

BOUNDARY MAKING AND EQUAL CONCERN

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Abstract: Liberal nationalism is a boundary-making project, and a feature of this boundary-making enterprise is the belief that the compatriots have a certain priority over strangers. For this reason it is often thought that liberal nationalism cannot be compatible with the demands of global egalitarianism. In this essay, I examine the sense in which liberal nationalism privileges compatriots, and I argue that, properly understood, the idea of partiality for compatriots in the context of liberal nationalism is not at odds with global equal concern for all persons. In particular, I argue that the three central goals and aspirations of liberal nationalism—promoting individual autonomy and cultural identity, the realization of deliberative democracy, and the aspiration for social justice within the state—do not entail or require a form of compatriot partiality that is inconsistent with the demands of global egalitarian justice.

Keywords: global justice, global equality, liberalism, liberal nationalism, nation building, boundary making, cultural identity, equal concern, partial concern, priority for compatriots.

The Problem

The fact of state boundaries is often said to be an “embarrassment” for liberals. On the one hand, on one understanding of liberal egalitarian justice the idea of equal opportunity applies globally to all individuals regardless of nationality or citizenship. On the other, taking political boundaries seriously seems to limit the ideal of equal opportunity to members within a state. While few commentators hold that foreigners count for nothing and that citizens of a society have no moral obligations whatsoever to foreigners, it is sometimes thought that the idea of equal opportunity—that individuals are entitled to the same background social and economic conditions under which to further their goals in life—is an ideal that applies among citizens but not globally. One reason for this is the belief that individuals are entitled (if not required) to show greater concern for their compatriots, and the basic institutions of their society could (or should) be designed to reflect this special patriotic concern; this patriotic concern seems to deny the ideal

of global equal concern that an account of global equal opportunity must presuppose in some form.¹

This tension between global equal opportunity and patriotic concern is thought to be most pronounced for liberal nationalists. Liberal nationalists hold that all states, including liberal ones, ought to be in the business of nation building. According to liberal nationalists, as we will see in greater detail below, the liberal vision of a just political society in which the ideals of individual autonomy, democracy, and social justice flourish is best realized when citizens share a common nationality; hence it is important for a state actively to engender a common national culture and a sense of shared nationality among its citizens. Yet integral to any nationalist doctrine is the idea that members of a nationality may (indeed, are obliged to) show special concern for each other. As David Miller points out, "In acknowledging a national identity, I am also acknowledging that I owe a special obligation to fellow members which I do not owe to other human beings" (1995, 49). On this view, "there is no general obligation to help poorer states," in the sense that there is no place for a global distributive ideal, such as a global equal-opportunity principle (108). And this partial concern for fellow nationals, or conational partiality as I will call it, seems to contradict the ideal of global equal concern that *liberal* nationalists should support. This is one reason why Bhiku Parekh thought the doctrine of liberal nationalism to be "incoherent."²

Of course, the liberal nationalist may wish to escape this tension by renouncing the ideal of global equal concern.³ Yet, other liberal nationalists openly affirm that they remain committed to global egalitarianism of some form. For example, Will Kymlicka has argued that as part of its nation-building project, the liberal state may regulate immigration into its

¹ An early and much shorter draft of this essay was discussed at an Amintaphil conference in San Diego in March 2000 and is published in the conference proceedings, *Human Rights in Political Philosophy*, edited by Burton Leiter and Tom Campbell (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002). I thank participants at the conference for their comments. Thanks are due also to Will Kymlicka and graduate students at Queen's University for helpful comments and discussions on the early drafts. In particular, I thank Christian Barry, whose detailed criticism, comments, and editorial advice on several drafts helped clarify certain important points for me.

² Parekh criticizes liberal nationalism, saying that the "nationalist privileges the moral claims of one's fellow nationals and assigns only a limited moral weight to those of outsiders" (1998, 316). To be sure, how strong Parekh's worry is depends upon how "limited" the weight given to outsiders is and how strong the "privileges" to conationals are. But, for Parekh, it is certain that the idea of global equal opportunity is ruled out for the nationalist, for even if outsiders do not count for nothing, they do *count for less* than one's fellow nationals.

