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ONE FOOT OUT THE DOOR: INDECISIVE COSMOPOLITANISM AND RABIH ALAMEDDINE

by
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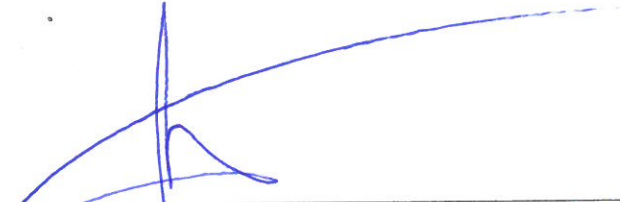at the American University of Beirut

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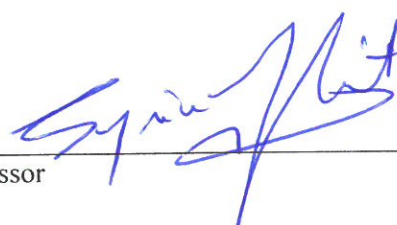# ONE FOOT OUT THE DOOR: INDECISIVE COSMOPOLITANISM AND RABIH ALAMEDDINE
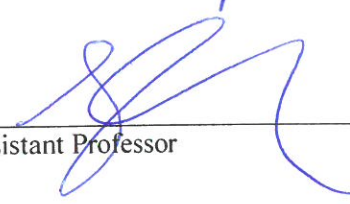
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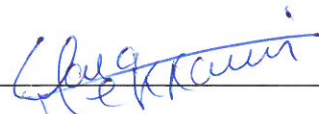
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: One Foot Out the Door: Indecisive Cosmopolitanism and Rabih Alameddine

        The notions of world and war, city and outsiders, are inseparable. The suffering these indissociable splits engender is one guide to their overcoming. In a "shared" world of open and closed systems the term "cosmopolitanism" suggests a way of taking suffering-in-common seriously. This thesis considers the role of suffering in the work of Lebanese-American novelist Rabih Alameddine and approaches cosmopolitan plurality with a new hesitance, advocating for what I term "indecisive cosmopolitanism". Indecisive cosmopolitanism registers the painful familiarity of strangers in the world, those invited in but hesitant to partake fully as well as those rendered without place. As a mode of being-in-community that questions belonging altogether, indecisive cosmopolitanism intervenes in shared being and in the structures of feeling and attachment that form community. In its hesitation, it is interpretative in a way that is necessary for actual global change. As such, it meshes well with Bruce Robbins' observation that cosmopolitanism can shift "an already existing worldliness . . . from interpreting the world towards changing it." Cosmopolitanism's indecisiveness in laying claim to the world while still participating allows a painfully honest view of our flawed world that can open us to one another's suffering enough to make a world together.

    The thesis proceeds as follows. The first section looks at the progression of cosmopolitan thought in relation to indecision and hesitancy. As scholars try to comprehend the means of which to form an interaction between open and closed world systems, hesitancy and negotiation with uncertainty prove to be necessary aspects. Moreover, to assert the need for indecisive cosmopolitanism, this section looks at global and local injustices as well as the manner in which they are dealt with, if dealt with at all. The second section presents a study of indecisive cosmopolitanism in the context of Rabih Alameddine's literature, where the themes of suffering, belonging, and remembering prove to be consistent in discussing indecisive cosmopolitanism. The third section reaffirms the necessity of indecision in cosmopolitanism as well as its usefulness on local and universal levels. The overall aim of the paper is to offer a robust definition of indecisive cosmopolitanism to trace the intricacies of identifying with cosmopolitanism as a mode of being in the world and accepting indecision's role in forming a sense of belonging.

CONTENTS

Introduction

The Decisions that We Don't Make

A. The World and a Shared State of Suffering

"later that night
i held an atlas in my lap
ran my fingers across the whole world
and whispered
where does it hurt?
it answered
everywhere
everywhere
everywhere."

Warsan Shire – "what they did yesterday afternoon"

The whole world hurts everywhere, always. Humanity is bound and separated

through suffering. War divides us and humanity unites us; and so, the cycle goes on and

on, between a world of opening up to one another and shutting down against the suffering

we cause each other. Perhaps nothing calls more for hospitality and openness than the

global refugee crisis. Over 6.5 million Palestinians alone have claimed refugee status

since 1948 (Al-Awda 2003); with the ongoing war in Syria, over 3 million citizens have

fled the country, seeking asylum wherever possible, many dying in the process (Iaccino

2015). Indeed, in June 2016, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

(UNHCR) issued a report detailing the severity of the migration crisis. This report, titled

Global Trends, underscores that the year 2015 saw the highest number of people

displaced in recorded history: "65.3 million people, or one person in 113, were displaced

from their homes by conflict and persecution in 2015" (UNHCR 2015). At best, however,

cases of welcomeness and warmth lead to grand shifts in identity formation– identity

comes unbound from a specific nation and race.

In processes of pluralistic integration, personal identity becomes worldly and therefore less set on forming allegiances to one specific locale. As noted, however, many are unwilling to embrace such broadening of identity through altruism, and, quite to the contrary, have grasped onto closed and isolated locales, holding ever tighter to concepts of "self and other," "us and them," and "host and guest" to accentuate the difference between hospitality and actual welcoming. Though hospitality and welcoming may seem synonymous, they differ in important respects[1].

What can be said for now is that hospitality is often combatted with hostility, for not all are quick to grasp the growing necessity for an open world system and end up exaggerating the need for closedness. After the United Kingdom voted to exit from the European Union, a lot of questions were left unanswered in relation to what would become of the UK's international relations. EU citizens had taken refuge in the UK as part of the world that was open to them, and some refugees had found shelter there as well. However, with the change in government and Theresa May's installation as Prime Minister, the UK's nationalistic position against world citizenship became evident in statements such as May's "If you are a citizen of the world, you are a citizen of nowhere" (quoted in Bearak 2016). Here, the newly appointed British Prime Minister clearly divides between being of the world and of a nation and suggests the union of the two is impossible. Indeed, the entire Brexit campaign acts as a gearing away from cosmopolitanism and global integration, issues which financially, socially, and politically the EU and London had previously embraced.

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[1] The distinction between these two will be clarified in chapter 1 through engaging with Immanuel Kant, Hannah, Arendt, Jacques Derrida.

Whether a citizen of the world is really just a citizen of nowhere is not a question first raised by Theresa May. It is an old question for cosmopolitanism and depends upon perspective, upon how one identifies with her fellow inhabitants of the earth, be it in terms of "self and other," "open and closed," "center and periphery," or otherwise. In dealing with this issue, the notion of cosmopolitanism has habitually outlined the ways in which human interaction occurs and entails a global setting.

This thesis reads cosmopolitan links between these seemingly opposed terms through the affect and the thought process of indecision. As cosmopolitanism relies on a basis of hospitality within shared communities, it is necessary to consider the reality of how hospitality is implemented within specific places. What quickly becomes apparent is that hospitality is in no means universal nor is it unwavering. As more and more people are displaced due to civil unrest and economic difficulties, they are often rendered strangers within the global realm, as many hold on to old notions of locality while assimilating within new places, and many more live in hellish between-places, unable to return "home" and unable to join existing communities elsewhere. Under such conditions, hesitancy is integral to a fruitful understanding of cosmopolitanism, an understanding that can grasp the split allegiances refugees and others are faced with in terms of being invited into and also excluded from political bodies. Cosmopolitanism as a concept must be indecisive with respect to ideas of shared community. What sort of community is shared? And what sort of people inhabit it? To be a cosmopolitan is to be a familiar stranger in the world—invited in but hesitant to partake fully. Having one foot in the local and an other in the global, the indecisive cosmopolitan stands at a fault between two or more sides, unsure of her allegiance. Uncertain allegiances are the only sort that can maintain

new possibilities of inclusion for those still excluded. In this thesis, through readings of three novels by Anglophone Lebanese author Rabih Alameddine, all set in or centered around Lebanon, I consider the uncertainty with which people can form cosmopolitan allegiances within the world, when forming any at all.

B. Cosmopolitanism

Pheng Cheah defines cosmopolitanism in "What is a world? On world literature as world-making activity," as an optic of the imagination and not one of perceptual experience that allows us to imagine the universe that we can actually see. Through the optic of cosmopolitan imagination, it is possible to see oneself as "part of the world, a circle of belonging that transcends the limited ties of kinship and country to embrace the whole of humanity" (26). This transcendental imagination does not discard or overcome the ties of kinship and country– it allows individuals to engage with the world[2] through negotiating local issues in relation to the globe, by opening up the spaces of locality that are often overlooked or ignored in universal endeavors, as shall be presented through analyzing the hesitancy factor found in cosmopolitanism specifically when affiliations have to be made. In ascribing the dynamics of connectedness in the world, the terms "filiation" and "affiliation", borrowed from Edward Said, come in handy. These terms help us understand how concepts of "self and other", "us and them", "host and guest" form. In *The World, The Text, The Critic*, Edward Said uses "filiation" and "affiliation" in understanding social identities. "Filiation" refers to biological identities or nature on the one hand, while "affiliation" refers to culture, "compatible tastes or programmatic

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[2] In a conscious attempt to not signify hegemony or globalization when using the term "world", instead what is signified is the individual in different locales, the traveler, the displaced, the multinational, the national; anyone and everyone who falls into the cosmopolitan category without even realizing it.

interests" (Brennan 1). In brief, "filiation" refers to what one is born into, while "affiliation" refers to what one associates with.

This space of the cosmopolitanism imagination has come to represent a glimmer of hope, capable of putting an end to war and securing peace. Nevertheless, as the harsh realities of violence and closed political systems take over, it becomes harder and harder to accept an ideology of shared community and perpetual peace. With the number of refugees and migrants around the world escalating, along with the problems that ensue, it becomes easier to blame the openness of borders as opposed to the rigidity of internal politics in dealing with its new residents for any and all instabilities. Police take it upon themselves to instill control by policing the new comers, while citizens cast them out as others unable to ever assimilate, categorizing each other in terms of religion, race, gender. Thus, adding new levels of closedness. Hate and bigotry become rhizomatic, branching out incessantly and uncontrollably. Nevertheless, openness spreads just as sporadically, engaging various nations in a union of shared duty, guilt, and responsibility. It becomes impossible to imagine a shared community without accepting the existence of closedness and intolerance. As much as openness is necessary in formulating a cosmopolitan environment, so is closedness.

Cosmopolitanism has often been used as a space to examine the social relations taking place in the world in terms of the interaction of open and closed systems in order to construct a better notion of living. Some scholars have often questioned its effectiveness and have approached it with hesitation (Derrida 2001), while still accepting its ability to ameliorate suffering and divides, possibly with some alterations. Others have taken it on partially (Appiah 2006) as a supplementary tool in understanding worldly

affairs and international relations. Even more so, others have fully accepted a revamped

version of the concept and opted for a "new cosmopolitanism," one that is represented by

an academic and political activity that regards human rights, international law, global

governance, a state-dynamics at the center of its understanding of the world. Whether one

commits to it fully, partially, or with hesitation, with diasporas expanding and borders

fading, cosmopolitanism remains pertinent. In this work, the hesitant factor in

cosmopolitanism is believed to be an intrinsic notion within cosmopolitanism that has

abled it to be a critical concept used in comprehending contemporary affiliations. Often

viewed as a nuance in decision-making that sidetracks the whole process, hesitation in

actuality is a crucial part of cosmopolitanism. In analyzing critical cosmopolitanism,

contingency has often been used to describe the cosmopolitan approach towards the

world such as with Gerard Delanty who finds contingency to be a navigator towards

cosmopolitanism as national allegiance becomes more and more uncertain (Delanty

2006). More recently, *Critical Horizons* dedicated the first issue in its latest volume to

contestatory cosmopolitanism with articles dealing with the implications of

cosmopolitanism in today's uncertain world; approaching it realistically as more than just

a synonym for universality (Ingram 2016; Rundell 2016).

In this work, with the term "cosmopolitanism" I refer to no particular doctrine or

concrete political program, as many have shown it is plural (Cheah& Robbins 1998),

which allows an expansion of its mode of action and orientation. As scholars often

navigated towards a specific sphere of inquiry –be it political theory, economic analysis,

or philosophy, – the use of "cosmopolitanism" as a method of understanding the world

has been wide. In numerous instances it has been affixed, as will be the case in this

thesis– philosophers, writers, sociologists, etc. have explored the term based on their personal identification with it. It is vernacular (Bhabha 1996), it is partial (Appiah 2006), it is empathic (Weik von Mossner 2014), and the list goes on. A common criticism of cosmopolitanism is that it is out of date, elitist, and irrelevant. It cannot address the problems of today's shared world because it does not describe it– often times it represents a covering up of global and local struggles through universalism. In *At Home in the World*, Timothy Brennan views cosmopolitanism as a "transnational corporation" that is a capitalist tool that instigates cultural warfare and hegemony. Moreover, Craig Calhoun finds cosmopolitanism as an accessory to globalization– not only is it a tool for capitalism, it is elitist and aids "high culture" as opposed to culture. Thinking of cosmopolitanism as an interconnectedness in the world and a propagator of equality is false; it rather established "inequality" and "uprooting". In "The Class Consciousness of Frequent Travelers: Toward a Critique of Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism" Caloun criticizes contemporary cosmopolitanism as a concept that is not universal or global at all, but is instead narrow and exclusive:

> Contemporary cosmopolitanism commonly reflects the experience and perspective of elites and obscures the social foundations on which that experience and perspective rests. Thinking about cosmopolitanism as ethical universalism reinforces the lack of attention to the social foundations on which it rests –even when ethical universalism might be a basis for egalitarian critique (440).

Clearly, Calhoun does not recognize the dispersed and unprivileged as cosmopolitan, for they remain outcasts within the global. Moreover, both he and Brennan seem to acknowledge a Western center in terms of cosmopolitan relations. Still, both believe the term is salvageable as will be apparent in chapter 1.

However, how can a concept designed to describe a shared experience of the world be limited to a specific group, when the shared experience of the world is defined by suffering? How can suffering be exclusive and exclusionary? The notions of world and war, city and outsiders, are inseparable. The suffering these indissociable splits engender is one guide to their overcoming. In a "shared" world of open and closed systems, the term "cosmopolitanism" suggests a way of taking suffering-in-common seriously. Despite work by scholars such as Pheng Cheah, Carol Breckenridge and Sheldon Pollock, however, it has yet to include the various discursive spaces of world closedness as opposed to just openness as its necessary components. As Delanty sees it, cosmopolitanism describes the dynamic relationship between the local and the global. He defines it as: "the interaction of the universal order of the cosmos and the human order of the polis" ("The cosmopolitan imagination: critical cosmopolitanism and social theory" 36). As such, a polis or a nation is grounds for interaction between openness and closedness, for, as a locale, it is in conversation with the global, which can be quite complicated to the differences among varying locales as well as the uncertainties found in globality; cosmopolitan interactions are constantly redefined due to the concept's inescapable plurality and variety. In Delanty's understanding of cosmopolitanism, it is composed of macro and micro dimensions. The macro dimension is concerned with the collaboration between societies. While the micro dimension is concerned with individual agency and social identities: "that is aspects of cosmopolitanism reflected in internal societal change" (42). The macro and micro levels work hand-in-hand; as individual agencies and identities are formed within local settings, i.e. the micro level, societies interact with one another, i.e. the macro level. Also, the type of agencies and identities

formed within the micro level affect the relationship formed on the macro level. Thus, cosmopolitanism is amenable to change as local and global affiliations are altered. This relates back to indecision; as individual agencies are hesitant in participating in movements and communities within the social world that transcend the locale, so do the interactions with societies change, complicating the formation of a common world.

As the world changes so does cosmopolitanism. As Bruce Robbins observes cosmopolitanism, it has shifted toward an individual view of the global, a multiple entity formed of small scales. It is not a distant entity, separate from nationalism, from hegemony, but instead it is affiliated with different cultures and locales, each forming a relationship with the world based on their own experiences. Such associations complicate cosmopolitanism's own components, making it unable to stand on its own. As such cosmopolitanism can be defined as the state of in-betweeness, a collision of the transnational, the global, the international, and the local. Cosmopolitanism registers indecisiveness in picking a side between whether cosmopolitanism is part of a locality or a globality. This indecision becomes its most celebrated virtue, for it allows an honest view of the world, as a rough surface with many bumps. Furthermore, in observing cosmopolitanism, it is important to not register a universal center, which is to say, one worldly center that the rest of the world orbits around. Instead, centers vary for different individuals, and therefore accordingly, conflicts and outlooks differ towards the world at large, which allows complicated attitudes towards shared living to coexist.

With respect to the nation, matters of opening up borders and maintaining a specific identity have always been around. Wars have been waged in hopes of expansion and liberty, to the extent that our world has not known a period without war in one corner or

another. Suffering is what truly defines a shared experience of the world. In relation to cosmopolitanism, in an effort to alleviate human suffering, international organizations such as League of Nations in 1920 and later on the United Nations in 1946 and its affiliates were created after the First and Second World Wars respectively in order to resolve national conflicts and achieve global peace. Moreover, NGOs such as the International Red Cross emerged in attempt to reduce human suffering regardless of national belonging. However, openness and closedness work contrapuntally together, where one often leads to the other. Therefore, in order to construct cosmopolitan environments, one must accept both the open and closed constructs of the world. Openness needs closedness, and in order to work together, a certain hesitation is required. This hesitation is manifested in indecision: indecision in laying claim to the world, remaining unsure of how open one should be within different closed systems.

C. Indecision

Therefore, in this thesis, the added prefix to cosmopolitanism is "indecisive." However, before breaking down the relationship between "cosmopolitanism" and "indecision," it is important to understand the relevance and usefulness of indecision in isolation. Indecision has often been regarded as a negative and transient state that impedes decision-making. In studies, it has been associated with unproductivity as research by Denis, Dompierre, Langley, and Rouleau has shown (Denis et al., 2011). Indecision has mainly been regarded as an obstacle that needs to be overcome and treated– rarely, has the beneficial quality of this state been explored. Still, it is grounds for a great area of inquiry, for in indecision, there is uncertainty that needs to be negotiated.

In "Reprivileging Reading," Ira Allen observes the usefulness of uncertainty as a tool. At the least, it deserves to be mulled over and negotiated. Though he talks about the aspects of true conversation, the same list of criteria he describes are pivotal in decision-making. Allen defines a true conversation as "a mode of interaction that challenges the boundaries or horizons of our own understanding." This allows an objective view of what is subjective – where one's own prejudices are regarded through the lens of "an impersonal history." The aim of such a conversation is to offer not a solution but an understanding of the differences that encompass experiences. This process is possible through negotiating uncertainties, "to feel our own not-knowing along the way" (108). Therefore, in forming a strong conversation, indulging in uncertainty proves to be productive. By allowing oneself to take a step back and observe matters not through one's own prejudiced perspective, but from a distant objectivity, it becomes possible to see and understand through a wider spectrum of interpretations. As negotiating uncertainty is useful in adjusting reading habits, it is as useful in decision-making. This moment of uncertainty is that of indecision, that in turn allows one to look at the varying consequence that any and every decision might lead to. This moment is important because it brings to light all the possibilities as well as hesitancies of committing to one form of allegiance, thus relying on indecision and its benefits before making any affiliations. This in turn relates to what philosopher Isabelle Stengers, in "The Cosmopolitical Proposal," calls "the ability to slow down reasoning and create an opportunity to arouse a slightly different awareness of the problems and situations mobilizing us" (994). By being able to slow down the process of decision making and negotiate the uncertainties found in indecision, one is able to better engage with the

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differences present in terms of local struggles and experiences, that in turn affect divergent views on the world and affiliations with it.

