Narrated Cosmopolitanism

-An examination of the UNHCR and the UNESCO

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to identify contemporary human rights and cultural debates relating to cosmopolitanism in the UN. The analysis consists of the narratives on cosmopolitanism in the documents of two UN agencies; the UNHCR and UNESCO. Oftentimes the cosmopolitan issues are dealt with tacitly by speaking of the issues at hand and not the bigger picture, so to get to the core of understanding the inner workings of one world’s largest upholders of universal rights regardless of citizenship and the diminishing importance of one’s nationality I have opted to utilize a narrative approach. Narratives found include the importance of Saviours other than the UN, poverty and lack of education as inhibitors of claiming human rights, and the problems with distinguishing between refugees who have are protected by cosmopolitan rights and migrants who aren’t. The UNHCR and UNESCO are through hard work and a concerted effort with other Organizations and civil society coming closer to creating a rights-based cosmopolitanism where the least common denominator of human life will be granted in for all, regardless of country of birth or the governing quality of one’s nation-state.

Key words: cosmopolitanism, United Nations, narrative analysis, citizenship, culture

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1 Introduction

At the same time, one can be a United States citizen of German background, of Swedish origins. A Christian; a socialist; a vegetarian; a women’s rights activist; a musician and so on with endless links to others all over the globe. Each classification connects a person to some groups of individuals and creates distance from others. A complex understanding of one's own identity can bridge gaps and create understanding across borders. This is the basis of the theory of cosmopolitanism, an old word literally meaning the condition of world citizenship. Rights are now not only bestowed upon nation-states but on individuals. Individuals can claim civil liberties and social rights not only from the sometimes corrupted State in which they are citizens but from the UN and regional organizations. They are rights which all people owe to one another regardless of nationality, and based on cross-border understanding and identification.

This thesis is concerned with the diminishing importance of nation-states and the growing importance of the IO:s, and in particular the UN in granting basic human rights and in promoting cultural, social and knowledge exchange. Cosmopolitanism entails the international regulation of human rights violations such as in refugee situations, the freedom of speech, and the general promotion of tolerance and knowledge exchange between cultures. The international legislature and monitoring of human rights stem from IO’s, and the transnational civil society. Cosmopolitanism will be understood as the legal and cultural norms of globalization. In this thesis the UNHCR is chosen to represent the legal cosmopolitan framework within the UN, and the UNESCO will represent the cultural cosmopolitan framework within the UN.

1.1 Formulation of the Topic

Some cosmopolitan theorists argue that a new strong world government needs to be established, others will argue that IO:s are more and more infringing on states’ democratic self-governance. The UN has been the leading force in creating and maintaining cosmopolitan rights, since its formation after World War II. It’s High Commissioner for Refugees and UNESCO’s work are the topic of this thesis. What characteristics of the cosmopolitan discourse can be found in their work from the past few years? This leads us to the three research questions below. The first question will be addressed in Chapter 3 which also serves as a background. The second and third question will be addressed in Chapter 6, 7 and 8.
1.2 Research Questions

- How is cosmopolitanism constructed in UN?
- What narrative on cosmopolitanism can be found in recent documents issued by the UNHCR, and in UNESCO?
- Can any aims to increase cosmopolitan rights within the two agencies be identified?
2 Theoretical Framework on the Concept of Cosmopolitanism

Below follows the theoretical framework for the thesis, focusing on the understanding of cosmopolitanism. The theoretical understanding will serve as the basis for the identification and understanding of cosmopolitan narratives in the documentation.

Cosmopolitanism stems from a long history of globalization of cultures. Immanuel Kant was one of the first western philosophers to formulate a theory for what we now describe as cosmopolitanism. Before Kant, there were other western legal traditions that went beyond treaties between sovereign states. There were conceptions of natural law, of Christian morals and the like (Benhabib 2006:25). The Peace of Westfalia in 1648 is considered to have been the starting point of the liberal positivist paradigm. In this order, relations with other countries were considered private matters concerning only the parties involved. Kant is generally considered to have laid the foundation of a post-Westfalian legal order (Benhabib 2006:23).

The human rights revolution after 1945 has been described as the most important cosmopolitan achievement this far. States are no longer the sole subjects of international law and rights were effectively disconnected from national citizenship. But the change has been criticized because it has not really promoted a strong sense of cosmopolitan identity. Residents in non-democratic countries are constantly having their human rights threatened, yet they are still regarded as national citizens rather than global citizens by liberal democracies (Bauböck 2002:115). Kant’s vision of peace promoted by a confederation of free republics was based on states as pieces of a puzzle, as is the UN System today (Bauböck 2002:110).

The last two centuries have entailed a nation-building process in the West. Will Kymlicka contends that there has been a complete reordering of political space, eliminating empires, kingdoms, city-states, colonies into a system of nation-states which have aimed at churning out a homogenous national identity, culture and religion among citizens in their territory. Often, the victims of this liberal nationhood have been immigrants who have faced exclusion and sub-state groups such as indigenous peoples who would face hostility at borders. Now with the post-national and cosmopolitan relations of today Kymlicka points to a tendency he calls ‘transcending liberal nationhood’ (Kymlicka 2006:129-130). A more multicultural conception of liberal nationhood seems not as near as we may have thought, Kymlicka states, but adds that this would be the only viable long-term solution (Kymlicka 2006:141).
The cultural impact of the Western states whether it be in science, socialism or capitalism has been transforming cultures in almost every society on earth. Since the Second World War, the volume and speed of global communication has increased enormously. Political Scientist David Held at the London School of Economics, maintains that despite all this, national cultures remain strong (Held 2002:48-49). National institutions continue to large impact on people’s lives. There is no common global way of thinking, no universal world history that unites people. What we have, are many sets of political debates, systems, et cetera through which we can negotiate a discourse on multicultural politics and human rights (Held 2002:56).