³ Without intending that he considers himself a liberal nationalist, see Richard Miller's "Cosmopolitan Respect and Patriotic Concern" (1998). Miller argues that global justice does not require global equal concern, and hence needs no commitment to global distributive equality in the forms that are familiar in discussions on domestic justice.

society. Yet this will potentially run against the ideal of equal opportunity, Kymlicka concedes, unless the liberal state takes seriously its duties of global distributive justice. In short, for Kymlicka, liberal nation building, including the restriction of immigration, is permissible only if global equality of opportunity is not undermined (2001a, 270; also Tamir 1993, 161). The challenge for liberal nationalists who want to maintain the ideal of global equal concern is that they must be able to show how this global commitment is consistent with the idea of conational partiality, that “the existing use of boundaries to define and protect distinct national languages, cultures and identities is not inherently in conflict with liberal egalitarian values” (270).

I will suggest that the tension between global equal opportunity and conational partiality disappears once we clarify what it is that liberal nationalists are partial about. The relevant question for global egalitarianism is not whether liberal nationalism entails conational partiality but what kind of conational partiality it entails. Or, to put the question in a familiar form, what we need to ask is: “Conational partiality *with respect to what?*” My claim is that nothing in the theory of liberal nationalism presupposes an account of conational partiality that is antithetical to the ideal of global equal concern. To make this claim, I begin by recalling some of the basic features and goals of liberal nationalism. Then I consider these features and goals of liberal nationalism and examine whether each of these presupposes or requires an account of conational partiality that is at odds with global equal concern. I argue that while some kind of partiality is of course inevitable under liberal nationalism, it is not the kind of partiality that is troublesome for global equal concern.

But before beginning my argument, let me make explicit the background assumptions in this essay. I assume that there is a case for global equal opportunity and that this presupposes a form of global equal concern.⁴ I also accept as given the doctrine of liberal nationalism. Thus, while some global egalitarians may say that it is so much the worse for nationalism if it allows for conational partiality, I will not proceed in this way.⁵ I will not claim that there is nothing worth retaining in the idea of conational partiality as such. My intention is rather to show how one can be both a liberal nationalist and a committed global egalitarian. Further, I do not claim that all conceptions of liberal nationalism will be compatible with global egalitarianism. Indeed, some professed liberal nationalists openly reject the idea of global egalitarianism.⁶ My present goal is not to show that all liberal nationalists must or should be global

⁴ For one defense, see Caney 2001.

⁵ See Parekh 1998; also Barry 1999.

⁶ See David Miller (forthcoming) for some recent nationalist arguments against global egalitarianism. I discuss more fully the nationalist objections to global egalitarianism in Tan 2004, part 2, and Tan 2002.

egalitarians but that the basic features and tenets of liberal nationalism need not necessarily be at odds with global egalitarian commitments. I will be focusing specifically on the problem posed by conational partiality, and will therefore allow that there may be other factors about national boundary making that can render it incompatible with global equality. Still, because the problem of conational partiality is one of the central challenges for global egalitarians, I believe it is important to dispel the misperception that the liberal idea of conational partiality is necessarily incompatible with liberal global equal concern. And to the extent that some liberal nationalists reject global egalitarianism on the ground that it contradicts the idea of conational partiality, my claims, if successful, will remove this particular source of resistance.

The Aims of Liberal Nation Building

In his defense of nationality, David Miller argues that democratic politics “are likely to function most effectively when they embrace just a single national community” (1995, 90). This is because the virtues of mutual trust and respect, moderation and self-restraint, to which one may add the ideal of public reason (Rawls 1993), are crucial for a functioning democratic political community; and common nationality provides the catalyst for engendering and nurturing these virtues. In addition, the ideals of distributive justice presuppose a community in which “members recognize such obligations of justice to one another” (Miller 1995, 93). In other words, “[w]here citizens of a state are also compatriots [i.e., conationals], the mutual trust that this engenders makes it more likely that they will be able to solve collective action problems, to support redistributive principles of justice, and to practice deliberative forms of democracy” (98).

In much of contemporary political philosophy it has been thought that liberalism and nationalism are antithetical ideals and that, to the extent that liberal democracy and liberal egalitarianism must presuppose an underlying national community, liberalism is doomed to failure (MacIntyre 1984, Sandel 1992).⁷ However, an increasing number of liberal theorists are coming to accept that some shared identity is required to sustain liberal democratic and welfare institutions, and that this may call for more than (pace Habermas) an allegiance to shared political values and principles (Kymlicka 1995, McMahan 1997, Yack 1999). They claim that the liberal democratic state must be undergirded by a common national community, and that to inculcate and foster this common nationality, the liberal state has to engage in some form of

⁷ For instance, Sandel writes that Rawls’s “difference principle . . . is a principle of sharing. As such, it must presuppose some prior moral tie among those whose assets it would deploy and those whose efforts it would enlist in a common endeavour” (1992, 22).

nation building (Kymlicka 2001b, chaps. 10, 11; Tamir 1993). Indeed, historically, liberals have been more attuned to the centrality of the nation. J. S. Mill famously thought that the success of liberal institutions in a given society depends on there being a common national culture.⁸ The liberal state may, therefore, adopt and enforce certain policies to integrate all citizens into what Kymlicka has called a societal culture—that is, a set of public and social institutions operating with a common language (2001b, 1995)—to try to achieve this overlap between nation and state.

