That is, they claim that the empirical features of the global order do not give rise to comprehensive obligations (since ties of community are absent), that we should be realists regarding social facts when establishing principles of justice (since they take ties of solidarity and identity as they are, instead of how they might be), and that pursuing cosmopolitan policies is incongruent with upholding the value created by states (since they hold comprehensive obligations on a global scale to undermine national attachments).

Like political anti-cosmopolitans, national anti-cosmopolitans have received a good deal of criticism. Some claim that ties of national solidarity are

⁶⁶ R. Miller 1998, Miller 2007 and 2013, and Tamir 1993 hold such views.

upheld by officially sanctioned half-truths and lies about the historical unity of the nation and the historical continuity of the people and that these unfairly skew public deliberation and creates problems with respect to liberal ideals of openness and autonomy.⁶⁷ Others hold that the notion of collective responsibility associated with national communities is implausible and, thus, that having ties of solidarity with compatriots and ties of non-solidarity with foreigners does not ground the stark distinction in redistributive conclusions affirmed by national anti-cosmopolitans.⁶⁸ Finally, theorists have pointed out that the concept of national ties presupposes a clear and precise demarcation of who belongs to which community, but that such a demarcation cannot be made in practice.⁶⁹ Again, I find these lines of criticism quite persuasive, but follow a different argumentative path. Thus, in *The State* I grant that people are (generally) currently more motivated to make sacrifices for compatriots than for foreigners. However, I claim that this motivational difference can to a significant degree be ascribed to nation-building policies which create and uphold national solidarity at the expense of cosmopolitan solidarity. This creates a problem for national anti-cosmopolitans, since they claim that we do not have comprehensive obligations to foreigners because people do not feel ties of solidarity towards them – but, I argue, we are effectively creating these (lacking) ties of solidarity, and could plausibly do otherwise. Secondly, in *Limit*, I make a similar argument to the one made against political anti-cosmopolitans – namely, that it is (largely) possible to institutionalize comprehensive obligations to both compatriots and non-compatriots without undermining the value of national relationships, and that the conflict they claim to see, is overstated. Finally, in *I Would*, I argue that the national anti-cosmopolitans account is incoherent, since we cannot fulfill basic obligations to foreigners within the framework of the current ties of solidarity and the present levels of redistributive motivation. Thus, national anti-cosmopolitans must either give up their realistic approach to theorizing (in which social facts are incorporated as they are) or the fulfillment of basic rights of foreigners.

Finally, there is a type of anti-cosmopolitanism, with which I do not engage in this thesis – cooperative anti-cosmopolitanism.⁷⁰ These theorists hold that economical interdependence and/or relations of reciprocity are necessary conditions for comprehensive obligations of justice to apply. In this case, the qualificatory reasoning behind the claim is that redistributive justice con-

⁶⁷ Abizadeh 2004.

⁶⁸ Lippert-Rasmussen 2009.

⁶⁹ Caney 2005, 14-15.

sists in sharing the surplus that flows from mutually advantageous cooperation, and that we only have duties towards foreigners in so far as this kind of cooperative relationship exists at the global level. These arguments, however, will be saved for future analysis.

Thus, having outlined the context within which my arguments operate, I will summarize two of the main contributions made by this thesis in the articles *The State* and *Limit*.

⁷⁰ Rawls 1999 and Sangiovanni 2007.

Chapter 7. The State Made Me Do It (Summary)

In this article, I analyze and assess the national anti-cosmopolitan position – or, rather, I examine one specific line of argument championed by theorists of this position (which can, in turn, be rediscovered in political debates). The argument runs as follows: people can be brought to meet comprehensive redistributive obligations to compatriots, because they share a *fundamental* relationship with them in the form of national identity. They can only be brought to meet basic obligations to non-compatriots, however, since they share only their fellow humanity with them, which is merely a *peripheral* relationship. Additionally, if a person cannot be brought to do something, then justice does not require that she does it. Hence, people are not required by justice to meet comprehensive obligations towards non-compatriots. Above, I mentioned how national anti-cosmopolitans conceive of these different relationships – national relationships have intrinsic value and require comprehensive obligations to be sustained, while global relationships do not. However, as I go on to show, the relationship between co-nationals is *imagined*, meaning that it exists only in the minds of people. Further, and more importantly, national relationships are continuously being created and re-created by policies of nation-building. Thus, we are, in an important sense, creating the basis of our mutual comprehensive obligations. Furthermore, I assert that, by doing so, we are effectively making our relationship with non-compatriots *non-fundamental* – that is, we are *making* ourselves identify with co-nationals at the expense of foreigners. This has important consequences for the argument made by national anti-cosmopolitans.

When national anti-cosmopolitans claim that we do not have comprehensive obligations to foreigners because the relationship we share with them is only peripheral they do so on illegitimate grounds – or, at least, problematic grounds. They claim that this argument works because people cannot be brought to meet such duties on the basis of peripheral relationships and, thus, we cannot make it a requirement of justice for them to do so. But this is obviously an awkward response, if we are *making* people unable to meet comprehensive obligations to foreigners by indirectly rendering their relationships to non-compatriots peripheral through nation-building policies. To put the point bluntly, it amounts to stating that we are not duty-bound to

redistribute comprehensively to foreigners because we have enacted policies making ourselves not duty-bound to do so.

National anti-cosmopolitans could, of course, retort that even if this were true, we could not create a fundamental relationship between human beings *as such* and, thus, upholding national ties of solidarity might be best *all things considered* (since the alternative is unfeasible). I dispute this claim, however, and point to a number of policies which could plausibly increase the fundamentality of our relationships with foreigners – e.g. cosmopolitan education and greater democratic participation and accountability in international institutions. Based on these considerations, I deem the national anti-cosmopolitan (disanalogy) argument for why we have comprehensive obligations to compatriots but not to non-compatriots unconvincing.

The points made in the article, then, relate to the broader question of this thesis by casting doubt on one of the central arguments in the global justice debate *against* the existence of comprehensive obligations to foreigners. Furthermore, it gives input to the first sub question on the justification of overwhelming redistributive partiality towards compatriots vis-à-vis foreigners by showing that one of the main attempts to do so is based on a problematic foundation. Finally, it relates to the more general question of the degree to which we should let empirical constraints influence fundamental principles of justice (sub question 3), by illuminating how such constraints may be formed by illegitimate or questionable processes, which gives reason to be skeptical about admitting them to the sphere of principles.

Chapter 8. The Limit to Your Love (Summary)

As noted above, both political and national anti-cosmopolitans hold that we cannot institutionalize comprehensive obligations to non-compatriots without endangering the value created and upheld in associations between co-nationals. In this article, we refer to this assertion as ‘the incongruence claim.’ The claim states, then, that pursuing policies of comprehensive global redistribution would undermine the fulfillment of comprehensive obligations domestically – or, rather, the *purpose* served by domestic comprehensive obligations. In this article, we argue that this conflict, which is often thought to exist between fulfilling special obligations to compatriots and pursuing cosmopolitan policies, is overstated. In more familiar terms, we claim that *patriotism* – here conceptualized as the willingness or disposition to fulfill comprehensive obligations to co-citizens – is (largely) compatible with cosmopolitanism. Thus, we cast doubt on political and national anti-cosmopolitan arguments. We do this, first, by examining the concepts of patriotism and obligations to compatriots (literally, *fellow patriots*) and spelling out the specific content of the incongruence claim, so as to better evaluate its implications. We note that patriotism has historically been conceived as fulfilling *special* rather than *partial* obligations. Thus, it involves making a *sacrifice* of personal advantages when one’s country is *in need* and, in this way, denotes overcoming narrow self-interest when required. If one simply put one’s country first no matter what, it would not be patriotism, but partiality or simple nationalism. Patriotism, then, refers to an *extension* of one’s obligations, but not in all cases or at all costs. This, however, has not only been the historical view of compatriot obligations, but is also the view held by contemporary national and political anti-cosmopolitans. They do not explicitly differentiate between special and partial obligations, however, and this distinction serves to clarify the content of their arguments. They do, nevertheless, embrace special (and not partial) duties as they maintain that we have basic obligations to foreigners and, further, we have some obligations to ensure fair terms of international trade and compensate states that have been victims of historical injustices. In other words, they do not think that we should give our co-citizens absolute priority in redistributive matters, but that the priority is subject to certain *conditions*.

To determine our obligations to compatriots, it must be established *when* our country is in need, which, in this case, is a comparative notion. What has to be established, then, is when the need of our country becomes so great that the failure to act on it will undermine the value of the domestic community. This, however, is subject to the conditions mentioned above as their fulfillment is *not* incongruent with patriotism (since they are not thought to be cosmopolitan policies, but rather anti-cosmopolitan conditions under which patriotism can legitimately be exercised). In this context, one may understand the conditions in different ways and neither national nor political anti-cosmopolitans are clear about this matter. What must be established is the *urgency* with which we should treat the conditions – that is, the priority their fulfillment is to be given vis-à-vis the realization of patriot duties. This is necessary to know what exactly is at stake in the incongruence claim. On this background, we claim three things.

First, we argue that given the conditions affirmed by anti-cosmopolitans and the distance at which we currently find ourselves from their realization whichever stance one takes on the urgency of fulfilling the conditions would entail giving them almost absolute priority. That is, to fulfilling basic rights, compensating for historical injustices, and institutionalizing a fairer system of international trade. This means that the incongruence claim has little *practical* significance and would make actual policies affirmed by cosmopolitans and anti-cosmopolitans practically indistinguishable (at least, in the short term).

Second, on a more ideal level, we claim that if the conditions are given *absolute* priority, living up to them would, in fact, make the anti-cosmopolitan argument very similar to the one made by associationist cosmopolitans (whose goal is, as mentioned, the establishment of fair, global institutions). Thus, if the conditions are to be understood in this way, the *theoretical implications* of the incongruence are virtually identical to the policies envisioned by (associationist) cosmopolitans.