Seyla Benhabib is of a different view, she states that sovereignty no longer means that a state should have ultimate and arbitrary authority over its citizens. States that treat their citizens in violation of norms and close their borders prevent a free market, freedom of speech and association are becoming outsiders in societies of states. This type of sovereignty is sometimes referred to as the “naming and shaming” process of sanctions which influences the behavior of states without military action and without violating the right to self-determination (Benhabib 2006:24 and www.unhchr.ch 1984).

Chan Kwok-Bun, Professor of Sociology at the Hong Kong Baptist University, essentially sees cosmopolitanism as arising from day-to-day interconnectedness and contact between cultures (Chan 2002:191, 206-207). Classical cosmopolitanism has sometimes been portrayed as a form of chosen detachment from the rules, regulations and commitments of a regular citizenship, like a luxurious view from an airplane where one can’t see borders. Now cosmopolitanism is increasingly associated with the much less fortunate fates and transnational experiences of refugees and state-less persons (Özkırımlı 2005:150).

Other cosmopolitan theorists such as Kok-Chor Tan, assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, argue that there is a broader need for cosmopolitanism. Tan thinks of global distributive justice as inherently cosmopolitan. The focus on humanitarian duties and assistance such as feeding the poor to fulfill the right to food does not sufficiently tackle the problem of global poverty. The monetary transfers, relief funds and technological transfers of the UN, others institutions, and civil society are good but our duties of justice calls for correcting the distributive aspects of global institutions (Tan 2004:19-20). The cosmopolitan idea of justice means that individuals are entitled to equal moral consideration regardless of nationality, citizenship, race, sex, religion etc. There are different understandings of what equal consideration means (Tan 2004:40). Tan describes the global structures of distribution of wealth (which is still tied to nationalism and non-interference) as unfairly restricting the life-options of many individuals whose governments are not the only one’s to blame for the economical situation in the poor countries (Tan 2004:201).

National identity arguably still is one of our many group identities. It is differentiated from membership in other groups, such as regional identities, linguistic identities, professional identities, because it derives from a grouping which is hardened by law and enforcement (Fleischer Feldman 2006:25).
While Carol Fleischer Feldman believes that national identities make powerful claims on the personality of its members, at the same time she asks herself how can defend the importance of one national culture at the expense of the growing other (sub)cultural identities that we don’t share (Fleischer Feldman 2006:28). As the research on ‘rooted cosmopolitans’ have shown, multiple identities do not have to be paradoxical. A ‘rooted cosmopolitan’ has stable connections to the local community as well as the world as a whole. More and more people are migrating they are in effect part of diasporas, of their new home countries and of the greater globe as well (Özkırımlı 2005:151).

The national identity can be seen as a common knowledge of cultural instruments that we use to interpret events in the nation. The conclusions can differ but they reference the same cultural identity (Fleischer Feldman 2006:29) A cosmopolitan identity then, would be made up of a common knowledge of the cultural instruments that we use to interpret global events such as a financial crisis, global environmental issues, or refugees. Benhabib maintains that the presence of people who do not share the main culture of a country pose a challenge to the democratic institutions to modify the meaning of being a citizen in that country (Benhabib 2006:69).

Cosmopolitanism is concerned with negotiating and encompassing the cultural, ethical and legal basis of the global political order where states and political communities are important, but not exclusively. While political nationalism tends to exclusively prioritize the national identity and interest, it cannot produce many sought-after public goods without regional and global interaction. Cosmopolitanism, unlike nationalism encompasses the multitude of concerns, processes and problems that are shared by people regardless of where they live or were born (Held 2002:57). Critics on the other hand, have stated that the cosmopolitanism of today is far too entangled with the capitalism and has arisen from the liberal Western hegemony (Calhoun 2002:108).
3 The UN as a Facilitator of Cosmopolitanism

On 26 June 1945, 50 States signed the United Nations Charter. The Charter is the constitution of the United Nations and is binding under international law. The preamble to the UN Charter clearly states an ambition to create and enforce equal rights for all:

"WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED to /.../reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained”

(www.un.org)

As Benhabib withholding we have entered a phase since the Declaration and the end of WW II which is characterized by a transition from international to cosmopolitan norms. These norms are driven by global civil society, the infrastructure of capitalism, and by treaty obligations, and multilateral agreements. The key switch is that the rights and norms may arise from treaties such as the UN Charter but they are to do with endowing individuals rather than states and state agents with rights, freedoms and opportunities (Benhabib 2006:15-17). The IO’s that materialize cosmopolitanism have come to have courts where the legal aspects of violations are debated and settled, such as the International Court of Justice who advised against an Israeli wall on the West Bank, and the European Court of Human Rights which has found Russia guilty of murdering Chechynans, and the UK guilty of detaining suspected terrorists on false grounds (Kennedy 2006:211-212). An African Court of Justice for African States is about to be developed by the AU (www.achpr.org).

For some it signifies a love of mankind, instead of a love of country, but cosmopolitanism is not simply an institutional remedy, it is a moral outlook. As such it denies states and national institutions primary ethical value. In principle it suggests that nationality and state borders are irrelevant to people’s entitlement to the basic conditions of a good life (Özkırımlı 2005:139).

It can also be seen as the recognizing the hybrid and fluid character of nationality and identity in the first place. To other theorists such as Jürgen Habermas and David Held, cosmopolitanism is a matter of discourse ethics. Let us briefly discuss this. The discursive theory of ethics takes a universalist moral standpoint, and thus limits the scope of a moral conversation to only those who are citizens or residents of a certain territory would be morally wrong. All people
are potential partners in a conversation where they would have to justify their actions to other individuals which it impacts. Because the moral justifications and discourses now have to have a wider range than only the moral duties and obligations to the population in our homeland community we need a moral perspective and discourse simply as humans.

