Cosmopolitanism or Globalization: The Anthropocene Turn

Abstract:

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to advance the debate on "cosmopolitanism or globalization" by (a) approaching this rich literature from *cultural, ethical and governance* angles, and (b) by introducing key notions from the work that has taken place in the natural sciences, around the *Anthropocene.*

Design/methodology/approach – This paper is based on analytical tactics that draw on a literature review and thematic analysis.

Findings – The composite analytical "lens" introduced here (crafted around *cultural, ethical and governance* angles) to approach the debate on "cosmopolitanism or globalization" plus the engagement with the literature on the Anthropocene, allow us to engage with current understandings of the global and the "planetary" that are the heart of cosmopolitanism.

Research limitations/implications – The paper deals with and merges two complex streams of literature ("cosmopolitanism or globalization" and the Anthropocene), and as such needs to be seen as part of an initial, exploratory scholarly effort.

Practical implications – The analytical "lens" described here shall be of further use to develop current trends re-claiming cosmopolitanism for the study of organizations.

Social implications – Our work can help to nurture a cosmopolitan sensitivity which celebrates difference, highlights expanded concerns for the 'distant other', and fosters involvement in new forms of governance.

Originality/value – The approaches introduced here bring new angles to continue thinking about the planet as the 'cosmos' of cosmopolitanism, and to explore new understandings around organizations and (global) *responsibility*.

Keywords Globalization, Cosmopolitanism, Cultural Difference, Ethics, Global Governance, Responsibility

Paper type Conceptual paper

INTRODUCTION

"My humanity is caught up, bound up, inextricably, with yours" (Desmund Tutu, as cited in Turnbull, 2011, p. 180).

The statement 'I am a citizen of the world', attributed to Diogenes, is probably the best characterization of cosmopolitanism, a phenomenon that is not new but that has received a new momentum with the expansion of globalization (Roudometof, 2005). But, "*how much cosmopolitanism is (there) in globalization*"? This suggestive question, posed by Colic-Peisker (2011), frames the debate on globalization or cosmopolitanism in an elegant way – and assumes that globalization does not equal cosmopolitanism. What are, then, the key "ingredients" that allow us to talk about cosmopolitanism - and the differentiating qualities it may bring, versus, above and beyond globalization? And more importantly, why is such a question relevant for the scholarly of society and business?

The debate on cosmopolitanism or globalization is not a new one (Barbalet, 2012). The literature dealing with some aspects of globalization, cosmopolitanism and society is considerable (e.g. Brett and Moran, 2011; Guibernau, 2001; Held, 2003; Jazeel, 2011; Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 2009; Kurasawa, 2004; Robertson, 2012; Roudometof, 2005; Valencia Sáiz, 2005; Went, 2004; Yates, 2009). The literature on cosmopolitanism, although abundant in the social sciences is certainly limited in the business field, although its influence has recently been growing in diverse domains in the scholarly field of management (Levy et al, 2013).

Succinctly explained, cosmopolitanism discards *nationhood* as the frame for cultural identity, citizenship, ethical concerns or governance. It brings a triple proposal: it is a radical celebration of cultural difference and of embracing diversity; an urge for moral concern and responsibility for the "distant other"; and the quest to find mechanisms and institutions for global governance. This scholarly work ultimately points out that in the new global landscape, multiple agents (including businesses) need to care for the global common good and share co-responsibility (Maak, 2009; De Bettignies and Lépineux, 2009; Maak and Pless, 2009).

Certainly, from a *historical perspective*, increasing interconnectivity and interdependence internationally can be attributed to globalizing forces such as technologies, trade mechanisms, new modes of transportation and mobility, information flows, finance, etc (Friedman, 2005). The engagement with "the distant other" (Chatterjee, 2004) has allowed multiple encounters and representations of the world and "the global". Commerce and exploration of new territories have historically brought issues around competitive advantage (wealth, prosperity, power), but also about sensitisation and concerns for other people. This has often gone hand in hand with new forms of governance (e.g. trade mechanisms and regulations).

The array of themes that have dealt with "cosmopolitanism or globalization" is definitely broad and beyond the scope of this paper. But, certainly, one theme which arises is *mobility*, of: information (text), physical (transport, goods, people), activities (agriculture, manufacturing, war, culture), environmental problems (climate change, water security), etc. Internationalization and *global capitalism* often come without corresponding globalized human (or environmental) rights (Went, 2004). In this debate, of cosmopolitanism or globalization, issues around *asymmetries and power* have been prominent in the critical research agenda (Dobson, 2003, 2006). And those have been closely aligned with the exploration of *justice and responsibility*. Certainly, "globalizing tendencies both promote and undermine cosmopolitan possibilities" (Barbalet, 2012). Homogenizing trends (just look at the dietary, meat-based changes taking place in middle-class Chinese consumers) parallel trends promoting the radical *fusion* encouraged by cosmopolitanism (e.g. most likely, many of the Western readers of this paper have enjoyed some version of Asian food in recent times).