Being regarded as more than just a useful stage, it is a crucial phase and aspect of decision-making. Indecision and the process of decision making have been studied in the field of social science. As social science studies human society and social relationships, it necessarily analyzes human thought and the manner in which decisions come about. As such, taking a social scientist's perspective on indecision is beneficial for it provides insight on the decision-making process. According to social scientist, Daniel Newark: "indecision may play an important role in identity formation and maintenance. In particular, the contemplations and conversations characteristic of indecision may help construct, discover, or affirm who one is, even if ostensibly they are intended only to clarify what one should do" (162). As such, indecision navigates the way a cosmopolitan identity forms.

Furthermore, the journey to decision-making could lead to great experience beyond the realm of the final destination of a decision. This passage involves indecision which invites "human insights, delights, and pains." In relation to this, identity is formed through experiencing indecision. It allows a natural "pathology" that opens up implicate questions of who one is and should be; "sometimes while we look uneasily for what to do, we end up forming who we are" (Newark 169). This goes hand-in-hand with the micro dimension of cosmopolitanism. As cosmopolitanism is found within local settings and individual agencies, indecision controls how it is situated alongside other concepts.

Moreover, as Newark limits indecision to decision-making on a personal and individual level, i.e. the micro dimension of cosmopolitanism, it is important to remember that global decision-making is also affected by indecision as the case for cosmopolitanism shows. Global decision-making relates to decisions that go beyond personal or micro-dimensions– in public votes or government policies, a large-scale decision-making process is presented. In relation to pain and suffering and the desire to ameliorate it without knowing truly how, indecision becomes the common factor that people identify with. Engagement in indecision in relation to one's relationship towards the world becomes representative of the common state of the world because the way in which affiliations are formed is in no way uniform. Affiliations are complex and multiple. Indeed, it is in their diversity and difference that a sense of unity is found– indecision is indispensable in forming affiliations, with oneself, with the world, and as such it becomes the common characteristic necessary to align oneself with cosmopolitanism. This paper studies the productive potential of indecision as a part of a globalized theory such as cosmopolitanism.

D. Indecisive Cosmopolitanism

Why does indecision even matter in cosmopolitanism? As noted by Allen and Stengers, separately, it allows us to take a break as well as a step back and see what is at stake in making a decision to align oneself with a shared community. Moreover, it allows us to engage with the unknown, that is definitely a part of indecision, simply as not knowing what decision to make. In her own use of the term "cosmos", Stengers ascribes it to "the unknown constituted by these multiple, divergent worlds, and to the articulations of which they could eventually be capable" (995). The reference to the

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capabilities of the world in relation to the unknown is exactly why indecision is necessary in cosmopolitanism; only by taking in the multiplicities and divergences that make up the world, which inevitably call for uncertainty, is it possible to understand both localities and globalities that constitute a shared community.

In an effort to situate oneself within the world, an arena of open and closed spaces, indecisive cosmopolitanism comes in handy. As mentioned previously, by Newark, Allen, and Stegner, the value of uncertainty in indecision, and therefore in cosmopolitanism, is in the interaction of the differences that make up the common world; it becomes a matter of "both/and" not "either/or" (Blaser 565). Therefore, indecision in cosmopolitanism is quite important when approaching the world, for through it, the interplay between differences in perspective as well as affiliations, becomes possible.

Upon looking at the "big issues" of the world, those that affect all due to clashes between different cultures, the dynamics of openness and closedness constantly shift, and affiliations and filiations fuse, which often leads to prejudice, hostility, and a flat out rejection of a shared-community in the global system. Still, concepts such as cosmopolitanism that interact with the different systems of local governances cannot be ignored or dismissed. Even if cosmopolitanism becomes a tricky state to assume, as individuals comprehend the intricacies of the world they live in, belonging and not belonging, affiliating with certain aspects while distancing themselves from others, they still interact with the world, thus reinforcing the necessity for cosmopolitanism and the hesitation that compromises it. The hesitation factor in cosmopolitanism allows a reconfiguration of the stances assumed by communities and individuals in relation to nuanced differences that, according to geographer Mario Blazer, "remain outside the

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common world becoming insignificant" (564). This is to say that to be able to form a common world, an interaction rather than an integration of differences is necessary. Through integration, certain factors are omitted to cater to the bigger picture of commonality.

In "Is Another Cosmopolitics Possible?", Blaser notes that variations in perspectives are amenable to be classified "according to putative degrees of equivalence between perspectival representations of the world and the factual world itself" (549). In turn, such classifications render it likely to consider certain "perspectives irrelevant, erroneous, or dangerous, and thus dismissible, or, worse, destroyable" (550). Blaser here asserts global tendencies to create larger narratives of commonality, which are achieved through the ranking of differences and similarities in experience as well as representation. Therefore, integration should not be the model through which cosmopolitanism is to be represented. However, through interaction, the divergent aspects come into conversation with one another. Interaction is made possible through hesitation as well as contestation, which theorists have relied on in analyzing cosmopolitanism as will be further discussed in chapter 1.

This thesis will observe how indecision in cosmopolitanism plays out through a literary analysis of three Anglophone Lebanese novels that are centered around Lebanon. The different experiences that affect the way in which affiliations are formed with the world showcase the way in which locality interacts with globality and therefore brings the uncertain to center stage in the decision-making process of how to familiarize with the world.

Literature allows a great representation of the micro levels of cosmopolitanism in relation to the macro. In narratives that follow protagonists as they attempt to find their place within the world and thus understand who they are, individual agency and social identities, which constitute the micro level of cosmopolitanism, become central themes. Moreover, the chosen novels look at the changing relationships between individuals and their centers of filiation as well as the changing peripheries which form the macro level of cosmopolitanism. Alameddine's novels present a discursive space for the negotiation of uncertainties and the hesitancy in affiliating with specific places[3]. Furthermore, literature also allows us to answer questions related to indecisive cosmopolitanism: What is at stake when an individual is to identify with indecisive cosmopolitanism? How do individuals interact with the common world, physically or mentally? What are the affiliations that they make? The identities that they form? How difficult does it become to understand one's self within the global space, while still situating one's self within a local? Where do allegiances lie in terms of belonging? How much are local narratives taken into account in the representation of the common world? And how is cosmopolitanism a part of this conundrum?

E. Literature as a Beneficial Means to Explore Indecisive Cosmopolitanism

In order to answer the questions above, a limited space of exploration must be offered that allows the reader to look into the intricacies of the cosmopolitan imagination, that on its own does not allow one to view humanity, the world, or the universe. As

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[3] See Tuan, Yi-Fu. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota, 1977. Print.

cosmopolitanism carries a hesitancy with it that is necessary in understanding the world,

a detached and constructed space that allows one to analyze and communicate with

indecision is needed. Literature presents such a space, where one can not only relay a

specific representation of the world, but invite numerous reimaginings of the given

construct through the interpretation of the reader. Through literature, it becomes possible

to engage with the hesitancy and uncertainty of the world found in the cosmopolitan

imagination:

> literature is an exemplary modality of the undecidability that opens the world. It is not merely a product of the human imagination or something that is derived from, represents, or duplicates material reality. Literature is the force of a passage, an experience, through which we are given and receive any determinable reality (Cheah 35).

The circulation as well as the receptibility of literature is what allows it to have

agency. As a piece of writing becomes forceful, portraying differing realities within the

same words, it becomes representative of the world that is susceptible to varying

interpretations based on varying experiences[4]. Thus through circulation and receptibility,

there is "an opening through which one receives a world, and through which, another

world can appear" (Cheah 35).

In discussing literature, the world, and cosmopolitanism, the necessary field of

literature to look at would be World Literature, which Pheng Cheah describes as, "a type

of world-making activity that enables us to imagine the world" (26). The description of

world literature as a world-making activity reasserts that such a literature allows a

creation of the world, that would remain abstract and non-visible without a literary

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[4] Mario Blaser talks about negotiating differences in "Is Another Cosmopolitanism Possible?" that analyzes how a single event carries varying significance due to cultural diversity.

representation. World Literature is a crucial aspect of cosmopolitanism. Just like cosmopolitanism, it is capable of interacting with differences, through the acknowledgment of and engagement with cultural specificity. The paradigms of World Literature affirm "the interconnectedness of distinct literatures, peoples, and ideas to an extent one must think of literature beyond the local and the national in relation to a global scale of circulation" (Hodapp 70). In this, James Hodapp asserts the necessity of a work to be able to engage with different localities in order for it to be categorized as world literature.

Rabih Alameddine's literature suits the category of World Literature, because it interacts with the world both in context and in circulation. In the three novels to be discussed, *KoolAids* (1998), *I, the Divine* (2001), and *An Unnecessary Woman* (2015), an interaction between different localities within the world is a recurring theme. As for circulation, Alameddine's novels have found an audience all around the globe. As part of World Literature, Alameddine's novels present an interesting case for the cosmopolitan state. They present narratives that exhibit the intricacies and multiplicities that lead to indecision. In Alameddine's literature, the cosmopolitan reality is that of being uncomfortable, out of place, in both global and local contexts. As individuals form attachments to more than one entity, cultural or otherwise, performing allegiance becomes complicated because to identify with the global does not eliminate the local. Indecisive cosmopolitanism allows individuals to hold themselves at a distance from both, accepting multiple allegiances halfheartedly and committing to none.

The thesis proceeds as follows. The first section looks at the progression of cosmopolitan thought in relation to indecision and hesitancy. As scholars try to

comprehend the means of which to form an interaction between open and closed world systems, hesitancy and negotiation with uncertainty prove to be necessary aspects. Moreover, to assert the need for indecisive cosmopolitanism, this section looks at global and local injustices as well as the manner in which they are dealt with, if dealt with at all. The second section presents a study of indecisive cosmopolitanism in the context of Rabih Alameddine's literature, where the themes of suffering, belonging, and remembering prove to be consistent in discussing indecisive cosmopolitanism. Through Alameddine's literature, the necessity to engage with indecision as opposed to overcoming it when dealing with one's in-between becomes evident. The third and final section reaffirms the necessity of indecision in cosmopolitanism as well as its usefulness on local and universal levels. The overall aim of the paper is to offer a robust definition of indecisive cosmopolitanism to trace the intricacies of identifying with cosmopolitanism as a mode of being in the world and accepting indecision's role in forming a sense of belonging.

Chapter 1

The World We Live in

A. Indecisive Cosmopolitanism: Why so hesitant?

Embracing hesitation and indecision in forming a relationship with the world is important, for there is a lot to account for when attempting to assimilate within the world. Suffering and human rights violations have been core concepts in the development of the cosmopolitan imagination as a means of uniting the world and ameliorating injustice. From the moment of its conception, cosmopolitanism has been associated with one's role in the world, be it as an individual or a member of a society; where one entails rights, the

other entails duty. These two notions are not to be seen as oppositional but as coordinate. In order for one to have rights, they must have duties and responsibilities towards others, which is to say, the alleviation of suffering in general or human rights violations in specific, should be a collective effort.

This work analyzes the attachments individuals form in both local and global setting, as citizens, as strangers, as others. It also looks at how individuals are received, when forming such attachments; are they treated with welcomeness, with a legislated hospitality, or with hostility? Many different factors are involved in the formation of a cosmopolitan imagination; indecision becomes crucial in encompassing all these aspects in an attempt to comprehend the world and thus rightly form affiliations.

A human[5] of the world is one of both authority and vulnerability, someone who lives within the globalized system and who is completely rejected by it, privileged and disadvantaged. Those that relate to the cosmopolitan state are at once locals in the world as well as strangers, not fully belonging anywhere but remaining in the in-between. The cosmopolitan of today can be a product of war, a representation of the diaspora and its inhabitants, struggling to find solid ground in the international space. As such, it is important to realize the different experiences that varying groups of people go through.

Moreover, it is impossible to define cosmopolitanism in a pure or singular sense; therefore, it cannot come in the form of a total detachment from the nation and a belonging to the world at large, as will be presented through an analysis of important moments in the development of the cosmopolitan imagination, specifically with respect

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[5] At this point, the term "citizen of the world" becomes hypocritical; as this thesis as well as other mentioned works have shown, being human and being a citizen present varying levels of affiliation within communities.

to how indecision proves itself to be a necessary factor in cosmopolitanism. After that, to understand the actual need for indecisive cosmopolitanism, matters of human rights violations that have been front and center in global debates recently and for over 70 years will be examined. Finally, the literary imagination of Rabih Alameddine presents a limited space that allows the varying components involved in being in the world to take shape, exhibiting the uncertainties involved in forming affiliations.

By following through the conception of cosmopolitanism and the planting of the seed of indecision in it, as well as observing its sporadic growth, it becomes more clear as to how indecision is beneficial in a global concept like cosmopolitanism

1. Stoics vs. Cynics

According to tradition, Diogenes the Cynic came up with the term "kosmopolites" or "citizen of the world" in the fourth century BCE. In accordance with the skeptical manner of the Cynics, the term was paradoxical, juxtaposing the citizen with the world. In Greek culture, a man's identity is linked to his citizenship, that is in terms of an affiliation to a particular polis or city (Ober 1996). Therefore, the term citizen was associated with being part of a city, or a nation – its associations were not considered worldly. By identifying as a citizen of the world, Diogenes released himself from any obligations to his city, Sinope. This original view of cosmopolitanism called for a rejection of belonging to a nation-state and called for an individual and free association with the world; to think as a world citizen was to be exiled from the security of locality and familiarity found in nationalism (Nussbaum 7).

This idea of cosmopolitanism was further developed by the Greek and Roman Stoics, beginning in the third century BCE, where it was further elaborated on as an ethical

philosophy with universalistic claims. In Stoic thought, a notion of universal equality that

transcended boundaries was prevalent. Unlike the Cynics, whose cosmopolitanism was

centered around the individual and separate from the local, the Stoics imagined the world

citizen as in fact every citizen, residing between "the local community of our birth, and

the community of human argument and aspiration 'that is truly great and truly common,

in which we look neither to this corner nor to that, but measure the boundaries of our

nation by the sun' (Seneca, *De Otio).* It is this community that is, fundamentally, the

source of our moral obligations" (Nussbaum 7). It is at the level of human morality and

obligation that the split between the Cynics and the Stoics is obtained; as one group

follows the notions of exile and human honesty (Leung 2014), the other acknowledges

people's duties to one another within the local and the global sphere. This indicates that

where the Cynics relinquish any form of allegiance to both local and global settings, the

Stoics abide to a worldly code of ethics that bounds them to the world at large and not

merely the confines of a city. This sense of duty to one another is ultimately the binding

factor, for it attempts to link humanity to both personal and political affairs. The politics

that followed the Roman Stoic tradition of cosmopolitan thought were based on altruism

more or less, a selfless connectedness between humanity that did not transcend spaces of

local and global but existed in multiple levels of attachment while still valuing shared

existence over national obligations. The Stoics valued global duty over the rights of an

individual – community and the moral obligation towards it was what was believed to

constitute cosmopolitanism. In more contemporary thought, levels of affiliation– be they

to national belonging or global shared experience – can be measured through a "series of

concentric circles" as Martha Nussbaum believes. These circles gradually widen from a

narrow center that is usually drawn around the self, to ultimately encompass the shared experiences of humanity:

> The first one is drawn around the self; the next takes in one's immediate family; then follows the extended family; then, in order, one's neighbors or local group, one's fellow city-dwellers, one's fellow countrymen—and we can easily add to these list groupings based on ethnic, linguistic, historical, professional, gender and sexual identities. Outside all these circles is the largest one, that of humanity as a whole. Our task as citizens of the world will be to "draw the circles somehow toward the center" (Stoic philosopher Hierocles, 1st-2nd CE), making all human beings more like our fellow city dwellers, and so on (Nussbaum 9).

By linking the larger sense of connectedness with the closest one of the self, which would be humanity at large to the identifiers of daily life, an awareness and respect is gained in relation to the shared bonds of humanity that are composed through various circles of connection; though circles differ, it is important for people to bear in mind that a unity on a larger scale between all humans remains that binds people universally and creates a sense of duty towards one another beyond the intimate and the localized.

Though Nussbaum's circles may present a neat lineage of the degrees of affiliation, where individuals "form intense attachments to the local first, and only gradually learn to have compassion for people who are outside our own immediate circle" (xii), such circles are more than usually complicated, fusing filiation and affiliation, to use Said's terms. Centers tend to shift, which means that aligning oneself in relation to family, neighbors, and local groups is not always possible, especially if one takes mobility into account. Instead, circles grow sporadically, forming attachments locally and globally at the same time, as well as differently in varying situations. This in turn is what allows a state of in-betweeness and an indecision in aligning oneself with a specific circle over another. It also challenges the Stoic notion of valuing global duty over individual right because that in turn permits a denial of human rights in the name of globality, which is what the case

becomes as evident in the calls for the respect of human rights evident in Immanuel Kant and Hannah Arendts' declarations. Moreover, Derrida and contemporary scholars call for a need for interaction between global notions of shared community and hospitality and local implementations.

Echoing the ancient Stoic cosmopolitanism of moral demands of world citizenship, the "Declaration of the Rights of Man" in 1789 as well as Immanuel Kant's advocacy of cosmopolitan morality as a necessary concept for making affiliations with the world at large move the cosmopolitan imagination into modern history.

2. Immanuel Kant

As an Enlightenment thinker, Kant advocates policies based on "reason rather than patriotism or group sentiment", which are relayed through universal affiliations as opposed to limitations within a certain community (Nussbaum 3). He manages to bring the world back to the center of policies, distancing rights and duties from patriotism and nationalism and bringing them closer to shared community. Kantian cosmopolitanism is based on morality, as is the Stoics'. Cosmopolitanism in this sense is a model of world peace, an openness that allows conversations between states that are to form an international federation. His cosmopolitanism was framed in a form of hospitality amongst nations, allowing the guests to have responsibilities, while the inhabitants to have rights as well as duties (Letteval 25). In managing the relationship between rights and duties, Kant presents the attribute of hospitality as a necessary factor in cosmopolitanism. In "Perpetual Peace", Kant outlines the necessity of such hospitality in combatting hostility:

> The growing prevalence of a (narrower or wider) community among the people of the earth has now reached a point where a violation of right at any *one* part on the

earth is felt in *all* places. For this reason, the idea of cosmopolitan right is no fantastic or exaggerated conception of right. Rather it is a necessary supplement to the unwritten code of constitutional and international right, for public and human right in general, and hence for perpetual peace. Only under this condition can one flatter oneself to be continually progressing toward perpetual peace (84).

Kant's words here take us back to Warsaw Shire's poem and the notion of world suffering everywhere. As he mentions, there is a continuous violation of rights occurring at any part of the world that is simultaneously felt by all. This invocation of *one* and *all,* affirms the unity among a global community, where individuals in *all* places share the violation occurring in any *one* place. Kant acknowledges the perpetual state of suffering as one that can be combatted through cosmopolitan legislations which in turn entail international laws that need to be abided.