In the UN Charter, 111 articles define among other things the aims of the United Nations as well as the UN organs and their duties. The General Assembly is among other things responsible for the further development of human rights norms and standards. It can condemn at the political level states that are responsible for human rights violations. Other UN entities associated with upholding cosmopolitan standards are the UDHR, OHCHR, the UNOCHA, the ICJ, ECOSOC, and the UNHCR and UNESCO (www.eda.admin.ch).

National groups may overlap with ethnic groups, and groups with a shared history. Others like the American national identity, are according to Carol Fleischer Feldman more evidently based on culture. Examples of this are American football, hot dogs, the American dream and the Fourth of July (Fleischer Feldman 2006:27). Similarly, one can easily draw the conclusion that a cosmopolitan identity cannot be based on a common ethnicity, language or religion, but rather has to be based on a “global culture”.

At present (2009) there are nine fundamental international human rights treaties (Conventions) within the UN framework. Such agreements are legally binding to the state parties. It is this fact which differentiates them from most Declarations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes the right to freedom of movement across boundaries, and the right to emigrate (but not the right to immigrate), and a right to enter a country. It also stipulates the right to a nationality, and the right to asylum. The fourth Geneva Convention is another important regulatory document for the treatment of refugees. The treatment of states of their own citizens is certainly no longer an uninterrupted territory. Nevertheless the treaties are only binding for signatory states, and can be widely disregarded by those states that do not sign (Benhabib 2006:30-31). But because UN membership is not limited to democratic states, its scope is truly global (Bauböck 2002:125).

Seyla Benhabib, a professor at UC Berkeley, delivered a series of lectures in 2006 where she investigated some key areas for cosmopolitan actors to address. These include the right to universal hospitality, and crimes against humanity. The right to universal hospitality demands that no state refuses to give asylum or refuge to those persons whose intentions is peaceful (Benhabib 2006:24-25). Crimes against humanity refer to instances where leaders, organizers or instigators have engaged in murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population “whether or not in violation of domestic law of the country where perpetrated” (www.unhcr.org 1945).

Özkirimli believes that the nation-state system is not only threatened by economic interdependence, but also the growing network of IGOs, supranational cooperation and NGOs. Growing streams of mass migration and mass exodus also contribute to the dissolution of state borders as we know them, where each state's
territory should be strongly tied to a particular racial, cultural and social norms (Özkirimli 2005:132). Within the framework of cooperation between UNHCR and its partners the UN frequently takes the leading role. When the refugees can not put their trust in the their state for patronage and rights to a particular territory the UNHCR and its partners have a great shared responsibility, and can contribute to justice being shaped outside the individual states.

The development of a cosmopolitan democratic community does not require a world government, but it needs to be built on the creation of transnational networks covering all levels and participants in global governance, writes Meyda Yegenoglu. Yegenoglu believes that it is non-state actors who are instrumental in the creation of a cosmopolitan civil society and cosmopolitan control. As global citizenship can be built on the UN and civil society rather than States, evolution has come all the way and the nation state has already been superseded (Yegenoglu 2005:107-108).
4 Description of the Material

I have chosen to analyze documents. I have will utilize four criteria when selecting the documents. As described by Uwe Flick (2006:248), the quality of a document as data in social science research, can be assessed by estimating the:

1. Authenticity. Is it genuine and of unquestionable origin?
2. Credibility. Is the evidence free from error and not distorted?
3. Representativeness. Is the evidence typical?
4. Meaning. Is the evidence clear and comprehensible?

When assessing the first criterion, authenticity, I have been looking at whether the document is a primary or secondary document. Most documents that have been chosen are primary documents that have been issued by the institutions in UNHCR and UNESCO. The credibility criterion is concerned with the accurateness of the documentation, and how prone the producer of the document is to making mistakes. I am rating the material as very credible since I have downloaded them directly from the official UNHCR and UNESCO documentation databases.

The representativeness of a document has to do with how typical it is. It is helpful to know if a record is representative and contains the information you would normally find in a record concerning the narrative on cosmopolitanism in UNHCR and UNESCO (Flick 2006:248-249). The aim is to include typical debates and decisions on cosmopolitanism in the last few years (Esaiasson et al 2004:244). When choosing texts I have been using UNHCR Refworld and UNESCO UNESDOC, which have full-text versions of most documents. Using the search function I have searched for “cosmo*”, “cosmopolitanism”, and “research” respectively. I have purposely searched for texts which have a bearing on the research, such as research papers from the UNHCR and policy developing analyses from UNESCO. Then I have chosen the first texts in the list of results that contained a lengthier discussion on a subject related to cosmopolitanism. I have picked the first results because I did not want to go looking for certain narratives I want to include, and thereby obstruct the results. For a complete list see the list of primary material in Chapter 9.1.

The meaning of a document is different for different readers. I will be drawing on the intended meaning from the producer’s side, as well as the average reader’s perception of meaning. For me as a student of political science, on the other hand, the documents may have another meaning altogether and that will also be taken into consideration (Flick 2006:248-249).

I have picked newer texts with the aim of narrowing the discussion of cosmopolitanism in the thesis to recent activities and changes in the last 3-4 years.
5 Narrative and Storytelling

I have chosen to go about this discursive analysis using narratives and storytelling. It is through stories that people relate to values of different social or ethnic groups, and internalize social conventions. Because stories provide a coherent account of world events and actors, and place social facts in a larger pattern, it is useful to policy analysts. The storylines usually also suggest moral reasoning in a way that is useful when analyzing cosmopolitanism (Fischer 2003:179). Within policy analysis the use of narrative has been most closely connected with problem-definition and problem-setting but it has also had an important role in the analysis of the entire policy cycle, including implementation and evaluation (Fischer 2003:161). Here follows a description and discussion on the chosen methodology.