One angle to approach the conversation on "cosmopolitanism or globalization" is to understand globalization (broadly) as the "diverse technological, economic, social and cultural processes that have made it possible to imagine *the world as a global space*" (Shah, 2006, italics added). It is the consideration of this *global space* - the planet as the scale for concern - that fuels the cosmopolitan ideal. The planet is the 'cosmos' of cosmopolitanism, its "geographical imagination", its "heart" – from which the mechanisms and political imagination for living together need to be crafted (Jazeel, 2011).

In this paper we aim to engage with the "geographical imagination" of cosmopolitanism (Jazeel, 2011) by (a) succinctly exploring key literature that has dealt with the issue of cosmopolitanism or globalization; (b) by conceptually introducing a new '*weltanschauung*' termed *the Anthropocene* (Crutzen and Stoermer 2000; Crutzen,

2000), a notion that describes the new geological era in which humans are the main force shaping the planet; and (c) by briefly exploring some preliminary implications to think about organizations and (global) *responsibility*.

The essential idea behind the notion of the Anthropocene is that humans are now shaping all geo-physical as well as chemical dynamics of the planet, and that we have entered a new epoch that puts an end to the privileged 10,000 years of the previous geological epoch known as the Holocene, in which humans invented agriculture and enjoyed – in geological terms- a stable, joyful, time (Rockström et al, 2009). This means, in effect, we are now in another era that will take place within ecological parameters never previously seen, and that humans are in "the driving seat" of the planet, shaping all corners, all dynamics, all ecosystems and (ultimately) all Earth-systems. 'Nature is us', have claimed Crutzen and Schwägerl (2000). In the Anthropocene, *complexity* and *coupled social-ecological systems* take centre stage in the understanding of "the global" or multifaceted issues. In this '*weltanschauung*' the role of humans (and industry) is probably more pivotal than ever.

Initially developed in the natural sciences (Earth-systems sciences, resilience theory, social-ecological systems), the Anthropocene offers powerful *new insights to think about the-planet-as-the-'cosmos'-of-cosmopolitanism*. As a new paradigm, Anthropocene research has also exploded in the social sciences, but has only recently (and very timidly) entered into the realm of management and organizational studies (this has occurred with just a handful of papers essentially centred on corporate sustainability: Hoffman and Jennings, 2015; Hoffman and Ehrenfeld, 2014). We see this as an important gap.

Here we claim that nurturing the conversation on "*cosmopolitanism or globalization" within the framework of the new geological epoch* represented by the Anthropocene is an important scholarly effort that has yet to be explored. The aim of this paper is to contribute to that task. Our aim is to explore the following three questions: What are some of the main themes that have nurtured the discussions on cosmopolitanism or globalization? What is the Anthropocene and what links can be established to cosmopolitanism? What are some of the implications of all this to continue thinking about businesses and (global) responsibility? So, this article is structured as follows: in our first section we succinctly contextualize (some of) the key themes that can be found in the debates around globalization or cosmopolitanism: e.g. increasing acceleration and mobility, interconnectedness and interdependence. We then turn to one of the key notions underlying cosmopolitanism: Citizenship. This brief review will allow us to enter the following sections in which we explore key assumptions behind the new paradigm of the Anthropocene and new understandings about the 'global' that it entails. In the final section we outline key ideas to be taken into consideration to nurture future debates around business and responsibility.

We approach each of these sections using a consistent analytical lens: each theme is systematically organized from three angles: culture, ethics and governance. We propose this as a conceptual and methodological 'tactic' to explore cosmopolitanism consistently.

A (QUICK) SNAPHOST: A HISTORY OF ACCELERATION, NOT CORRELATION

Most of the literature coincides in the claim that *globalization* is not new… but it is accelerating, in extent, intensity, velocity and impact, creating greater mobility and increasing interconnectedness and interdependence (Held, 2003). Beyond 'celebratory' accounts around the opportunities globalization has created for a significant number of countries in terms of economic development and cultural hybridization, critical voices have described it as (essentially) unidirectional and resulting in asymmetries; inequities of power, access to resources, prosperity and human dignity (Dobson, 2005). What seems certain is the relationship between globalization and cosmopolitanism is not one of correlation: "It is incorrect… to see globalization as a necessary and sufficient condition for the emergence of cosmopolitanism" (Woodward et al 2008, p. 210). Nor is it one of cause and effect.

However, cosmopolitanism is seen by many as a desirable or even a necessary *response* to globalization (Kurasawa, 2004; Went, 2004; Alexander, 2005; Dobson, 2005; Valencia Sáiz, 2005; Levy et al 2007; Maak, 2009; Colic-Peisker, 2011). Indeed, "Globalization without cosmopolitanism could fail" (Held, 2003, p. 479).

A succinct review of this literature from the lenses of *culture, ethics and governance* enables the examination of key aspects of globalization and cosmopolitanism.