Liberal nationalists argue also that nationality, besides serving as the basis for democracy and social justice, provides the moral precondition for individual autonomy. This is because membership in a national community defines the cultural “context of choice” within which individuals form, pursue, and revise their conceptions of the good life and acquire their sense of identity and belonging (Kymlicka 1989, 1995; Margalit and Raz 1990; Tamir 1993).

Briefly put, then, liberal nation building serves the three core liberal ideals of (1) autonomy, (2) democracy, and (3) social justice (Kymlicka 2001b, 224–29). It is in the context of a national community that these liberal values can be best and most fully realized. For this reason, Tamir says that nationalism is a “hidden agenda” of liberalism and that “most liberals are liberal nationalists” (1993, 139).

Thus, the contrast between liberal states and nonliberal ones “is not *whether* states engage in nation-building, but rather what *kind* of nation-building” (Kymlicka 2001a, 262). Liberal nationalism is not predicated on what we may call the “Romantic-Collectivist” account of the nation (Canovan 1996, 6), whereby the nation is taken as a moral entity in itself, with intrinsic worth and able to command individual sacrifices for its ends. Instead, for liberal nationalists, the moral standing of a nation depends on how it contributes to the well-being of its individual members. Also, liberal nationalism is an inclusive form of nationalism, based on a common societal culture that is in principle open to all, unlike exclusive forms of nationalism based, say, on the dubious yet selective notion of race.⁹ Concerning immigration, for example, liberal nationalism would not permit restricting immigration on the basis of racial or ethnic criteria. The aim of liberal nationalism here would not be to protect a given racial or ethnic identity but would instead be to protect a national culture defined in terms of its political and public institutions and common language. The problem, then, is not that nonnationals cannot in principle be integrated into the national culture so defined (as they could not in the case of racially based nationalism) but that integration into a common societal culture takes time, and therefore too open an immigration policy

⁸ Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861), chap. 26.

⁹ See Kymlicka 2001b for more discussion on liberal ways as opposed to nonliberal ways of nation building.

might risk overwhelming a national culture at a given time. It is thus too quick, so argue liberal nationalists, to dismiss any form of immigration restriction as illiberal.¹⁰ Some rationale for, and ways of, regulating immigration are more liberal than others; and a liberal conception of nationalism would strive to meet the requirements of the former.

Let me now examine whether liberal nationalists can be global egalitarians. Does liberal nationalism entail the kind of partial concern for conationals that is antithetical to egalitarian global justice? One way of answering this question is to see if the three stated goals and aims of liberal nationalism described above—individual autonomy, deliberative democracy, and social justice—rely on or entail a form of conational partiality that is contrary to the demands of global equal opportunity.

Nationality and Individual Autonomy

Consider first, then, the goal of securing the cultural context of choice for individual autonomy and the basis of individual identity. If it is correct that a person's national institutions, practices, and traditions serve as the cultural framework within which he or she meaningfully forms, pursues, and revises his or her conceptions of the good, then it follows quite plainly that liberal nationalism has to promote and foster a *particular* national or societal culture. Liberal nationalism is openly premised on the basic idea that individuals have certain predispositions or inclinations toward their own national culture: their own national culture, not another, gives their choices meaning; their nationality, not another, provides the basis of their identity.

Thus liberal nation building is unavoidably biased in a real sense: it aims to engender and promote a given national culture for the benefit of its adherents. It helps secure for members of a nation access to *that* nation's cultural resources, without doing the same for nonnationals outside its borders.

But nothing about privileging conationals' access to their nation's cultural resources entails prejudicial attitudes or hostility toward other nations. A liberal nationalist can accept that the cultural institutions of other nations are as valuable to their respective members as her own institutions are to her, and that other states are as entitled to promote their own national cultures as her own state is.¹¹ More to the point, such partiality is not antithetical to the goals of global justice: nothing in the

¹⁰ But for one well-known liberal argument in favor of open borders, see Carens 1987. For an opposing liberal view, see Pogge 1997.