As mentioned, however, anti-cosmopolitans (more or less explicitly) hold that in situations in which we must choose between living up to the stated conditions and fulfilling special obligations to co-citizens, we should weigh these obligations against each other with neither of them taking absolute priority. In connection to this, and as the third point, we show that the determination of these weights depends significantly on empirical factors, and further, that these factors may be altered to augment the opportunities for prioritizing the needs of foreigners without undermining the values of patriotism. Arguing against national anti-cosmopolitans, we show that one may change the norms and relations between citizens, which affect the reasons and plas-

ticity of societal trust, thus, making greater levels of global redistribution possible. Against political anti-cosmopolitans, we argue that the relationship between coercion and autonomy is less straightforward than assumed by anti-cosmopolitans and that taking a more republican understanding into account might allow for greater institutionalization of cosmopolitan policies without losing the value upheld by a domestic system of coercion (which, in their case, is the value of autonomy).

Regarding the overall question of this thesis, then, *Limit* sheds light on an important ambiguity in anti-cosmopolitan arguments – namely, the degree to which we can fulfill comprehensive obligations on both the national and global level simultaneously. We show that this can plausibly be done to a greater degree than often assumed and is largely possible within the framework of anti-cosmopolitan theories – and especially, in the face of severe poverty. Thus, even if we grant the value of patriotism and relations of domestic distribution, we may still pursue policies that are very similar to cosmopolitan ones.

Chapter 9. Idealism and Realism

Nobody appeared to have the least idea that there was any other system but the system to be considered.

Charles Dickens: *David Copperfield*.

As mentioned above, there is a general disagreement in the global justice debate about the extent to which empirical constraints should influence the shape of principles governing redistributive obligations of justice. Anti-cosmopolitans, on the one hand, adopt a *realist* approach to normative theorizing, which involves incorporating major social facts into one's theories and principles at the fundamental level. They do so, they claim, in order that their principles may guide political action in the right way. Cosmopolitans, on the other hand, largely abstract from such facts about the world when constructing principles of justice and opt for an *idealist* (or *activist*) approach (see *I Would* for details on this division). Below, I will spell out this distinction relying on the description found in *I Would*.

A question that arises when examining the above distinction is: what is entailed in the notion of *political action guidance*? For, even if anti-cosmopolitans claim that realism is a precondition for performing this task, cosmopolitans can (and do) rightfully disagree. They are not, after all, proposing principles that would be *impossible* for people to observe (even if they may at times be demanding), or arguing for a world order that could never come about and, thus they are guiding political action in some sense. Following David Estlund (and the depiction in *I Would*), theories may be divided along two dimensions according to *how* they propose to guide political action.⁷¹ Firstly, there are theories which propose principles that people *could* live up to, but with which we have good reasons to believe they will not actually comply. One example of this is Peter Singer's principle stating that 'if it is in our power to prevent something bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything of comparable moral importance, we ought, morally, to do it.'⁷² If put into practice (and followed by everyone), this principle would entail *massive* levels of redistribution from citizens of wealthy

⁷¹ Estlund 2008, chap. 14.

⁷² Singer 1972, 231.

countries to citizens of poorer ones, since it follows that people should be prepared to help others by reducing their own level of welfare or utility to the point of negative marginal utility (that is, the point at which more redistribution would create a smaller benefit for the recipient than what would be lost by the donor). Now, surely it would not be *impossible* for people to adhere to this principle – that is, it is within the capacities of human beings to do so and we can certainly imagine and even point to some who have lived according to this or similarly demanding rules. In this sense, then, the principle is politically action guiding, since it sets out normative goals that human beings *can* meet (and, perhaps, *ought to* meet) and *aspire* to meet. However, based on our knowledge of the limits of human altruism, we have very good reasons to think that people in general would not – nor would they ever – meet such demanding requirements. Estlund refers to such theories as *hopeless* theories, implying that we have no hope of them ever being realized.⁷³ Some (though not all) cosmopolitan theories, such as the ones proposed by Singer and Peter Unger, fall into this category.⁷⁴ Other theories are *hopeful*, which means that they hold people to standards that we have *no* good reasons to think that they could *not* meet. Most other theories – of both cosmopolitan and anti-cosmopolitan character – fall into this category. Many of the cosmopolitan theories propose ideals and principles which will probably not be realized in any near future and which would require revolutionary changes in institutions and identities to realize, but they are not hopeless – they do not propose principles that we can be relatively certain people *could never* conform to. This point is important to keep in mind when examining anti-cosmopolitan arguments and their claim to a monopoly on political action guidance.

Another distinction, which tracks the degree to which facts are incorporated into theories, is between those that are *concessive* and those that are *aspirational*. Concessive theories *concede* certain facts about people, institutions, and societies, and how they are likely to work and act and continue to work and act to increase the chance of compliance. Aspirational theories, on the other hand, are not adjusted to facts that are likely to endure, and set up principles that people *ought* to live up to even if they are currently not complying and are unlikely to do so (due to these facts).⁷⁵ This distinction differs from the previous one, since it does not separate principles that cannot be met (ever) from those that can. Rather, it separates theories which incorpo-

⁷³ See Valentini (2012) for a related distinction regarding full and partial compliance.

⁷⁴ Singer 1972; Unger 1996.

rate facts that are unlikely to change and play a significant role in the way people and institutions function in the present context from those that do not. As is (hopefully) apparent from the above description of anti-cosmopolitan and cosmopolitan arguments, this distinction is paramount to understanding how they differ. Thus, anti-cosmopolitan theories are concessive and incorporate the way in which states *currently* coerce their citizens and the lack of such coercive structures internationally (in the case of political anti-cosmopolitans) and the ties of solidarity that *currently* prevail between nationals and the absence of such bonds on a global level (in the case of national anti-cosmopolitans) to increase compliance. Their notion of political action guidance, then, is linked to the presence of these social facts. Cosmopolitans, on the other hand, emphasize that such facts can be changed and provide reasons for doing so with the intention of guiding political action in another sense – namely, by guiding the development of social structures in a direction that better conforms to fundamental ideals.

It is important to note that the principles provided by anti-cosmopolitans have an ideal element as well. Thus, for example, the claim that a just world would entail the fulfillment of basic obligations to foreigners is not action-guiding in the sense that it could reasonably be fully institutionalized tomorrow. Rather, it is considered realistic given the framework of the current institutions and identities. But, of course, cosmopolitans might reply that changing these institutions and identities is not *more* unrealistic than achieving basic rights fulfillment *without* doing so (which is closely related to the claim I make in *I Would*).

Anti-cosmopolitans may deny that cosmopolitan principles can give us practical guidance in the present context, but it is more reasonable, I claim, to see the positions as two points on a multi-dimensional continuum of 'likelihood of immediate realizability.'⁷⁶ From this viewpoint, then, political action guidance cannot be understood in a simple dichotomous fashion – instead, specific theories should be evaluated regarding *how* (rather than *if*) they are able to guide political action.

I undertake an analysis of this kind in *I Would*, examining the ways in which national and political anti-cosmopolitan theories are meant to guide political action. On the basis of this analysis, I show that these theories *cannot* guide political action (in the sense in which they use the term) towards fulfilling basic rights obligations to foreigners (which they claim is a requirement of justice). In this way, I identify some inherent problems in the realist meth-

⁷⁵ This description is taken from *I Would*, 7.

⁷⁶ See Hamlin and Stemplowska 2012, 52, for a similar point.

odology and its insistence on conceding social facts in the development of normative principles. I touch upon this subject in *Limit* as well in pointing out how coercion and trust may be conceived and shaped in ways different to the ones imagined by anti-cosmopolitans instead of conceding them as they currently present themselves. This, in turn, might make us able to pursue policies which are closer to the cosmopolitan ideal without compromising the value of patriotism. Finally, it is a central theme in *The State* that national anti-cosmopolitans build their theories around the way in which ties of solidarity are currently structured without being aware of the illegitimate or problematic manner in which these bonds are created.

To summarize, this thesis contributes to the debate on ideal and non-ideal theory in global justice in three ways. First, by emphasizing that the notion of political action guidance is more complex than often assumed in the debate on global justice and emphasizing the importance of separating different dimensions when analyzing specific arguments (which is the approach in *I Would*). Second, by showing that the manner, in which political action-guidance is employed by anti-cosmopolitans, is incompatible with their normative commitments (in *I Would*). And third, by indicating how the concessive nature of anti-cosmopolitan arguments can lead to overlooking opportunities for change (in *Limit*) and potentially illegitimate ways in which social facts are created (in *The State*).

Chapter 10. I Would if I Could, But I Won't (Summary)

In this article, I show how both national and political anti-cosmopolitan theories face a dilemma because of a discrepancy between their methodology and their normative principles. More precisely, I focus on the anti-cosmopolitan claim that we are required to fulfill basic rights obligations to foreigners and their realist methodology, which entails that we should concede major social facts in our normative theories to increase compliance. As shown above, these facts are conceded to enable their theories to guide political action in a specific, practical way. I claim, however, that their realist notion of action guidance cannot coherently be maintained at the same time as their goal of alleviating basic rights deficiencies.

To show this, I examine which social facts they concede in order to guide political action. As shown in chapter 6, political anti-cosmopolitans concede the existence of coercive institutions in the domestic context and their absence in the global sphere while national anti-cosmopolitans do the same for ties of solidarity and identity. However, I go on to show that basic rights obligations cannot, actually, be fulfilled from within the *current* framework of the facts they concede, and therefore realist anti-cosmopolitans cannot guide political action toward this end. As a result, they are faced with a dilemma and must give up either their concessive approach to action guidance or their aspiration to alleviate basic rights deficiencies. I have shown that this is the case for both national and political anti-cosmopolitans since they both rely on social facts that must *necessarily* (or at least *plausibly*) be changed if global poverty is to be eliminated. I identify three reasons, for which anti-cosmopolitan arguments are prone to be thus incoherent: because their realism makes them oblivious to injustices regarding basic rights inherent in the current setup of social facts, renders the most promising routes toward meeting basic rights obligations inaccessible, and because fulfilling basic rights involves *indirectly* changing such facts, which seems to be beyond the scope of realist political action guidance.