As such, "perpetual peace" becomes possible through universalizing the suffering felt due to violations occurring in specific places, to be shared all over the world. It becomes a global responsibility to alleviate pain occurring locally due to the universal bond based on compassion and humanity. Kant's cosmopolitanism is one based on morality. It is perceived as a part of nature, where the same nature that differentiates us through "languages and religions" (Kant 92) joins us through mutual self-interest and morality. That is to say that people have affiliations that go beyond the *one* place through bonds formed by religion, language, trade among other aspects, in addition to the moral bond of humanity.

All in all, Kant's quest for a never-ending peace is resolved mainly within the collaboration of open and closed systems of governance; the growth of the global allows the prosperity of the local. Yet, with such a concept of peace, who remains outcast? With the constant use of the word "right", one wonders, how are people who have no rights represented within such a doctrine? The reference to "rights" brings up the question of

who has rights? Though Kant addresses international war and the necessity of offering hospitality to those left displaced due to war, he does not address the issue of loss that comes with displacement. What happens when people lose their rights and become unaccounted for, are they still treated hospitably? If so, what does global hospitality look like within a local governance? Hannah Arendt addresses these questions in "The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man", by observing how those who belong to the category of refugees, those who are rendered without rights, receive global hospitality.

Global hospitality must be applicable for those with rights and without. For cosmopolitanism to be possible hospitality must encompass a true welcoming of all. Unfortunately, the violation of human rights in *one* place are seldom felt in *all* places; this is due to the inability of people to truly take on the responsibility they have towards one another– and thus register each other as equals and sympathize with the global rights of all humans. Indecisive cosmopolitanism is a necessary outlook because it allows one to regard the duties individuals and communities have towards one another realistically, while comprehending the intricacies of hospitality across the globe that varies within localities.

Wars and acts of violence force people to leave their hostile environments to seek refuge elsewhere. Some might be lucky enough to gain political asylum or merely integrate within a new community, but some are left unrecognized, without rights. When talking about hospitality and accepting foreigners into one's land, what does this hospitality look like? And at what point do newcomers stop being "others" or "guests" and integrate, if ever? Take for example the condition of Palestinians in Lebanon; with a

growing number of displaced individuals since the 1940s, they often become forgotten in the global sphere as more and more nationalities join the displaced space, a space that Lebanon has also long been familiar with due to its own encounter with civil war and foreign occupation. However, even though encountering hostility and violations of human rights, Lebanon can be perceived as a cosmopolitan country, hosting different people in varying ways. Refugees from the region have long made residence in the country; Palestinian refugees make up approximately ten percent of the population of Lebanon. However, the relationship between the country's residents and its Palestinian inhabitants (many of whom were born and raised in Lebanon, only hearing of Palestine) is complicated. Palestinians are denied several significant rights and are excluded from working in over 20 professions. As they are not citizens of a recognized state, Palestinian refugees cannot claim the same rights as other foreigners living and working in Lebanon (UNRWA). They are rejected in the global system; however, they are forced to live within it and acclimate. Palestinians represent the fault in Kant's system of world hospitality; as a people whose nation was erased, they lose any form of local identification and therefore global right. Migrants and refugees have no place in Kant's cosmopolitanism; nevertheless, in this work, they are recognized.

   To define cosmopolitanism as being citizens of the world, is a definition that requires reconfiguration. First of all, the word "citizens" must be replaced with "humans", as not all humans within the world are citizens. Second of all, it must recognize the different experiences of humans within the world from points of both authority and vulnerability. A human of the world is someone who lives within the globalized system and who is completely rejected by it, privileged and disadvantaged. Through cosmopolitanism, the

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space of the local is expanded through a sense of belonging as opposed to a mere geographical boundary. Such a cosmopolitanism is familiar to those that are at once locals in the world as well as strangers; not fully belonging anywhere but remaining in the in-between. The cosmopolitan of today can be a product of war, a representation of the diaspora and its inhabitants, struggling to find solid ground in the international space. It is impossible to define the cosmopolitan in a pure or singular sense; therefore, cosmopolitanism cannot come in the form of a total detachment from the nation and a belonging to the world at large, nor can it come in the form of an inclusive bubble that encompasses the variant narratives of the world under one large narrative of shared community. It instead interacts with the different narratives of the globe, validating the histories, memories, and pains of locales in order to comprehend what makes the world. This will be presented through the literature of Rabih Alameddine.

3. Hannah Arendt

Hannah Arendt further elaborates on the issues of differing experiences in creating an interactive shared community. Picking up from where Kant left off, this is done through the expansion on the issues of "rights" and "cosmopolitanism" as they remain in the center of political discussion. In the 20th century, with two world wars forever changing the world as we know it, adding tolls to the shared pain and suffering of humanity. Hannah Arendt offers her own perspective on nature, humanity, refugism, and rights. In "The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man", she proposes an analysis of the modern history of minorities, of those "without a State, of the stateless and homeless, and of deported and displaced persons" (268). Arendt describes modernity as a "new situation" where humanity has taken up more significance, formerly prescribed to

nature or history. "Humanity" assumes a universal understanding that all humans have rights or the "right to have rights" both individually and collectively. However, conflict lies even in ascribing what a human is; it remains an abstract concept defined differently in different nations:

> It is hard to say how the concept of man upon which human rights are based – that he is created in the image of God (in the American formula), or that he is the representative of mankind, or that he harbors within himself the sacred demands of natural law (in the French formula)- could have helped to find a solution to the problem (Arendt 300).

This quote opens up the category of human as one that is not of nature, or filiation, but of affiliation and law. For the word "human" to be able to have different connotations asserts that it can be inclusive as well as exclusive simultaneously, for it permits certain people to fall out of the category of "human" if they do not fit the given criteria. Therefore, what is to be done with those who have no rights? Who do not fit the criteria necessary to receive the rights ascribed to humans? When people are left with nothing but their status as humans rightless, they are put in danger, for what does it mean to just be human? What rights does being human guarantee?

In such a case, the displaced seek to identify with what is more than human, with a nation. People adhere to their nationalities firmly even when said nation ceases to exist, and whatever rights and protection it had offered them are gone. When a nation becomes part of the past, part of history, its nationals cling to it even stronger as their remaining link to the civilized world–especially when rejected by the actual one. Nationality provides a more concrete level of belonging than the abstract notion of humanity; it gives people a sense of identity and relatability in relation to a state of stability even if it is no longer afforded. This shows that nationality trumps humanity. However, according to the "inborn and inalienable rights of man", the same ones Kant advocated and described,

when human beings lose their political status, they are to be embraced by the world, by other existing nationals. Hospitality is to be provided. Nonetheless, it is not; at least not in a humane manner. The displaced individual is rendered as an "other", treated with less dignity and humanity than man: "It seems that man who is nothing but a man has lost the very qualities which make it possible for other people to treat him as a fellow-man" (Arendt 300). Here humanity is lost, due to its affiliation with law– to have rights no longer becomes inborn and permanent but becomes linked to a locality– when locality perishes, and the human is left without her protective rights, she becomes "othered", treated no longer as a member of a shared community, but as something strange and excluded. Thus, those who are left without rights become undocumented, untraced, and uncared for. Refugees become no one and are mistreated and policed. Arendt addresses the issue of refugees who are rendered as no one in relation to those that gain recognition:

> Only fame will eventually answer the repeated complaint of refugees of all social strata that "nobody here knows who I am"; and it is true that the chances of the famous refugee are improved just as a dog with a name has a better chance to survive than a stray dog who is just a dog in general. The nation-state, incapable of providing a law for those who has lost the protection of a national government, transferred the whole matter to the police. […]in one sphere of public life it was no longer an instrument to carry out and enforce the law, but had become a ruling authority independent of government and ministries. (287)

Forever "othered" and gravely restricted, those left nationless become victims of privatized authority as opposed to universal law. Even in cases less severe than those of refugees, the displaced in general are left with a sense of hesitancy; clinging to a sense of local belonging that they have lost, politically and legally. As one's place in community attributes immensely to identity formation, the loss of a private life demotes one's position in the game of humanity. The more importance given to the private, the less possible it becomes to build a hospitable public sphere, "because the public sphere is as

consistently based on the law of equality as the private sphere is based on the law of universal difference and differentiation" (Arendt 301).

By ascribing "universal difference and differentiation" to the private sphere, Arendt associates universality with locality, making it impossible to form a public space without taking into account the proceedings of local governances. This form of world dynamics is found in indecisive cosmopolitanism. This concept is one that regards shared community with uncertainty, negotiating the spaces that encompass it. From one point, globally, people are invited to partake within the community, believing in the comfort of universal hospitality; however, locally, a hesitancy in participating is necessary due to the forms in which hospitality is offered. As mentioned previously, hospitality is not synonymous with welcomeness; therefore, when encountering new locales, it is important to take into consideration the differences as well as differentiations of said locality. A "refugee" is treated differently than an "other", an "other" is treated differently than a stranger, and a stranger is treated differently than a "citizen". Arendt's declaration urges people to acknowledge the difference in hospitality.

The realities of the interactions that occur between global hospitality and local policies is further discussed by Jacques Derrida, who takes Arendt's work into consideration upon forming his own understanding of what cosmopolitan rights actually look like. Derrida's "On Cosmopolitanism" foregrounds the necessity for indecisive cosmopolitanism, since the applicability of a shared community as presented through history has not fulfilled its part in terms of accounting for all the members of the world, thus outcasting some in an effort to include others. However, if a shared community is to be possible, it is to take into account the experiences of all living within the world,

cooperating with the diverse people of the earth as opposed to forcefully encompassing all under one category.

4. Jacques Derrida

In "On Cosmopolitanism", Derrida observes the historical implementation of cosmopolitanism in relation to asylum and refuge. He remains critical throughout of the notion of hospitality. Notably, Derrida hesitantly observes the existing cosmopolitanisms and concludes that a space that integrates the openness of ethical hospitality and the closedness of legislative hospitality has yet to be created. Often, the "City of Refuge" "invites but regulates" which causes conflict, for "regulations belong to nations, and nations have varying authorities" (16-17). National laws necessarily impede universal understandings of hospitality (if they ever existed). He goes on to argue that hospitality differs from one culture to another and is not simply "one ethic amongst others". Hospitality might transcend national boundaries and take on a more universal platform; however, it remains subjective, based on a private doctrine of a locality.

Derrida gives an example of cosmopolitanism which is found in Pauline Christianity[6]. In an effort to increase the following, foreigners were invited to join the faith and thus regain a sense of belonging and identity through the hospitality of the church. However, this has led to wars and divides within the world since hospitality is restricted to those who join. Easily, hospitality in this sense can be described as a "with us or against us" situation, that is in no way universal as initially advocated. Derrida goes on to analyze Kantian cosmopolitanism which was inspired by Pauline Christianity. As Kant does not confine cosmopolitanism to the condition of universal hospitality, he places on it two

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[6] Today, such a notion of cosmopolitanism might be understood as secular.

limitations: The first one is the restriction of hospitality as a *right of visitation* as opposed

to a *right of residence.* Though he advocates for "universal hospitality without limits", he

renders it as temporary; a transient state that will come to an end. The second limitation is

that hospitality in a Kantian sense remains a legislation, and therefore, controlled by the

state: "hospitality, whether public or private, is dependent on and controlled by the law

and the state police" (22). In reality, policing controls hospitality and, therefore, obstructs

cosmopolitan discourse.

Even when presumably forming an open international union, national laws overpower

the international shared ones; rendering universalism obsolete. As such the struggle

between closed nations and open policies creates a "space which takes place *between* the

Law of an unconditional hospitality, offer[ing] a *priori* to every other, to all newcomers,

whoever they may be, and the conditional laws of a right to hospitality would be in

danger of remaining a pious and irresponsible desire, without form and without potency,

and of even being perverted at any moment" (22-23).

Throughout the essay, Derrida analyzes cosmopolitan experiences and

experimentations by looking at crimes which have caused human suffering and have

cemented the urgency for hospitality in a cosmopolitan sense. However, these spaces of

in-betweeness that neither adopt nor reject the other, do not form an ideal solution.

Instead, they allow a negotiation to occur with regards to what impedes openness, and

then take these impediments into account to try and understand the interactions that occur

in the world. Such negotiations become apparent in the rise of a "new cosmopolitanism",

in the early 90s, where the different experiences of individuals are taken into account not

only in relation to hospitality and hostility, but as well in terms of how individuals are mobilized within locales and the world divergently.

5. "New Cosmopolitanisms"

Contemporary scholars have investigated cosmopolitanism from philosophical, economic, cultural, anthropological, and postcolonial perspectives, to name a few; coming up with numerous categories within the field such as partial cosmopolitanism, plural cosmopolitanism, capitalist cosmopolitanism, sentimental cosmopolitanism, eco-cosmopolitanism, and many more. Indecisive cosmopolitanism is perhaps to be added to the category of new cosmopolitanisms as it expands on common notions of difference and plurality.

According to Kwame Anthony Appiah, cosmopolitanism functions partially through a humanistic lens. Appiah advocates "local partialities and universal morality". He writes in *Cosmopolitanism*:

> So cosmopolitanism […] begins with the simple idea that in the human community, as in national communities, we need to develop habits of coexistence: conversation in its older meaning, of living together, association. (Appiah, xix)

As Appiah has it, cosmopolitanism works towards breaking down barriers of diversity and difference, and creating more of an acceptance than a tolerance of cultures. Cosmopolitanism does not reject national belonging but instead associates it, transnationally. The definition I propose for cosmopolitanism agrees with Appiah's to a certain extent; however, as he associates plurality with openness and familiarity, not taking into account that plurality also causes complications, this work regards closedness as a part of cosmopolitanism, due to the necessary interaction between exclusion and inclusion that is needed in forming a valid shared community. Nevertheless, in terms of "developing habits of coexistence," through a cultural exchange as Appiah proposes, the

cosmopolitan imagination is grounded in the local space while associating with the global, through allowing a channel of communication between both entities. This is to say that one fulfills her obligations in her own community, while still participating in the collective concerns of the world. This interaction is affected by one's own local experiences which cause a sense of hesitation in approaching global matters, due to one's own uncertainty in how to deal with the world at large. As Appiah connects the interaction between the spaces of the local and the global to partiality, other scholars do not limit the concept of cosmopolitanism to partiality and instead regard it as versatile, engaging with the different partialities as opposed to being limited to only one side, which is openness.

When engaging with cosmopolitanism as a pluralistic concept that engages with multiple ideas simultaneously, many academics from varying fields act as its advocates; Bruce Robbins, Pheng Cheah, Sheldon Pollock, Homi Bhabha, Carol Breckenridge, and Dipesh Chakrabarty are some of the prominent scholars to study cosmopolitan plurality. In *Feeling Global,* Bruce Robbins regards the idea of cosmopolitanism as unequal, with more than one trajectory. He looks at differences in experiences of detachment and belonging, therefore bringing forth different cosmopolitanisms. Moreover, Robbins relates cosmopolitanism to cultural internationalism– as culture has always been seen as grounded in nationalism, what happens when one's culture is that of the international, linked to more than one local? – By viewing cosmopolitanism as cultural internationalism, it becomes possible to perceive the world as a channel of communication, where a shared community becomes possible through an interaction between different experiences. No longer is cosmopolitanism seen as an opposite to

nationalism, rather it opens up to it. As Nussbaum aligns affiliation with levels composed

of concentric circles, and Appiah regards cosmopolitanism as a partial affiliation,

Robbins' take on the concept of cosmopolitan is one that is not partial, nor does it form

gradually. It instead occurs simultaneously between different levels of affiliations,

transnationally. Robbins reinterprets cosmopolitanism by including the reality of war and

displacement in profiling cosmopolitan citizens:

> This is perhaps a moment for transnational politics to turn from Kant to Hegel, that
> is, from the purity of the normative to the impurity of the already existing, to
> cosmopolitanisms in the plural that include non-European, nonelitist, and ineligible
> versions (156).

Robbins understands that cosmopolitanism is not detached from nationalism and locality;

it is also not distinct from the global scale, rather it creates a space that bridges between

the different alliances, allowing 'conflicting loyalties' (6). This is similar to the claim that

this thesis makes in terms of indecisive cosmopolitanism. By recognizing the significance

of the divergent spaces that make up a shared community– the spaces that do not

overcome or encompass, but interrelate with each other– cosmopolitanism helps

individuals find their place in the world. Indecisive cosmopolitanism builds on Robbins'

notions, specifically with respect to the necessity of 'conflicting loyalties', that in turn

cause hesitancy in founding affiliations. A similar outlook on plurality and inclusiveness

is present in *Cosmopolitanisms*, where Sheldon Pollock, Homi Bhabha, Carol

Breckenridge, and Dipesh Chakarbarty find that cosmopolitan thought is constructed of

"plurality in modes and histories", which is to say that within different historical

situations, cosmopolitanism carries different interpretations. Pollock and company

account for the displaced:

> Cosmopolitans today are often the victims of modernity, failed by capitalism's upward mobility, and bereft of those comforts and customs of national belonging. Refugees, peoples of the diaspora, and migrants and exiles represent the spirit of the cosmopolitical community.(582)

Again the shared community of the world is associated with suffering; "the victims of modernity," and those "bereft of those comforts and customs of national belonging," would be categorized by Kant as those who have had their human rights violated. With the number of people displaced around the world only increasing, the suffering of *some* becomes the suffering of *all* not only in a sense of compassion but through a growing need for hospitality and welcomeness to aid those who are left without any sense of locale and are at the mercy of "the cosmopolitical community." "The failure of capitalism's upward mobility" is characterized by globalizing movements that are more interested in creating grand narratives that merge world entities into a singular unit as opposed to negotiating with world diversity. As cosmopolitanism is plural, it simply exists in different contexts, in an interfold manner, through cooperation between local and global spaces and trying to comprehend the varying local narratives that make up the world.

Such is a cosmopolitanism that Craig Calhoun can endorse. As he is very critical of cosmopolitanism as a means of global governance, due to its usual association with capitalism and Western hegemony, he recognizes its necessity in challenging the latter institutions. Calhoun argues that "cosmopolitan democracy depends on finding ways to relate diverse solidarities to each other rather than trying to overcome them" (111). This is to say that, yet again, cosmopolitanism should be endorsed as a means of understanding the varying affiliations formed within the world. Therefore, in order to achieve truly cosmopolitan situations, understanding different localities within the globe

is crucial; there is no one form of world that should be imposed on another. Nonetheless, a lot of the work done in relation to cosmopolitanism remains ideological and elitist at its core. As cosmopolitanism is theorized from the vantage point of those capable of frequent travel, "easily entering and exiting polities and social relations around the world, armed with visa-friendly passports and credit cards" (90), it does not seem capable of reflecting a discriminatory and diverse notion of what the world is. Instead most cosmopolitan discourse remains Western-centered, presenting itself as a middle ground between widespread "corporate globalization and reactionary traditionalism of nationalism" (91). Such cosmopolitanism creates a false sense of world that accepts one entity over another. Calhoun concludes his paper, "The Class Consciousness of Frequent Travelers: Toward a Critique of Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism" with this note:

> Cosmopolitanism and democracy have both been intertwined with capitalism and Western hegemony. If cosmopolitan democracy is to flourish and be fully open to human beings of diverse circumstances and identities, then it needs to disentangle itself from neo-liberal capitalism. It needs to approach more discursive engagement across lines of difference, more commitment to reduction of material inequality, and more openness to radical change (111).