¹¹ This is one crucial condition that sets *liberal* nationalism apart from *illiberal* forms of nationalism. Also, in this regard, liberal nationalists should accord minority nations within the state special rights to mitigate the effects of state nation building. See Kymlicka 2001b and 1995. But I will leave this important point of minority rights aside here and focus more on the implications of nation building for global justice.

privileging of conationals' access to a cultural context is incompatible with the demands for global equality. As I mentioned, the idea of equal opportunity calls for a set of background conditions and allocation of goods and resources within which persons can all freely and fairly pursue their ends. But nothing in the idea of favoring the cultural life of one's nation necessarily interferes with this global egalitarian objective. The demands of cultural protection and global equal opportunity are two very different and distinct ones.

A more problematic form of conational partiality would be one that wants to privilege conationals' access to *material* resources as well. It is conational partiality in this sense—of privileging their access to the primary goods (if we like) of income and wealth—that would pose a serious obstacle to global equality, and it is conational partiality in this sense that is specifically at issue in debates about national partiality and global justice.¹² But even here one can say that a nation can privilege its members' access to material goods so long as it also supports the appropriate background global context required by the idea of equal opportunity. This will mean, in effect, that nations may privilege their members materially only within the rules of a just global distributive structure. Thus, conational partiality with respect to resource distribution presents a challenge for global egalitarians only if this partiality with respect to resources means that nations need not provide support for a just global distributive arrangement in the name of favoring their members' material interests.

The interesting question, then, is whether liberal nationalism requires or rests on this form of conational partiality—a partiality with respect to resources and a partiality with respect to the design of the background global distributive framework. Let us examine the two parts of this question in turn. First, does the promotion of the national *cultural* context of choice require that the liberal state privilege conationals' over nonnationals' access to *material* resources? It is far from clear that it does. While the liberal nationalist's argument for autonomy necessarily favors the claim of conationals to their national culture, it says nothing, one way or the other, about privileging their claim to material resources. That the state ought to privilege the national cultural context of choice for its citizens alone does not entail that it should also privilege their access to material goods over that of strangers.

Another way of making the above point is in terms of the different values one can be cosmopolitan about. The cosmopolitan view, which is implicit in liberal accounts of global justice, holds that individuals are the ultimate units of moral concern and are entitled to equal consideration no matter where they reside. Here, Samuel Scheffler's distinction between

¹² For an account of primary goods, see Rawls 1971, 93. For why cultural membership is also a primary good, see Kymlicka 1989.

“cosmopolitanism about culture” and “cosmopolitanism about justice” is illuminating. Cosmopolitanism about culture rejects the view that “individuals’ well-being or their identity or their capacity for effective human agency normally depends on their membership in a determinate cultural group” (Scheffler 1999, 256). Instead, it believes that the truly free or autonomous individual is one who is not bounded within a particular cultural context but is culturally mobile, even culturally detached, and hence able to access and enjoy different cultural ways of life.¹³ Cosmopolitanism about justice, in contrast, is not directly a view about culture. Rather, it is a conception of justice that “opposes any view which holds, as a matter of principle, that the norms of justice apply primarily within bounded groups comprising some subset of the global population” (256). Concerning distributive principles, for instance, cosmopolitan justice would say that how material goods and resources are to be distributed among individuals should be decided independently of the national boundaries within which individuals happen to be.

It should be evident that liberal nationalism, as I have described it, clearly rejects the cosmopolitan view about culture.¹⁴ But it does not follow from this that it also has to reject cosmopolitanism about justice; nothing about liberal nationalism’s denial of cultural cosmopolitanism rests on rejecting cosmopolitan justice. If anything, the liberal starting point of liberal nationalism would require that it endorse the cosmopolitanism view of justice.¹⁵

Now it might be objected that if one is serious about rejecting cosmopolitanism about culture, one cannot also be fully committed to cosmopolitan justice. This is because, so the objection goes, if one takes the promotion and protection of one’s national cultural identity to be a morally significant and legitimate goal, one is also likely to insist on greater resources for the purpose of such cultural protection, and may legitimately have them. After all, the more resources a given community has, the better able it is to promote and sustain its culture, all things being equal. Jeff McMahan makes a related point when he thinks that conational partiality is justifiable (to some extent) on the ground that materially “benefitting them [conationals] contributes to the flourishing of the nation” (1997, 130).¹⁶

¹³ For a defense of cultural cosmopolitan, see Waldron 1992. See Kymlicka 1995 for one reply.