'Accelerated' Globalization, Cosmopolitanism and Cultures
Globalization, through the mobility of people, ideas, activities and trade, directly and indirectly enables increased exposure to and sharing of different cultures (Woodward et al, 2008). This can lead to mutual interconnectedness (Guibernau, 2001). Additionally, it could be argued (in simplified terms) that responses to this can be cosmopolitan (open), or parochial and insular (Woodward et al, 2008).

The terms local, global, "glocal", national, transnational, and international, their connotations, and their relationship to globalization and cosmopolitanism, have been broadly discussed in the literature (Brett and Moran, 2011; Held, 2005; Grinstein and Riefler, 2015; Robertson, 2012; Roudometof, 2005; Woodward et al 2008). The predominant view seems to be that while globalization has led to the perception of the world as a global space (Shah, 2006), the interaction between cultures does not necessarily produce homogenisation (Robertson, 2012). Rather a cosmopolitan appreciation of other cultures and the willingness to meditate difference (Guibernau, 2001) can result in a *global culture* characterised by "many local cultures both large and small" (Robertson, 2012, p. 196). Dobson (2005) favours a more unidirectional view, such that some local cultures can only (or are only allowed to) ever exist locally, whereas others can exist locally and globally.

In the realm of business and management, Levy et al (2007, p. 240) see cosmopolitanism as "a willingness to explore and learn from alternative systems of meaning held by others" and a state of mind "which seeks to reconcile the global with the local". They suggest a global mindset consists of cosmopolitanism combined with cognitive complexity, enabling people to engage with, value and learn from multiple cultures, and to operate in more complex and dynamic environments. Igarashi and Saito (2014) suggest that cosmopolitanism, as a personal disposition, is a valuable element that fosters *cultural capital*; yet its access, for example through international education, is unequal, which has a stratifying effect (Kakabadse et al, 2015).

In the field of marketing, Grinstein and Reifler (2015) developed a typology of cosmopolitan versus local consumers by examining the effectiveness of global versus local messages. They found "cosmopolitan consumers are not disconnected and uninvolved in the local community, but tend to have varying degrees of affinity to both globality and locality" (Grinstein and Reifler, 2015, p. 3). Their delineation between 'global consumers', who appreciate global standardisation of products, and 'cosmopolitan consumers', who actively seek diverse cultural experiences and products (Reifler et al, 2012) offers new perspectives to think about globalization and cosmopolitanism in accelerated and entangled, global consumer markets.

Accelerated Ethical Concerns?
Both globalization and cosmopolitanism are, on the surface, associated with mobility: globalization as increasing mobility, and cosmopolitanism as fostering global citizenship and a transcendence of national borders. But diverse authors (e.g. Shah, 2006) dispute certain metaphors of globalization; using Bauman's 'tourists and vagabonds' metaphor she illustrates the difference in the way people experience mobility. Tourists are those with freedom to travel, including corporate elites and academics, whereas vagabonds are asylum seekers, refugees and migrant workers, who may be mobile but are not free, forced to move, or forced to stay, often living *sans papiers*.

As argued by Held, cosmopolitan principles assert "All human beings share a common universe, all human beings have equal dignity and value and all human beings have a right to an active agency" (Guibernau, 2001). The cosmopolitan literature, beyond mobility issues, urges values of concern and care for all humans. It submits that equal status as a human being infers access to both 'agency' and 'justice'; that unequal distribution of power creates inequalities that preclude such access; and that globalization has resulted in massive inequalities (Dobson, 2005; Held, 2003; Lappé, 2013; Went, 2004). For diverse authors, the priority is one of creating a global society where human beings are the ultimate unit of concern (Barbalet, 2014; Maak, 2009).

For Dobson (2003) globalization should, therefore, foster moral concerns for the "distant other". But, above and beyond that, it should come with obligations of *justice* to those "others", now "entangled" in our lifestyles and material lives (e.g. through the supply chains that connect the products we consume and our cities with global climatic impacts and to all corners of the world).

Accelerated Governance Mechanisms?
Globalization has resulted in the removal of (significant) barriers, technological and regulatory. For the first time, all three circuits of capital (finance, trade and production) are global – interconnected and interdependent (Went,

2004). The continuing centralization and concentration of capital is such that "a couple of thousand multinational companies concentrated in the most dynamic sectors of the world economy … together account for half the world's trade in goods" (Went, 2004, p. 344).

Alexander (2005) explains the growing reach of markets has contributed to inequality in the form of exploitation and poverty as well as wealth creation and economic participation. Galbraith (2011) identifies markets, specifically the price of oil and finance, as the most influential factors in economic inequality. Lappé (2013) recognizes the cause of world hunger as poverty, and not a scarcity of food; she found rising food prices correlated with the development of agro fuels and commodities futures trading. It is suggested that the "governance of world financial and commodity markets … [is a] critical, and perhaps under-acknowledged, issue in the struggle to control inequality – and to build a fair, tolerable and sustainable world" (Galbraith, 2011, p 26). There is general concern about the concentration of power within the market, and the corresponding geopolitical power accorded to wealthy nations (Colic-Peisker, 2011; Dobson, 2005; Held, 2003). International negotiations seem to be characterized by outcomes reflecting relative distribution of power (Candy, 2013; Dobson, 2005).