In this, Calhoun asserts the necessity of a cosmopolitan democracy capable of implementing real change that addresses the varying issues of the world. This is done through more "engagement across lines of difference," which entails addressing local issues in order to implement global change. In looking at recent political actions, such as the Brexit vote, forms of radical change are already taking shape. However, whether this vote will aid or impede cosmopolitan interaction is to be determined. What is evident is that indecision and an uncertainty in how to go on within a shared community are prevalent, and as such capable of imposing change. More so, the need for an interaction

between openness and closedness is crucial in order to prevent extremism of one side over the other.

This sentiment of interaction is what composes the cosmopolitan imagination, specifically indecisive cosmopolitanism. In negotiating the hesitancies of reverting to one or the other, negotiating the implications of each is necessary to decide how to proceed within the world. It is not about overcoming but about embracing the diversities found in the world. Theories of contestatory cosmopolitanism have approached views of shared society through perspectives that embrace the formation of social solidarity through cross-cultural relations and a profounder acknowledgement of the importance of varying centers.

In "Citizens and Strangers: Cosmopolitanism as an Empty Universal," John Rundell examines "the different interpretations of what the universality of humankind" entails (113). As there is no denying the role of nation-states in administering and constructing notions of freedom within a specific locale, the legitimacy of the universality of humanity, as well as hospitality, is put to question. Hospitality itself is not universal and just, for people varying in statuses are welcomed differently. Citizens, contingent strangers, and outsiders succumb to the various tensions and conflicts arising from nation-state legislations which are quite present in modern-day cosmopolitanism:

> The name and the identity of the outsider matter to the host- once names are identified, the outsider can slip from the (non-)identity of an indifferently perceived outsider to a potential enemy and/or become subject to the policing mechanisms of the state, with its defined points of entry and exit. Identity becomes permanent and residence temporary (117).

Profiling based on identity plays a key role in establishing the type of interaction to occur between the host and the hosted. Once an identity is established, it in turn governs either

an indifferent, hostile, or hospitable interaction. This again shows the prominence of policing and localized legislation in dealing with outsiders– those who do not belong to the nation-state.

Here, Derrida is echoed in his concerns of integration in spaces of conditional hospitality. Nonetheless, as Derrida questioned the role of policing in the ability to form cosmopolitan realities, Rundell believes cosmopolitanism's value is invoked in the shape of common humanity. The cosmopolitan imagination appears differently on the ground; however, in accordance with different nations and legislations, it still takes form within a certain type of freedom and a particular degree of openness. Beyond tolerance, in openness, a sense of hesitation is found due to the actual ability to be inclusive when residing in different states of exclusion. As the discursive spaces of what it means to be free vary between one nation and another, it is difficult to determine what inclusivity actually includes, as it then also varies based on the conceptualization of freedom. This again relates to indecision, for even when defining a concept that seems universal, different cultures understand it variously. Therefore, one must take into account these nuanced differences when moving from one locale to another.

Moreover, Rundell notes that with the centering of the nation state, modern cosmopolitanism is constructed around it, around different cultures and policies, while keeping "tension open between the gestures of the welcome and openness toward different world and the challenges that interaction with others brings" (120). As such, cosmopolitanism does not attempt to cover up or assume an ultimate image of openness but instead, it captures unfinished and open dimensions of modernity (121).

Cosmopolitanism universality is further contested by James Ingram in "Cosmopolitanism from Below: Universalism as Contestation." When applied, universalism necessarily becomes particularized, taking on attributes related to the locale surrounding it. This again relates to Derrida's ideas on hospitality; as it differs from one culture to another, as well as between one nation and another. Universalism is not seen as unconditional or free, which has already been established as conditional as well. Similarly, for Ingram, the ideology of universalism is just that, an idea that remains impotent and abstract in a global sense, and practical when localized. Within a locale, it becomes conditional, and open for contestation. As such, cosmopolitan ideas based on the imaginary notion of universality cannot offer solutions, but instead shed light on problems of humanity related to freedom and equality within ever-changing equilibriums reliant on the conditionality of situated powers and legislations. It is through such cosmopolitan struggles, that it becomes possible to "expand the scope of freedom and equality, rights and powers, beyond what is currently regarded as justified" (71).

Cosmopolitan's role becomes encapsulated in "providing a general moral-political orientation, a sense of the complexities, dilemmas and contradictions likely to arise in politics, while nevertheless providing a normative and political basis on which to choose sides, assess strategies and rough out compromises in particular situations" (72). Through this, Ingram shows that cosmopolitanism's role is limited to that of a mediator, between "the complexities, dilemmas, and contradictions" that form our world. It also provides a space for the individual to indulge in indecision, by taking time to "assess strategies and rough out compromises in particular situations", while still bearing in mind the need to interact between the varying aspects that make up one's affiliations. Ingram's own

conception of cosmopolitanism works well with indecisive cosmopolitanism as it acknowledges the necessity of engaging in a conversation with the different aspects that construct one's world, directly and indirectly. Only after doing so and assessing the stakes involved within the different aspects, does it become possible to affiliate oneself with a shared community.

Incorporating hesitation and indecision in forming a relationship with the world is important for it is not truly open yet no fully closed. This has been a common concern for thinkers over the years. Kant brought the concept of cosmopolitanism back to life as a solution to closed systems of warfare and division, believing it to be the key to perpetual peace. Arendt and Derrida, in turn, looked at how hospitality within the globe actually took shape through the rights that were ascribed to different types of people. As certain groups secure their rights, they neglect the duties they hold to a larger community, preferring to be hostile as opposed to hospitable. Indeed, in fulfilling one's duty towards others, hospitality is ascribed as a crucial factor in international relations by Immanuel Kant. Hannah Arendt points out that the rights ascribed to humans relates a lot to the type of hospitality they receive if any. Moreover, Derrida regards local implementation of global policies: within a shared community, how are others treated in local settings different from their own? So far, Kant, Arendt, and Derrida engage cosmopolitanism with a sense of hesitation, unsure of whether it is actually applicable or capable of adjustment. The frameworks they present relate to that of indecision, in a sense that they negotiate with uncertainty, bringing to light the differences and complications that arise within a shared community and attempt to understand them as opposed to merely overcoming them.

The hesitation manifested is harbored by more recent studies on cosmopolitanism. From the early 90s until now, the effectiveness of the concept of cosmopolitanism in imposing actual change has been analyzed through questioning its universality even further. As Derrida points out, it is impossible to leave locality out of cosmopolitan stances. This leads to the question of what sort of universality is found in cosmopolitanism if any? Moreover, by acknowledging culture differences as well as social experiences, how is it possible to form a concept of shared community, when experience itself is not shared. By looking at theories of new cosmopolitanism, led by Bruce Robbins, Pheng Cheah, Sheldon Pollock, Kwami Anthony Appiah, among others, the long-standing indecision as well as hesitancies become validated, as new ways of implementing this concept are brought to light, mainly through opening up to the differences in the world in terms of experience.

At this moment, it is necessary to situate the cosmopolitan imagination within past and present political issues. Taking into account what has been said for over 200 years on the necessity to end the violations of human suffering and to adopt more open policies – referring to Kant here– how do these policies take form when dealing with contemporary issues?

B. Cosmopolitanism in Today's World

To shed light on the struggle of forming a shared community based on openness, it is important to invoke history, memory, and suffering. Local history must be taken into account as well as local narratives of remembrance. Moreover, suffering plays a pivotal role in understanding the suffering that a person or a whole community may have in terms of affiliating with a larger, global concept. To invoke memory is to acknowledge

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certain histories that may have been forcefully forgotten or erased– genocides, wars, annexations, and other crimes against humanities, take permanent tolls on people's lives, However, larger narratives of peace, often tend to manipulate history, either erasing or ameliorating the recollection of such atrocities. Nonetheless, as the number of displaced grows, so does the suffering. This will be presented later on by looking at the migration crisis, Palestinian statelessness, the United Nations, as well as U.S. warfare. Suffering haunts people locally and globally throughout the everyday. If history and memory can be tampered with, suffering remains present. It is this suffering that stabilizes the state of indecision within cosmopolitanism.

As individuals as well as entire communities are aware of the injustices that occur globally, they remain hesitant in partaking in the world fully. This hesitancy is due to many factors, not all at the level of severe crimes against humanity. Closedness is manifested through prejudice– racism, classicism, and plain hate, leave many hesitant about joining in new localities as part of a shared community. The recent upsurge of populism in referendums and elections is exemplary of this, as will be presented when analyzing the Brexit vote of June 2016.

Global and local injustices may call for a need to be indecisive in cosmopolitanism; however, indecision should not be regarded as a consequence, especially not a negative one. As mentioned previously, indecision in cosmopolitanism allows for a space where negotiation can happen and where varying groups can discuss their concerns within both local and global settings. In turn, any notions of universality are grounded within local experience. It is in the ability to comprehend and acknowledge the varying concerns of locales that a shared community can ever hope to prosper.

1. Migration, Brexit, and Palestine

As Kant, Arendt, Derrida, and the modern cosmopolitans have shown, there has always been an urgency for cosmopolitanism to solve issues of displacement and refugism. These issues have only amplified in our modern times. With an outflow of stateless people, nations are forced to open their borders and host newcomers. However, with the migration crisis, private crises arise. Conservative politics are adopted and international relations are forever changed as shall be demonstrated in the case of the UK. Moreover, the statelessness of Palestinians acts as an exemplar of how displaced people go about within the public after their actual locality has been taken away. The migration crisis, Brexit, and the state of Palestinians make it crystal clear that closedness is very much part of the shared world we live in.

Countless refugees die or face death crossing borders to gain some form of humanity and security within the world. Refugess are rendered as nothing but human, they are faced with hesitancy and doubt. People are heading head-fast into uncertainty, not knowing what is to be expected within the global community. The varying localities of both the host and the hosted become indecisive in determining how to act towards the other. It becomes apparent that indecisive cosmopolitanism is at play as those involved are hesitant with regards to interacting with one another. What does this intense number of displaced, of outliers, mean for global interaction? How is the issue of migration being dealt with? Through interaction, integration, or flat-out rejection? Does the necessity for hospitality create closedness and destroy openness, as is apparent in Hungary and Britain to name only two examples? Is the world's indecision in finding a solution what is actually causing more turmoil? Or should this indecision be harnessed in order to actually

allow a negotiation with the uncertainty brought on by this crisis, as a means of finding a solution?

In 2015, more than a million migrants and refugees crossed into Europe –the total asylum claim in the continent was 1,321,560 migrants. Some of the contemporary migration movements are due to the conflict in Syria, the ongoing violence in Afghanistan, and abuses in Eritrea, as well as the poverty in Kosovo[7].

Europe presents a popular and practical destination as refugees fleeing from the Middle East and Africa can reach the continent through sea, air, and land. The number of refugees seeking assistance from Europe is staggering; it is the highest it's ever been, and countries are struggling to find solutions and ways to aid those in need. People arrive seeking asylum or simply running away. Germany received applications for over 450,000 asylum claims. However, over one million were counted in Germany's transition camps for people before they seek asylum. Moreover, Hungary's demographic is at risk of change with the excessive number of refugees in proportion to its population[8]. The migration crisis has strained relations between European countries due to the disproportional distribution of people among countries. Even as countries try regulate migration, closing down borders and sending people back, the number of refugees has only escalated in 2016, overpassing that of World War 2, making the current migration crisis truly the greatest tragedy of our time.

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[7] The listed migrant groups are obviously only a few of many other groups from either recent or long-standing conflict.

[8] According to a BBC report in March 2016, nearly 1,800 refugees per 100,000 of Hungary's local population claimed asylum in 2015. Similarly, 1,667 per 100,000 were in Sweden. The EU average was 260 (BBC News, 2016).

With Britain's vote to leave the European Union in June 2016 the migration crisis does not seem to be showing any signs of improvement. As a community aimed to resolve conflict and maintain peace amongst neighboring countries, Britain opted to exclude itself from cosmopolitan negotiations of difference and talks of hospitality by exhibiting closedness and hostility. Brexit symbolized an escape from an internationally dependent future; embracing instead the past. In "Brexit Is a Mutiny Against the Cosmopolitan Elite," Craig Calhoun describes the vote as one "grounded in nostalgia," playing "on an old idea of sovereignty, old English ideas about the difference between the island nation and the mainland of Europe," and that "alarm over immigrants and claims that the U.K. was somehow subsidizing Europe" (The World Post). Nevertheless, the issues of migration and immigration were at the heart of the Brexit vote, which dissuaded multiculturalism and advocated nationalism.

The campaigns to leave the EU were fueled on racist and anti-immigration sentiments– resentment, anger, and frustration directed the voters. As London embraced immigrants and rose as a cosmopolitan hub, providing growth opportunities for many immigrants and locals, the rest of the UK suffered. Moreover, with immigrants taking on jobs in the service and construction industries, lesser jobs were available for the lower class citizens. This instigated the hatred of the immigrant, or the other, and fueled nationalism. Calhoun believes that nationalism and populism are what lead to the Brexit vote: "Nationalism flourishes precisely when people feel threatened by international forces. Populism flourishes when people feel betrayed by elites." Therefore, unfair treatment on both local and global fronts lead to a more close-minded retaliation against a shared world. With the middle and working classes struggling to secure decent living

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standards, populism and nationalism have grown prominently. Yes, migration has increased significantly, but countries are already struggling internally, so why worry about global prejudices when locally injustices are occurring as well?

The vote presents a clear indication of how global decision-making is affected by indecision. In an interdependent world, for a majority to choose to leave and revert back to nationalism and populism, instead of a more open ideal of governance based on cosmopolitan ideals, is an indicator of an inability to form a unified decision in terms of allegiance and belonging within a community– hesitation in cosmopolitanism is present. With Brexit in Britain, the dominance of conservatives will prevail, which means that an open mindedness and tolerance towards the world will become less likely, and prejudice will become more widespread. The Brexit vote brings to light Arendt's comments on nationalism and humanity, for clearly nationalism trumps humanity, and Derrida's hesitancy is given an answer that cannot be salvaged by the claims of "new cosmopolitans." Though there is a pressing need for global interaction, nations cannot give up on their own claims for improvement and living. However, one cannot take the place of the other and a certain middle ground has to be reached. Perhaps the Brexit vote is representative of cosmopolitan indecision, that will ultimately lead to a solution; one that is inclusive of local prosper and global urgency. As the interconnectedness of the world cannot be avoided, Brexit's promises of reinstating an old sovereignty will surely be broken, therefore alternatives need to be found. Even though the U.K. has been declining as a global power, it remains a key player in terms of global integration. If integration is compromised, the world will surely suffer.

And the world is suffering; pre and post Brexit, the world is no stranger to suffering.

If institutional agencies were able to patch up the world after World War 2, they seem to

be ripping apart now and nations are closing up again. If the current migration crisis is to

carry any blame for the leave vote, what is to be made of older migration crises that

were instigated by similar institutional agencies in the wake of World War 2?

Palestinians have been displaced and dispersed for over 70 years now. How did the

public sphere deal with these former nationals who lost their privacy? Who, in the grand

narrative of the world are often attempted to be erased from history, from memory? Are

the human violations committed against the Palestinians on daily basis, for over half a

century now, felt all over? When filiative relations are rendered as memories, what sort of

affiliations are made? Moreover, what sort of duties does the shared community of the

globe have towards Palestinians?

In "Memory, Inequality, and Power", Edward Said points out the human rights

violations that affect the Palestinian people, that truly have no equivalent in modern

history. They "have been displaced, they have had their society shattered, they have had

to live under military occupation, their lands and lives are today systematically torn

apart" (Said 28). What is quite significant about the case of Palestinian statelessness is

that these people have actively been ignored in the sphere of international relations. The

injustices occurring within their lands on a daily basis go unnoticed. Said comments on

the suffering that the people endure everyday:

> Consider this-and I did this as a quick example on the internet-on January the 23rd,
> 2003 you read: […] Some towns on the West bank have already sustained 214 days
> of curfew. 150 dunums of fertile agricultural land were destroyed in Gaza. Three
> people, two of them civilians were killed. Six homes demolished. This is all in one
> day in late January. This sort of thing has been going on there every- day for 35

years. The Israeli occupation is now the longest in modem history. […] And the settlements increase: they crowd every available hilltop (25).

Thirteen years later, the human rights violations committed on a daily basis are addressed by Dr. Riyad Mansour, Ambassador and Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations, on October 7th, 2016, outlining the continuous transgressions happening against the Palestinian people by their Israeli neighbor:

> I regret to once again have to draw your attention to the critical and tense situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as a result of Israel's relentless provocations and illegal actions against the Palestinian people. The systematic human rights violations and breaches of humanitarian law, particularly the theft and colonization of the Palestinian land, being perpetrated by the occupying Power continue to undermine the fragile and perilous situation on the ground and threaten to make the Two-State solution impossible (Mansour, 2016).

Between Said's internet search in 2003 and Dr. Mansour's address in 2016, the continuous violations against this people are exhibited. With the political turmoil in Palestine continuing for almost 70 years now and the ever growing displacement of people due to the violence that is encountered, the need to shed light on local struggles of the everyday becomes more and more important to revitalize the global duty to assist and open up to those in need.

As migration crises reach historical calibers in numbers, to the extent that in 2015 "the refugee" was chosen as the person of the year by the Daily Maverick (Spector 2015), how do long-term matters of suffering remain relevant? Palestinian statelessness, may fall under the unfortunate side of refugism that Arendt describes; no longer being the famous refugee, they are left without international protection, relying on endless stagnant resolutions.

However, even without state-recognition, the Palestinian people remain quite present in the world through literature, academia, cinema, and other fields. Even though they are not able to interact with Israel and create a shared community within their homeland, they are part of the world community. Indecisive cosmopolitanism is apparent in the case of Palestinians because of their odd place in the shared community. Excluded from their homeland, and from many global circles, Palestinians are treated as strangers within the world, unable to familiarize, yet going about and making their mark.

Indecisive cosmopolitanism allows an engagement between the different groups of the world. As some are hesitant in terms of opening up their locales, others are hesitant about joining them. Local concerns cannot be discarded in hopes of achieving a global unity, instead they should be interacted with. The travesties of the world are all due to a failure in interaction– the former Jewish victims victimize the Palestinians, thus excluding them from their common homeland as opposed to figuring out how to share it[9].

The three aforementioned contemporary issues represent the hesitation in wanting to open in up in the world in one way or another as they all exhibit oppression and prejudice towards outsiders. However, the world turning its back on cosmopolitanism is exactly why it needs to be reinstated. As nations are not willing to prioritize global matters over local ones, rejecting them all together is not a feasible option, nor is gliding over them in hopes of creating larger narratives of shared community. Indecision is thus evident in trying to find a means of committing to a shared community. Indecisive cosmopolitanism brings the shortcomings of international relations to the forefront to achieve a true sense

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[9] Said claims that the question of Palestine is 'not a matter of partition, of dividing the land. It is a matter of sharing it with equality' (30).

of understanding within the world by bearing in mind the historical context of nations as well as their collision with others through war and peace. In turn, history insists on a recollection of suffering, which remains universal, for all nations have suffered in one way or another. As individuals and nations reconcile with their history which ultimately is shared globally through suffering, it becomes pertinent that a global unity is formed to alleviate the current and historic suffering through some form of healing, if possible.

2. Suffering and Indecisive Cosmopolitanism

Suffering is too important to disregard in a study on world connectedness. In this work, suffering will be observed as an important part of indecisive cosmopolitanism. In its exclusion lies a universal inclusion where a situated pain can be found in varying settings through intertwining with history, memory, and voice. By allowing suffering to take its place front and center with respect to how one familiarizes within the world, the necessity of hesitance that comes along becomes evident.