For their arguments to remain coherent, then, anti-cosmopolitans must choose between realism and basic rights obligations to non-compatriots. Choosing the former avenue would make them unresponsive to the claims of the poorest of the world and, thus, open the door to severe cosmopolitan

criticism, while choosing the latter would weaken their own critique of the cosmopolitan inability to guide political action significantly.

The arguments made in this article relate to the overall question of this thesis by showing that anti-cosmopolitans cannot coherently argue for the fulfillment of basic rights while standing firm on their realist methodology. Thus, *if* we believe that we have basic obligations to foreigners (which most political theorists and people more generally do) we must abandon the realism of anti-cosmopolitans in favor of a more flexible approach. This, in turn, would open the door to altering institutions and identities (e.g. in line with the proposals sketched in *The State and Limit*), which may conceivably push the limits of feasibility towards a more cosmopolitan future. In other words, even if one holds that we only have basic obligations to foreigners, this (when abandoning realism) would leave open the possibility of making the required changes to social facts for these obligations to *become* comprehensive. Further, the arguments provide a significant contribution to the debate on ideal and non-ideal theory by showing that letting empirical constraints influence the shape of our fundamental principles of justice potentially creates a number of problems and inconsistencies – at least, in the context of global justice.

Chapter 11. On Associations

A central distinction made within the field of distributive justice, which has special relevance for the debate on global justice, concerns the circumstances under which obligations of justice arise. More concretely, the disagreement relates to the *scope* of distributive obligations. So, while the previous section on disanalogy arguments and the articles summarized thus far were concerned with whether one can coherently hold that we have radically different obligations to compatriots and non-compatriots, this section concerns the more fundamental question of *when obligations of justice arise to begin with*. In answer to this question, some theorists claim that justice only applies once people stand in certain relations with each other – of reciprocity, interdependence, or national community, for example – while others hold that we have obligations of justice to each other based merely on our common humanity – viz. regardless of the way we are associated. In the following, I will provide a taxonomic overview of the different positions. Mapping out this debate, will allow me to clarify how the articles contained in the thesis relate to the scope distinction, and, in turn, help me bridge the negative contribution of the first three articles (*The State, I Would, and Limit*) with the positive contribution of *Duress*. This theoretical bridge building will in itself form part of the positive contribution made by this thesis.

Different suggestions have been offered concerning how to classify theories according to their view on the scope of justice. Pogge, for example, divides theories into *institutional* and *interactional* ones – dividing theories in to those that claim that institutional bonds generate obligations of justice and those that do not.⁷⁷ His account, however, is mainly concerned with the assignment of *responsibilities* for injustice, and does not discriminate clearly between different views that assign importance to associations *other than* institutions and those that do not. Sangiovanni, in another widely employed differentiation, separates relational from non-relational accounts – differentiating between theories that hold that relations determine the content, scope, and justification of distributive justice and those that do not.⁷⁸ Since I am concerned only with scope at this point (and not content or justification), and wish to capture accounts that lend importance to associations other than in-

⁷⁷ Pogge 2008, 175-183.

⁷⁸ Sangiovanni 2007, 5.

stitutions, I employ another classification, which takes these considerations into account. Taking my cue from Simon Caney, I will distinguish very broadly between *associational* accounts and *humanity-centred* accounts, and add a third category: *hybrid* accounts.⁷⁹ I touched upon this distinction in chapter 5 and I will elaborate on it here.

Associational accounts hold that the scope of *all* principles of distributive justice is decided by way of the associations by which people are related.⁸⁰ So, whether or not A has an obligation of justice towards B depends on whether or not they are interconnected in the relevant manner. And justice, they claim, is a value that is *limited* to such associations.⁸¹ Humanity-centred accounts, on the other hand, claim that obligations of distributive justice are not *based* on membership of associations of some kind (although, as I will discuss below, such relations may give rise to further obligations *instrumentally*).⁸² Rather, they originate in our shared humanity, and a basic notion of equal human worth. On this account, then, A, B, and C have comprehensive obligations towards each other *whether or not* they are interconnected, simply because they are all humans (although, A may, for example, be instrumentally better positioned to *meet* the claims of B than C, in which case the designation of who is to fulfil different claims may change). Finally, hybrid accounts maintain that *some* obligations arise only between people that are interconnected in the relevant way (and do so for reasons that are *intrinsic* to the association), while other obligations of a more limited kind exist independently of such relations and are founded in our humanity as such.⁸³ This would mean that, A and B, who are relevantly interconnected, have strong redistributive obligations to each other (e.g. to ensure equality of opportunity), while they are only under obligation to secure a more limited redistribu-

⁷⁹ Caney 2011.

⁸⁰ I take Nagel 2005; Pogge 2008; Van Parijs 2007; and Walzer 1983 to be associationalists. Note that Pogge does not deny that there might be additional, non-associational duties of justice, but only appeals to associational (negative) duties, since he takes these to be the strongest kind (Pogge 2008, 135-145 and Pogge 2010, 192-196).

⁸¹ They may, of course, have obligations towards each other that are of a different kind – i.e. humanitarian duties or duties of charity – however, such obligations are not the subject of this thesis (see section III on this point).

⁸² I consider Caney 2005 and 2011; Gilibert 2012; Goodin 1988; Nussbaum 2000; Singer 1972 and 2010; and Unger 1996 to be examples of humanity-centred accounts.

⁸³ I take Beitz 1999; Blake 2001 and 2013; D. Miller 1988, 2005, 2007 and 2013; R. Miller 1998; Rawls 1999; Tan 2004; and Sangiovanni 2007 to be hybrid accounts.

tive goal for C, with whom they are not associated (e.g. to secure her basic rights).⁸⁴

It is worth noting that the distinction cuts across the spectrum of cosmopolitanism and anti-cosmopolitanism (as mentioned in the chapter on cosmopolitanism). As defined above, cosmopolitans hold that we have comprehensive obligations to all human beings (in their current situation on Earth), which are similar in strength to those owed to compatriots (note that these are two distinct components). However, this claim can be based on different notions about the scope of justice. As such, they may be associationists claiming that we only have duties to those with whom we share a certain relationship, but make the *further* claim that all humans *do* in fact share such a relationship (Van Parijs and Pogge hold positions of this kind). They may, instead, defend a hybrid view claiming that a certain relationship, which gives rise to comprehensive obligations, exists globally (for example, economic interdependence). And further that, if someone found themselves outside this association, they would still have a (basic) claim on others (for example, due to equal entitlements to the Earth's natural resources). Finally, they may hold that we owe comprehensive obligations to foreigners simply based on their sheer humanity. Antithetically, anti-cosmopolitans may ground their notion that our obligations to foreigners are comparably limited on a view of the scope of justice as restricted to certain associations (as Nagel does). Alternatively, they may hold that minimal duties exist between people that are not associated in the relevant way, which is the case for our obligations to foreigners, but that comprehensive obligations pertain only to fellow associates (in which case their account of the scope of justice is hybrid).⁸⁵ In this section, however, I am concerned with arguments regarding the grounds upon which obligations of justice arise, and not the (cosmopolitan or anti-cosmopolitan) conclusions made on these grounds. Hence, I will focus on spelling out the different positions on the scope of redistributive obligations.

⁸⁴ Note that in Caney's terminology, humanity-centred accounts and hybrid ones are placed in the same category of: accounts that hold the scope of *some* principles of justice apply outside associations. I think, however, that Caney would concur with my more detailed division.

⁸⁵ Some libertarians may be said to hold the third type of view – that everyone has basic obligations towards everyone, which are grounded in their common humanity, and which are independent of associational ties. Such views are not anti-cosmopolitan as defined here, however, since they do not claim that we should give priority to compatriots.

To elucidate this taxonomy, it may be worth spelling out the difference between hybrid and humanity-centred accounts. On the one hand, hybrid accounts hold that every human being has a claim for a certain level of goods, rights, or opportunities, regardless of their associational ties (basic claims).⁸⁶ In addition to this, they assert that certain associations give rise to *further* claims – of distributive equality, for example (comprehensive claims). Comprehensive claims, then, are properties of the *association*, and not tied to the humanity of the people forming the association. So, on the hybrid view, if there were no associations of the relevant kind between people (in a Hobbesian state of nature, for example), everyone would only have basic claims on each other.⁸⁷ If a group of people decided to form an association with the relevant properties (e.g. a coercive state apparatus) these people would gain comprehensive claims on each other, due to the properties of the association (e.g. *because* they were now coercing each other). Others, however, would only have basic claims on them (e.g. because they are *not* being coerced). Humanity-centred views, on the other hand, claim that *every* human being has comprehensive claims on each other. Such accounts may agree that further obligations are incurred when forming an association, but such obligations are derived from the equal human worth of humans, and not from properties of the association itself. To clarify, in a state of nature everyone would have comprehensive claims on each other, on the humanity-centred view. If a group of people decided to form an association, they might incur further obligations to each other, but only *instrumentally* – e.g. because they would be better placed to discharge such obligations, affect each other's well-being to a greater degree, or be more susceptible to discrepancies in power and status. In this situation, others would still have comprehensive claims on the now-associated, but the latter group might be better placed to meet such claims to each other.

To illustrate with a simplified example, imagine that Al and Brenda are citizens of the same wealthy state, Albrendaland, while Calypso and Dani belong to a different state, Calypsodaniland, which is poor, but provides its citizens with the fulfilment of basic rights. Both Brenda and Calypso, furthermore, suffer from low self-respect because their respective societies have norms that portray women as inferior to men. The two societies are not inter-related in any relevant way, and thus, no associational duties exist between

⁸⁶ The exact level at which basic claims are set may vary from one hybrid account to another, but the idea remains the same.

