

Beyond 'Distant suffering' and pity-compelled cosmopolitanism – Examining the relation between the consumption of ordinary news, general media consumption and cosmopolitan outlooks in Scandinavia

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Abstract

Questions arising out of the global character of the media include whether or not one can become a *kosmou politês* (citizen of the world) by consuming and using different media whose "relay function" (Schulz, 2004) potentially draws the world into the sphere of the everyday. This potential has mainly been researched from a reception-of-distant-suffering paradigm where what is at stake is the possibility for news reporting to set in motion an "electronic empathy" (Hannerz, 1996). This study ventures beyond this dominant paradigm and uses ESS (European Social Survey) Round 5 2010 to examine the impact of the empirically neglected variables of ordinary news consumption and media consumption in general to see to what extent they cultivate a cosmopolitan outlook in audiences and users. The results indicate that 'the media' display ambivalent and multi-directional effects and thus that the notion of "mediated cosmopolitanism" does not withstand empirical testing.

Keywords: Mediated cosmopolitanism; cosmopolitanization; ESS Round 5 2010; regression analysis (OLS)

Introduction

In an era characterized by the intertwined meta-processes of globalization and mediatization (cf. Krotz, 2009) media and cultural theorists have pondered over the capacity of the media to "enlarge mentalities" (Silverstone, 2007, p. 47) by providing the symbolic and material platforms upon which audiences can consume distant places, events and 'others' (cf. Tester, 1994; Höijer, 2004; Chouliaraki, 2006; Robertson, 2010). More bluntly put, questions arising out of the global character of the media include whether or not one can become a *kosmou politês* (citizen of the world) by consuming and using different media whose "relay function" (Schulz, 2004) potentially draws the world into the sphere of the everyday.

This article identifies and addresses two main problems with the current body of literature. First, the question of a "mediated cosmopolitanism" first introduced by Rantanen (2005) and later adopted implicitly in sociological theories on the conditions under which the cosmopolitan subject emerge, seems, at least on the rhetorical level to imply an attitude-changing capacity of the media when the empirical backing on the relation between media, communication and cosmopolitanism is generally scarce, as many have noted (see e.g. Tester, 1994; Höijer, 2004; Ong, 2009). Second, inspired by Boltanski's (1999) notion of the "politics of

pity" and the moral implication of being a spectator, existing research is predominantly confined within a reception of distant suffering-paradigm where focus is put on finding certain semiotic-discursive traits in extraordinary content of news depictions of starvations, floods, conflicts or other catastrophes that can trigger compassion or empathy in Western audiences (see e.g. Chouliaraki, 2006; 2008; Joye 2009; 2010). The central problem here is that these accounts run the risk of textual reductionism as the influence of these texts on actual audiences, which is the ultimate concern, largely remain in the sphere of hypotheses and ideal types. Others have turned to audiences yet remained largely in the limited understanding of "global compassion", or cosmopolitanism arising as emotional responses of empathy, out of the reception of 'distant suffering' (see e.g. Höijer, 2004; Kyriakidou, 2008a; 2008b; 2008c; Ong, 2008).

Following Robertson (2010) this study seeks thus to let empirical analysis bear on the question of a "mediated cosmopolitanism". While this notion has been critiqued on a philosophical level (Halsall, 2006) I will continue to insist that an empirical endeavor might reveal valuable information about the contemporary power of the media, here understood as having to do "with how people understand the world and their place in it" (Robertson, 2010, p. 137, Lindell, 2011). Furthermore, Robertson (2010) is correct in asserting that while existing literature on the topic has generated important insights on the potential textual capacities of the media, it is "imprudent" not to account for ordinary news reporting (2010, p. 10). At the same time, sociologists have also recognized 'the media' as a potential agent of cosmopolitanization as it now reoccurs on different calls for an empirical research agenda (see e.g. Beck, 2002a, p. 79-80; Holton, 2009, p. 120). Therefore, this study seeks to analyze the influence of the empirically neglected variables of ordinary news consumption and media consumption in general in order to avoid a rather ironic cosmopolitanism indirectly materialized out of global power asymmetries and accordingly approach the notion of a "mediated cosmopolitanism" in a truer sense. Also, the analysis is conducted from the perspective of audiences and users where the influence of the media in this context ultimately finds its manifestation. The benefit of deploying a regression analysis (Ordinary Least Square) in this context is that the notion of a "mediated cosmopolitanism" is elevated from theoretical speculation into empirical testability.