¹⁴ Some liberal nationalists, of course, accept cosmopolitanism about culture. For them, liberal nationalism is a nationalism centered around certain political principles and ideals rather than culture (e.g., Ignatieff 1993, 6). But most liberal nationalists think that this culturally neutral account of nationalism is incoherent. I will not pursue this point here, my task being that of reconciling a culturally based liberal nationalism with the demands of global justice. But see, e.g., Kymlicka 1995 and Tamir 1993 for further discussion.

¹⁵ Again, see Beitz 1979 and Pogge 1989.

¹⁶ I thank Carol Gould for pointing out this possible objection to me.

This is a forceful objection, but I do not think that it is decisive. There is no doubt that if one takes cultural protection seriously, and if more resources means better cultural protection, then one would want to have more rather than fewer resources to this end. But the crucial issue here is whether it would be *legitimate* for one to acquire or retain more than one's fair share of resources for this purpose of protecting culture. That liberal nationalism takes it to be a legitimate (and indeed required) goal of states to promote and protect their own national cultures does not mean that it also accepts that this nationalistic end justifies any means. Among other things, it does not follow that a state may hang on to, or acquire, more than its *fair share* of resources and wealth in the name of nation building. The liberal starting point of liberal nationalism imposes typically liberal constraints on the pursuit of the nationalist agenda. And one typical liberal constraint is that of cosmopolitan justice. In short, liberal nationalism operates within this larger question: "What resources and other means may a state legitimately employ to pursue its nationalist goals?" Liberal nationalism tells us how and why liberal states have to engage in national building, but cosmopolitan justice tells us what resources and methods are *rightly* at their disposal in the pursuit of this goal.

The discussion above thus provides a response to the second part of the question—whether conational partiality means that special concern for conationals is a legitimate consideration when determining the background conditions of global distributive justice. Liberal nationalists can easily accept the cosmopolitan ideal of justice that holds that the principles of global distributive justice be determined independently of nationalist commitments. They can insist that the background social and economic institutions of the world, among other things, be impartially designed with respect to people's national membership and commitments, while permitting conational partiality within the rules of the just global structure. This does not show that all liberal nationalists must accept the priority of cosmopolitan justice.¹⁷ It shows, rather, that there is nothing inherent in the idea of conational partiality *with regard to cultural belonging* that requires privileging the national standpoint when deliberating on the terms of global distributive justice. To take an example from a more familiar context, we accept that partiality among family members is reasonable and permissible within the bounds of justice for the domestic society, even though nothing in this account of familial partiality entails that such partiality may determine the terms of domestic justice.

Partiality and Liberal Democracy

Consider, next, the second objective of liberal nationalism—that of facilitating deliberative democracy. As I mentioned, the virtues of

¹⁷ I try to do this in Tan 2004.

democratic citizenship, such as civility, mutual respect and trust, self-restraint, and public reasonableness presuppose a shared identity or solidarity among citizens. Moreover, as Kymlicka has argued, “democratic politics is politics in the vernacular”: a common national language allows citizens to engage in political deliberation, to understand the symbols and customs of political deliberation, and is moreover itself an expression of democratic self-determination (2001a, 269–70).

But we have seen that there is no tension between promoting and participating in a particular societal culture while remaining a committed liberal universalist. That is, liberal nationalists can be actively partial toward conationals’ access to their national language (or languages) without also having to be partial toward their living standards (that is, we may privilege the language but not the *material* interests of the users of that language). To repeat an earlier point, these are very distinct and separable categories of partiality. A “politics in the vernacular” can be secured without hindering global egalitarian commitments.

Does the realization of other ideals that are preconditions for democracy, such as mutual trust and respect, depend on some form of compatriot favoritism?¹⁸ To answer this question, we must answer perhaps a more basic question: Why should deliberative democracy depend on mutual respect and trust?¹⁹

Deliberative democracy depends on certain mutual trust and respect because individuals are required to *respect* each other as autonomous agents capable of advancing and accepting reasonable and rational arguments in defense of each other’s positions, and to respect the outcome of democratic procedures. And citizens can reasonably be expected to accept outcomes that they disfavor only if they can *trust* that, should the democratic process rule in their favor next time, the opposing side would honor that result.