5.1 Narrative Points of Departure

A critical understanding of documents means taking into account who has produced them and for what purposes. Flick discourages from focusing too much on the contents of a document without taking the use, context, and function of the text into account. The data, the documents, are a means to constructing a version of the cosmopolitan process in the UN. Documentation like this is often used in a broader spectrum for making a certain case on the evolution of history (Flick 2006:252). In what way are cosmopolitan issues “framed” by the UN and what type of stories and narratives do they want us to see them as?

Narrative methods are used to understand the implied storytelling and rhetoric of texts. There are three main methods to collect the stories of organizations. The first includes a collection of spontaneous stories over a long time in the field. This is described as difficult and requires a special sensitivity and good memory, or a good opportunity to record the material. The second way is to produce stories. You ask, for example, informants to tell about different events. (Czarniawska 2004:42 pp). The third way to collect stories is to study written stories created by organizations (Czarniawska 2004:44). I have chosen the latter approach, because there is a widely accessible material, and I am particularly interested in the policy research and the open information that these UN agencies use to disseminate the story of cosmopolitanism to decision-makers and the citizens of its member states.
5.2 Method of Narrative Analysis

The prominent narrative theoretician Jerome Bruner contends that shared narratives are what make us active participants in our cultures. Narratives are used to make sense of what is happening around us, what has happened, and what may happen in the future. Narratives pattern our lives and our reality are shaped by them. From this point of view, shared story-worlds are very much the basis of whether we feel and act nationalistic or cosmopolitan (Bruner 2006:14). The stories are likely to be found in the products of a culture, as well as being reiterated and created in them. Such products could be the documents that are being produced in a large policymaking organization, such as the UN, as well as by the media, books and in this thesis. Stories can be large and shared cultural stories that form a common national identity, or they can divide people, such as with the Nazis or apartheid. They can also be transnational such as the narrative about cosmopolitanism. Stories are likely to be implicit, similar to the way that our day-to-day culture is not explicitly known to us (Bruner 2006:15). These stories would be present in documents produced by the executive and legislative bodies of the UNHCR and UNESCO.

So, what are the details of a narrative? Narratives typically have:

- characters (agents)
- actions
- goals
- recipients
- settings and
- some form of drama

The “drama” or trouble is known as a peripeteia (classic greek for adventure). Then comes an action that needs to be taken to correct the drama. This action then produces a resolution if successful. Stories are likely to end with a coda, a commentary or lesson to be learned (Bruner 2006:17-19). Stories are also likely to have roles: the protagonists, the hero, as well as attempts to resolve the predicament, then the outcome of these trials and the protagonist reactions. (Czarniawska 2004:41). These parts of a story building structure and is good to have in mind when carrying out a narrative analysis.

Stories also come in genres; tragedies, comedies, crime or political corruption, to name a few. These are relatively banal when stripped of their unique particularities (Bruner 2006:20).

Narrative approaches are not in any way a new concept in the literature on decision-making and policy analysis. Policymakers may agree on the specifics but have polarizing suggestions for action due to the narrative framing. Few academics in the field of policy analysis will tell you that narratives and stories do not effectively carry a lot of information in the bureaucracy. Still, for some positivist social scientists, terms like stories and post structuralism are signs of a relativizing non-objective approach that implies the non-existence of a reality.
beyond the social construction (Roe 1994:9-10). This is not the point that I am trying to make, but to point at the reality of the importance of the framing of questions, issues, problems on the agenda of global governance organizations of the UN. Facts can be interpreted in different ways, to support different sets of opposing solutions and decisions to be made.

Narratives are usually defined as a series of events, but another important aspect of the narrative text is that some or all the events are described when they occur within a specific context. Therefore, these stories are brought to life for the reader and act out more than when presented in a summary fashion. Narrative researcher Catherine Emmott refers to this as text providing a framework (frame). Another type of presentation is when the text is unframed text, this happens when events are summarized and presented as a background to the main event. (Emmott 1997:236)

To be able to generalize, I will localize narrative themes. The narrative themes can best be described as recurring stories (Robertson 2005:237). For the analysis of the UN’s cosmopolitan stories I will identify a number of special features and keywords, and then identify these as a narrative that we can discern themes from. This will allow me to bring different narrative from the Organization together so that individual stories within a certain area can be presented collectively (Robertson 2005:237-238).

Agreements in large organizations tend to be based upon the *lowest common denominator*. The consensus becomes an end in itself, and the result is often supported by a very professionalized jargon that makes it possible for people with different experiences and stand-points to reach a *resolution*. This narrative, may even focus more on the reinforcing the power of the writers and their capacity to reach good conclusions than on the topic at hand (Molin 2006:67).

Narrative need not consist of all these parts and functions mentioned. It is necessary to be able to recognize a narrative in a material. Different kinds of materials containing various kinds of narrative, and therefore it is the material that determines how to identify and recognize narrative (Bergström & Boréus 2005:230-232). The material I will analysis consists mostly of research, plans, evaluations and outreach information and is therefore not a traditional story like a novel or short story.

Once all the material is collected you interpret it and write a summary of this interpretation. What is it in the text that I should look for and interpret? In order for me to recognize a narrative in the same way, I will have to decide and define what a narrative in the material is. This contributes to the inter-subjectivity.

A narrative feature will be operationalized in my material as follows:

- It will have been disseminated by the UNHCR or UNESCO respectively
- A staging of ”facts” in a cosmopolitan context
- A dramatization
5.3 Discussion on the Chosen Texts and Methods

My study is a kind of case study. Social research can often be categorized as either experimental, as a social survey, or as a case study (Gomm 2000:2). This thesis consists of two case studies, which work together to make a somewhat better view of what the conditions for cosmopolitanism in the UNHCR and UNESCO is like. These are just two cases, so any generalizations to the entire UN System cannot be made. I’ve kept the number of cases down to two in order to be able to increase the amount information about each case. It would not have been possible to write a thesis about experiments on this topic since it is hard to make a reconstruction of international relations, and if I would have done a social survey I wouldn’t have been able to gather as much data about each case (institution, text, employee or refugee).