Therefore, any global system of governance, cosmopolitan or otherwise, must address the distribution of power, agency and justice if it is to ensure equal life chances for all (Dobson, 2005; Held, 2003). Proponents of cosmopolitanism as a normative force for resisting the manifesting asymmetries of globalization (Dobson, 2005; Held, 2003) are concerned that "capitalist globalisation … powered by competition and expansion cannot be restrained by cosmopolitan forces concerned with the global common good" (Colic-Peisker, 2011, p. 1). Some authors go as far as to claim "globalization is ungovernable" (Valencia Sáiz, 2005, p. 166).

Global interconnectedness, interdependence and inequality provide not only the opportunity but the *provocation* for cosmopolitans to explore and accelerate forms of *global governance* which enable active agency and justice for all (it is at this point of 'how', rather than 'what' or 'why' that opinions are more divided).

The acceleration of new cultural interactions, awareness of "the distant other" as a motive for ethical concern, and the need to contribute to new forms of governance for increasingly global challenges are, in our view, key tenets to nurture a cosmopolitan-oriented debate on business and responsibility in a globalized world, as we will argue later in this text. Certainly, as argued by Dobson (2003), with local decisions affecting global outcomes, governance at all levels must include a sense that distributed power carries an obligation to concern oneself with the global common good - and the urge to reconsider (global) citizenship.

REIMAGINING CITIZENSHIP IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

While arguably the dominant understanding of citizenship is rooted in the *nation-state*, cosmopolitanism provides a lens to disrupt this assumption and examine what it means to be a citizen in today's globalized world. Ours is a world of "overlapping communities of fate" claims Held (2003). By considering culture, ethics and governance once again, such concepts as identity, obligation, and political agency have to be reflected on and we do so (briefly) next.

Citizenship and Cultural Identity
One contested idea within cosmopolitanism is whether considering oneself a cosmopolitan, or citizen of the world, necessarily precludes identifying as a national citizen. In the documentary, *Examined Life* (Taylor, 2008), Appiah reminds us that identity is complex, with many associations, including territorial, cultural, human and ideological.

Brett and Moran (2011) as well as Woodward et al (2008) found, for example, that a strong identification with being Australian did not preclude embracing multiculturalism, nor identifying as a citizen of the world. A person may consider themselves a national citizen in the sense of origin, culture, territory, political representation or rights and obligations. At the same time they may feel the obligations to *nature* or the environment, that can form the basis of a different, *ecological citizenship* in which nation-states are seen as irrelevant (Dobson, 2003; Valencia Sáiz, 2005).

Thus, while one view of cosmopolitanism suggests a weaker identification with national roots is an antecedent to identifying as a citizen of the world, people can embrace more than one identity. At the same time, to consider only national interests is problematic for a functioning global society.

Citizenship and Ethics: New Obligations

In the context of global problems such as environmental degradation and increasing food prices, which differentially affect the world's poor, cosmopolitanism demands that equal consideration is afforded to the needs of the far-distant other as to local and national interests. For Dobson (2005), citizenship implies more than a cosmopolitan commitment to "open dialogue", "care" and "consideration for all human beings"; it involves obligations created through imbalance of power which result in an unequal global distribution of goods, ideas, information, wealth and freedom. For this author, it is precisely the ("long arms") of our *ecological footprints* that should force us to think about non-territory based notions of citizenship and obligations to do justice.

The question does not seem to be whether cosmopolitan ethics are desired or needed to temper the observed asymmetrical effects of globalization; indeed many authors agree this is an urgent priority (e.g., Alexander, 2005; Colic-Peisker, 2011; Dobson, 2003). Rather, in the context of competing priorities, the question is *how* to secure power and legitimacy for negotiation and decision-making grounded in cosmopolitan ethics, and how to enable action.

Colic-Peisker (2011) holds a pessimistic view, arguing that a global environmental catastrophe will be required before cosmopolitan ethics and global responsibility will challenge the pervasive paradigms of economic rationality and national interest which prevent an ethic of global responsibility from developing. Kurasawa (2004, p. 252), however, observes and seeks to foster a developing "solidarity without bounds", or "cosmopolitanism from below", built on the "efforts of human beings committed to each other and to the realization of a vision of a just and pluralist world". In defining 'post-cosmopolitan' citizenship, Dobson (2003) echoes Kurasawa's notions of mutual commitment and a just world, arguing citizenship manifests in interactions between citizens, not just between citizens and government; this "horizontal citizenship" (Crane et al, 2008) allows for cooperative civic action towards the global common good, even in the absence of a formal global governance.