⁸⁷ There would, of course, be associations of kinship and friendship, but these would not give rise to obligations of justice (at least not in the *political* sense discussed here).

them. On a humanity-centred view (and certainly on the one put forward in this thesis), Al and Brenda have obligations to increase the lesser prospects of Calypso and Dani since they have a comprehensive claim on them (which would not be the case on a hybrid account). However, although Brenda and Calypso both have comprehensive claims for a secure social basis of self-respect, Al has stronger obligations to Brenda since he partakes in upholding the repressive norms of Albrendaland from which she suffers, and more importantly, because *only he* can discharge these obligations. Thus, the difference in obligational strength is for instrumental reasons only, and one does not gain further claims by entering an association. However, the association may change the *implications* of a person's (Brenda's) comprehensive claim compared to non-members (Calypso), since fellow associates (Al) are in a unique position with respect to its fulfilment. Hybrid accounts, on the other hand, hold that everyone has basic claims, but that certain associations give rise to additional (comprehensive) claims. Above, I have described various arguments for limiting comprehensive obligations to compatriots (see section VI on disanalogy arguments), and in the articles *The State, Limit*, and *I Would*, I analyze and discuss the reasons and assumptions which underlie such arguments. That is, I discuss whether or not one can consistently deny comprehensive obligations to foreigners *given a certain scope of justice*. As noted, however, this section focuses on claims about what the scope of justice *is*, and thus, lies at a more fundamental level than the previous discussions.

Those who attribute justice-grounding weight to associations do so for very different reasons. Some claim that a shared national culture gives rise to special duties, others that economic interdependence do so, and still others that a system of direct and intrusive coercion grounds comprehensive obligations among fellow coerces. The *kind* of association that the different theorists consider relevant for obligations of justice to arise, thus, varies. Further, and related to this, such theories differ in *thickness* – that is, they differ in the *level of interrelatedness* needed for justice-concerns to come to be. On Andrea Sangiovanni's account, for example, the associations that give rise to comprehensive obligations are rather 'thick'. Thus, he claims that only fellow citizens of a state that provides 'the basic conditions and guarantees necessary to develop and act on a plan of life,'⁸⁸ have comprehensive obligations towards each other. Charles Beitz' account, in turn, is 'thinner' as only economic interdependence is needed to incur such obligations to others.⁸⁹ Final-

⁸⁸ Sangiovanni 2007, 20.

⁸⁹ Beitz 1999, 143-153.

ly, Philippe Van Parijs' account is very 'thin' requiring only that 'our life prospects [are] significantly affected by constraints which are not natural necessities but coercive rules on which at least some of us human beings have some grip,'⁹⁰ by which he refers to the existence of coercively upheld borders. Thus, for Van Parijs, it is enough that some people are being prevented from taking advantage of opportunities enjoyed by others (by enforcement of borders) merely owing to their place of birth. For Beitz, this would not suffice as grounds for comprehensive obligations, as relations of interdependent trade between autonomous parties are required for this to be the case. For Sangiovanni, even this would not be enough since people must be engaged in a reciprocal relationship with influence and impact on their basic possibilities in life for comprehensive obligations to arise between them. The three accounts, then, all hold that comprehensive obligations apply only to certain associations, but, as can be seen, the depth and degree of interaction needed for people to come to form such associations varies considerably.

As we have seen, then, theorists within the field of global justice differ on several parameters with respect to how they account for the scope of distributive justice. Thus, they differ in the *scope itself* (is justice restricted to particular associations or not: associational, humanity-centred, or hybrid), in *thickness* (what level of interdependence is required for an association to take the normatively relevant form: ranging from thick to thin), in *kind* (what type of association gives rise to obligations of justice: national, political, economic, etc.), and they differ in *conclusions* (to which obligations do the existence of the relevant associations give rise: anti-cosmopolitan or cosmopolitan). Now, the point of this taxonomic exercise has been to pave the way for the thoughts unfolded in *Duress*, and clarify their relation to the debate on global justice. In *Duress*, we propose and defend an ideal of distributive justice, which, in the terms used in this section, is humanity-centred and cosmopolitan. It entails that the object of justice is to make everyone free from significant pressure against succeeding in life. As such, we affirm that comprehensive obligations of justice arise among people regardless of their associational affiliations, and thus, reject both the claims of both associational and hybrid accounts. Before briefly introducing the debate on the goal of distributive justice and summarizing the content of *Duress*, I will provide some additional arguments for this rejection.

⁹⁰ Van Parijs 2007, 48.

10.1. Against the Importance of Associations

Each man's death diminishes me, for I am involved in mankind.
Therefore, send not to know for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee.
John Donne: Meditations 17, Devotions upon Emergent Occasions

To whom do we owe comprehensive obligations? As mentioned above, the answer to this question depends on whether or not one assigns special normative weight to particular associations, through which people are connected. In the articles, *The State*, *I Would*, and *Limit*, and in earlier sections of this thesis, I have presented arguments against the claim that we owe comprehensive obligations to compatriots, but only basic ones to non-compatriots. Specifically, I have shown the premises of such claims to be doubtful and cast doubt on the coherence of their supposed disanalogy between the domestic and the global realm. The arguments I have criticized were all hybrid accounts regarding the scope of justice and anti-cosmopolitan regarding their conclusions, in that they claim that we have basic obligations only to foreigners. Furthermore, the arguments were all 'thick' asserting that a high degree of interconnectedness is needed for comprehensive obligations to apply. This is the case for the arguments made by national anti-cosmopolitans, against which I argue in *The State*, *Limit*, and *I Would*, and for political anti-cosmopolitans, whose reasoning I criticize in *Limit* and *I Would*.⁹¹ So, having already advanced arguments against these 'thicker' accounts of why comprehensive obligations should be limited to the domestic realm, I will not turn to 'thinner' versions of this claim. By casting doubt on theories, which claim that *less* intensive modes of interaction are necessary for comprehensive obligations to arise, I hope to strengthen the case negatively for the non-associational, humanity-centred ideal presented in *Duress*. Since such accounts require very thin levels of interconnectedness for comprehensive obligations to exist, they are difficult to distinguish from humanity-centred views in practice. Thus, one may assert that associations really *do* matter, and that the reasons that humanity-centred accounts fail to see this, is because they do not consider associations at an appropriately thin level. I claim that this is not the case, and that even at a thin level of interconnectedness, the arguments given for delimiting comprehensive obligations to associations are unconvincing. To do so, I will examine three different hypothetical cases, in

⁹¹ In *Limit*, we refer to these positions as 'the community argument' and 'the coercion argument' respectively.

which people are not associated in the relevant sense, and argue that they owe each other comprehensive obligations even so. The three cases are: Pogge's 'Venus', Schemmel's 'Jungle tribe', and my own 'Mountain society.'

First, I turn my critical gaze towards Thomas Pogge, whose widely influential account of cosmopolitan justice is centred on international institutions and their debilitating effects on the opportunities of the poor people of the world. I am generally very sympathetic to the ecumenically founded arguments made by Pogge, and recognize that his associational stance is taken partly to avoid alienating political and philosophical opponents.⁹² I believe, however, that a case can be made for positive duties beyond the scope of the associations, which he deems justice-relevant, and that embracing such obligations would strengthen his theory without compromising its ecumenical foundation.

Pogge's associational proposition regarding the scope of justice states that 'one ought not to cooperate in the imposition of a coercive institutional order that avoidably leaves human rights unfulfilled.'⁹³ Thus, his account of is decidedly 'thin' – at least, on the background of the current world system, in which unjust international institutions, of which we are all indirect supporters by virtue of being citizens in member countries, enforces an order that creates and upholds basic rights deficits. According to Pogge, then, international institutions produce and maintain poverty and tyrannical regimes in the poorer regions of the world (that is, 'it avoidably leaves human rights unfulfilled'), and these institutions are ultimately upheld by citizens of wealthier countries (who thus, 'cooperate in the imposition' of this order). The very inclusive notion of 'cooperate' employed by Pogge, by which being a citizen in a (democratic?) member state of the Bretton Woods institutions suffices to make one co-responsible for global poverty, makes his account of who incurs cosmopolitan obligations decidedly thin. However, Pogge's account is not clear when it comes to designating the degree to which a person needs to be involved to have a claim on others, stating simply that 'all human beings are now participants in a single, global institutional order.'⁹⁴ There *are* limits to Pogge's account of justice, however, and to mark these off he produces the example, 'Venus':

Suppose we discovered people on Venus who are very badly off, and suppose we could help them at little cost to ourselves. If we did nothing, we would surely violate a positive duty of beneficence. But we would not be

⁹² See especially, Pogge 2010, 181-182.

⁹³ Pogge 2008, 176.

⁹⁴ Pogge 2008, 177.

violating a negative duty of justice, because we would not be *contributing* to the perpetuation of their misery.⁹⁵

We do not have obligations of justice towards the Venusians in Pogge's example because we are not cooperating in imposing an institutional order, which leaves their human rights unfulfilled. So, even if their human rights *are* unfulfilled we are not *causing* this deficiency, and thus, are not bound by justice to resolve it. It should be noted that Pogge only discusses negative obligations and, thus, could hold that we have *positive* duties of justice to help the Venusians. However, even if Pogge does not *deny* that such obligations exist, he does not *commit* to them either. As he leaves them unspecified, I will proceed with his argument as it stands – that is, without positive duties of justice.⁹⁶

Now, I agree that one's intuitive reaction to 'Venus' is that we do, indeed, owe less to the Venusians than we do to other Earthlings. However, I am doubtful that this reaction is caused by the fact that the Venusians are unassociated with us through our international order. Rather, I suspect that the reason we feel ourselves less duty-bound toward Pogge's Venusians is that the example conjures images of alien-like beings, rather than humans (as Debra Satz puts it, it is hard to imagine 'people' on Venus as having the same common humanity).⁹⁷ Thus, even if we are intuitively drawn to Pogge's conclusion, this does not strengthen his argument, because it is for other reasons than the ones he proposes (namely that we owe less to non-humans than to humans). Pogge is forced to look to other planets, however, to find someone who is outside the scope of justice due to his claim that 'all humans participate in the global order.'