If this is the function of mutual respect and trust with respect to deliberative democracy, it is not clear why conational partiality with respect to material distribution is required to support it. How does conational partiality motivate the respect of conationals as autonomous rational agents and instill the trust that they will honor democratic

¹⁸ Another problem global justice might allegedly present for deliberative democracy is that the demands of global justice may appear to limit the domestic decisions of states. But my concern here is specifically with the ideals of mutual respect and trust that are integral to deliberative democracy, and the challenge is that mutual respect and trust between people requires some form of special concern among them. As for whether global justice can limit domestic decisions, let me just say that if these limitations are limitations as required by justice, then these will not be limitations against democratic decision making. We do not say that democratic decision making is compromised because a state may not collectively decide to engage in a war of aggression on the grounds that this would constitute a violation of international justice and law.

¹⁹ I thank Will Kymlicka for helpful discussion here.

outcomes regardless of how their interests are affected? Merely assuming that solidarity, trust and respect, loyalty, fellow feelings, and conational partiality (the commonly cited list of national sentiments) must simply go together as a package begs the question. An argument is needed. And while some forms of nationalism may insist on conational partiality as inseparable from all these other national sentiments, liberal nationalism need not. Indeed, saying that conational partiality provides the necessary fuel for democracy would seem to reduce the democratic ideal to a form of bribery, or at best an association motivated entirely by self-interest.

If fostering the mutual trust and respect that are required for deliberative democracy is dependent on conational partiality, then this indicates a tension between global egalitarianism and deliberative democracy in general and is not peculiar to liberal nationalism. Further, it seems to involve a more general and controversial claim, which is that the very idea of the democratic state is antithetical to global egalitarianism. In any case, it remains to be shown that the fostering of mutual respect and trust *for the purpose of democratic deliberation* must rest on the practice of conational partiality.²⁰

Furthermore, one could speculate in the opposite direction as well and say that conational partiality at the cost of injustices toward outsiders, rather than fostering mutual respect and trust within a nation, would breed mutual contempt and suspicion. It is just as likely that a nation that favors members' needs by ignoring the needs of strangers is unlikely to be a nation within which the ideals of trust and respect among individuals can flourish. Engels's observation that "a nation cannot become free and at the same time continue to oppress other nations" is quite apt here (cited in Cunningham 1995, 104).²¹ This suggests that instead of enabling deliberative democracy, neglecting the demands of global distributive justice in the name of conational partiality may in fact disenable it.

Shared Nationality and Social Justice

As I mentioned above, the liberal welfare state assumes that citizens are "mutually indebted and morally engaged to begin with" (Sandel 1992, 23), that they share a common moral world. Liberal citizens are thus expected to look beyond kin and neighbors and to include fellow citizens who are virtual strangers within their scope of moral concern. One way the moral horizons of individuals can be broadened beyond their parochial and traditional ties is by establishing a common nationality.

²⁰ I am not suggesting that this problem thus disappears. Rather, this challenge has much wider (than intended) implications for the very idea of deliberative democracy.

²¹ Or we may recall Plato's point that the ideals of cooperation, trust, and respect are likely to be absent within a band of thieves (*The Republic* 351d). On the contrary, generalizing from Plato again, it seems to me that mutual trust and respect are more conductively engendered in a nation that treats other nations justly.

Common nationality may thus provide the bond that transcends the physical and personal gulf between citizens of a modern state by drawing them into what David Miller calls a common “ethical community” (Miller 1995, 48).

But this creation of a moral community, it is said, inevitably leaves some people out, namely, noncitizens outside the country’s borders. The worry is that insofar as liberal nationalism succeeds in expanding our moral world beyond our parochial ties, it does so only by limiting that world to the nation-state. Liberal nationalism risks championing a kind of moral isolationism in which an abiding sense of moral identity is enhanced nationally through excluding or weakening that identity globally.

If this is right, the project of liberal nation building is in trouble: the right of a state to maintain its culture by means of regulating its immigration policy, which is dependent on its fulfilling its obligations of global justice, has to be forfeited because the project of creating a national identity undercuts that very commitment. Of the three goals of nation building, the goal of promoting social justice within the state seems to pose the most serious obstacle to the liberal commitment to global justice.

But this worry may be exaggerated. If liberal nation building aims to extend the moral boundaries of individuals to include fellow citizens who are practically strangers and succeeds in doing so, then why should we think that such efforts cannot be sustained beyond the national boundaries? As Charles Jones asks, why not capitalize on this “expansionary momentum” to expand the scope of our moral concern beyond conationals to include also foreigners (1999, 160)? To assume that the construction of our moral world has suddenly to cease at our national borders seems arbitrary at best. To be sure, more arguments must be provided here to support this possibility (though there is evidence that this can be done—for example, the European Union), but one should not foreclose the discussion by assuming that national boundaries are morally impermeable, or that these boundaries fix once and for all the outermost limit of our moral sphere.