Citizenship and Governance: A Whole World to Reimagine

Historically, the sovereign nation-state, as the representative and protector of its citizens, is relatively recent, coming into being after cities and empires. As mentioned, literature on modern globalization and cosmopolitanism frequently challenges the legitimacy and efficacy of nation-states for dealing effectively with complex global problems (Candy, 2013; Colic-Peisker, 2011; Held, 2003; Shah, 2006). Sovereignty requires loyalty to the nation-state, in opposition to the needs of others (Colic-Peisker, 2011; Shah, 2006) and is concerned with international law more than with human rights (Alexander, 2005).

David Held argues for global governance in the form of a multi-layered cosmopolitan democracy, wherein the nation-state is but one layer, as a necessary condition for enabling participative global decision-making which can protect human rights and the environment, and for guarding against leaving pressing regional and global issues to the simple interests of particular parties, states or market forces (Guibernau, 2001). Shah (2006) points out that in any democratic form of governance, even if multi-level or cosmopolitan, citizens elect representatives. "Those who are not national citizens therefore, *in principle*, would not be represented regionally and globally and become excluded from the universal community of humanity" (Shah, 2006, p. 402, italics in original).

Most cosmopolitan accounts urge to re-think *citizenship* and to reimagine new agency, transparency and accountability mechanisms that result in new forms of multi-level and global governance. For Held (Guibernau, 2001) this is a long-term project, one that can be seen as "impossible" as when the *nation-state*, today one of our key institutional arrangements, was thought to be an impossible dream.

The boundaries of territory defined by nation-states are seen, nevertheless, as questionable in an era of increased mobility (Shah, 2006), communities unbounded by nation (Kurasawa, 2004; Roudometof, 2005), problems which transgress political borders (Valencia Sáiz, 2005), and organizations such as global MNCs that, in terms of power and influence, can - in many ways - be comparable to countries (Chandler and Mazlish, 2005). These are issues that can nurture more complex understandings of "the global" and, therefore, can foster more nuanced approaches to businesses and (global) responsibility. The paradigm of the *Anthropocene* provides a new angle for this.

THE ANTHROPOCENE: A NEW TURN FOR GLOBALIZATION AND COSMOPOLITANISM

Complex and interconnected processes comprise the Earth-system: continents, oceans, atmosphere, ice and life interact to produce changes in climate, weather, and multiple hazards (NASA, 2013). An increasing and astonishing rich body of scientific work is showing that humans are altering each and every Earth-system –the planet's surface appearance, and its core chemistry and geology (Mayer and von Mossner, 2013). This new paradigm has been termed *the Anthropocene* (Crutzen and Stoermer 2000; Crutzen, 2000; Steffen et al, 2007) and it denominates a new geological epoch in which humans have become the greatest geological force. Scholarly work on the Anthropocene is dramatically developing in the natural sciences and, increasingly, is shaping numerous debates in the social sciences.

The Anthropocene may have started with the Industrial Revolution and it is believed to have received a tremendous impulse from 1945 to 2000, with the atomic bomb and the post-World War II worldwide period. In this period a remarkable number of indicators show an unmistakable spike (Steffen et al, 2015): techno-scientific developments, the nuclear arms race, population explosion and rapid economic growth, damming of rivers, water use, fertilizer consumption, global transport, use of car and communication technologies, international tourism, CO_2 concentrations in the atmosphere, ozone depletion, occurrence of extreme weather events, loss of tropical rain forest and woodland, changes in land use, global biodiversity loss, etc. This period has been termed by Will Steffen as "the great acceleration" (Steffen et al, 2007). According to many analysts following the great acceleration, the Anthropocene ends the privileged, stable, 10,000-year period known as *the Holocene* that allowed agriculture and modern civilization to flourish (Rockström, 2009). The Anthropocene throws humans into a period of tremendous uncertainty and accelerated *global social-ecological* dynamics.

The Anthropocene can be depicted as an era in which intensified globalization fosters more interactions among even geographically distant systems and across scales (Liu et al 2007), an era in which global social change and global environmental change interact with each other (Young et al, 2006). Distant interactions can be seen in trade and insurance, transnational land deals, spread of invasive species, technology transfer, energy systems and markets, population migration, etc (Moser and Finzi, 2015). As these authors have shown, distant interactions produce increasing effects (what Liu et al 2013 call "tele-connections"), distant in space and time, on domains as diverse as biodiversity, food security, poverty alleviation, public health, social unrest and water scarcity (Liu et al 2013).

Growing global connectivity increases the potential for phenomena and crises to spread, synchronize, and interact in novel ways (Biggs et al, 2011). For example, the floods experienced by Thailand in 2011, driven by the strongest monsoon in 50 years, resulted in hundreds of people killed, the disruption of local agriculture, and forced some 10,000 computer supply and electronics and car and camera part manufacturing factories to close in that country, while heavily disrupting dozens of firms in the Silicon Valley (Moser and Finzi, 2015). So, often local vulnerabilities can and do originate in far-away places. Global drivers are becoming increasingly dominant over local drivers as determinants of the dynamics of coupled human and natural systems (Liu et al 2007). In the Anthropocene local disturbances propagate faster – and management responses in one system can unintentionally precipitate undesirable change in far removed systems (Young, 2002; Young et al. 2006). As argued by Young et al (2006) the linkages between biophysical systems and social systems have grown to the point where it is necessary to speak of human-dominated ecosystems, operating at various scales, from local to global.