Two things may be said of this. Firstly, if no humans are beyond the scope of Pogge's account (except for people on other planets), his account of the scope of justice collapses into a humanity-centred one.⁹⁸ In this case, Pogge and I are in agreement. However, this seems blatantly at odds with the emphasis he places on institutional connectedness. Secondly, his claim that all humans participate in the global system is empirically controversial. It seems obvious, at least, that some people participate in the global order to a much *lesser degree* than others, say, citizens of countries that stand outside international institutions (e.g. North Korea) or people who live traditional lives in re-

⁹⁵ Pogge 2008, 204 (original emphasis).

⁹⁶ E.g. Pogge 2010, 195-196.

⁹⁷ Satz 2005, 54.

⁹⁸ Although, it is unclear what Pogge would think of our obligations to Venusians if they were to migrate to Earth.

mote villages untouched by the state system (e.g. tribeswomen in the Amazon jungle). Does this mean that they are owed *nothing* or *less* with respect to justice? This seems to follow from Pogge's account, since the global order is clearly being forced upon them to a very slight degree. However, that severely impoverished people who are unfortunate enough to be born outside the reach of the international order are also beyond the reach of justice, would seem to run against the current of Pogge's cosmopolitan account.⁹⁹ Taking these two points into account, I will assume that Pogge would concede that there are some people, who do not participate in the global order (or do so to a much lesser degree), or, at the very least, that such people *could* (and may) exist on Earth. Are these people really beyond the scope of justice?

I turn now to an example proposed by Christian Schemmel. Unlike Pogge, Schemmel's account is hybrid (and cosmopolitan) with respect to the scope of justice, claiming that we have some (lesser) duties to those outside the relevant associations. However, as I am arguing against a principled difference in obligations of justice between those that are members of an association and those that are not, either will serve my purpose. Schemmel's example, which I shall call 'Jungle tribe,' attempts to establish exactly what 'Venus' fails to do. Namely that, people *do* exist (or could exist) on Earth, with which we are not associated in the normatively relevant way and to whom we do not, thus, owe comprehensive obligations. The example runs as follows:

As an example, imagine the discovery of a very poor tribe living in the depth of a jungle that had not previously been explored by individuals from a richer society. Let us assume that the tribe, so far, had been living in complete isolation and has not changed its way of living over the last few centuries - nor has the richer society actively contributed to their poverty in any other way (for example, by clearing the jungle around the area where the tribe lives, thus reducing the fauna available to the tribe for hunting, or something similar).¹⁰⁰

Schemmel concludes that the poverty of the jungle tribe gives rise to different obligations than the ones created or upheld by an institutional order. He concedes that the inequality between wealthy societies and the jungle tribe 'triggers some kind of intuitive concern,'¹⁰¹ which may give rise to fulfilling

⁹⁹ See also, Tan 2010, 53-55, for criticism of 'Venus.'

¹⁰⁰ Schemmel 2007, 59.

¹⁰¹ Schemmel 2007, 60.

lesser duties, but that it is not necessarily unjust (even if it is *unfair*). It seems to me that Pogge is committed to a similar conclusion.

Now at this point, it may be useful to differentiate between 'an unjust state of affairs' and 'unjust efforts of redistribution.' The case imagined by Schemmel points to an unjust state of affairs as he indicates himself by noting that the jungle tribe ought to be raised to some minimal standard as a matter of justice (which, in turn, Pogge's account does not entail). But importantly, it does not entail unjust efforts of redistribution. This is why, I contend, one's intuitive reaction to 'Jungle tribe' is not one of indignation (as Schemmel puts it himself). In other words, while we may be concerned by the plight of the tribe, we have not failed in our efforts to help them (yet) – we can simply not feel bad about not having rectified the deprivation of the newly discovered tribe, since we have not had a chance to do so. The example only shows, then, that the lesser life prospects of the tribe do not intuitively call for comprehensive redistribution *at the moment of discovery*. It does not show that we are permitted to do nothing about it in the future, and leave the tribe members to their less-than-adequate fate, instead of gradually improving their lot.

To see this, let us spell out the example a bit and say, for example, that the tribe residing in the jungle has minimally decent living standards – for example, we may say that their average life expectancy and infant mortality rate is at the level of a country with medium levels of human development: a life expectancy of sixty-five and an infant mortality rate just below thirty-five in every thousand births (compared to around fifty years, and just below sixty infant deaths in a thousand in Rwanda). Now, I agree that this gives rise to only some intuitive concern – not least, since other, poorer countries have much more need of our help (such as Rwanda). However, note the following variant of 'Jungle tribe.' Imagine that twenty years pass, in which the jungle tribe remains in complete isolation. Imagine further, that the wealthier countries do nothing to improve the prospects of the jungle tribe in these twenty years. It seems to me that both Pogge and Schemmel would be committed to saying that the inaction of the wealthy states would not be unjust – they have not failed to live up to their obligations of justice, on their account, since they have not imposed a coercive order on the jungle tribe (Pogge's requirement), nor have they left them to live an indecently bad life (at least, when measured by HDI standards). However, given that the wealthier nations have an average life expectancy of around eighty years and an infant mortality rate of five (as they do now), and very plausibly could have improved the possibilities of the tribe for a life of reasonable length, I find it implausible that we should not consider this situation unjust. Unlike the original

'jungle tribe,' we would not only have an unjust state of affairs, but would also have not have made any efforts to improve the inferior opportunities of the poor. We would have let the tribeswomen and men live significantly shorter lives, let more children die than what was reasonable, and we would have done so for twenty years, and this, I claim, *would* be unjust and a valid source of indignation (to paraphrase Schemmel).¹⁰²

Furthermore, real life poverty comes closer to second variant of 'Jungle tribe.' As I argued earlier, some people can be said to be unaffected by the international order (or affected to a much lesser degree). And surely we must assess their situation as not just an unjust state of affairs but *also* as something we could have done something about, but have not. So, the real-world situation is different from the one imagined by Schemmel and it differs in a way that is highly relevant for our assessment of its injustice – namely, in that we have had the possibility to improve their significantly worse lives, but not done so. Barring situations in which we stumble upon an undiscovered tribe whom we have not yet had the possibility of helping, then, Schemmel's example does not illuminate our intuitive sense of obligation towards people who are beyond the reach of international institutions. In most actual (and hypothetical) cases, we will have ignored their worsened life prospects for many years, and this, I claim, gives rise to different intuitions and conclusions than the ones elicited by 'Jungle tribe.' Thus, Schemmel's example does not lend the intuitive support intended to delimit comprehensive obligations to certain associations. Even if his criterion is quite thin, and thus, close to a humanity-centred approach, it yields results which I deem implausible regarding our obligations to non-members.

One might object, however, that associations *do* matter but that the level of interdependence needed for them to give rise to comprehensive obligations is just even thinner. Take, for example, the associational account of Philippe Van Parijs, in which what demarcates the scope of justice is when constraints, by which our life prospects are significantly affected, are being imposed coercively by other humans.¹⁰³ This means that the mere existence of interstate inequality on a background of borders and migration laws would give rise to obligations of justice. Thus, for example, in relation to the two cases explored above, Van Parijs might point out that, normally, we would not allow the Venusians or the members of the jungle tribe to simply migrate to a wealthier country and acquire immediate citizenship. Were it possible, he might say, for these people to simply move to a developed state

¹⁰² Barry and Øverland 2012, 102-103, make a similar objection (against 'Venus').

¹⁰³ Van Parijs 2007, 48.

and thereby increase their opportunities for living a life with similar opportunities, the situation would be radically different. But since it is not the case, and we are coercively hindering them in 'taking advantage of opportunities open to people born elsewhere,'¹⁰⁴ by enforcing a system of borders, we *do* indeed have comprehensive obligations towards even those who are unaffected by the international order (in other ways).

In practice, of course, Van Parijs' account yields almost the same conclusions as those which may be reached by a humanity-centred theory of the scope of justice, since all humans are, in fact, bound by migration laws. However, it seems reasonable to say that some people suffer more from such laws than others. If you are born in a poor, rural village in Northern Siberia, a thousand kilometres from the nearest border, or on an island in the Pacific Ocean, your possibilities are obviously limited by other factors than mere borders – most of which are not humanly created or upheld. At the very least, it seems that the *impact* of borders upon one's opportunity set varies quite considerably – affecting both actual and potential actions – and since Van Parijs is concerned with exactly that, opportunities, it seems that he ought to differentiate between such instances (or give an account of why impact does *not* matter). Secondly, one can imagine people standing completely outside Van Parijs' thin associational scope of justice. Were we to identify such people, we would have no obligations (of justice) towards them. But, this seems to me an unreasonable conclusion, which, further, seems clearly at odds with the strongly cosmopolitan trend of Van Parijs theory more generally.

Imagine a mountainous society, Paititi. Formerly unknown to its burgeoning neighbour society, Moche, Paititi is suddenly one day spotted by a Moche citizen on an especially clear day. An extensive investigation is undertaken, and by the use of telescopes and other measurement devices, their circumstances and way of life are slowly charted. The Paititians have a relatively well-functioning society, but compared to the Moche, they are undernourished and face relatively many threats, especially due to their need to move between mountain peaks and scale the steep sides to tend to their agricultural terraces – which besides a few mountain birds is their main source of food. The Paititians food supply is thus both sparse (due to the lack of cultivatable earth), vulnerable (due to the elevated climate) and unvaried (and thus leading to deficiencies in levels of several important vitamins and minerals). The Paititians seem doomed to continue this existence, as they have no useful wood or metals to improve their bridge building, which is now

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

made from tough (but not tough enough) plant fibres, and have no better ways of securing food than growing them on hazardous slopes. Furthermore, the Paititians have no way of escaping their highland existence in search of better conditions, as avalanches have surrounded their few inhabited mountains by lethal chasms. The Moche society, by contrast, is located in a lush valley which assures that there is plenty of food (and of many other goods) for everyone. Even though their technology is superior, the Moche cannot get to the Paititians, however, since access by helicopter is made impossible by the mountain winds, and even the most skilled mountaineers are unable to scale the steep cliffs. They can help the, however, by dropping goods by parachute to the Paititians.