Parekh worries that “[i]f people are constantly told that they should care for each other because they belong together and if their educational, cultural, and other institutions are designed, as they must be, to reinforce this message, their moral imagination gets so emasculated and moral resources so depleted that outsiders will come to mean little to them” (1998, 316). But we can see now that this worry is too hastily voiced. That people are to be taught that they should “care for each other [i.e., conationals]” does not mean that they must be taught to care *exclusively* for each other; that our institutions must be designed to “reinforce this message” of national affinity does not mean that these institutions cannot also be designed to reinforce our cosmopolitan aspirations and

commitments. If the original moral aim of nationalism is expansionary—to extend individuals' moral spheres to include not just kin, friends, and fellow tribesman but also their fellow citizens—there is no reason why nation-building aspirations cannot be supplemented by cosmopolitan aspirations. Both nationalism and cosmopolitanism push our moral horizons in the same direction—toward strangers—and hence provide complementary rather than conflicting aspirations.

Thus Amy Gutmann (responding to similar worries raised by Martha Nussbaum) argues that education for democratic *citizenship* and educating people to be moral *cosmopolitans* (in the sense that they are taught their duties to humanity at large) are not mutually exclusive projects (cf. Nussbaum 1996, 16; Gutmann 1996, 71). In fact, Gutmann goes on to argue that global justice might best be realized through democratic *citizenship* participation and education. She notes: “Democratic citizens have institutional means at their disposal that solitary individuals, or citizens of the world, do not. Some of those institutional means are international in scope..., but even those tend to depend on the cooperation of sovereign societies for effective action” (1996, 71).

If this is right, then instead of thwarting cosmopolitan aspirations, liberal nationalism may in fact be a vehicle for pursuing them. Take away national solidarity, and we take away democratic citizenship, and in doing so we risk surrendering an arena—the democratic state—within which liberal citizens can effectively fight for a better world. Moreover, it might be said that the weakening of national ties will have the opposite effect of driving people back into their subnational and parochial moral communities, instead of turning them into enlightened cosmopolitans. So, rather than expanding our moral horizons, disbanding national solidarity—*without a viable alternative basis of solidarity*—may in fact contract them (Kymlicka 1999; also Gutmann).

Here one might object that if the aim of nation building is to create a moral community, attempts to expand this moral community outward to include foreigners will thwart this very aim. “The idea of distributive justice presupposes a bounded world within which distribution takes place,” as Walzer has put it (1983, 31). Yet, the objection continues, aspirations to global justice threaten that very world. Either we give preference to conationals (that is, maintain a limited but viable moral world) or we treat everyone equally but incapacitate ourselves morally. In other words, caring equally for all is incompatible with caring for our own—the demands of domestic justice and the demands of global justice pull us in opposite directions.²²

If this is a comment about our moral attitudes, it is rather implausible. It assumes that individuals can consistently inhabit a morally split mental world, that one's intolerance of injustice at home is indirectly propor-

²² One may refer to Rawls's comments on the “strains of commitment” here (1971, 145).

tionate to one's intolerance of injustices abroad. There seems, however, to be more unity and consistency in moral attitudes; those who are indifferent about injustices abroad tend also to be indifferent about injustices domestically, and vice versa. The sorts of attitudes that would lead one to ignore foreign injustices are similar in kind to the sorts that would lead one to ignore domestic injustices (barring those directly affecting one and one's immediate circle). After all, we cannot say of conationals that they have a stronger pull on us because they are kin, more familiar, or intimate. Conationals are for the most part also strangers; thus to the morally indifferent, there is no significant difference between a local stranger and a foreign stranger. It seems to me that if we could not succeed in making people care for strangers *outside* their borders, we would not have succeeded in making them care for strangers *within* their borders; and that we do succeed in making people care for strangers within gives us hope that they too can be made to care for strangers without.²³ Indeed, the objection's assumption that there is an inverse relationship between national sentiments and the commitment to global equality needs more substantiation. It is interesting to note that the Scandinavian countries, whose stricter immigration policies are suggestive of strong national cultural sentiments, typically contribute more to foreign aid than do countries like Australia, Canada, and the United States, which are traditionally referred to as "immigrant" societies. This suggests that a strong nationalist need not be an indifferent internationalist.