Thus, many of the current debates taking place in journals such as *Science* and *Nature* discuss the qualities of large-scale, coupled social-ecological systems. They remark on the need to understand people and nature as integrated, complex systems. They warn of abrupt changes, vulnerability, eroded resilience and irreversibility. Complex and connected global social-ecological linkages are a crucial feature of the Anthropocene (Galaz, 2012, 2014). Many of these studies urge abandonment of common notions of risk, stability and control to focus instead on the dynamics of multi-scale (e.g. at local, regional and global levels) systems, non-linear dynamics, tipping points and thresholds (Young et al, 2006; Galaz, 2014; Moser and Finzi, 2015). In short, they open a new understanding of the Earth-as-a-series-of-Earth-Systems with interacting qualities and (also) quantifiable thresholds (Steffen et al, 2015).

Within this line of enquiry the *planetary boundaries framework* (Rockström et al, 2009; updated in Steffen et al 2015) has recently put forward the most active discussion, centred around the planet as an object of enquiry, in some of the most prestigious scientific scholarly journals and forums of the natural sciences. Their framework aims to answer the following question: What are the non-negotiable planetary preconditions that humanity needs to respect in order to avoid the risk of deleterious or even catastrophic environmental change at continental to global

scales? Is there a "safe operating space for humanity"? Beyond climate change, a set of eight other planetary boundaries were identified and quantified - boundaries *within* which humanity, authors argue, can continue to develop and thrive for generations to come. These nine boundaries are conceived as interacting Earth-Systems: *Stratospheric ozone depletion*, *atmospheric aerosol loading*, *release of novel entities*, *ocean acidification*, *fresh water use, land-system change, climate change, biogeochemical flows and biosphere integrity*. For most of these Earth-systems, well-defined thresholds have been quantified. Crossing them could generate abrupt or irreversible environmental changes - and at least three planetary boundaries described above have probably already been crossed (climate change, nitrogen and phosphorus, and biodiversity loss).

The Anthropocene, therefore, puts at the centre of its discussion *the level of the planetary* that is precisely at the heart of cosmopolitanism. But it also sheds new light on and reframes the "acceleration" that has previously been attributed to the processes of globalization. As mentioned, the planet is the 'cosmos' of cosmopolitanism, the political imagination for living together (Jazeel, 2011). Now the Anthropocene gives a new turn to that planetary geographical imagination – to re-think the contours of the global, the universal brought by cosmopolitanism. It brings new angles for the reflection of cosmopolitanism or globalization at our three levels of analysis (culture, ethics and governance), as we show next.

The Anthropocene and new "NatureCulture" Hybridities

> "In the African Rift Valley, the Afar [an Ethiopian ethnic group] must worry that climate change will steal from them their last available water, while the sugar from the new plantations will end up in American or European candy bars" (Schwagerl, 2014).

The Anthropocene reminds us that our interactions with *distant* regions or the "distant and future other" (Maak, 2009) are often non-obvious. For example, as it is well known, often those at the receiving end of climate change and other negative environmental impacts (e.g. Bangladeshis) have done very little to deserve some of the problems they are now suffering (e.g. major agricultural damages in their own land and deltas). As Moser and Finzi (2015) argue, tele-connections and impact (e.g. that of the "long arm of climate change") affecting other regions and cultures are increasingly clear, and can now be more easily traced thanks to techno-scientific advances.

The techno-scientific, cultural forms and images around the Anthropocene remind us of those non-apparent linkages and they speak of nature-culture-technology "hybridity" (Baskin et al, 2014). Concepts and images of the Anthropocene are now going far beyond the realm of science to penetrate and be embraced, reinterpreted and given new vigour by social scientists, intellectuals and artists in a multi-disciplinary fashion (the Anthropocene Project in *Hause Der Kulturen der Welt* in Berlin is a good example of this; Klingan et al, 2014). So, as ecologists urge to maximize biological diversity and warn of the perils of the Sixth Extinction we may be witnessing (Rockström, 2009), the Anthropocene alerts and becomes an invitation to foster human, cultural (and animal and plant) diversity. But it is no longer an idealized view of pristine cultural or natural settings. It is an acknowledgement of the "natureculture" hybrids and a forever culturally-transformed nature (Latour, 2014). The Anthropocene becomes an invitation to re-think the place of humans on the planet or, ultimately, what can be considered "human" or "natural".

Beyond merely intending to avert apocalyptical forecasts (Nascimento, 2013), or to show multifaceted connections, the Anthropocene brings more complex public perceptions of nature and society. It aims to reconsider and bring local-global issues into the presence of everyday lives (Goodbody, 2013). In putting forward this scientific production, narratives and images, the Anthropocene offers what we can see as "tools" to shape cultural values and worldviews that can become part of our *cultural identity* - perhaps the key issue in dealing with environmental controversies and concerns (Hoffman, 2015).