Suffering is defined on both a personal and public level. It associates people through different experiences and creates a connection between pain and compassion. Even the basest animals understand pain, and collective suffering is definitely shared within ethnicities, cultures, and nationals. It is able to move from private to public circles due to human ability to feel for one another. Suffering in a public sense remains situated within local settings. This in turn puts in to question its universal nature; if universality is to be looked at as an empty component or as an abstract entity that takes form through the particular and the situated, social suffering acts as its agent. Social suffering is the representation of suffering through the political and economic conditions that play out in the ordinary and every day. Such suffering, though public, is built up through personal

experiences that in turn result in a hesitancy when dealing with the world at large. When suffering becomes systematized within the everyday, individuals partake in it, however, they develop a sense of indecision in forming any strong affiliations due to the personal and common suffering that they have always encountered. As such hopefulness and optimism are replaced with indecision and pragmatism.

According to psychiatrist and professor of medical anthropology and cross-cultural psychiatry, Arthur Kleinman, the term "social suffering" has a multiple range of reference. It can be found in any state where pain, trauma, and disorder are exhibited as a result of "what political, economic and institutional power does to people and, reciprocally, from how these forms of power themselves influence responses to social problems" (Kleinman et al. ix). As such, suffering cannot be looked at in isolation, separately from other factors, which in this case will be memory and history as they are mutually exclusive. In the case of Palestine, the power of memory in imposing as well as attesting injustice was presented. If historical events can be tampered with, recognized or denied, it is up to memory, to make sure history isn't erased. History disillusions the notions of nationality and ideology for in history there is injustice to all mankind. This is evident in the long-standing history of violence and trauma that is recalled through the memory of those who have suffered or who have been informed of suffering. This in turn takes us back to the early on stages of modern cosmopolitan thought, from the Stoic's insistence that the individuals of a community have a duty to others in the world, Kant's proposal to eradicate acts of injustice by taking the suffering of some that is felt by all and combatting it through international law, to the recognition of the right to have rights for all humans as Arendt would have liked to see, to more contemporary theories that

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oppose the empty universalism by investing in the locality of suffering and difference to understand the shared community of the global.

As such, there is a process of the publicizing of historic suffering and thus in sharing it globally through the presence of a voice that does not allow those who have suffered to remain hidden or become forgotten. Indecision takes place in the success of the voice to heal. As narratives are obscured, fragmented, and falsified, communities go on every day with no sense of healing but with ingrained pain that keeps them indecisive about situating themselves within the world at large.

As previously noted, war has been a constant in the world. The purpose of war can be condensed to the infliction of pain (Scarry 20). In order to protect one's nation, one must injure the enemy. War and pain are constant in the world. But how can pain be experienced or shared globally if it is confined locally? More specifically, how is suffering to be understood as part of cosmopolitanism when it invokes exclusivity through the particularity of pain? Pain is either hidden or an assumed given; rarely does it become visible as a source of social suffering, which is often correlated to great human suffering such as genocide or apartheid (Kleinman and Das, 10). Still, suffering on an everyday level, of those who have experienced trauma, be it directly or at a distance, is exhibited socially; this is why the suffering to be discussed from now on is social suffering, as it will later on be defined and observed in Alameddine's literature, through the analysis of the suffering the Lebanese people share as part of the pain imposed by war, as well as the individual suffering that the protagonists have that impedes them from fully assimilating within the realm of the public.

In the case of Lebanon, as will be further elaborated on in chapter 2, the Civil War, the Israeli occupation, and other acts of aggression have accumulated varying experiences of pain that have integrated into the social structure of the community. This has gravely affected the manner in which individuals go about in both local and global settings in Lebanon as they are forever marred by the violence and injustice of war, while urged to move forward in a globalized sense.

Through great flocks of emigration forever opening up the channels of connectedness between Lebanon and the world, as well as the buildup of capitalist structures within Lebanon that make it part of the consumerist open society, Lebanon and those inhabiting it are participants in the world; however, other markers, such as sectarianism, impose a deep sense of closedness and nationalism. Sectarianism allows different recollections of the history of war to rise that are often obscured. Such narratives are dangerous for they merge myth with fact and thus creating spaces "imbued with these mythic qualities" that in turn generate "narrations not only representing violence but also producing it" (Kleinman and Das 8). History is recalled subjectively, either covering up specific moments of violence to secure a greater sense of unity or highlighting them to sustain senses of division. The Lebanese context represents an exemplary space for regarding the subjectivity of history. As a county, Lebanon's status as a hospitable and open country remains unclear, as sectarian and exclusionary aspects remain quite prominent, even though a comprehensive agenda of openness and progressiveness is put forward. Circles of familiarity as well as exclusion are multiple within Lebanon, as is evident through the systematic suffering of the everyday, which in turn exemplifies the indecisive

cosmopolitan state, by interacting between the inclusive as well as exclusive aspects that make the country.

Lebanon become exemplary of social suffering, where grievances are never filed in the past and remain present in everyday life. As such, no healing occurs and suffering becomes normative, characterized in people's attitudes in dealing with additional pain. Historical suffering is not cured, and grand narratives of forgiveness and redemption come in opposition to local stories in which communities are experimenting with ways of inhabiting the world together.

Social suffering is apparent in the inhabitants of local settings that may differ from larger narratives that are usually obscured by memory:

> One may ask, though, if communities ever heal such wounds, or are the memories simply buried for one or two generations, until such time as the perspectives and experiences of those living through the shadow of death can be articulated? […] We are looking necessarily for a grand narrative of forgiveness and redemption but for the small local stories in which such communities are experimenting with ways of inhabiting the world together (Das 16).

By "experimenting with ways of inhabiting the world together", communities are faced with their social suffering; therefore, a validation and acknowledgment of historical suffering forces indecision to become a crucial asset to cosmopolitanism. As memory and suffering are intertwined, how we remember defines how we interact in the world. If we are willing to forgo local suffering, we are more likely able to adapt to the world; however, if we are stuck within a constant loop of remembering the same events, are we unable to partake within the shared community of the world? Remaining indecisive allows the memory of suffering to remain present while formulating new connections. It does not necessarily impede unity, but it does not become susceptible to the empty powers of universality that are guided by laws of governance and citizenship.

Moreover, the ability to voice suffering and thus acknowledge it is also an area of hesitation. The severity of pain can be difficult to express, and is therefore rendered silent or communicated non-verbally (Scarry 10). Still, it is crucial that pain be given a voice, for the lack of verbalizing pain does not assist its elimination but its infliction. In *The Body in Pain,* Elaine Scarry observes the difficulty of understanding pain and therefore verbalizing as well as publicizing it: "pain [is] something that cannot be denied and cannot be confirmed. To have pain is to have certainty; to hear about pain is to have *doubt*" (13). To have pain and to share pain affirm its existence in the world as a shared entity that binds people. In its variations, cosmopolitanisms have a duty to the border shifting world, which is of a human nature and is forever tarnished by suffering. If one does not experience suffering directly, one is still aware of it. Only after accepting one's suffering and recalling history is it possible to form some form of interaction between local and global spaces.

Moreover, through the narration of local stories of suffering as opposed to the grand narratives of the history books, suffering is given a voice. Through suffering, a sense of unity is formed effortlessly. As Wole Soyinka notes:

> The role of memory, of ancient precedents of current criminality, obviously governs our responses to the immediate and often more savage assaults on our humanity, and to strategies of remedial action. Faced with such a balancing imposition—the weight of memory against the violations of the present—it is sometimes useful to invoke the voices of the griots, the ancestral shades and their latter day interpreters, the poets. Memory obviously rejects amnesia, but it remains amenable to closure that is, apparently, the ultimate goal of social strategies. [...] It is there that they find common ground even though the latter does entail, by contrast, a demand for restitution. Both seek the cathartic bliss, the healing that comes with closure (Soyinka, 1999).

This is to say that memory plays an active role in balancing out the relationship between past and present, between historical injustices and amends. The activity of memory is

representative in indecisive cosmopolitanism. Through such an outlook, it becomes possible to navigate the inevitable closedness brought on by unresolved assaults on humanity in forming affiliations within the present, within the world, and with the open.

The poets, the writers, those who give voice to the everyday local suffering, help in articulating the pain behind experiences that often go unnoticed. Alameddine's narratives present such voices that balance the weight of memory with the present violations, in an effort to reach an amenable closure for those linked to a Lebanese locality, which becomes the center of analysis in the second chapter, as grounds for both indecisive cosmopolitanism, in general, and Alameddine's indecisive cosmopolitan characters, in specific. Rabih Alameddine brings to light the interrelation between memory, history, and suffering through the imaginative space of indecisive cosmopolitanism in the three novels to be discussed.

Still, an idea of forming a cosmopolitan unity to amend the hurt the world has gone through is not new nor revolutionary. The creation of the League of Nations in 1920 and later on the United Nations in 1946 and its affiliates were created after the first and second world wars respectively in order to resolve national conflicts and achieve global peace. Moreover, the devastation and death after the war brought back humanistic cosmopolitanism; notions of people sharing a common responsibility to humankind reemerged. NGOs such as the International Red Cross were established to abate human suffering. Also, in advocating human rights, cosmopolitanism became a "motivation to oppose slavery and apartheid, and to defend the emancipation of women" (Kleingeld and Brown). As a means of shared being, the concept of cosmopolitanism has been linked to the alleviation of hate, pain, and division.

3. Local narratives in a Global Setting

a. The United Nations

Efforts to restore humanity through universal law, however, have not always worked; the suffering and turmoil the world encompasses have only increased, and international interference remains hegemonized by countries more powerful than others[10]. In the world of politics, it is clear that cosmopolitan movements are either restricted by national boundaries or interests, or they are oppressive and take on forms that defy peacekeeping and universality.

The main organization founded to "maintain international peace and security, promote sustainable development, protect human rights, uphold international law, and deliver humanitarian aid" (Introductory Note | United Nations) is undoubtedly the United Nations. As Seyla Benhabib argues in *Another Cosmopolitanism*, with the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, humanity has entered into the arena of cosmopolitan norms and universal justice– a time where global civil society shares a responsibility towards the grievances of the world. The transition to cosmopolitan law over international law is significant because it involves people on an individual level. The duty to uphold peace no longer becomes the burden of nations only, but the burden of all humans as part of a shared community: "Cosmopolitan norms of justice, whatever the conditions of their legal origination, accrue to individuals as moral and legal persons in a worldwide civil society" (16). The notion of cosmopolitan laws taking over international laws could possibly be the answer to the question posed by Derrida as to whether a time

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[10] In "Memory, Inequality, and Power", Said looks at how the American Empire and Israel use their powerful status to impose great inequalities, specifically in relation to the Palestinian people, residing in the West Bank.

will come when national laws do not supersede the legal rights of "persons in a worldwide civil society" if it proves to be affective. It also assets Kant's claim that suffering is felt throughout the world by all; the United Nation Declaration opens up suffering as a global issue and not one closed up to nations. Moreover, with the development of *crimes against humanity*, *genocide*, and *war crimes*, human rights are transformed into generalizable norms that ought to govern the behavior of sovereign states. Supposedly, in accordance with UN charters, humanity carries its own weight and is significant; the value added to being human and the necessity to protect the right to be human acts as a step towards perpetual peace and the cosmopolitan ideal.

However, the United Nations goals are far from close to being achieved, and the "maintenance of international peace" is rendered futile. Arendt's questioning of human rights has brought the ineffectiveness of the UN in the defense of peace and the void value of being human into perspective. This, in turn, restores Derrida's hesitations with respect to cosmopolitan law yet again, for it becomes clear that in creating a worldwide civil society, localities must be taken into account.

Time and time again, the UN has come short in preventing violations and restoring peace. This might be related to the cosmopolitan nature of the UN doctrines that attempts to find a solution based on gliding over local problems in accordance with international consensus, leaving localities frustrated, thus in turn validating certain injustices imposed on humanity. Specifically, in the Palestinian context, the dissatisfaction with the UN's work in managing Palestinian statelessness is related to the US's domination of the situation and its close relations to Israel. In reality, the military intervention of the US in

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numerous international affairs is also another indicator of the failure of the cosmopolitan

plight based on grand narratives and not local ones.

b. US Warfare

Bruce Robbins points out in *Perpetual War*, cosmopolitanism appears at two levels,

nationally and transnationally (3). As both embody certain cosmopolitan aspects, they

remain quite distinct, each laying identity claims in different spheres without connecting.

In this distinction lies the problem with transnational warfare; as calls for the restoration

of global peace are made, national agendas are actually being implemented. American

nationalism presents itself with superiority in relation to the world, prioritizing patriotism

over transnationalism. The type of narrative that Robbins believes America creates

belongs to the grand kind- a hero story of an American savior who saves the world all

over. However, the case is far from such; there is no real closure of healing that occurs

through American universality. Instead, it perpetuates war by unendingly basing itself

within centers of conflict and helping progress whatever agenda suits American

nationalism in the name of cosmopolitanism:

> The sense of the present moment […] starts with topical events that, in the absence
> of a closure called for and promised, have metamorphosed into long-term and self-
> perpetuating conditions. I mean, first of all, the violence in the Middle East that has
> been initiated and supported by the United States. [...] habitual Israeli brutality
> against Palestinians [...]sustained as it is by the calm, long-term assurance that,
> whatever the number of casualties, the American government will never show more
> than token displeasure against its closest regional ally (5).

Any means of resolving conflict and ameliorating the pains of violations perpetuated by

the Americans remain absent while more injustices are committed. This increases not

only the closedness but the hesitancy found in forming affiliations within a shared

community, for it propagates war and not in any way advocates democracy and peace.

In integrating the local and the global spaces to form a cosmopolitan solidarity, understanding of a shared history and a desire to ameliorate suffering is necessary. This is to say that a super power like the U.S. cannot impose its own national agenda under the guise of cosmopolitan advancement. National bias acts retroactively- repeating history and escalating levels of pain throughout the globe through perpetual warfare. Indecisive cosmopolitanism, as opposed to such a military farce of cosmopolitanism, is a concept based on the recognition of the rights of those who have been treated unjustly and are still suffering. In accordance, they are hesitant when attempting to find their place within the world.

The aforementioned examples demonstrate an improper application of cosmopolitan governance, one based on national agenda as opposed to transnational compassion. If cosmopolitanism is to be looked at through hegemony, it is rendered a globalized failure. However, the world is too intertwined to exist without global affiliations even if they appear with hesitance. Still, collaboration and corroboration on transnational levels from different locals have proved to be more successful in various disciplines. As Sheldon Pollock et al. claim: "Transdisciplinary knowledge, in the cosmopolitan cause, is more readily a transnational process of culture's in-betweeness than a transcendent knowledge of what lies beyond difference, in some common pursuit of the universality of the human experience" (582). Pollock et al.'s point is that universal concepts are not measured by transcendental shared success but by a comprehension of varying struggles in the name of a common quest which in this case is cosmopolitanism. Another example of a universal concept with varying struggles is feminism. Feminism is a movement that aims for the establishment of equality and general improvement of women's standard of living that

works within the private as well as the public sphere. The common experiences of

oppression and suffering that women have gone through are cosmopolitan; they are

shared as much as they are personal. Like cosmopolitanism, feminism is plural and does

not abide to one single universal. Indeed, the various forms of feminism have had to fight

through their own universalisms, as have different notions of cosmopolitanism had to

struggle with different notions of universalism based on different centers. In

Cosmopolitanisms, Sheldon Pollock et al. demonstrate the variety in feminisms:

> U.S. mainstream feminisms have noted that the "our" of our times is a noninclusive
> our that consists of able-bodied white, heterosexual men. Asian American and
> African American feminists have pointed out the racialized nature of U.S.
> mainstream feminism itself, and together they have made an argument for the
> *constitutive* nature of gender and race in relation to each other. South Asian
> feminism has had to probe its class and cultural moorings in the world of the Hindu
> upper class with its attendant erasure of the lower class woman as well as the
> woman marked as Muslim, Christian, or tribal (583).

The above quote criticizes universality and inclusivity, as it acts as a hegemonic factor

representing one aspect while disregarding the rest. Possessive pronouns such as "our"

embody one and not all. Indeed, an "our" cannot be possible, as struggles, even under the

name of feminism, vary immensely. U.S. mainstream feminism is different from Asian

American and African American feminism, as are all three categories different from

South Asian feminism. The universalities in each of these feminisms are found within

their locales. In turn, this shows that within a larger universal lie multiple universals that

are in fact quite specific and not relatable on a global platform.

In the twentieth century, feminism developed simultaneously in different corners of

the world as an effort to improve the state of women universally and "dispel all national,

racial, and cultural barriers" (583). Through a long history of suffrage, prejudice, and

disregard, a unity amongst women was able to form. As part of a mutual movement

towards bettering the conditions of women throughout the world, particular struggles are recognized as universal. Feminism is situational as opposed to universal, and cosmopolitanism is too. Just like cosmopolitanism is plural, so is feminism. Just like cosmopolitanism is representative of different groups, so is feminism. Feminism has learned to wrestle with problems and attendant possibilities while struggling to keep the situated rather than the universal subject in the foreground.

C. The Rewards of Indecisive Cosmopolitanism

In observing the nature of the relations occurring within different localities, it is impossible to leave out the role of the shared world. As human rights violations hit local communities, they are forced to seek refuge in new places, in the name of universal hospitality that is meant to bind humans beyond national limitations. However, claims of openness and transnational assistance are greeted with hesitance. This hesitancy cannot be disregarded but requires acknowledgment, especially in cosmopolitanism. To identify with cosmopolitanism requires hesitation and indecision, for there really is too much to bear in mind when associating one's self with a shared community.

Cosmopolitanism has been contested as not just being based on world openness, but as necessarily also being inclusive of closedness that is manifested through national concerns and agendas. These two factors must certainly interact with one another in order to address human suffering efficiently. This issue has been at the heart of cosmopolitan debates since its initiation as a system of universal duty with the Stoics that Kant related to morality through realizing the international community's role in alleviating violations of human rights. Arendt and Derrida rightfully contested the ability of resolving human

suffering through universality while more contemporary cosmopolitans acknowledged

the significance of locales in the formation of a shared community[11].

Moreover, to encompass the locale is to recognize the pain, mobility, and history that

each group has gone through, acknowledging their varying experiences and learning to

accept them. Again, by engaging with the divergent narratives of the world and

recognizing and validating their suffering, indecisive cosmopolitanism helps in creating a

shared history that gives due attention to the universality of suffering without eclipsing

local and historical contingencies and particular realities.

The world hurts everywhere, and it is our job as a collective to amend it. The

following chapter does not offer solutions, for this thesis is not outrageous enough to

believe that it can offer a plan for world peace, or even peace in the Middle East. What it

offers instead is an outlook on how indecisive cosmopolitanism plays out in a specific

place, through local and global interactions, history and its recollection, and perpetual

social suffering. The local stories of Rabih Alameddine give voice to those who have

been covered up by grander narratives, bringing to light their indecision in partaking

within the larger shared community. Alameddine's three novels also allow us to answer

questions with respect to specific entities of indecisive cosmopolitanism, such as: How is

human connectedness within the world represented in the novels? And how is the

distinction between strangers, citizens, and outsiders evident? What impedes full

identification as a person of the world? What are some of the constraints imposed on a

person that impede her from becoming part of the world? How do injustices to humanity

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[11] This is not to say that Arendt and Derrida did not acknowledge the role of locales; however, as Arendt was able to point out injustices and Derrida was able to raise important questions, it is not until the last 20 years that locales across the globe- and not just within a powerful Western center- became part of the cosmopolitan conversation.

contribute to the cosmopolitan state? Finally, how are memory and history able to

negotiate between the spaces of uncertainty in the world?