When it comes to the generalizability of the qualitative results, I do not aim to have an external validity that will stretch from these two institutions and are translatable to the whole UN system. I will be studying what is in these institutions, but drawing any wider conclusions on globalization, world government or the like is not necessary in my opinion. The typical hard science way of reasoning, that if there was another situation that was exactly the same and you collected the data you would reach the same result is also not applicable. I do not see it as being likely that other similar UN’s will appear any time soon. Also, any attempts to reach generalizability to the EU is not feasible, since the EU has an entirely different legal structure where EU resolutions automatically have legal status in member states without having to be ratified (Ward Schofield 2000:74 pp)

The epistemology is cultural and what we use to interpret the world, which then also can be reconstructive. We use a certain epistemology which then impacts the ontology. In this case a narrative epistemology which to the reader may make the ontology seem to be just flourishing with narratives (Fleischer Feldman 2006:32). Governments and identities change, IOs change, and so do national identities and cosmopolitanism. Language is a powerful selector in directing attention to subjects and forming a way to perceive it (Molin 2006:61). And, in my case, some of the texts contain decisions towards actions.

I intend to contribute to the reliability and the interpersonal transparency of the analysis by sharing my conceptions of the reality of the texts (Bruner 2006:17). Also, by clearly stating how a narrative is identified, and what it contains, it will be more obvious to the reader how the identification of narratives has been made.
6 Narrative Analysis: UNHCR Documentation

The purpose of this Chapter is to investigate the content and tone of recent narratives in the UNHCR discussion on cosmopolitanism. Since cosmopolitan ideas are rarely described as cosmopolitanism, but rather as issues of discrimination against children, indigenous peoples or women, as human rights, or in terms of democracy, the tacit meaning of the discourse will need to be examined. The same is valid for the Chapter on UNESCO.

6.1 The Importance of Other Saviors

In Document 1 the UNHCR itself appears strangely absent. The narrative revolves around local groups and militias as upholders of human rights in West Africa. The citizen responses to the state security failures have engendered citizen movements and support for the vigilante groups and militias which are described as legitimate in the eyes of the citizens and effective in general. This in effect places the militias as the savior of the public. The savior rids them of the problem which was failing government that cannot protect its citizens. The cosmopolitan features of international organizations aren’t mentioned at all. The governments are described as unable to offer protection, in accordance with the 1951 UN Refugee Convention’s definition of a refugee. The refugee is more an object than a subject. The Militias on the other hand are active. Thus, neither the state government nor a cosmopolitan agency such as the UNHCR is the best suited agent for guaranteeing refugee rights, but the militias.

"Where their own or the host state fails to protect them, displaced people may feel they have no option but to organize their own protection against attacks and intimidation; in such cases vigilante groups and militias can be seen as effective solutions to the breakdown of the rule of law and the state"

(Document 1:1)

The weakness and failing of several West African states, including their police force, has inhibited their ability to provide security. This is the predicament, or “problem” in the document’s narrative. The popular conception provides fertile ground for the emergence of vigilante groups and civil militias in the refugee context. In Nigeria, the police are being described as perpetrators, and as having committed countless human rights abuses. In Sierra Leone, other “saviors” have
also come into the picture such as private military companies, or mercenary organizations which has “diminished the state’s responsibility/…/and its authority as a state”. This West African trend is of private military companies is said to show a movement towards a privatized conception of security which bypasses the state (Document 1:2-3). When the author talks of the legitimization of non-state justice she differentiates between the state justice based on a liberal human rights standard (i.e. cosmopolitanism) and the vigilantism which is based on compensatory, immediate and corporal punishment. The local discourse on human rights and state justice focuses on its limitations and unfairness. The human rights discourse as well as the Nigerian state structure is being depicted as alien or a western colonial imposition which do not reflect the indigenous models of right and wrong (Document 1:4). The report states that Nigerians will continue to look to alternative means of security whether through these groups or other forms of justice yet to emerge, in the absence of a functioning state. The UNHCR is strangely absent in this cosmopolitan context (Document 1:8).

This narrative suggests that identification with cosmopolitan norms and organizations is low. This supports Bauböck’s view that the developments toward cosmopolitan norms have failed to create a strong sense a cosmopolitan identity, especially in non-developed states. The citizens of West African states instead of turning to the UN or NGOs turn to local unlawful groups for protection when their government fails them. The roles in this narrative, like much of the human rights discourse are usually that the protagonist is a given; the refugee. The predicament is the refugee camp or the situation in the home country. The protector or hero if you will, is the civil militias, vigilante groups.

6.2 The Problems of the Countries of Origin: Brain Drain and Need for Remittances

The UNHCR series of research papers are published by the Policy Development and Evaluation Service. They contain preliminary results of research carried out by UNHCR staff and associates and provide an insight into the recent scientific discourse on refugee related issues (Document 2)

The poorest countries of origin are described as having

“little real incentive to obstruct the departure of their citizens, even if they are leaving in an illegal or irregular manner”.

This is partly prescribed to the fact that migration reduces the work force and the need to create jobs for them. The narrative here is that the migrating families without jobs in their home country may become instable, and a threat to governing politicians. Large streams of migration also bring the promise of remittance transfers which the poor country of origin needs. The diasporas outside state borders may also contribute to building a trading network (Document 2:5).
6.3 The Story about Refugees as “Citizens of UNHCR”

The third narrative belongs to the tragedy genre. One recent research paper from January 2009, discusses whether the UNHCR has become a surrogate state to the refugees in protracted situations. The paper is intended to be a response to recent critique of the UNHCR where it was described as primarily interested in its own size and status. The UNHCR wants to rectify its image and wash away suggestions that it may have been complied in the perpetuation of refugee situations and camps that should have reached a speedy end by now (Document 3:1).