Note first, that on each of the three accounts analyzed above, the Moche are not bound by justice to help the Paititians even though they *know* that their mountainous neighbours have (what I would deem) insufficient capabilities in important areas of life, and *can* do something about it (both with respect to resources and feasibility). Since the mountain-dwellers are not affected by the international order, or the system of coercive borders (but only natural ones), they are outside the scope of justice on even the thinnest associational accounts. Intuitively, I find this implausible – so say I. On my view, it seems that telling someone who is already cut off from the international system that they are cut off from the scope of justice as well, seems to me as adding insult to injury. But furthermore, the conclusion seems to be in opposition to the general cosmopolitan current that runs through the accounts analyzed here. I suspect that one of the reasons may be that associationists often focus on identifying which agents are *responsible* for alleviating specific instances of poverty (e.g. those upholding an unjust international order). However, they are less effective in explaining who holds *claims* of justice, and thus, I contend, tend to overlook some injustices. To illustrate this, imagine that a group of philanthropic Moche citizens managed to build a bridge to Paititi, so that they could help their relatively impoverished neighbours. This would mean that the Paititians were now suddenly being coercively excluded from Moche, and thus, were owed comprehensive obligations, since the two societies now form an association. This strikes me as an absurd conclusion, however.¹⁰⁵ While it may be that the Moche have now incurred a *spe-*

¹⁰⁵ Some might argue that relational egalitarians such as Elizabeth Anderson could be understood as defending such a position: that now Paititians have a claim of justice, which involves a claim against particular others that they do something to remediate their situation. I disagree with this, as I think relational egalitarianism is not just about making *existing* relations respectful and equality-based, but *can* at

cial responsibility for alleviating the insufficiencies of their now-associated neighbours (because they are well-placed to help), it seems plainly counter-intuitive to me that the claim for justice by the Paititians has changed. And it seems to me that the only way to resolve this in a coherent manner, is by arguing instead that there were obligations already simply based on the Paititians being humans and being insufficiently well-off.

At this point someone might object that this discussion seems far-removed from the injustice of the poverty that plagues our current world. Why, they might ask, discuss a distinction with such little practical consequence (especially given my activist resolve as explained in the methodology section)? I have two reasons for doing so. Firstly, I do not think that one can infer that a discussion has little practical consequence, simply because the viewpoints involved would lead to similar policies in practice. Importantly, they may provide different *reasons* which may motivate people in different ways and directions, and with that in mind, I think political philosophers should aim to provide the most fundamental reasons available for combating injustice when several argumentative routes to the desired goal are available (as I touched upon in my methodology section). In this specific case, associational reasoning always involves the inbuilt possibility of denying the empirical claim that such associations actually *exist*, or claiming that their impact is less *substantial* than assumed on some (or all) members, and thus, deny the cosmopolitan conclusions that follow. Humanity-centred accounts, on the other hand, are not vulnerable to such objections. Secondly, should new situations emerge we ought to be equipped to deal with them in a coherent and intuitively plausible manner. However, as I have indicated, the accounts mentioned above would not be able to do so if, for example, it *were* to occur that we came across an isolated tribe in the jungle, discovered a previously unknown mountain society, or found humans on Venus. A humanity-centred account, I contend, is better able to accommodate such situations in a coherent fashion.

Now, the example given above and the analysis more generally is an attempt to demonstrate that associationist accounts – even in their thinnest forms – yield intuitively implausible claims. This evaluation may, of course, simply originate in a deep-seated difference in intuition. Maybe associationists really think we would owe nothing to the Paititians, and that it is not absurd to think that the building of a bridge would make comprehensive obligations spring forth? If this is so, perhaps no agreement can be reached. Alt-

least be understood as involving a duty to establish relations of equality where there are none – this point is argued in *Duress*.

though, I have only given negative support for my conclusion, I will venture a positive suggestion nonetheless. What I contend is that the *knowledge* that someone is insufficiently well off (which, I contend, is the case if one faces a life expectancy of sixty-five years), and the *possibility* of improving her situation (in terms of resources and feasibility) are sufficient conditions to create comprehensive obligations of justice to that someone – regardless of whether or not one shares an associational link with her (unless, for example, meeting the obligations makes the person who helps insufficiently well-off herself).¹⁰⁶ By the above discussion, I hope to have some basis for this claim by casting doubt on associational theories. In the next section, I will briefly summarize the content of *Duress*, which outlines and defends a humanity-centred account of distributive justice, and which, in turn, would entail that Venusians, jungle-dwellers, and mountain-settlers alike should be considered within the scope of justice. First, however, I will outline the context of the debate on the goal of distributive justice very succinctly.

¹⁰⁶ This would, of course, be subject to feasibility and efficiency constraints when considering what we ought to do all things considered.

Chapter 12. Distributive Justice

In the chapters above, I have hinted that our obligations to foreigners are comprehensive and not merely basic. I have done this by casting doubt on a number of arguments claiming that a coherent and compelling disanalogy can be drawn between our domestic and our global duties and, in this way, paved the way for arguing that we have comprehensive obligations to foreigners. Furthermore, I have argued that our obligations to others are based in our common humanity and not, as associationist cosmopolitans and anti-cosmopolitans claim, by way of the associations we form with others. It remains to be seen, however, what the *content* and *goal* of our comprehensive obligations are. I now turn to this question.

The debate on the goal of distributive justice (also known as ‘equality, priority, or what?’) is an extremely broad and multifaceted amassment of ideas and arguments. I will only scratch its surface here in order to contextualize the article summarized below. Generally, there are three broad conceptions of distributive justice that embrace comprehensive obligations: egalitarian, prioritarian, and sufficientarian theories.¹⁰⁷ More often than not, their implications will not differ *in practice*, but the fundamental reasons on which they are based, the priorities they would assign to different cases of shortage or deficiency, and the implications in scenarios, which may occur in the future, vary quite considerably. As explained above, I find such differences important since the reasons cited may motivate people to different forms of political (in)action.

Boiled down, the three conceptions differ in the following way: first, egalitarians hold that the goal of distributive justice is to make everyone *equal* with respect to the relevant currency (e.g. welfare, resources, capabilities, or opportunities for welfare).¹⁰⁸ Egalitarians often (though not always) base their view on the notion that it is *unfair* if someone is worse off than others for arbitrary reasons – that is, for reasons beyond their control (such as race, gender, social class, nationality, etc.).¹⁰⁹ Egalitarianism has been the dominant view during the last decades and the two other conceptions are best understood as critical reactions to this dominance.

¹⁰⁷ Another possibility is the maximin account embraced in Rawls 1971.

¹⁰⁸ See for example Arneson 1989, Cohen 1989, Dworkin 2000, Sen 1990.

¹⁰⁹ Some point to the fact that equalities may be unjust as well – see Albertsen and Midtgaard 2013.

Second, prioritarrians dispute the value of equality and hold that 'benefiting people matters more the worse off these people are.'¹¹⁰ Achieving equality, they claim, is important in so far as it involves improving the prospects of the worst-off (which it usually does) but is not valuable *in itself*. Note that prioritarianism is a distributive *rule* (establishing *how* to distribute) but has no inbuilt *goal*. For this reason, prioritarianism (as a rule) is compatible with both of the other distributive conceptions (as goals). In this manner, one may hold that the goal of distributive justice is to ensure that everyone is equal in some respect and that we should *achieve* this goal by continually giving priority to the worst-off.¹¹¹ Alternatively, one might endorse a form of sufficiency-constrained prioritarianism¹¹² according to which priority should be given to the worst-off until everyone is above a certain threshold, at which point no further redistribution would be necessary.¹¹³ Importantly, however, prioritarianism employs a distributive logic that is distinct from the other two conceptions. Further, prioritarianism provides different *reasons* for our redistributive obligations in specific cases than other distributive conceptions and these may serve to guide political action in distinctive ways.

Finally, sufficientarian accounts hold that the goal of distributive justice is to ensure that everyone has *enough*.¹¹⁴ In its pure form, sufficiency is made up by two claims: the *positive* claim, which states that it is of critical importance that everyone has enough, and the *negative* claim, which entails that egalitarian and prioritarian reasoning above the identified threshold, should be rejected.¹¹⁵ Theories of sufficiency, then, must identify a threshold that has special significance in human lives above which no further redistribution is required. Thus, sufficientarians hold that inequalities above the identified threshold are not unjust and that, in principle, this is the case no matter how great they are (although some point out that great inequalities may influence people's level of well-being or possibilities in an absolute sense and, thus, make them insufficiently well-off).¹¹⁶ The notion of comprehensive obligations proposed in this thesis takes this sufficientarian form.

¹¹⁰ Parfit 1997, 213.

¹¹¹ Holtug 2010 defends a prioritarian view that simultaneously holds strands of egalitarianism.

¹¹² This term is borrowed by Casal 2007, 320-321.

¹¹³ This is the view embraced by Crisp 2003.

¹¹⁴ See Benjabi 2005, Crisp 2003, Frankfurt 1987, Huseby 2010, and Shields 2012 for such accounts.

¹¹⁵ Casal 2007, 298-299.