In our view, much of this relates to new understandings of the "planetary" and brings, therefore, fruitful angles to continue exploring the debate on cosmopolitanism or globalization. This requires, obviously, to deal with ethical issues.

Ethical Landscapes in the Anthropocene

> The increasingly global scale of socio-economic activities is having significant consequences, including the recognition that distinctions between "inside" and "outside" or "here" and "there" are becoming blurred, and that

exporting domestic problems or, in other words, "dumping them out" is not justifiable (at least morally) any longer (Young et al 2006, p. 310).

The Anthropocene reminds us that time lags, irreversibility and the impact on current, distant, and future generations is a real possibility (Steffen et al, 2011). The Anthropocene puts "the environment", now essentially conceived as "Earth-as-a-set-of-sub-systems", into what in managerial terms has been named a "primordial stakeholder" (Driscoll and Starik, 2004). The social-ecological dynamics of the Anthropocene transcend territories, nationalities and political borders. As cosmopolitan scholars would claim, human beings are bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern (Delanty, 2006; Nussbaum, 1994; Levy et al, 2013). But they are also bound by ecological footprints and the consumption of resources (Dobson 2003). As mentioned, the responsibility for global environmental problems is certainly unequally distributed. The interconnected "cosmopolitan dream" of citizens beyond national borders needs to also be seen as one that is grounded in very concrete material flows that bind us together - and create the interdependencies and asymmetries that characterize the Anthropocene.

The Anthropocene gives the *precautionary principle* (taking preventive action in the face of uncertainty; Kriebel et al 2001) a new impetus. It reminds us of the alterations of the surface of the earth, and its chemistry and geology - and the possibility of unknown consequences. From an ethical point of view, *stewardship* then becomes a central element. As described by Barry (2002), the original meaning of stewardship referred to people responsible to an owner for the care or management of that person's household and goods. As seen from an environmental perspective, there is no "ownership" but the need "to make good use", and the need to "care". In the Anthropocene, Steffen et al (2011) suggest that humans should become the care-takers of the Earth-Systems, such as the planetary boundaries referred to above.

Stewardship (of the Earth-systems), equity, development and prosperity are at the heart of a discussion on values in the Anthropocene, something that is far beyond the scope of this paper. Those can be seen as key elements for a cosmopolitan agenda that acknowledges impact and responsibility at a global scale. And they are of importance in reflecting on the complex governance and institutional challenges ahead, as we explore in the next section.

An "Accelerated" need to Re-Imagine Governance

As claimed by Valencia (2005 p. 165), in the face of global environmental challenges "the liberal democracy, despite its potential effectiveness in the context of the nation-state may turn out to be ineffective in the global context". Concerns like these have been prevalent in many of the debates around governance brought up by cosmopolitanism.

In the Anthropocene, the "problem of scale" (Perey, 2014) becomes much more complex. Global issues require new mechanisms of governance, transparency and accountability (Guibernau, 2001), beyond the governance systems of current international organisations. Global initiatives in the past have included The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, Flora and Fauna (CITES), the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) and, of course, always celebrated as a success story, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Lele, 2010). But the success of many of these initiatives has been merely partial if we look at the significant decline of most ecosystems of the planet, according to the *Millennium Ecosystems Assessment* (Millennium World Resources Institute, 2005).

So, what are the features of the next generation of international institutions, partnerships, and organizations able to address highly complex, contested and fluid global, social and environmental phenomena (Biermann, 2014; Galaz, 2014)? What kind of governance systems may be in a better position to address the planetary boundaries – those parameters in which humanity may operate safely (Galaz et al, 2012)?

In this quest for alternative organizational forms, a 'cosmopolitanism from below' (Kurasawa, 2004) can also be made possible: "a transnational mode of practice whereby actors construct bonds of mutual commitment and reciprocity across borders through public discourse and socio-political struggle" (Kurasawa, 2004, p. 234). Individuals now have *more* mechanisms to collaborate across borders ["bypassing" nationally-bounded institutions], and to innovate and leverage projects for the common good than ever before (Friedman, 2005, pp. 44-46).

We see, therefore, tremendous potential in emerging *leadership coalitions* (Austin, 2000) and collaborative organizations working across different levels and regions, in complex networks of *governance*. The *Network for Business Sustainability*, the *World Business Council for Sustainable Development* or the *United Nations Global Compact* are just a few good examples of networks of businesses engaging with the type of global challenges that characterize the Anthropocene.

New understandings around interconnectedness, interdependence, asymmetries, mobility, citizenship and the rapid acceleration of social-ecological dynamics that characterize the Anthropocene become important *tenets* to address contemporary debates on organizations and (global) responsibility in contemporary settings. We sketch some of those in our final section.

TOWARDS A COSMOPOLITAN-ORIENTED RESEARCH AGENDA ON THE ANTHROPOCENE, BUSINESS AND (GLOBAL) RESPONSIBILITY

As we have argued, literature on business and society has had little or no engagement with the abundant stream of literature around the Anthropocene, that is offering key new insights to reconceive "the global", and therefore, to advance the debate on "cosmopolitanism or globalization".