However, the paper does not offer a different view; it explains the predicament of the UNHCR who have been placed in a position of assuming responsibility for growing refugee camps to fill gaps in the international refugee system which were not foreseeable when the convention was ratified after WWII. The UNHCR goes on to blame policies pursued by other actors. This takes away from the general view as discussed before, that the UNHCR usually takes the lead role in refugee interventions (Document 3:1).

The UNHCR are given to role of the protagonist, whose aims and willingness is good, but which has been overly “used” by 1. host countries who want to retain the visibility of refugee camps to discourage people from settling on their territory, 2. refugees who have grown increasingly comfortable in the refugee camps to the level where they have no incentive to move, and 3. donor countries’ administrative structures. The semi-permanence of many refugee situations and the requisite for care and maintenance led to the development of services, and systems parallel to that of the host country, and in many cases better than that available to locals. This than started a predicament (Document 3:7) where the organization was being regarded as a surrogate state, with its own territory, citizens (refugees) and public services like education, health care, water etc. The refugee camps even had a culture, an ideological basis of nationality, such as community participation and equality between men and women. The UNHCR as an agent or actor was regarded as a ‘benign foreigner’ or as a ‘a better husband than a hutu man’ in the sense that it provided a better living to women.

One refugee man in Tanzania was quoted as saying:

“there is a change. People are not taking care of their own life. They are just living like babies in UNHCR’s arms.”

(Document 3:8)

The trials the UNHCR faced because of these situations have included refugee emergencies such as Darfur, and the growing “evidence” of the negative consequences of protracted refugee situations. To these facts the UNHCR appears stumped. Then comes a turn in the “unfortunate” past of the UNHCR:
“Since the turn of the new millennium however three related factors have enabled the UNHCR and other members of the international community to become more engaged with the problems of protracted refugee situations and to ask whether it can be approached in alternative ways”

(Document 3:9)

The *coda* to this situation, paradoxically, turns out to be the UNHCR itself. Thanks to UNHCR research like this document, on protracted refugee situations this problem will be addressed. In this narrative context we have to consider who the sender of this message is, and who the potential reader is. The UNHCR of course benefits from this narrative in the sense that it pulls away the attention that failures draws to them. Molin’s theory on how Organizations tend to focus on the reinforcing the power of the writers and their capacity seems fitting to this narrative.

Document 4, is a discussion paper on how to resolve protracted refugee situations in which the UNHCR are involved. The UNHCRs involvement in the millions of refugees who live in camps or settlements with no immediate prospect of finding a home for a longer period of time, is described as a problem. The predicament of the UNHCR and the refugees that rely on its help is to be solved by the different actors including states of origin and settlement with a high level of consensus. The suggested solutions are all aimed at making the refugees able to sustain themselves without the help of the UNHCR (Document 4:1,7). Voluntary repatriation, self reliance or integration into the local community are suggested as solutions/coda that should be promoted so as to avoid situations where refugees become to reliant on the UNHCR for a long period of time (Document 4:10-14).

This supports Yegenoglu’s view of a global citizenship as needing to be built not on a world government, but on transnational networks covering all levels and participants.

6.4 Refugee or Migrant? That is the question

Some of the documents are to do with determining who is a refugee and who is a migrant. Only people with refugee status are under the direct supervision of the UNHCR. The Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol stipulate rules for determining who has refugee status and how they are to be treated. Both the Convention and the Protocol allow for the 110 signatory governments to participate in determining who should have refugee status and who should not. According to the original 1951 Convention a refugee is a person who “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted ... is outside his country of nationality.” The UNHCR is called upon--inter alia--to provide international protection, under the auspices of the United Nations, to refugees falling within the competence of his Office. The fear of being persecuted need not necessarily be based on the applicant's personal experience, it can be based on what has happened to his
friends, relatives and other members of the same racial or social group. It may well turn out that his fear of sooner or later he also becoming a victim of persecution was well-founded (www.unhcr.org 1992)

Document 2 deals with the developmental dimension of migration. The motivations for migration are described as having become difficult for the UNHCR to identify and categorize. People, families, here described as the subjects more than the objects, make an active decision and often leave their home country for a combination of reasons which can be economic, social, political or personal. The issue of motivations has been a strong narrative in migration discourse. The last years’ substantial increase in the number of people moving across borders, and the traditional divisions between countries of origin, transition and destination have been blurred. Now, the question that this narrative asks is if people are moving to foreign countries primarily looking for a better standard of living or if they are seeking refuge from persecution (Document 2:3). Generally people tend to move from poorer to more affluent communities regardless of their legal or irregular refugee status. Poverty is described as the main predicament which gets people moving. The narrative trials, then, of the refuge, is the scrutiny of the hosting country. And again the weak governments and failed states are being described as the drama/peripeteia. These governments are in the refugee/migrant dichotomy depicted as rather silent observers. (Document 2:4).

Migrants are however tacitly being described as cosmopolitans and as a result of the process of globalization, which now has endowed more people with the means to move from one country to another (Document 2:4)

Naming migration without passports and visas “irregular migration” casts it as somewhat of a problem. The UNHCR’s magazine Refugee recently devoted an issue to the topic of Refugees vs. Migrants. Throughout the article both the refugees/migrants are described as active people, embarking often together on a hazardous adventure-like journey to get to the country where they would like to settle. Migrants trying to escape poverty, weak governments and high levels of unemployment. The article conveys the multitude of reasons that people have for migrating as legit. The storyline ties together different reasons for migrating with the overall globalization and technical development. Improved communications and transports are encouraging more and more people to move outside their country. The UNHCR continuously takes a stand for the protagonist, the refugee, in this Document (Document 5:6-8) The people which are least likely to self-identify as a cosmopolitan are the poorest who “stay put”. The trials on the way to a safe life in the county of destiny are twofold; the smugglers and the border control. Under the Title “Protecting Refugees” the UNHCR are cast as saviors from bad governments that will categorically decline to give asylum to certain groups who may be refugees. The very obvious coda comes at the end in the form of a “Ten Point Plan of Action” that has been drawn up by the UNHCR (Document 5:9).