Indeed, it seems to me that most arguments that nationalistic moral sentiments are in conflict with concerns for foreigners posit a condition of stark global scarcity such that concern for outsiders will be at the significant expense of one's commitments to conationals. Alasdair MacIntyre, for instance, famously discusses the tension between the nationalist particularist and universalist liberal viewpoints in terms of conflicts over resources seen as absolutely scarce (1984, 6). His point is that the liberal universalist will not be able to account for the patriotic sentiment of going to war on behalf of one's nation against another over scarce resources (he uses the example of scarce fossil fuels). This illustrates for MacIntyre the tension between the nationalist and universalist moral viewpoints. I agree that under such extreme conditions of absolute scarcity there will indeed be a terrible tension between one's commitments. But while consideration of such cases has the advantage of testing the limits of our moral commitments and bringing to the fore potential contradictions within or between them, they may provide inadequate guidance in a world such as ours, which differs significantly from the imagined scenarios (see Pogge 2002, 7–8). In conditions of moderate scarcity rather than absolute scarcity (normally thought to be the

²³ In this regard, consider the dismal foreign-aid contributions (and isolationist policies) of Western governments that are also hostile to domestic welfare programs.

conditions under which questions of justice become relevant), attitudes expressing a commitment to global justice and to nationalist commitments need not conflict in this way. To use a domestic analogy, while the care for one's family may be irreconcilable with any concern of justice for others in a Hobbesian state of nature or a Humean "society of ruffians," under conditions of moderate scarcity these two sets of concerns need not be irreconcilable. Indeed, most accounts of global equal opportunity will have to presuppose, plausibly, conditions of moderate rather than absolute global scarcity. This is just one of the circumstances of global justice.²⁴ Under current conditions at least, in educating individual citizens to be good liberal citizens who are committed to the well-being of their fellows we do not need to turn them into *illiberal* internationalists who must treat outsiders with less than equal concern.

Concluding Remarks

I have argued that there is no inherent conflict between liberal nation building and the purported liberal commitment to global equality. The goals of securing and protecting a cultural context of choice, and of enabling democracy through common language and mutual trust and respect, are achievable without yielding to conational partiality with respect to resource distribution. And while the fostering of a common moral community via common nationality may be thought, at first glance, to be antithetical to the cosmopolitan moral point of view, it need not be so. When we become clear on the question as to what it is that liberal nationalists are to be partial about—"Partiality for compatriots *with respect to what?*"—the alleged tension between liberal boundary making and global equal concern is alleviated.

If there is no tension within liberal nationalism, between its idea of conational partiality and its commitment to global egalitarianism, then liberal nationalists can meet Judith Lichtenberg's challenge that "first you equalize resources, then you can have your cultural belonging" (1998, 183). Liberal nationalists can have it both ways. This of course does not mean that no partial national interests can be satisfied until global equality of opportunity is realized—justice is an ongoing quest, not an end state that can be definitively achieved. Liberal nationalists can give special concern to cultural belonging only if they are also working toward creating the global background economic and social structure required by the ideal of equal opportunity. The point is not that liberals should abandon nationalism in the name of global egalitarian justice but that they can and should pursue their nationalist goals without neglecting their duties of global egalitarian justice. One way the ends of national boundary making and the ideal of global equal concern can be reconciled

²⁴ See Rawls's discussion on Hume's circumstances of justice (1971, 126–30).

is for liberal nationalists to strive for a global basic structure whose rules and institutions treat all persons with equal concern. Within the rules and terms of such a global basic structure, national boundaries may be maintained and conational partiality may be exercised (e.g., Pogge 2002, 11–12 and 120–24). Indeed, only within such a world can nationalists *successfully* pursue their nationalistic agenda from the moral point of view. The critical success, one might say, of any nation-building enterprise is compromised otherwise.²⁵

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²⁵ The passage here borrows from and adapts Ronald Dworkin: "If a just distribution has been secured, then the resources people control are morally as well as legally theirs; using them as they wish, and as special attachments and projects require, in no way derogates from their recognizing that all citizens are entitled to a just share. But when injustice is substantial, *people who are drawn to both the ideals*—of personal projects and attachments on the one hand and equality on the other—are placed in a kind of ethical dilemma. They must compromise on one of the two ideals, and each direction of compromise impairs the critical success of their lives" (1992, 222; my emphasis).

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