Chapter 2
The Place of Perpetual Uncertainty

A. Indecisive Cosmopolitanism and Lebanon

So far, the necessity for indecisive cosmopolitanism as a concept for "world-making",
to use Pheng Cheah's terms, has been laid out by connecting it to suffering primarily that
takes form individually as well as socially, and always in relation to history and memory.
The purpose of this thesis is to assert the value of indecision in cosmopolitanism in order
to help better understand the types of affiliations that individuals align themselves with as
part of the world. What becomes evident through such an outlook, is that the
cosmopolitan imagination takes shape through an interaction between openness and
closedness. Here, hesitancy is found. The discursive space where one has to decide where
to affiliate is exactly where cosmopolitanism manifests through the interactions between
the variables of localities and cover-ups of globality.

In this chapter, a place as well as a space will be analyzed in understanding indecisive
cosmopolitanism. The place is Lebanon, a country marked as a "cosmopolitan hub in the
Middle East. The space is that of world literature. Specifically, the literature of Rabih
Alameddine. Three of his novels, *KoolAids* (1998), *I, the Divine* (2001), and *An
Unnecessary Woman* (2014), present individuals as well as communities that go in and
out of the state of indecisive cosmopolitanism by expanding their local narratives in an
effort to combat those of the grand global.

Lebanon can act as a representative space for indecisive cosmopolitan attitudes.
Historically multicultural, it has a long standing history of occupation, immigration, and
refugee intake. Within the national boundaries, the country has a significant number of

diverse citizens; globally, the Lebanese diaspora is overwhelming with over 10 million spread around the world.

As a rarity within the region, Lebanon has constantly struggled with national identification, for it is intimately bound with an outside force, the basis of which relies on sectarianism. Within the Lebanese constitution, 18 ethno-religious communities are recognized; each sect harbors its exclusive "clerical hierarchy, institutions, personal status laws, media, and political organizations" (Seidman 28). Idealistically, such a diversity is meant to invoke the cosmopolitan image of inclusiveness and integration; however, in reality, it provokes a segregated image of tolerance marked with contempt and violence. In Alameddine's novels, the divides brought on by sectarianism are evident through the various descriptions of Lebanon where notably, different people within the same locale, or at least discussing the same locale, affiliate with different groups involved in Lebanon, while vilifying the opposition. The plethora of divides governing Lebanon is described well in *KoolAids*: "It sounds like a tag team professional wrestling match with too many referees (79)."

As Seidman notes in "The Politics of Cosmopolitan Beirut", Lebanon has a long standing history of civic brutality, with continuous instances of uproar for over 60 years (e.g. 1958, 1975-90, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2013, and 2016), rendering the fate of this sectarian country into "an iconic symbol of national failure" (28). Not a year passes without some form of unrest taking place, usually through an assassination or a bombing[12]. Though the civil war officially ended in 1990, the remnants of the war throughout the country keep it alive:

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[12] Take for example the bombing of Blom Bank in June of 2016 (Abizeid 2016).

> Beirut's postwar topography is a daily reminder. [...]The landmarks that secured a sense of place, a tree-lined street or the family's butcher shop, these too are gone and the awareness of their absence evokes a past that cannot be easily forgotten. [...]There is the brother or cousin lost in battle or to a stray bullet; the sister or uncle who chose exile over chaos; or the parents who endured the war years but now live in a state of dread (Seidman 28-29).

The past remains part of the present as locals are unable to forget the travesties of war due to its consequences, be they topographical or familial. As places of familiarity and loved ones are forever marked by war, there is an inability to move past it, which instead gives rise to anger, frustration, intolerance, and hatred due to the inflicted pain, trauma, and suffering.

These emotions form circles of closedness– if no longer with family members, in a Nussbaumian sense, then they form through allegiances with their sect. Instead of a sense of unity through human suffering occurring, paranoia and hatred are honed, and within Lebanon divisions remain through sectarianism. Here, the types of affiliations made are brought to light. As much as advocacies for openness are presented, they are also linked to promises of closedness, usually with the promise of protection. In such advocacies, indecisive cosmopolitanism is crucial, to help abate the extremities of one in an effort to recognize the rights of all. Othering becomes a local pastime, as allegiance to one's sect dominates nationalism or patriotism:

> Sectarian solidarity is forged in part around a construction of sectarian other as an enemy, as a threat so immediate and consequential to self, kin, sect, and nation that it has the magnitude of a force of evil (Seidman 29).

Sectarianism imposes concentric circles of exclusion, where, within a locale, different constructions of affiliation are developed that in turn outcast those that don't belong, constructing a "sectarian enemy" out of them. This shows that, affiliations are formed through closedness in certain cases such as sectarianism, therefore its impact cannot be

discarded when talking about cosmopolitanism because it is quite present. It is important

to regard the cosmopolitan attitudes of those who identify as Lebanese to understand how

closedness interrelates with openness through their inescapable and necessary interaction

within a locale.

　　With sectarianism and recognition of division playing such an active role in personal

as well as national identity formation; how does one, or a city at that, relate to a concept

of shared community? With over a century of emigration, the Lebanese have assimilated

in other countries and maintained a sense of multiple identity that goes beyond being

merely Lebanese, while still identifying as such. Therefore, national identification is not

exclusively a religious or sectarian phenomenon, but one of a necessary transnational

nature. Any notions of nationalism in Lebanon relate to an outside force of dependency,

be it European or Arab. As Steven Seidman describes it, the Lebanese belonging can be

described as "cosmopolitan nationalism" (24); a nation based on interconnectedness and

merged identities that fosters residents from the global North and South, a country that

exhibits indecisive cosmopolitanism in its clean and gritty senses. Seemingly

oxymoronic, "cosmopolitan nationalism" integrates cosmopolitanism with nationalism,

showing that the two concepts act as key identity staples, not necessarily working against

each other but with one another. Through identifying with both a shared world

community as well as remaining affiliated with the nation, the interplay between

welcomeness and openness as well as protection and closedness is weighed through

hesitation, as it balances out the amalgamation of affiliation and filiation occurring.

　　With a visible generalized rage, cosmopolitanism within Beirut is not spared of

animosity or trauma; it becomes a result of a tiring effort to look past the divides in order

to see the city as a whole as opposed to a scarred and fragmented battlefield. Here, openness is found in an attempt to reconnect the various divides, as well as to ameliorate suffering. Lebanon is grounds for social suffering, whereby suffering becomes part of the everyday. Indecisive cosmopolitanism allows openness to work with the present suffering and attempt to heal the wrong-doings of the past, through addressing the issues that lead to closedness in the first place. Even though sectarianism is a prominent part of the Lebanese reality, the country is in constant interaction with strangers from outside its geographical borders.

Through prominent sectarianism and an openness to foreign residents, it is a rest stop for North American and European visitors, as well as a refuge for Palestinians, Syrians, and other displaced citizens; moreover, it is a home for migrant workers from numerous countries. It would be extremely ignorant and naïve to assume that the experience of these various groups in Lebanon is the same; where some are embraced, others suffer prejudice and are literally "othered". Lebanon hosts almost half a million Palestinian refugees (Palestinian Human Rights Organization: 2002). For almost 70 years, many Palestinians have been treated as unwelcome guests in Lebanon, and the world at large; not only are they exiled, they are stateless, with their notions of home being taken away, forcing them to find a home in affiliation with their fellow exiles instead. The state of exiles in general and Palestinians specifically, goes against the normative ideal of cosmopolitanism, for to be in exile is "fundamentally a discontinuous state of being" (Said 140). To say that Palestinians are not part of the shared community is impossible, for even if there is an attempt to erase them, they are quite present. They prove that cosmopolitanism exists outside of grand narratives, as they continue through

national identification within the global context to make an impact on the world through literature, legal politics, theater, and academia ("Mind, Inequality, and Power", 26). Such a sporadic state of being falls in line with notions of indecisive cosmopolitanism, where individuals are sometimes put in a situation and have to assimilate without forming a comprehensive sense of being due to divided allegiances and emotional drawbacks. During both the civil war and the Israeli invasion, the Lebanese found themselves in such a state, forced to flee their country. As a report from the Associated Press included in *KoolAids* reports, approximately "400,000 refugees – more than half of the population of southern Lebanon and about one-tenth of the country's people" fled from their homes in search of safety (25). In a split second, a group of people can be put into a dangerous situation that they need aid in escaping. Those who were once the "hosts" become themselves the refugees and are thrown at the mercy of the world.

As part of indecisive cosmopolitanism, suffering and a strong sense of history impede people from forming concrete connections of belonging anywhere they go. A feeling of strangeness and unsureness is prevalent even when citizenship is given, for there is a sense that it can be easily taken away. Such individuals are evident in Alameddine's literature; Aaliya, Sarah, Mohammad, Samir, his mother are all familiar with social suffering through the death of loved ones through war[13]. They all live with their sufferings on a daily basis, which impede them from making strong connections of familiarity as they go about within the world. As such indecisive cosmopolitanism is invoked in the characters' inability to make firm decisions with respect to their affiliations. They remain stuck with one foot here and another foot there. Alameddine's

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[13] and the AIDS epidemic as in the case of Samir and Mohammad.

literature helps us better understand indecisive cosmopolitanism through analyzing the hesitancy that goes along with the mobility of individuals from one locale to another, as they struggle to become members of the shared community.

Lebanon allows its residents to maintain a sense of worldliness by not allowing them to assimilate. Identities remain hesitant, unable to form a full-fledged sense of belonging within one locale. Lebanon in essence embodies transnationality through its multiple worldly dependencies. With a perpetually growing diaspora and an increasing number of refugees, the country is representative of an unbalanced identity, composed of varying and unequal features, swaying between a desire to be open and a need to be protected.

The country's complicated relationship with its citizens is exhibited within the literature of Lebanese/American author, Rabih Alameddine which allows us to answer the following questions in relation to indecisive cosmopolitanism: What is at stake when one finds belonging in indecisive cosmopolitanism? In the space of indecisive cosmopolitanism, how are people treated within the differing places of locality? How are hospitality and hostility exhibited for different characters in different locales? Again, what are the affiliations that they make? The identities that they form?

B. Rabih Alameddine's in-betweeness

As a member of the Lebanese diaspora, spending his time between Lebanon and other countries, mainly the U.S., Rabih Alameddine, himself, belongs to the state of indecisive cosmopolitanism due to his hesitancy in laying claim to affiliations. He belongs to the category of Anglophone Lebanese writers, both due to his thematic relationship to Lebanon as well as his own heritage. Alameddine is an example of an individual split in between, belonging somewhere, yet fitting in somewhere else. In an interview with *The*

Guardian last January, Alameddine stated that "he fits in the US (where he doesn't belong) but belongs in Beirut (where he doesn't fit)" (2015). This in-betweeness is mirrored in the protagonists of all his novels, where memory becomes the link to feelings of belonging but a barrier to fitting in.

With memories of suffering and injustice remaining at the forefront of a person's choice-making process, it becomes difficult to familiarize within any particular part of the world due to one's close encounters with hostility. Alameddine represents this in-betweeness by creating characters that identify as black-sheep, outcasts within their filiative circles, forming their affiliations elsewhere. However, none of these characters are able to shed the suffering they encounter, be it as part of a collective social suffering or as part of their own individual states of suffering as they remain engraved in each one's memories. Mohammad, Sarah, and Aaliya are faced with the memories of their youth in Lebanon, while they integrate with the world at large, through art and literature. However, they remain attached to memories of Lebanon, to suffering and pain endured within that locale that prohibits them from acclimating anywhere else fully. In these narratives, the center is Lebanon. Even though the characters engage mainly with the West, the West is the outlier and not the center. The center remains Lebanon whether the characters want that or not. Mohammad leaves Lebanon and never comes back, Sarah keeps going back and forth, while Aaliya remains physically grounded within the city. Despite their varying degrees of mobility, the three protagonists are connected to Lebanon due to the suffering they accumulated within this locale. They share the suffering imposed by war, but they each suffer individually as well.

Cosmopolitanism takes on different forms, as centers differ and experiences vary. When the center is not one of privilege and power, but one of pain and suffering and peripheries are not all welcoming and encompassing, indecision takes on an active role in identity formation for those who identify with cosmopolitanism. Alameddine epitomizes an indecisive cosmopolitan attitude by not merging identities but rather allowing the different factors that build it up to coexist.

In his novels, Rabih Alameddine showcases the intricacies of identifying with cosmopolitanism. In *KoolAids: Art of War,* he presents a collage of experience with war, disease, and death within two distinct locales showing us the connection established through suffering. The novel follows the lives of a group of homosexual men affected and dying from HIV/AIDS during its early epidemic years in San Francisco and New York. It also chronicles the travesties of the Lebanese Civil War, as it affected families, individuals, and the nation entirely.

The prominent characters in the novel are Samir and Mohammad; both Lebanese gay men living in the diaspora. Due to war or in pursuit of education, they leave the country to find homes for themselves within the global context. However, when it comes to making connections with home, they differ. Samir remains attached to his homeland and visits, while Mo appears to be detached, not just from Lebanon, but from most people, letting few into his life. Apart from the main protagonists, the novel looks at the many contradictions exhibited in history, memory, and perception, through presenting various accounts of the war through emails, letters, reports, and love affairs. This prevents a singular narrative to occur and thus creates a cacophony in forming affiliations. The novel centers around relationships, be they sexual, emotional, or familial. The complexity

of these relationships is represented through the physical distance, as both Samir and Mo's parents remain in Lebanon while the men travel to study and work. As Lebanese displaced in war, they remain strangers in the world; however, as strangers, they form relationships more intimate than they ever did as locals.

In *I, the Divine*, the cosmopolitan narrative becomes more focused and comparative, presenting the global citizen distinctly against those who remained fixed which helps us understand how indecision plays out in cosmopolitanism. In the novel, Sarah Noureddine attempts to write her memoir but ends up with a book of first chapters which in turn tells the reader the story of her life. The reader meets her family, her friends, her lovers, and her tragedies. The protagonist Sarah, struggles with her identity and remains hesitant about how to align herself with the different factors in her life. Having had to "shuffle ad nauseum between the need to assert [her] individuality and the need to belong to [her] clan", as well as having to manage the trauma she carries with her, she identifies as "the black sheep of [her] family, yet an essential part of it" (229). Through such an identification, she asserts herself as a perpetual stranger, unable to fully assimilate within one sphere and remaining caught in between two, by managing the hesitancies that impede her from fully partaking. As in *KoolAids*, indecisive cosmopolitanism is shown through the affiliations formed within Lebanon and outside of it, that at times are exemplary of openness, but at others, clash with closedness brought on through hate and intolerance in both local and global circles. By looking at how a family remains connected across oceans, specifically through shame and suffering that go beyond expected family drama, the individual's significance in making a decision in identity formation is evident. The novel closely studies the pluralities in ascribed identities.

Moreover, even more so than *KoolAids*, it observes the significant role suffering plays in identity formation. Also, with the city falling victim to globalization, opening up capitalist chains such as Starbucks, and reemerging as an elitist hub for tourists, it also harbors tradition and the closedness that befalls Lebanese households and governance.

Finally, in *An Unnecessary Woman,* Alameddine presents Aaliya who is connected to the world through literature which matters because it depicts cosmopolitanism without the traditional attribute of travel. *An Unnecessary Woman* defies the premise of world-traveler attached to cosmopolitanism (Germann-Molz 17) by presenting a character that is grounded physically within the context of Lebanon. However, Aaliya is intellectually well-traveled; with over 200 literary references from all over the globe, she becomes a global citizen. She herself takes up translation as a hobby, translating one book a year into Arabic from English or French. Nevertheless, Aaliya, is rendered unnecessary; she is a seventy-two-year-old woman, single, and introverted, with no obligations in life to anyone but herself. To her family, as well as her society, she is truly superfluous; for she refuses to participate in any family matter. She is her "family's appendix, its unnecessary appendage" (13). After a failed and unconsummated marriage, Aaliya does not remarry, thus rendering herself a spinster, a tragic destiny for women in Lebanon. In the course of the fifty years of Aaliya's life that the novel covers, the reader gets to see a changing Beirut, and the interplay of closed and open systems that occur in the process. Members of society who are rejected fill up the novel, from those who are rejected due to mere oddity as Aaaliya, or those who were previously rejected due to their status as refugees and make their own way through whatever means afforded to them, like Ahmad. When searching for indecisive cosmopolitanism, *An Unnecessary Woman* helps us look at how

much an individual is actively a part of the decision-making process, and how much

hesitancy in partaking really factors in. It also allows us to see the necessity for

comprehension by bringing to light the absurdity of the continuous suffering throughout

history. Aaliya's memories and recollection of the history of Beirut, as well as the

constant relations she makes to the world through her knowledge, help connect history to

contemporary suffering, that may not "'repeat itself, but it does rhyme'" (194):

> One response must be that Beirutis must be savagely insane to murder each other
> of trivial divergences. Don't judge us too harshly. At the heart of most antagonisms
> are irreconcilable similarities. Hundred-year wars were fought over whether Jesus
> was human in divine form or divine in human form. Belief is murderous (252).

Sarcastically, Alameddine shows how human travesty continues through time, and how

people need to be reminded of the past ones in order to understand the contemporary

crimes against humanity.

Each novel depicts how suffering and memory obscure belonging. These novels look

into local narratives that through the use of individual memory of war and the suffering

that entails, are able to draw out the types of affiliations they form. These attachments

take shape in indecisive cosmopolitanism, as hesitancy plays a key role in how Aaliya,

Mohammad, Sarah, and others assimilate within the world. They find themselves in

between varying localities unable to fully belong anywhere. As all three novels center or

situate Lebanon and the Lebanese war in their narratives, accounts of direct suffering are

presented. Different forms of suffering are observed, be it in a physical sense as in

KoolAids through the portrayal of the AIDS epidemic, through trauma and mental

suffering as in *I, The Divine* with Sarah's PTSD and Lamia's psychopathy and in *An*

Unnecessary Woman through Aaliya's detachment.

Moreover, the novels display the interplay between open and closed relations in the world; the inability to fully assimilate or be accepted is what leads to a sense of hesitation in staking a claim of identity and belonging for each of the characters. The three characters are described as the "black sheep" in their families, due to the ways in which they choose to live their lives. Mohammad is dead to his family because of his sexual orientation. Sarah is unable to come to terms with her past traumas, and remains in constant search for significance in her life. Aaliya is rejected by her family because of her uselessness to them; she fails at marriage and doesn't share her apartment with her brothers. Because of the grievance they carry due to their past experiences of exclusion, hesitancy is found in every affiliation the characters make. Ultimately, all three novels are quests for belonging.

The narratives present individuals that participate in the world not from a position of power, but one of shared experiential pain. The three novels share a common theme of war, specifically the Lebanese War and the suffering that entailed on both a collective and individual level. Another theme presented in all three is the attempt to escape from the locale, the place of filiation; however, none of the characters are successful in that thus proving that interacting between different spaces on both local and global fronts, as well as open and closed systems, is necessary in forming affiliations.