¹¹⁶ Huseby, for example, states: 'I [...] believe that a person can be content even while having less than others. However, there is reason to think that it is harder to be

In *Duress*, a sufficientarian ideal of distributive justice is proposed and defended. The article claims that the goal of distributive justice is to ensure that everyone is free from significant pressure against succeeding in central areas of life. This, then, is the threshold of sufficiency to which it is critically important that everyone is brought and above which inequalities are considered unimportant from the point of view of justice. This position and the arguments in the article are summarized in the next chapter. For the moment, however, it is worth noting that the ideal proposed in *Duress* has implications that are similar to prioritarian and egalitarian views. The ideal employs seemingly prioritarian reasoning *below* the threshold claiming that helping people is more important the worse off they are. However, in doing so, it employs sufficientarian reasoning stating that helping the worse-off is important because their prospects are the ones which are *most* insufficient (or, in the terms employed in the article: they are under duress to the greatest degree). Further, *Duress* claims that we should sometimes be concerned by inequalities that seem to be above the threshold (and as a consequence, seems to employ egalitarian reasons). However, by appealing to the notion of positional goods and the importance of interpersonal relations, the article shows how one's *relative* position in the distribution can influence one's *absolute* opportunities. Some inequalities are important from the point of view of justice, then, but the importance stems from reasons of (in)sufficiency.

Overall, sufficientarian theories can be divided into two groups which correspond to the two different types of obligations distinguished earlier: low-threshold sufficientarians,¹¹⁷ who embrace basic obligations of justice and high-threshold sufficientarians, who endorse comprehensive ones.¹¹⁸ As we saw earlier, anti-cosmopolitans defend a type of low-threshold sufficientarianism in the global context (in the form of obligations to ensure the fulfilment of basic needs and rights) coupled with comprehensive obligations (in an unspecified form) between compatriots. The account in *Duress*, on the other hand, employs a high threshold in both the domestic and the global sphere.

As will be seen, the exact relation of our distributive ideal to the global justice debate is not spelled out in detail in the article. Hopefully, however, this chapter and the previous one have succeeded in outlining how it fits within the greater conceptual framework of the global justice debate – namely, as a cosmopolitan, humanity-centred account of redistributive jus-

content if, for instance, *many* are *much* better off,' 2010, 182. See also Frankfurt 1997.

¹¹⁷ A view of this sort is outlined in Shue 1996.

¹¹⁸ The view held by Frankfurt (1987) employs a high threshold of sufficiency.

tice embracing comprehensive obligations in the form of high-threshold sufficientarianism to both compatriots and foreigners.

Chapter 13. Freedom from Duress (Summary)

In this article, we propose and defend a version of the sufficiency principle as the ideal of distributive justice. The goal of our redistributive obligations, we claim, is to make everyone free from significant pressure against succeeding – free from duress. Normally, duress refers to circumstances surrounding a crime that reduces or eliminates culpability. We use the term duress, not in the specific legal, but a related sense – namely, to describe a situation in which one is under significant pressure in central areas of human life; pressure that would impede any normal human being's ability to succeed in a similar situation (just as being under duress is, legally, understood as pressure that would increase any normal person's probability of committing a specific crime). The ideal is built on central insights from the capability approach: that the goal of justice is to secure people's *freedom* (and not, for example, a certain amount of resources), that justice is concerned with certain, *central* areas of human life (and not determined, for example, solely by reference to people's preferences), that one's freedom cannot be measured on one dimension (i.e. utility or welfare) but includes access to *all* such central areas and finally, that the logic determining a just distribution differs between the various freedoms.

Being free from duress entails having sufficient probabilities for succeeding in *central* areas of human life, understood as the aspects of life that humans have in common – or, in other words, that play an essential role in *any* human life. These include *capabilities related to basic needs* such as health, decent housing, adequate education, etc., but also more complex aspects of the human practice, which can be deemed capabilities that are in the fundamental interest of all human beings such as *rational development and critical thought, respectful social relations, and political freedoms*. What someone can claim from others as a matter of justice are these capabilities, which are needed in order to obtain a successful life.

We insist, further, that people must be brought above the threshold of sufficiency within each of these central areas – or, in other words, that several thresholds exist *horizontally*. These should be understood as distinct and separate thresholds within different aspects of human life that are *all* elements in being free to succeed. This means that one cannot make simple trade-offs

and make up for a lack in one central dimension (e.g. political freedom) by giving someone a larger amount of another (e.g. housing). Thus, the contributions made by each of these central freedoms to the possibility of pursuing a successful life are *incommensurable*, since they each give access to aspects of a successful life that cannot be obtained through the strengthening of other capabilities.

Now, usually sufficientarians worry about people's level of contentment or welfare or, alternatively, their absolute level of goods and not about how much they have compared to others. As mentioned in the previous chapter, however, we argue that this distinction is not always clear. For some capabilities, relative and absolute values are intimately intertwined – namely, those related to *positional goods*. In the case of these capabilities, 'one's relative place in the distribution of the good affects one's absolute position with respect to its value.'¹¹⁹ In these cases, sufficientarians should be concerned with relative deprivation, but it is the absolute *insufficiency* that is generated which creates a problem, not the inequality in itself. And indeed, most often when distributive egalitarians point to unjust inequalities, these are actually positionally determined insufficiencies, we claim.

Positional aspects are inherently present in capabilities that are connected to social relations such as societal status, political influence, and the social bases of self-respect. With respect to other central areas of life that are not as positional, however, distributional procedures ought to be designed so that everyone acquires a reasonable absolute level of the aspect in question and that relative positions do not matter (although, their distribution may influence positional capabilities, in which case the distributive logic is similarly affected). This is generally true for capabilities that are *not* intrinsically positional. Most aspects of life related to basic needs such as health, food, or housing are like this. Bringing everyone above the threshold(s) of sufficiency, then, may imply either an (almost) equal distribution *or* bringing them above an absolute threshold and ignoring inequalities beyond this threshold (or a hybrid in cases where capabilities have both positional and non-positional aspects), depending on whether the distribution of the freedom is governed by positional logics.

Being under duress, as we have presented it here, means being in a situation in which one is under considerable pressure in central areas of human life; pressure that would impede any normal human being's ability to succeed in a similar situation. Making people free from duress, then, entails making them free from such pressure to allow them to pursue a successful life

¹¹⁹ Brighouse and Swift 2006, 472.

and this, this thesis claims, is the goal of our redistributive obligations to compatriots and foreigners alike. Furthermore, the focus on the critical importance of avoiding *insufficiency* takes on a special relevance when the ideal is confronted with the severe and widespread poverty of our world. Thus, the article articulates an ideal, which provides reasons for considering the poverty of foreigners as a problem of justice, which we are duty-bound to solve, *and* as a type of injustice that should be treated with a *special* sense of urgency and, thus, serves to direct people's motivation towards its alleviation.

Chapter 14. Freedom from Duress and Global Justice

The ideal of freedom from duress specified in *Duress* and summarized above is primarily an intervention in the broader debate on the goal of distributive justice and does not target the global justice debate *per se*. In the chapters preceding the summary, I sought to situate the ideal with respect to other positions on global distributive justice, but some questions persist. For example, what is the role of the distinction between positional and non-positional capabilities in global redistribution? And who is responsible for fulfilling the different obligations (and what should we do in case some parties fail to do their part)? It is beyond the scope of this thesis to answer these questions in any final sense. Instead, I will outline how I think future research and theorizing might proceed.

The ideal proposed in *Duress* identifies capabilities related to basic needs such as health, decent housing, and adequate education as having a non-positional *core*, which entails that we should be concerned with people's absolute level in these areas as opposed to their relative holdings. This may, at first glance, seem to entail that we only have basic obligations to foreigners (and compatriots) with respect to these goods. This perception, however, is mistaken. As mentioned in the article and as indicated in the discussion of 'Jungle tribe' in chapter 11, the sufficiency threshold for these capabilities should be understood as relatively *high* and our obligations, consequentially, as comprehensive. This becomes clearer when considering the notion of a successful life. Plainly, someone faced with an average life expectancy of 55 or even 65 years is under significant pressure against succeeding in an (obviously) central area of human life and raising these prospects is of critical importance. Similarly, living in a tin shack presents obstacles to succeeding, which would not be acceptable to the ideal of freedom from duress. Thus, in both cases, we would be duty-bound to redistribute. And while it is difficult to pinpoint the *exact* expected age or level of housing, at which someone may be said to be free from significant pressure against succeeding, some levels can be deemed *insufficient* with a great deal of certainty.

As mentioned, justice concerns capabilities which are common to all humans – namely, those that are needed to succeed. One could argue that, as a consequence, the point at which someone faces an adequate life ex-

pectancy or has the capability of obtaining a sufficiently high standard of housing for her to be free to succeed should similarly be based on our common humanity. What life expectancy, one might ask, would humans as a race deem reasonable in this way? I will not pursue the answer here, leaving it open for further studies, but I think it is fair to assume that it would be closer to the average lifespan of wealthy countries than that of poorer ones.¹²⁰

Positional capabilities are a different question. The redistributive obligations they would generate would be importantly linked to the way in which their absolute value is determined. As the absolute value of positional capabilities is decided socially by one's place in a distribution, obligations would depend on which distribution(s) would in fact *have* this effect. For example, our obligations to improve the social status of someone suffering from insufficient prospects in this central area would depend on our actual ability to affect their status – and similarly with respect to political influence. Such mechanisms have often been thought to be confined to national societies and this may still be the case.¹²¹ However, several cosmopolitan theorists have argued convincingly for international inequalities which affect absolute opportunities across borders. Pogge, for example, argues that the enormous differences in wealth and power between nationstates create absolute insufficiencies in *bargaining power* for poor countries when negotiating trade agreements and international treaties.¹²² In a similar vein, Lea Ypi argues that there are global positional goods in the form of power (understood as both power in trade and military power) and that inequalities between states in these areas greatly influence the ability of poorer societies to develop in an absolute sense.¹²³ It seems, thus, that positional mechanics are not confined to domestic societies and that redistributive obligations may arise on this account as well. This area remains underexplored, however, and more work must be done to determine our obligations to foreigners with regards to positionally determined capabilities – not least with respect to distinguishing the different central areas of human life and determining which of them may be affected and how.