As mentioned, the acceleration of new cultural interactions, the awareness of "the distant other" as a motive for ethical concern, and the need to contribute to new forms of governance for increasingly global challenges are, in our view, key tenets to nurture a cosmopolitan-oriented debate on business and responsibility in a globalized world. Embracing diversity, acknowledging responsibility for the state of the world, and encouraging new forms of global governance are at the heart of a cosmopolitan sensitivity.

The planetary, as the scale of concern that cosmopolitanism puts at its centre, receives a new momentum with the Anthropocene. Accordingly, diverse forms of *prosperity*, *flourishing*, *justice* and *human dignity for all citizens* should be part of the "agenda" of those managing the most important institutions of our time: businesses (Gini and Green, 2012; George, 2013; Jackson, 2011; Maak and Pless, 2008; Rockström and Sachs, 2013; Santos, 2012; Turnbull, 2011). Advantaged members of society, and in particular leaders of multi-national corporations, have a co-responsibility to assist those in need, and to address issues like human rights, poverty and environmental standards (Maak and Pless, 2009). This duty is earned through global citizenship and through means: power, privilege and potential (Maak and Pless, 2009). So, business leaders have the chance to be an active part in Held's (Guibernau, 2001) multilayered power, multilayered authority and complex forms of governance required in today's world, with its "overlapping networks of power and interaction [which] cut across territorial boundaries".

Therefore, the Anthropocene brings diverse elements that should be of use to explore understandings around organizations and *(global) responsibility* and to nurture related *future debates and new research agendas*. The following can be considered as some (initial, preliminary) tenets or *foundational elements* to consider in that quest:

. **Cosmopolitan principles:** Developing diversity and multiple cultural identities grounded in *global citizenship* is a central aspiration for a cosmopolitan agenda. Openness, recognition, inclusion, care, concern, and duty of assistance for all human beings, including "distant Others" should be essential concepts for businesses in rethinking *responsibility* in a globalized world. To facilitate active agency for people to participate in governance - for a fair and just world – becomes a vital ambition.

. **Embracing complexity:** Reconciling the local with the global, and recognising interconnected, interdependent social-ecological systems are central tenets for a new geological epoch. Building systems and processes to enable decision-making which takes account of complex obligations and cause and effect over distance, time, and socio-ecological systems is a central imperative in the Anthropocene. As mentioned, the Anthropocene brings new angles to rethink globalization and reminds us that our impact on and interactions with *distant* regions or the "distant and future other" (Maak, 2009) may often be non-obvious, but are certainly real. As stated by Levy et al (2007 p. 245), global and cosmopolitan mindsets will be required to arrive at "complex, innovative, and non-conventional interpretations that do not simplify global realities, but rather represent them in all their complexity, ambiguity, and indeterminacy". To build a shared sense of global responsibility and

justice for humanity *and the Earth-systems* will require active involvement of businesses, and the organization of mechanisms, institutions and systems that deal with novel and global phenomena (risks and opportunities).

. Guiding questions around (global) responsibility. Questions such as the following can be of use to guide organizations in their cosmopolitan aspirations: Is our organization helping to create governance mechanisms that contribute to addressing social-ecological challenges at local and global levels? Is our organization enabling multiple identities to flourish, including that of 'global citizen'? Is our organization helping to build a felt sense of responsibility, not only for 'our company', 'our community', 'our jobs', 'our team', 'our shareholders', 'our customers' or 'the purpose of our organization' but for the future of the earth and all its people?

Translating some of these issues into a research agenda will be an ambitious task - but one that comes with significant urgency. A new geological epoch, the Anthropocene, has ended the stable, privileged Holocene period that allowed humans to flourish. The many insights provided by the natural sciences –some of them briefly sketched here- bring an invitation to reconsider key notions around local-global interdependence, and a planetary scale that becomes even more evident and reminds us about wide-ranging (global) fragility. In the Anthropocene, cosmopolitanism may be an even more relevant proposal than in any previous time. We agree, "globalization without cosmopolitanism could fail" (Held, 2003, p. 479). Therefore, we believe that a global perspective, one that engages with refined understandings of the "planetary level" is necessary; that a prime responsibility of organizations is the urgent attention to stewardship of the earth's ecological and social systems; and that cosmopolitan principles form a powerful basis for wise and effective decision-making. Organizations and business leaders, inspired by a cosmopolitan sensitivity shall be well positioned to be part of the solution and, we have argued, approach complex issues from much needed *cultural, ethical and governance* angles. We summarize some of the central arguments distilled in this paper in Table 1.

INSERT TABLE 1 AROUND HERE

Further research will be needed on the topic of global responsibility and cosmopolitanism when challenges such as the response to the new epoch of the Anthropocene are taken into consideration. We see this paper as one of the initial, exploratory steps in that direction.

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