C. Partial Cosmopolitanism in the Novels

The novels share common features of cosmopolitanism in the traditional sense in terms of class-consciousness, globalization, and frequent-travelling that does not necessarily serve much of a purpose in terms of social utility (Calhoun 2002). Such features are evident in Alameddine's novels through the depiction of elitist lifestyles and

capitalist endeavors within Beirut. However, the novels also depict cosmopolitanism as a productive means of being in the world, through the employment of indecision as it relates to suffering, remembrance, and the quest for belonging; all three novels portray existential searches for a stable identity, for both cities and characters as they fall in and out of cosmopolitan states due to the instabilities they face in terms of illness and place. However, before indecisive cosmopolitanism is studied any further, one must look at the "partial" cosmopolitan features of the novels.

Early on in the thesis, the term "partial cosmopolitanism" was encountered as part of Kwame Anthony Appiah's theory on cosmopolitanism. At this point, however, the same term will be used differently, by limiting cosmopolitanism to a certain list of characteristics that are not able to encompass plurality and variety, but instead represent a part of what cosmopolitanism has come to define, perhaps more in accordance to how Craig Calhoun believes it is actually employed[14]. Partiality entails a list of normative characteristics associated with capital growth, globalization, and elitism. All these are attributes that may encompass a part of cosmopolitanism, however, they should not be used as its definers. Indecisive cosmopolitanism forms in spite and around other worldly developments such as capitalism.

The narratives are mainly set between Lebanon and the United States. Both countries are home to people who speak several languages. In Lebanon particularly, polyglots are the norm, as citizens speak the national language, and one or two Western languages, either that of the former French occupier, or of the globalizer, English. Moreover, as many other cultures found a home in Lebanon through the years, languages such as

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[14] Though Calhoun recognizes that cosmopolitanism can be used as a means of comprehending the shared world, he does not believe this has been done so far, and is instead utilized as hegemony and globalization.

Armenian, Russian, Cyrillic, and others are evident. Also, as domestic workers mainly

from Africa and Asia-Pacific are employed in the country, their languages are also quite

prominent (International Labor Organization, 2013). In accordance, the characters in the

novels are fluent in 2-3 languages, English, Arabic and French.

Apart from the language factor, in all the novels, the West is quite present even in the

Lebanese locale[15]. Travel engages all of the characters in different ways. In *KoolAids,* a

permanent form of travel takes shape as Mohammad and Samir leave war-torn Lebanon

to settle in the USA. In *I, the Divine,* in-betweeness in travel is exhibited as Sarah

constantly travels between Lebanon and the USA, establishing a life in the latter while

remaining familiar with the former due to her strong familial ties. In *An Unnecessary*

Woman, mental travel is exhibited as Aaliya, is educated enough to be a Western literary-

scholar, constantly relying on literature to make sense of the world around her. The

interaction with the world as presented through the different forms of travel allows a

sense of strangeness to arise within the travelers, as they identify within different spaces

but remain unable to fully assimilate in one.

Moreover, within Lebanon, westernized lifestyles are adopted, as seen through

musical interests, pop-culture involvement, and capitalistic ventures. In the first chapter

of *I, the Divine* titled "Starbucks as Metaphor", a prologue is presented that describes

Beirut as a city in ruin, "Berytus is no more" (265). To refer to Beirut as "Berytus"

incites its history as an ancient city[16]; for it to no longer exist, implies that globalized

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[15] The presented cosmopolitanism is definitely one of Middle East-West relations as opposed to one that engages another part of the global south, which is also a valid area for the study of indecision and cosmopolitanism.
[16] "Berytus" was a Roman colony. See Hall, Lynda J. *Roman Berytus: Beirut in late antiquity*. Psychology Press. London, 2004

ventures replace it. Starbucks isn't integrated within the city, it takes over the city, destroying its history and heritage. The chapter goes on to describe the gradual return of pop-culture to the city; from Kent billboards to a Starbucks opening up in Hamra. In *KoolAids,* the elitist atmosphere is described through Samir and Karim's prewar outings: "Even though Faraya and Faqra were more modern resorts, the Cedars was better, less pretentious, less nouveau riche. [...]The resort was old money, class all the way" (65). In *An Unnecessary Woman,* as Aaliya wanders around the city, she notes its changes; "billboards featuring ridiculously wealthy Westerners shopping, swimming in private pools, and getting facialed in spas" (212) and the announcement: "We're Beiruting Again", thus associating the city of Beirut with high-culture. However, such environments are disillusioned by the omnipresence of war, and the constant destruction juxtaposes modernity as well as class status.

Rabih Alameddine takes great opportunity to critique certain images of cosmopolitanism by offering an inside look into the lives of the class-conscious frequent flyers. Specifically, within the context of Beirut as a "cosmopolitan city", Alameddine showcases the hypocrisy behind such a labeling; whereas Beirut is able to describe a cleaned-up version of an open city, it still harbors a lot of closedness and hostility. As memory, and the falsification of history are integral causes of hesitance, forgetfulness allows the globalized version of a clean and positive cosmopolitanism to take over: "The Lebanese forget. Syrian rule is better than Christian rule, and Israeli rule is better than Muslim rule. Drug companies ring their cash registers. Reagan sleeps well at night. He has forgotten everything" (*KoolAids* 153).

The quote incites a lot of global players within a local setting; as the Lebanese Civil war causes religious divides (Christian, Muslim, Druze), it becomes evident that the war is in no way limited within the locale, and outside forces are quite prominent. War becomes a cosmopolitan venture in that it involves different members of the world, interacting within one locale; unfortunately, in this case, the interaction is destructive. This situation casts light on a cause for hesitation as part of indecisive cosmopolitanism as well. As individuals are made aware of the international perpetrators of injustice within their locale, they become hesitant in wanting to interact with them and thus close up and resort to other groups they believe will protect them. Such is the case again in the civil war as well as in the sectarian system that governs the country; hostility and hospitality go hand in hand in offering protection to some while attacking the other, all within one locale that in turn is divided.

KoolAids specifically questions Lebanon's status as a cosmopolitan country; through numerous letters or emails inserted analyzing Lebanon's identity within a global context. Its nature remains complicated, as each writer describes it in accordance with his own affiliation. Wayne Kassem affiliates being Lebanese with being American (71) while Roger Dabbas identifies the Maronite as "the true Lebanese" (58). Said Maleh affiliates Lebanon with Israel, who is "liberating us from the heavy Syrian boots and protecting us from the Hezballah" (219). The image of Beirut as a cosmopolitan city in Lebanon is further analyzed in *An Unnecessary Woman,* where the notion of a city as cosmopolitan is explored; the novel follows how through cultural integration and segregation, the city forms its own cosmopolitan identity. Throughout most of the novel, Aaliya is walking through the streets of her city, recalling past memories and daydreaming about her

fictitious friends. As Calhoun mentions, "the noun cosmopolitanism is used to describe" cities as specific areas of diversity, which in turn mirrors the diversity found in the whole world (428). Therefore, when identifying with a city that is cosmopolitan, one identifies with cosmopolitanism as well because one becomes familiar with the different aspects of the city that are worldly and shared, transcending the walls of the locale and making connections beyond. Just like Aaliya is able to invoke Mark Twain, George Santayana, Nietzsche, Hegel among some, when walking the streets of Beirut, others are able to find associations as well.

Even if features of partial cosmopolitanism appear in the novels, they're nature invites skepticism as well hesitance. What is to be made of the pain and suffering that is quite prominent in the novels? Does an interaction between exclusive and inclusive spaces take place, or is one overtaking the other by distorting memory and therefore erasing history? All three novels follow the everyday stories of those who have suffered due to the violence of war and displacement. They do not allow narratives of civil war amnesia to settle in (Haugbolle 2005). Strong attachments to the local are lost, or complicated to say the least. Indecision forms, due to partiality associated with the local as well as with the globe, thus remaining between the two.

D. Indecisive Cosmopolitanism in the Novels

The partiality of cosmopolitanism fuses with indecisive cosmopolitanism at certain moments; necessarily, a channel of communication with the world outside the locale is needed to appeal to the cosmopolitan imagination, be it through travel, literature, or political affiliation. By regarding the novels through the lens of the indecisive cosmopolitanism imaginary, it becomes possible to see the stakes involved when forming

affiliations within the world. Citizens become strangers, they become "others". Distance and difference do not affect networks subject to a higher level of connectedness, which is represented by humanity, or lack thereof. People are still allied, in some form, obligated to one another through pain and a search for peace and healing. In two distinct circles, solidarity is assumed through a compassion with pain and a grave desire for peace.

Through the chosen literature, the question of what causes people to leave their local community or their reality is posed. In short, it is suffering; suffering caused by a number of factors, be it war, illness, or trauma. As specific and personal as suffering may be, it can still be shared, as it transcends personal experience to become public. Pain and death are transformational; they are transformational in a sense that they transcend from the ephemeral, from the local, to a level that binds all together. Death, diseases, pain and suffering are beyond forces of control.

Constant experiences of suffering are ingrained systematically in society and are part of the everyday; individual experiences morph into collective states. Elaine Scarry describes the transcendental power of pain eloquently: "the self extends out beyond the boundaries of the body, occupies a space much larger than the body" (33). Here, Scarry shows how pain felt within, personal pain, becomes shared, through occupying a space much larger than oneself. In the novels, this is evident through the similar experiences of pain. Sarah and her family mourn the death of her sister Rana, Samir's mom loses her son to the diaspora, and Aaliya loses Hannah to depression and ultimately death. For suffering to move from the private to the public sphere, memory and history are summoned to shed light on the similarity in experience that different people go through. Suffering becomes ground for indecisive cosmopolitanism incites both openness and

closedness, since it either invokes compassion or provokes aggression. Both in an effort

to alleviate individual suffering. The uncertainty in dealing with the pain the characters'

feel is what causes hesitation in how they associate locally and globally.

    As mentioned in chapter 1, it is difficult to separate suffering from memory and

belonging as all three are interrelated. In *KoolAids*, suffering is brought on physically

through the spread of AIDS in some of the characters. It is also found in war as characters

and their loved ones are killed and/or separated due to its travesties. In coping with

suffering, feelings of anger and frustration are sometimes triggered. These emotions, as

well as an uncertainty in how to ameliorate suffering, become part of the hesitance

brought on by injustice, hypocrisy, and forgetfulness. Lebanon's civil war erupted with

the massacre in Ain El Rimmeneh, when a bus full of Palestinian refugees was stopped,

and its 28 passengers were shot to death. Since the Nakba, Lebanon opened its borders to

its Palestinian neighbors, who were escaping the annexation of their land. The Lebanese

nation-state was created in 1943, which means that refugees have been a part of its

history from the get-go. However, many prefer to think of Lebanon without refugees;

recalling "the good old days" without any unwanted guests:

> The good old days. Everybody talks about the good old days. You could go anywhere you wanted without being afraid of being killed. No Israeli planes, no Syrian tanks, no shells waking you up at night. Snow skiing in Faraya, then down for a dip in the Mediterranean at Khalde. No refugees in the Saint Simon beach club. You could actually walk the *trottoir* at Raouche. No kid-napping, no disappearances (88).

In the above quotation from the novel, the delusional version of the past is presented;

memory acts as the main deceiver as it prohibits people from objectively recounting

history or even perceiving reality. The absence of unified versions of history and memory

make it difficult to form a decision in relaying what actually happened, and therefore causes hesitance in figuring out how to proceed.

Memory can be blurred, biased, fragmented, or simply false, all of which impede it from representing shared experience truthfully. This again is cause for hesitation, as one cannot trust their own memory or that of the history books. As Syrine Hout notes in "Cultural hybridity, trauma, and memory in diasporic Anglophone Lebanese fiction", as there is "no agreement on a consistent war narrative, state-sponsored forgetfulness becomes a strategy to suppress political/public memory. Until today, Lebanese public policy has been successful in omitting the civil war from history textbooks" (331). This relates back to the formation of grand narratives that attempt to instill peace by eliminating uncomfortable and unresolved occurrences in history, However, this strategy of gliding over history, fails and instead increases feelings of anger and frustration, because those involved in those occurrences, the civil war in this case, remember and still suffer.

This leaves room for dangerous interpretations of Lebanese history as shown through the example of Roger Dabbas's address to his "fellow Christians", where he describes how the Maronite are the "true Lebanese", due to their pure and sole lineage in relation to the Phoenicians (57-58). Such dangerous rhetoric and misconception of history is what allows the growth of hatred and intolerance within the world. Forgetfulness of the turmoil brought on by injustice to humanity is what breeds more closedness:

> They forget about us. Israel attacks Lebanon, it is front page news They kill children in an ambulance, it still is news. They bomb a UN shelter killing 105 civilians, it gets reported. The fighting goes on for a week, it gets moved back to page three. It goes on for two weeks, more people die, and it is no longer news (152).

The longer violence goes on, the more the imposed suffering becomes normalized and regarded as part of the everyday, it no longer receives the same coverage as it did early on. As such, human suffering becomes boring, habitual. In Arendt's terms, those suffering lose their famous status and are thus forgotten. Violations of human rights are no longer felt all over, but are instead treated with a temporality– significant for a specific time, but ultimately ephemeral to the world at large.

In retaliation to searches of purity and constant divisions, indecision in making any allegiance is sprouted. As an insistence on forgetfulness of suffering builds up, cosmopolitanism is founded in the inability to forget, to move on and forgive. This movement towards forgetfulness is implemented through the creation of grand narratives that downplay and discard suffering perpetrated, in an effort to cover up violations of human rights instead of actually resolving them. People's lives are forever changed with each instance of warfare, yet an insistence on moving on is found. However, people's incapability to move on, to forget, is what keeps them hesitant within a shared community, which itself is built on suffering, hospitality, and migration. Cosmopolitanism is thus situated in the local, where in order to actually allow a healing process to occur, it is important to acknowledge the injustice that is happening. Alameddine's texts do just that, they bring forth the narratives of pain and suffering to prevent them from being forgotten.

Another important aspect of indecisive cosmopolitanism explored in Alameddine's novels is hospitality. As individuals themselves may be hesitant to participate in the global sphere, the places they travel to are not always welcoming. Through racial profiling, blatant racism, and national politics, a forced hesitation is issued which

impedes full identification as a person of the world. Many instances of racist encounters are presented throughout the novel. Everyday racism is evident through Mohammad's interactions in the states, from an offensive note asking him not to prepare any "national specialties with odors hard to get rid of" (36), to a composite drawing describing the identity of the Oklahoma bomber, speculating that it is a Middle-Eastern man; "Your picture is all over the news" (196). As such, the likelihood of fully assimilating within his new locale, where he is able to fit in, remains far-fetched, as his identity will always be marked by his origin, thus preventing him from belonging. These two instances are representative of the complexity of hospitality in the world; strangers are allowed into nations, but only as guests, and have to abide by the legislations of the host. Moreover, they are susceptible to profiling and policing and are often blamed for any disturbance that occurs due to their status as the other. In Mohammad's case, he is a stranger who becomes a citizen, and even though he becomes a member of the new locale, he is still a stranger at times, susceptible to discrimination. The inability to fully assimilate that Mohammad faces, is representative of indecisive cosmopolitanism, where one remains uncertain of where he belongs.

As evident, inclusion is uncertain as the abilities to belong and to fit in do not tend to correlate. The complicated dynamics between belonging and fitting in are evident in how the various Lebanese characters relate to their country of origin. As worldliness is celebrated as a success, it also prohibits a sense of belonging. Perhaps the main theme of the novel that also resonates in *I, the Divine* and *An Unnecessary Woman* is that of belonging and fitting in:

"In America, I fit, but do not belong.
In Lebanon, I belong, but do not fit." (40)

The indecision in laying claim to one's identity fully, leaves the individual standing at a halt in between two locals without integrating them as part of one's identity. Identity remains in crisis. As Syrine Hout notes, that apart from being part of an actual physical diaspora, the characters go through a state of "spiritual diaspora" a term coined by Layla Al Maleh ("Cultural hybridity, trauma, and memory in diasporic Anglophone Lebanese fiction,"335). For Mohammad and Sarah, "the United States offers freedom as well as anonymity but at the same time it threatens to sever or weaken their emotional ties to their birthplace" (Hout 335). Thus, they remain indecisive in laying a full sense of assertion to their identity in terms of one local though they have suffered because of their homeland, they cannot let it go, and they can never fully assimilate within American culture. Not that they would want to.

Frustration and suffering are also channeled in *I, the Divine*. In terms of having one foot in the local and another in the global, *I, the Divine* captures this stance in a more focused manner than the fragmented *KoolAids.* As the novel addresses the Lebanese war, it focuses merely on individuals than collectives; specifically, the focus falls on Sarah Noureddine and four generations of her family. The narrative is set against the backdrop of one of the most closed communities in the world; the Noureddine family are of the Druze faith. Even though they participate in the open world, they ultimately restrict themselves to the traditions of their religions. Sarah's grandfather was enamored with Sarah Berhardt, and therefore named his beloved granddaughter in her honor, or so she thought[17]. Sarah's father married an American woman, who tried her best to acclimate in the Druze household that eventually rejected her. Her Druze husband divorced her and

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[17] Names in *I, the Divine* and *An Unnecessary Woman* have interesting connotations and deserve further research in a different context.

repented by marrying "a woman according to the traditions of his forefathers"(168). Sarah's stepmother, a Druze woman, made the best out of her position in a traditional and patriarchal situation, ultimately becoming the glue that holds the dysfunctional Noureddine's together. As such, this family does not befit an orthodox Druze representation but is instead involved with the struggles of daily life that everyone shares. Saniya describes the family as "one big mess", but familiarizes with it as her mess (253). The role of the family takes on the greatest power as it represents the ultimate form of belonging. This is echoed in Sarah's final words in the novel: "Come meet my family. Come meet my friends. Come here, I say. Come meet my pride" (308). Sarah forms her affiliations with the people in her life; as if following Martha Nussbaum's concentric circles, Sarah aligns herself with her family first, before any national and humanitarian affiliations.

However, if a sense of belonging is found within the family, a clear sense of identity remains unattainable. Sarah and her sisters struggle to understand who they are meant to be, and thus react accordingly. In Lamia's case, it is through psychopathy and serial murder; in Amal's, it is through an extra-marital affair; and in Sarah's case, it is through understanding her legacy, through understanding the significance of her name. Sarah is ostracized as the black sheep by her family and doesn't fit in. Nor does she belong in America where she is constantly faced with the trauma of her rape and the war. As Syrine Hout notes in "Cultural hybridity, trauma, and memory in diasporic Anglophone Lebanese fiction," Sarah is able to easily relay the events of the war, however she is not as vocal about her rape (336) Sarah's rape is a private form of suffering. In its privacy, there is a shared solidarity, amongst all the women that had to suffer similarly in silence:

> She sat in from of the television. Her stepmother watched her intently. *Are you alright? Yes, I'm fine. I'm fine.* For a minute, but only a minute, she considered how many girls must have gone through what she did and sat silent. *Are you sure you're alright?* (199).

As mentioned earlier, voice plays a big role in transferring experiences of suffering from the private to the public. Sarah's inability and hesitancy to express her internal pain stays with her and prevents her from engaging fully with her local setting. In Lebanon, she is faced with her rape, in the United States, echoes of war and a growing depression haunt her.