Some countries’ reliance on remittances, such as Afghanistan, Mexico and the Philippines is described as problematic. The remittances are being portrayed as in effect substituting macro-economic development strategies. The remittances may be obstructing reforms from happening that could be the basis of a more long-
term economic growth. Cambodia and Viet Nam could have been described as sending young citizens abroad to gain experiences and a better standard of living, which they could then perhaps return home with. Instead they are described as having calculated the gains from ridding themselves of the labor force and cashing in on remittances (Document 2:7).
7 Narrative Analysis: UNESCO Documentation

The purpose of this Chapter is to investigate the content and tone of recent narratives in the UNESCO discussion on cosmopolitanism.

7.1 Education as a Pre-Requisite for Citizenship

As one of UNESCO’s main working areas, education is very much associated with gaining an understanding of one’s cultural and political surroundings. In light of the UN Literacy Decade (2003-2012), this paper discusses education as the basis of an active citizenship. The literacy challenges of today are described as a regional and global issue that needs to be dealt with by regional and global stakeholders and agents alike. This issue, too, is clearly framed as cosmopolitan although the actual word ‘cosmopolitanism’ doesn’t come up, much like in the majority of the documents. It is cosmopolitanism packaged as globalization (Document 8:5).

Many countries still haven’t implemented national strategies for literacy improvements, but at the meeting that the document is pertaining to, policy makers, researchers and practitioners of education collectively agreed on a joint commitment to put literacy high up on the political agenda in their home countries and to find ways to work together across the borders. The genre of this story is that of a success story. It shows cosmopolitan and transnational bonds not between states but between people with a shared professional and ideological goal:

“With the shared vision and collective commitment of the stakeholders, we will be able to construct a literate and democratic world peopled by critical citizens/.../”
(Document8:5-6).

Creative active citizens can mean different things in different settings, and so can literacy depending on what is considered important knowledge (Document 8:10). In this narrative the focus is knowledge that allows the student to become an active multi-citizen (Document 8:8).

To become a citizen that can relate to and deal with “the multiplicity of contemporary societies beyond the traditional concept of a national, cultural linguistic or religious homogeneity” one needs to be educated on the communicative practices of the citizen, and not an objective set of literacy skills
So, as this article shows, UNESCO acknowledges that the citizen takes a central role as an agent both educationally as well as in terms of the entity that needs to be given rights as opposed to the nation-state.

To help foster critical citizens and provide them with information, UNESCO highlights the importance of teaching journalists to dare to ask difficult questions in order to be able to provide citizens with information and to force leaders to take account of their actions (Document 7:12).

Within its education discourse, UNESCO reports suggest the acceptance of a multitude of parallel narratives and descriptions of society. In a report on “Old Wisdoms and New Initiatives from around the World” from 2005 the indigenous people of Mexico’s opinion is voiced. Their narrative differs because they refuse to participate in cosmopolitan arenas such as the large IO’s. They distrust the actors of the globalized public arena, companies and bureaucracies alike. The fact that UNESCO has published it shows a very multicultural approach (which is in line with the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage from 2003):

“We will never again trade our dreams and autonomous capacities for promises of unlimited prosperity and infinite justice through global political designs. /…/ We govern ourselves in local political bodies. In dismantling the structure of domination of nation-states, we reinvent national and transnational political fields for the harmonious coexistence of differentiated cultures and communities”

(Document 9:106-107)

This narrative highlights the lack of a common world history that was discussed by David Held, and would be needed to create a universal global identity to replace other identities. However with this report the UN may be trying to bridge the gap between old identities and newer ones.

7.2 Cosmopolitan Justice Ensures Rights to Spread Information and Free Speech

The international laws concerning the right to free speech, and crimes against journalists are discussed at length in an issue of the UNESCO Courier. In this case governments are once again part of the predicament and trials that face journalists. Many states fail to protect journalists from attacks or even from being murdered. Often the journalists have been exercising the right to free speech and created enemies in the power structure of their countries. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists justice was done in less than 15 % of the 500 murder cases where journalists were victims in the last 15 years (Document 7:8).

This situation is narrated as a threat to democracy and to the population as a whole and not just as a situation where cosmopolitan rights need to be in place to protect the individual journalists (Document 7:7). Many African countries have a
legislature which prohibits the press from working freely, but coalitions of media and civil society organizations are fighting for Freedom of Information bills to be adopted (Document 7:15).

7.3 Poverty Reduction as a Cosmopolitan Goal

Document 6 is an article by the former UN Assistant Secretary-General Adma Dieng on the topic of why Poverty should be fought with a human rights-based approach based on cosmopolitan values and morale. Dieng describes anti-poverty policies as more likely to be effective and equitable when based on international human rights (Document 6:198). In this narrative, being poor would be equal to having your human rights violated, which is not an entirely new idea. The cosmopolitan idea here is that poverty and hunger need to be fought for as rights and obligations instead of being based on charity or assistance (Document 6:197). Assistance, as we have seen in the case of UNHCR under Chapter 6.3 can be counterproductive in the sense that it inhibits the recipients’ own initiatives.