Finally, I have not spelled out who is responsible for assuming specific obligations of redistribution. It may, then, seem that my account is ill-suited to

¹²⁰ Crisp, for example, argues: 'that, say, eighty years of high-quality life on this planet is enough, and plausibly more than enough, for any being,' 2003, 762.

¹²¹ Rawls notes that 'we tend to compare our circumstances with others in the same or in a similar group as ourselves, or in positions that we regard as relevant to our aspirations.', 1971, 536-537.

¹²² Pogge 2008, 9.

¹²³ Ypi 2012, especially chap. 5.

direct political action, since I do not point out *who* is to take action. Let me make two brief points: first, I think considerations of responsibility are secondary to questions of justice. First, we must determine who is *owed* something and only then should we turn to who should meet this claim. This follows from my humanity-centred view, in which the importance is not on how people are distributively related but on what humans *must have*. Second, I think that putting primary weight on questions of responsibility can make us lose sight of the *urgency* of fulfilling our redistributive obligations. The reasons invoked, many of which are about denying responsibility, can tend to obscure the importance of the task at hand.¹²⁴ This point is related to the activist element in my methodology, which I outlined in chapter 4. Many, of course, will deny the import of this claim emphasizing that the argumentative *content* would be the same regardless of whether obligations or responsibilities were determined first. This I do not contend. I do not have space to defend my stance here, but will simply restate my previous assertion that political philosophers (and social scientists more generally) should be aware of their (albeit, limited) impact on the political and social reality and that this awareness should affect the way we focus our research and frame our arguments. I will leave it to empirical scientists to uncover how such measures may alter the impression philosophical arguments can make.

¹²⁴ Miller's discussion on the topic is a case in point – 2007, chap. 4-6.

Chapter 15. Conclusion

In this thesis, I have examined the question of what redistributive obligations of justice we have towards foreigners. My analyses have been made on the background of – and while taking into account – the severe and widespread poverty of our world. I have argued that our obligations to foreigners are comprehensive and much more demanding than often assumed by political theorists and politicians alike. The primary contribution of the thesis is an effort to dispel some of the main theoretical arguments claiming that our obligations to foreigners are not comprehensive, but only *basic* – that is, involving only the fulfilment of basic needs. In doing so, I have argued negatively for the existence of comprehensive obligations to foreigners. Additionally, the thesis contains a positive contribution to the question in the form of an account of the content and goal of our distributive obligations of justice. The distributive ideal proposed defends the claim that our obligations entail making everyone free from significant pressure against succeeding and, thus, that they are comprehensive in strength.

Many believe that our obligations to foreigners are significantly weaker than the ones to compatriots. One reason to think so is because we feel a stronger sense of solidarity to compatriots, which makes us able to contribute more to the improvement of their life prospects and, so, we cannot be required to fulfil comprehensive obligations since we are simply *unable* to do so due to our significantly weaker bonds. However, as I show in *The State*, these solidaristic bonds are created and upheld by policies of nation-building. Since we are, in a sense, causing our own lack of solidarity, this constitutes a fragile argumentative foundation. Another reason to hold that we are not required by justice to fulfil comprehensive obligations to foreigners is that doing so might undermine the cohesion and autonomy-enhancing features of the nation-state. In other words, cosmopolitanism may be incongruent with patriotism. In *Limit*, however, I show that this incompatibility is overstated and that fulfilling comprehensive obligations to foreigners can (largely) be done even when insisting on the value of patriotism and upholding national communities. A third reason to think that we do not have comprehensive obligations to foreigners is by pointing to the lack of international solidarity and international institutions without which such obligations could not be effectively implemented. Such facts are, one might continue, an important part of the social reality and will most likely continue to be so for a

long time. As a consequence, we must take these facts into account when determining what justice requires if we are to guide political action. However, as I show in *I Would*, it is implausible that even *basic* obligations can be fulfilled within this framework and, thus, if we believe ourselves to have such minimal duties of justice to help foreigners we will still have to change the system of international institutions and increase global solidarity. This, in turn, might facilitate even greater levels of global redistribution.

Based on my analyses, I conclude that the principal arguments against the existence of comprehensive obligations of justice to foreigners are problematically grounded, incomplete, and incoherent. Having, thus, paved the way for an argument for comprehensive obligations to foreigners, I defend an account of such duties in *Duress*. I argue that our obligations consist in securing the freedom to function at a level, which may be deemed successful, in all central areas of human life by removing great obstacles to doing so for everyone. While my input does not constitute an answer to the question regarding our redistributive obligations to foreigners in any conclusive sense, it does, at the very least, identify a number of weaknesses in the arguments used to *deny* the existence of comprehensive obligations, which warrant further explanations. Additionally, it raises questions about the justifiability of inflexibly letting empirical constraints influence our fundamental principles of justice and points to a broader way of understanding the deprivation of the world's poor and, accordingly, how it is to be repelled. Whether these argumentative challenges will be addressed remains to be seen.

There are many truths and we can cast light on but a few of them at a time. I contend that the moral injustice of severe and widespread poverty that afflicts our world is the most important of these and that highlighting and explaining the injustice it involves is a crucial task of political philosophy. My modest hope is that this dissertation has in some way helped do so.

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Dansk Resumé

Denne afhandling beskæftiger sig med global fattigdom. Mere specifikt omhandler den spørgsmålet om, hvilke fordelingsmæssige pligter vi har overfor fattige i andre lande og hvorvidt disse ændres af, at verden er præget af *svær* og *udstrakt* fattigdom. De fleste (både teoretikere og almindelige borgere) kan blive enige om, at vi som minimum er forpligtede til at sørge for, at alle får opfyldt deres basale behov og rettigheder. Men samtidig opfattes vores pligter overfor landsmænd som væsentligt stærkere: her bør vi sikre lige (eller i hvert fald rimelige) muligheder for alle. Dette afspejler sig i vores institutionelle omfordeling af ressourcer, hvor vi oftest omfordeler op mod 50 % af vores indkomst på landsplan, men kun knap 1 % til verdens fattigste via ulandsbistanden. Men hvad skyldes denne enorme, omfordelingsmæssige forskel og kan den retfærdiggøres?

I debatten om global retfærdighed optræder en række argumenter, der forsøger at begrunde en sådan omfordelingsmæssig forskel. For at komme nærmere et svar på, hvorvidt diskrepansen i forpligtelser mellem medborgere og ikke-medborgere kan retfærdiggøres ser jeg derfor nærmere på flere af de mest centrale af disse argumenter (såkaldte anti-kosmopolitiske argumenter). Imidlertid viser jeg her, at de for det første bygger på empiriske kendsgerninger, der er mindre statiske end anti-kosmopolitter antager. Derimod opretholdes og reproduceres de på problematisk vis, hvilket gør det *illegitimt* at basere sine argumenter herpå. For det andet argumenterer jeg for, at anti-kosmopolitter ikke på overbevisende façon formår at vise, at vi ikke både kan opfylde krævende forpligtelser til verdens fattigste *og* til vores medborgere, hvilket gør deres argumenter *ufuldstændige*. Og for det tredje viser jeg, at sådanne argumenter er *usammenhængende*, idet de ikke kan redegøre for, hvordan vi kan opfylde minimale forpligtelser til verdens fattigste indenfor den metodiske ramme, de foreskriver. Slutteligt beskriver og forsvarer jeg et fordelingsmæssigt ideal, der anser retfærdighedens mål som værende at sikre, at alle er garanteret et tilstrækkeligt muligheder for at opnå succes på centrale områder af et menneskeligt liv. Dette, hævder denne afhandling, er således svaret på, hvad vi skylder både medborgere og fattige i andre lande.

English Summary

This dissertation concerns global poverty. More specifically, it concerns the question of, which redistributive obligations we have towards foreigners and how these obligations are affected by the existence of severe and widespread poverty. Most people (both theorists and ordinary citizens) agree that we have an obligation to ensure the fulfillment of everyone's basic needs and rights. At the same time, however, obligations to compatriots are commonly thought of as significantly stronger – in this context, we should strive to secure equal (or, at least, reasonable) opportunities for everyone as a matter of justice. This moral discrepancy is reflected in our current levels of redistribution, by which we redistribute up to 50 % of our income on the domestic level and less than 1% to poor foreigners through development aid. But can this overwhelming redistributive partiality be justified?

In the debate on global justice, a number of theorists argue that this discrepancy can indeed be justified (so-called anti-cosmopolitans). Thus, to bring us closer to an answer regarding our redistributive obligations towards foreigners, I analyze and evaluate such arguments. My critical examination reveals a number of flaws in the anti-cosmopolitan line of thought. First, on closer inspection, they turn out to be based on empirical facts that are less static than they presume. These facts might, then, be changed in which case their arguments would also change, making room for greater levels of redistribution to poor foreigners. Further, the social facts on which they rely are created and upheld in a problematic (and potentially unjust) manner, which makes them a problematic foundation for grounding principles of justice. Second, I argue that anti-cosmopolitans do not succeed in showing that we cannot meet comprehensive obligations to foreigners and compatriots simultaneously. Thus, even if we are duty-bound to redistribute comprehensively to compatriots, this does not entail that we could not also do so towards non-compatriots. Hence, their arguments are incomplete. Thirdly, I show that anti-cosmopolitan arguments are incoherent since their methodology is at odds with their normative commitments to meeting basic rights obligations to foreigners. This, I claim, is not possible within their methodological framework and, thus, they must either abandon their methodology (which would make them open to cosmopolitan conclusions) or their commitment to alleviating basic right deficiencies (in which case they become vulnerable to several points of criticism). Finally, I describe and defend an ideal of distributive justice according to which we should strive to ensure that everyone is free from

significant pressure against succeeding in central areas of life. This, I claim, is what we owe both compatriots and foreigners.