To fully belong in a place can be difficult; especially a specific place related to suffering. As it is impossible to escape from suffering, individuals become caught in a state of in-betweeness, leaving the actual place of discrimination as in Mohammad's case or violation as in Sarah's; however, they remain haunted by the inflicted pain wherever they go, giving it the power to govern them within the world. Suffering plays an active role in navigating how one integrates within the world. As such, one always carries the baggage of the past wherever she may go, which in turn brings forth hesitation in actually moving forward.

As for suffering induced by war, compassion and a comprehension of pain are established. People accommodate their lives within the context of constant violence; as Saniya mourns the death of her daughter, she comforts the murderer's mother in a unified effort to alleviate the pains of a mutual suffering:

> My stepmother strode over to the murderer's mother, sat down next to her. They did not exchange words. The room hushed completely. My stepmother reached over, covered the woman's hand with hers. The soldier's mother cried silently (69).

Saniya and the soldier's mother have both lost their children; instead of reacting angrily and hatefully toward the mother of her daughter's killer, Saniya practices compassion,

allowing the desire to ameliorate pain to surpass the desire for retribution. There is no hesitation in Saniya's actions, in the darkest of moments she opens up and welcomes the woman sharing her pain.

Rana's death and Saniya's compassion may not be directly linked to cosmopolitanism; however, they are exemplary of how compassion exhibited within the private sphere may appear in the public. If more people were to exhibit compassion and welcomeness as opposed to hostility in the face of suffering, then the world would be one step closer to being truly shared. The clash of worlds and a strong need for a unity between individuals cannot be broken. The two examples of female solidarity provided above help instill the importance of indecisive cosmopolitanism; different experiences add greatly to a global concept of shared community in that they bind beyond nation and tradition, but through altruistic humanity. As suffering is the main cause of such a unity, the struggle in overcoming it, causes hesitation, which again is related to how one deals with suffering– either by exhibiting hatred or by showing kindness.

In its own turn, hesitation leads to distorted perception and memory, which is to say that the right decision is not always formed when one has second-thoughts. Hesitation may not always act as a moment of insight, but can also be a place of deceptive thought. For example, abusive partners are either transformed into forgivable wrong-doers; tragic memories are recalled nostalgically as positive, and former locales are idolized. This, however, does not form a problem for indecisive cosmopolitanism, because the point of hesitancy is what brings forth the process of negotiation in decision-making. The uncertainties of how to proceed, what is right and wrong, are hashed out in indecision. When Sarah leaves Lebanon and builds her life in America, she finds herself

at a loss in situating herself within a place fully, thus remaining in a state of in-

betweeness in belonging:

> Can there be any *here*? No. She understands *there*. Whenever she is in Beirut, home
> is New York. Whenever she is in New York, home is Beirut. Home is never where
> she is, but where she is not (99).

Does Sarah belong in two places at once, or does she belong nowhere? In America she

idolizes Lebanon; in Lebanon, she curses the day of her return and cannot wait for her

trip back to the States. Sarah's hesitance in grounding herself juxtaposes desires of going

back home with desires to stay away. In such a hesitance, the attitude of indecisive

cosmopolitanism is embodied because it constantly makes her contemplate the validity of

her affiliations.

Hesitation is also quite prominent in Aaliya's relaying of her memories as well as

historical events in *An Unnecessary Woman*. As the narrator, she evaluates the events of

her life; in a distorted fashion. Her memory constantly lapses as she herself does not seem

to trust her remembrance of episodes in her life, constantly second-guessing herself:

"Memory chooses to preserve what desire cannot hope to sustain. The images I retain,

though, couldn't have happened" (43). Recalling the harshness of reality is not an easy

task for Aaliya, who hides behind her blurry recollections to alleviate the levels of pain.

With each memory comes a sense of hesitation in relaying the painful details: "These

memories- these memories make keen the pain that time has blunted" (249). As

"memories make keen the pain", retelling such events incite the suffering all over again;

without memory, pain might be alleviated through the course of time as it becomes

forgotten. This in turn relates to global narratives that attempt the blur memory to allow

suffering to disappear; however local memories such as Aaliya's prevent that from

happening. To deal with the pain that she has faced, through loss and war, Aaliya remains

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distant and detached; as such she is indecisive in taking responsibility for the pain

brought on by war, as it is a shared experience and not just hers.

The localized setting in the novel allows the reader to understand the variations of

cosmopolitan being. As stated before, universalism in cosmopolitan interactions are

derived from situational interactions as those of the local or through transcendental

experiences that are relatable on a global level (such as rape and PTSD in *I, the Divine*).

In order to aid humanity in terms of freedom and equality, it is necessary to aid particular

struggles. Indecision in cosmopolitanism is characterized in choosing which struggles to

aid and which not to– it is in the attempt to be involved within the world. This again

relates to hesitation– a hesitancy in choosing not only whether to partake but how to.

Perhaps Aaliya's description of her technique in reading applies well in assessing

indecisive cosmopolitanism:

> When I read a book, I try my best, not always successfully, to let the wall crumble
> just a bit, the barricade that separates me from the book. I try to be involved. I am
> Rashkolnikov. I am K. I am Hubert and Lolita. I am you. If you read these pages
> and think I'm the way I am because I lived through a civil war, you can't feel my
> pain (100).

In these lines, a call for involvement and understanding is found. As Aaliya immerses in

the literature she reads, she associates the lives of the characters as well as the authors at

other instances with her own. Understanding that their experiences are quite different,

however, certain feelings trespass experience, such as pain. Aaliya's isolation is different

from that of Bruno Shaltz and Fernando Pessoa, but it is still relatable. As her life is

marked by the wars that hit Lebanon and the urbanization it lays ground for in between

acts of violence, she grows with the tumultuous city that develops and decomposes on a

regular basis. Hesitation is found in whether to allow the walls to crumble; which in

relation to cosmopolitanism is a question of how much to let the world in. Indecision

allows an assessment of the situation, an understanding, that in turn leads to a decision.

Again, the localized space in *An Unnecessary Woman* proves to be an asset to

understanding indecisive cosmopolitanism, for it allows the reader to see the openness of

the city as well as what betrays it and its inhabitants. In accordance with Seidman's

notions of cosmopolitan Beirut carrying the remnants of war through sectarianism and its

closed up neighborhoods, the novel provides an "in" into its cosmopolitanism through

Aaliya's narrative as she walks through the streets of Beirut lamenting on its changes and

stagnations. Upon walking through a neighborhood, Aaliya observes the following:

> There is a Sunni mosque a mere half block away. Lebanese flags facing every
> possible direction drape across an electricity pole, making the green cedars, symbol
> of our pygmy state, look like they're tumbling in a slow avalanche. Each sect wants
> to prove its more Lebanese than the next, which explains the recent rise of puerile
> patriotism in our neighborhoods (251).

The scene portrays the culture of fear and rage that Seidman describes in "The Politics of

Cosmopolitan Beirut." In a neighborhood that is presumably affiliated with a Sunni sect,

a sense of nationalism is established with association to that sect as it would be with

another in another area. Exclusivity becomes prominent and within the circle of the

nation, a divide between self and other remains through sectarianism. As Beirut opens up

through commercialism, it does not advance in terms of opening up locally, which is due

to the constant presence of the other. Seidman notes that "the sectarian outsider is not

just a stranger but also a menacing "other" threatening the degradation of the pure self

and community" (30). Therefore, the people constantly feel a need to protect themselves

from this "other" by aligning themselves with a specific sect. Perhaps Pessoa's poetry can

be used to describe sectarianism in Lebanon and the interactions that occur between its

locals best:

> I've surrounded the garden of my being with high iron gratings- more imposing than any stone wall- in such a way that I can perfectly see others while perfectly excluding them, keeping them in their places as others (188).

By building up walls of protection, interaction is prevented from happening. Indecisive cosmopolitanism is found in the awkward conforming of exclusion with inclusion as evident in Beirut and Aaliya's cases.

Nonetheless, to have a choice in exclusion is a privilege that is not afforded to all. While Aaliya chooses to distance herself from nationalism associating herself as a 'diehard Pessoan' before relating to any form of governance, the novel also follows those who abide to their protectors due to a need to survive, for exclusion breeds other inclusions as is the case with Ahmad. As there is a national othering through sectarianism, there is a general othering as well of those who are outsiders, specifically Palestinians and later on Syrians. National othering entails two or more groups that provide protection for their member against the other; however, general othering refers to those who have no sense of protection in the national, thus abiding to whatever hospitality is provided to them by the nation.

In Aaliya's stories, we learned about Ahmad, a young Palestinian refugee who resides in Sabra, who walks into her bookshop and remains there to aid her for 4 years, until the events of Black September take place, forcing him to "reevaluate his priorities" and join the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestinians, where he rose to prominence as a torturer.

Ahmad is Palestinian, an "other" within an "othering" nation. For him there is no privilege in choosing his path and his involvement. In order to acclimate, he has to succumb to the political forces that allow him to assimilate in a country that is not exactly

hospitable. Later on, when opportunity prevails to leave this already unwelcoming

environment as an exile, Ahmad takes it:

> He was among the throng of Palestinians forced out of the city in order to end the Israeli siege and their insane bombing. In August 1982, we had the great Palestinian exodus redux redux redux, etc.[...]He and his cohorts seemed neither defiant nor ashamed, more resigned, their hands drooping like sunflowers (249-250).

The exiled Palestinians seemed resigned– this description indicates the drifter status

Ahmad and those like him belonged to through always living on the sidelines. Perpetually

"othered", Ahmad represents what Edward Said would refer to as the "Palestinian pawn"

used to move political agendas forth without really accounting for the rights of the people

who have no rights (*The Question of Palestine,* 45).

Ahmad is representative of the modern migrant, living unwelcomed and surviving

through hostile conditions. He is worldly in that he was never welcomed within the local.

His attachments are formed through whatever nationalistic bonds remain, even if they are

no longer concrete. Through resignation, he is cosmopolitan. Where Aaliya chooses to

remain an outcast, he is forced. As a Palestinian in Lebanon, he is mistreated in a certain

way; as an exile in Algeria he is castigated even further. Cases like Ahmad make it

difficult to advocate for cosmopolitanism because there are clearly individuals who

remain outliers in the world. However, refugism also raises the need for a working

concept of cosmopolitanism, that is able to encompass people like Ahmad. Indecisive

cosmopolitanism is based on interaction between the varying groups of people in an

effort to resolve issues of exclusion through negotiation. Ahmad was never invited to

participate, but was instead forced into the different predicaments he got himself into.

In *An Unnecessary Woman,* the different factors at play locally that form the

circumstances for indecisive cosmopolitan are observed. Beirut is presented, yet again, as

a unique space for cosmopolitan development and decomposition. Aaliya is a character who invokes the spirit of indecision in her struggle to escape circles of association be they familial or national through her bibliophilia, and Ahmad is representative of the actual outsider who is not welcomed in his host country, but still finds a way of surviving within it. Locality plays an important role in understanding cosmopolitanism for it brings to light the different motives of indecision that complicate notions of world openness.

Alameddine's novels bring indecisive cosmopolitanism to life by allowing the reader to observe the varying factors at play in the forming of identity and affiliations. What is clear is that to conceive of a shared world, based on equal opportunity and compassion is difficult, for there are a lot of impediments. By giving his novels the backdrop of war, the injustices committed, as well as the contradictory retelling of events add to the confusion of relaying a true narrative of events. As certain individuals would prefer to place blame on one and idolize another, the reality of war is that everyone is at fault. Death is death, and suffering is collective. Still, to be able to see suffering as a shared entity is difficult, as many people revert to anger and hatred as well as fear, thus seeking protection in the closedness of sectarianism. Others do not even have the choice of sectarian protection, and move around like pawns wherever the opportunity presents itself.

Indecisive cosmopolitanism is not a solution offered on a silver platter, however, it is a viable means of moving towards world interaction, by giving the concept of contemplation a shot, and in turn allowing hesitation to settle in and negotiate the varying uncertainties one may face, through attempting to understand the different stories and narratives that might ultimately allow one to shed her own prejudices and practice compassion. Only then, can it be possible to move towards a shared world order.

Conclusion
The Decision

The concept of cosmopolitanism does not offer a clear cut solution to the problems of today's world. It does not present a means of resolving racism, hate, injustice, and exclusivity all around. It does instead offer a better way of understanding the world from a just perspective that in turn could pave the way to resolving problems brought on by divides. Such a just perspective is portrayed through engaging with the multiple versions of locality that form the collective world. Cosmopolitanism is not a universal concept based solely on openness, because the world is not constructed as such; the world at large and the localities that encompass it have many doors that do not open up to all, and are slammed in the faces of some. What it would seem like to be cosmopolitan, is to have one foot out the door, taking in what's outside gradually with hesitation, while holding on to what is familiar on the other side of the door.

To identify with cosmopolitanism is to accept a sense of strangeness in the world, in both local and global contexts, which is to say that one cannot fully integrate within a specific sphere, while shedding any and all affiliations with the other, but remains caught in between the two, hesitant to fully partake. In different discourses, cosmopolitanism's attributes are constantly debated. In its plurality, one finds an attempt to free it from the unfair connotations of social privilege, leisure travel, and a place of familiarity for the bourgeoisie. Rather, it is a problematized area, encompassing unlikely partners by looking not only at class and status, but, also, at the lack thereof. Indecision in cosmopolitanism is in considering local problems as global– this is done by contemplating questions on suffering, inclusion, and vocalization: how and why does one's suffering due to a specific issue relate? How does the openness/closedness in local

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politics unite the globe? Where does humanity find its voice in indecision? Familiarity in the world of today is a farcical notion; instead as borders fade, more and more strangers are put out into the world, unable to assimilate to any particular place, but rather remain caught between several, as the case of exiles and refugees shows. However, compassion is still possible, through the transformation of private pain into public.

As trauma, violence, displacement, as well as other forms of suffering accumulate great levels of pain within specific local settings, they acquire a sense of universality through the similar suffering that occurs elsewhere, thus, remaining not only significant privately, but publicly, as it is shared. Globally, 65.3 million are forcibly displaced (UNHCR 2015), while 350 million suffer from depression (WHO 2016). Suffering has so far been viewed as an integral aspect in the formation of the indecisive cosmopolitanism imagination because it allows hesitancy to occur, either through the anger and frustration induced when it is ignored, or through the uncertainty of knowing how to go about when one has experienced suffering. Suffering then, defines the ways connections are formed in humanity.

Moreover, the portrayal of suffering is significant in that it vocalizes and brings to light not only the momentum of inflicted pain, but its permanence as exhibited in the everyday life of a community. Such suffering becomes pivotal in understanding how one goes about in local or global spaces. When states of suffering become integrated in one's identity, the history of this suffering, as perpetrated by brother, neighbor, or stranger becomes ingrained within the memory. As Seidman points out a sense of paranoia becomes prevalent within the Lebanese people who cannot fully feel at home within their own neighborhood let alone country, due to the excess levels of exclusivity amongst the

sects. As such, this sense of discomfort is found in other locales, and with respect to global settings as well. Individuals find themselves unsure of how to go about within local and global spaces, stuck in a state of indecision with regards to how they are to fit in and belong.

The chosen novels showcase cosmopolitanism and its subjectivity. The characters go through different experiences in relation to the world– be it through physical or mental travel. It becomes evident that there is no grand narrative of shared community that all belong to, instead many factors, apart from travel and even permissible passports– go into identifying with other forms of locality than one's own. As such indecisive cosmopolitanism, becomes exhibited through attempting to identify with different locals as opposed to one big global. Many have criticized cosmopolitanism for being a concept designed to pass over the concerns of localities in an effort to progress global ones, which are often the concerns of those who hold power in the world. Nonetheless, as the case has been made through this thesis, the cosmopolitan imagination creates a space where localities are allowed to coexist and their concerns are negotiated. Indeed, it becomes evident that it is impossible to detach one from his locale, which means that the problems of the world that concern him are that of the local. The analysis of three of Alameddine's novels allows us to see how localities coexist on a global level, especially in the formation of identity and a sense of belonging.

Cosmopolitanism is exhibited through feelings of attachment as well as disassociation. It is not just a politically correct, polished phrase that sweeps its imperfections under the rug; rather, it is a reflection of reality and experience, which in turn differs for different people in different parts of the world. Cosmopolitanism in

essence is a universal concept that is applied variously in relation to varying locales. With this it becomes necessary for individuals to remain hesitant in ascribing their affiliation to the world, due to its unequal form of acceptance. As universalism is empty (Ingram 2016), openness is subjective, and closedness is inescapable. The way we all go about within the global context is forever lamented by the changing dynamics of open and closed systems of hospitality. As an educated Lebanese-Ukrainian woman, residing in Lebanon, I realize that each one of the markers that compose my identity carries significance within local and global spaces. I acknowledge what doors are open to me, what doors I need to push open, and what doors will remain shut. I also realize that whatever barriers I may encounter are non-existent for others in certain locales who have more salient access to the world. Moreover, I acknowledge how privileged I am in relation to others who have lost any physical sense of locale and are greeted with closedness within the global arena negotiating privilege. To comprehend the varying levels of inclusion and exclusion is crucial. What I also understand and fear, is the fickle nature of the world we live in; where at any moment, the stability I possess as an educated Lebanese-Ukrainian woman, residing in Lebanon, will vanish. As the provided literature has shown, Lebanon is no stranger to volatile conditions of war and displacement. As of recent, Ukraine has also encountered civil war and growing flows of migration. Allowing a sense of comfort to take over within a locale seems naive; however, within global places, local governance sets its own terms of hospitality which do not allow the full assimilation of the stranger (even if she were to become a citizen).

The question of who is a citizen of the world no longer matters. Instead we ask: who is not a person of the world? Cosmopolitanism is a clash of cultures and classes− it is

awkward and uncomfortable. By accepting such a notion of indecisiveness in cosmopolitanism, it is no longer rendered as exclusionary, nor is it an idealistic morality. Rather, it allows a different interpretation of experience in the world that reflects the reality of a global stranger, caught in between a local and a global identity, and unable to familiarize in such a space. Significantly, indecisive cosmopolitanism makes sure nobody goes unseen within the world. As the migration crisis continues to inflate, it is imperative that everyone be given a voice- no longer can stories of locality be brushed under the rug of grand narratives of resolutions. Negotiations must occur with the vast uncertainties that come with the world opening up and more people mobilizing between borders.

For the world to have reached such a grave number of displaced people, and for powerful governances to be reverting to conservative policies of exclusion of the other when they are in dire need of inclusion, no longer should delusional narratives of world unity be accepted, instead, unity should be achieved or worked towards realistically. Such a unity is attainable through the employment of memory and suffering, as records of suffering cannot be easily forgotten and local stories remain witness to war's aftermath. The indecisive cosmopolitanism imagination accounts for the shared and excluded experiences of the world. Cosmopolitanism in this sense allows for a better view of the world, for studying and acknowledging the significance of such experiences allows a true form of assimilation within the global context of no longer creating divisions between global and local spaces. Indecisiveness allows a distant and always critical view of the world at large, which in turn challenges and complicates those same disciplines that take it for granted.

Indecisive cosmopolitanism sheds light on narratives of the everyday that have known suffering and injustice, yet still carry on by negotiating uncertainty and indecision in going about within different locales, while forming a global identity. Such a perspective on cosmopolitanism is an asset on a personal and public level due to the rational perspective it provides– again understanding the limitations within different settings is just as crucial as understanding the opportunities provided in each. In the imaginative space of indecisive cosmopolitanism, there is time. Time set aside to contemplate, to negotiate, to comprehend, and then to interact.

"Time. Time is what I need right now." – *KoolAids*

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