Says Dieng:

“there can be no doubt that the international systems for protecting human rights provide an ideal framework for establishing strategies to combat poverty”

(Document 6:198)

Poverty, he says is the point where the violations of social, cultural, economic and political rights meet. These rights are described as closely interrelated. Poverty is an obstacle to the exercise of democracy and human rights (Document 6:196). It also is interlinked with the educational aspect of how well you get to know your rights, and how well you are able to articulate them, as mentioned in Chapter 6.1. When viewing the living conditions for the poor population on earth as systematic violation of human rights you realize that it will take a lot of monitoring and control if poverty is to be addressed as a violation of a human right. The article suggests four cosmopolitan mechanisms to control governments’ actions and warrant that the basic needs of the poor are met. Two of them are; 1. the monitoring of governments’ actions by special courts for economic, social and cultural rights. This would be the counterpart to the today’s global and regional courts for political and civil (human) rights, but would have a special mandate to uphold equality and cultural rights. 2. states would be required to submit yearly reports to the international bodies like UNESCO and UNDP who are defining social and cultural rights on which methods they have adopted. In this narrative, the UN takes on the role of combatant for equality and as the agent who is going to put it all right. Poverty is the plague, but the citizens are strangely absent in the text. The administrative and bureaucratic nature of the monitoring and reporting to uphold the rights come across as had for the poor to fight for, and perhaps precisely for this reason poverty needs to be fought, because it stops people from knowing and fighting for their rights (Document 6:202-203). Poor people in
developing states are also known to not migrate or identify with cosmopolitan norms as much as other social groups (see chapter Chapter 5.4 and Yegenoglu 2005).

Cosmopolitan rights such as non-discrimination and equality are already frequent in narratives on human rights, and poverty is known to give rise to discrimination and inequality (Document 6:204). Poverty here seems to be the root of all evil things, and UNESCO as part of the progressive and forward-thinking solution. Yet, since the publishing of this document in 2004 no cosmopolitan framework for fighting poverty with rights and regulations has emerged. On the other hand cosmopolitanism defined as a mutual interconnectedness and reliance on other states on poverty issues has been in place since aid first emerged. Also the Millennium Development Goals has put a global focus on the poverty issue, but halving the amount of people living on less than $1 per day remains a distant dream (www.un.org/millenniumgoals).
8 Discussion and Conclusions

As I have pointed out, UNHCR and UNESCO have important roles to play when it comes to the granting and regulating human rights, and as we have seen in this thesis there were several stories on cosmopolitan topics present in the texts that they produce. The narratives I have located and selected as most significant are

- The Importance of Other Saviors
- The Problems of the Countries of Origin: Brain Drain and Need for Remittances
- The Story about Refugees as “Citizens of UNHCR”
- Refugee or Migrant? That is the question
- Education as a Pre-Requisite for Citizenship
- Cosmopolitan Justice Ensures Rights to Spread Information and Free Speech
- Poverty Reduction as a Cosmopolitan Goal

Two of the UNHCR narratives on cosmopolitan issues reveal a tendency to want to put some of the responsibility as guardians of human rights concerning refugees on other actors such as host countries, countries of origin, and even on militias or vigilante groups. There seems to be a frustration on the part of UNHCR that they are having to take a lot of responsibility where nation-states and civil societies have failed. Throughout the UNHCR analysis the agents have been the refugees, who are often poor. It is clear that these agents are the ones in most dire need of a working cosmopolitanism that grants them human rights where their governments have failed. The people in the most acute situations of poverty are, as discussed, also the ones who are least likely to identify with a cosmopolitan self-image, or to migrate. As Tan’s theory suggests there emerges limited cosmopolitanism from the remittances from Western countries to the poor because it doesn’t change the underlying inequalities. The narrative on whether some groups of immigrants are to be considered refugees or migrant shows the importance of the linguistic approach to the cosmopolitanism. The naming of an individual as a refugee could mean means that they have a right to asylum according to various UN treaties, while the naming of an individual as an immigrant could mean that they are sent back to a country where they are persecuted. It is in some cases a question of life or death.

The UNESCO narratives on Cosmopolitan issues point to their support of the cultural bases and mutual understanding between peoples. They do this through their core areas such as improved education to make better world citizens, beyond doubt a cosmopolitan ideal. Better education means placing demands of better standards and rights on one’s government. The literacy challenges of today are
described as a regional and global issue that needs to be dealt with by regional and global stakeholders and agents alike. There was some intertextuality on the topic of education between the texts. Poverty reduction as a human right has many of the same qualities. Poverty proves to be a dividing factor and shows inequalities and discrimination between world populations that are not compatible with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights sentence “everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person” since there are people dying from starvation. UNESCO also shows tolerance for different understanding of cosmopolitanism as a human right such as in the case of Document 9. Much like Bruner stated, the stories were often implicit, and cosmopolitanism seemed not to be the main focus although the content were most certainly cosmopolitan issues as they were defined in Chapter 2.

My first research question was answered in part in Chapter 3 and in Chapters 6-7. The cosmopolitanism in the UN is protected through Treaties, but are only binding to signatory states and sometimes disregarded by those states that have signed them. The number of human rights declarations and recommendations has grown in recent years, especially from UNESCO. They cover a wide-ranging selection of topics such as the right to information in cyberspace to the protection of world heritages.

My third research question was about what the next step toward cosmopolitanism in the UN may be. This is not entirely simple to answer. The narratives in the documentation and research papers of UNHCR and UNESCO are clearly framed as cosmopolitan although the actual word ‘cosmopolitanism’ doesn’t come up. The process of building a wider cosmopolitanism seems to be happening partly in disguise, although I have only been able to analyze a small selection of documents. These changes do not seem to be newsworthy to the UN and it is not named what it is. Their task is to make cosmopolitanism work, not necessarily to increase it. It is also not for the agencies to decide but for the member states. But the lack of an explicit discussion of the future of cosmopolitanism concerns me. These are the agencies that millions, maybe billions of people rely on to grant them their cosmopolitan rights. As cosmopolitanism is emerging as an important topic of policy research, the UN should itself become more active in carrying out research.

When it comes to the overall impression of the status of cosmopolitanism, perceived through the narratives, I believe that both the UNHCR and UNESCO through hard work and a concerted effort with other Organizations and civil society are coming closer to creating a rights-based cosmopolitanism where the lowest common denominator, which Molin talks about, of human life will be granted in for all. Regardless of country of birth or the governing quality of one’s nation-state.
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