As such I pose the question of the *extent to which a "mediated cosmopolitanism" exist in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and in Scandinavia in general: to what extent is the cosmopolitan outlook the outcome of mass-mediated news consumption as well as media consumption in general? Furthermore, are there any differences between the influence of news consumption and media consumption in general, and how does the "media effect" relate to the role played by age, education and gender?*

In hypothesizing these relations, one needs to properly take into account the multi-directional muddle to which "the media" has been understood as the catalyst in research of media power throughout the years

and also the meta-philosophical paradigmatic shift away from an "effects-paradigm" (McQuail, 2010, ch. 7). Moreover in recognizing findings from sociological studies that persistently conclude the structured character of cosmopolitan outlooks (see e.g. Szerszynski & Urry, 2006; Phillips & Smith, 2008; Weenink, 2008; Mau, Mewes & Zimmerman, 2008; Mau, 2010) it seems reasonable to expect a potential "media effect" to be significantly weaker than that of e.g. respondent's educational capital. Secondly, if the media does display an influence manifested in the capacity to foster cosmopolitan outlooks it seems reasonable to expect the effect of news consumption to be greater than that of media consumption in general which, in turn, can be expected to be far more ambiguous and multi-directional.

The article is divided into three following sections. The next section provides the theoretical backdrop and relevant empirical research for the study by presenting two questions arising out of the view on cosmopolitanism 'from below'. The first involves the capacity of the media to constitute as agents of "cosmopolitanization" (Beck, 2006), the second involves the location of this outlook in social space. The following, and second section presents the study design including a discussion on data material, operationalization and methodological course of action. The third section attempts to answer the research questions by deploying a regression analysis (OLS) and the fourth and concluding section discusses the results and the agenda for future empirical endeavors into the relation between media, communication and cosmopolitanism.

Subjective cosmopolitanism, the media and social space

The term cosmopolitan originates in 300 B.C. Cynic philosophy where the controversial figure Diogenes of Sinope upon being asked to where he belonged answered: "I am a citizen of the world" (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 5). The most famous cosmopolitan, however, may well be Immanuel Kant who in his political essays adopted Stoic moral philosophy and the idea that humans belong essentially to two communities: firstly to the locality to which one by chance is born and secondly to the wider community of humanity, to which one owe moral responsibility (Nussbaum, 1997; Brown, 2010). For Kant (1784; 1795) then, a "universal cosmopolitan existence" (Kant, 1784/2010, p. 25) will inevitably be realized in the course of the evolution of human organization, it is tied to the fate of humanity (see Kant, 1784; 1795). This teleology is echoed within contemporary liberal moral philosophy, political sciences and political praxis alike in the search for different ways to institutionalize and make "cosmopolitics" a feasible reality (see e.g. Held, 1995; Beck, 1999; Archibugi, 2008). The problem with the argument that cosmopolitanism is inherent in (second) modernity (Beck, 1999; 2002b; 2006; Delanty, 2009) is the active downplay of the subjective dimension originally held by Diogenes. Beck (2002b; 2006) for example, suggests that in "cosmopolitanization" we are

all becoming cosmopolitans, whether we like it or not (2006, p. 19). The problem here, following Tomlinson (1999), is that prior to normative macro-political deliberation one should address the question of whether or not people actually possess cosmopolitan outlooks as this would be "crucial to the possibility of a cosmopolitan politics" (1999, p. 30) and how these are cultivated. In short, cosmopolitanism "needs to be purged of its political utopianism" (Skrbis, Kendall & Woodward, 2004, p. 132).

Luckily, as Holton (2009) rightly points out, the term has come to taken on far broader meanings and "has recently become seen as a way of life as much as a sense of political or ethical obligation the world as a whole" (2009, p. 2). It is here on the subjective level, where cosmopolitanism is understood as an outlook, that the media enter the equation as potential agents of cosmopolitanization:

Our present times, in which many people have a shared sense of a world as a whole, and experiences this through travel, work and exposure to the media, are thus perfectly suited to the proliferation of the idea of cosmopolitanism. (Skrbis et al, 2004, p. 117).

It is in this spirit Hebdige (1990) asserted that:

/.../ we're living in a world where 'mundane' cosmopolitanism is part of 'ordinary' experience. All cultures, however remote temporally and geographically, are becoming accessible today as signs and/or commodities. If we don't choose to go and visit other cultures they come and visit us as images and information on tv." (Hebdige, 1990, p. 20)

The "relay function" (Schulz, 2004) - the capacity of media technologies to 'compress' (Harvey, 1990), 'distanciate' (Giddens, 1990) or 're-order' (Thompson, 1995) the phenomenal categories of time and space has been a catalyst for initiating a generally optimistic narrative around the cosmopolitan implications of the contemporary media environment. In this manner, Hannerz (1990) asserted that "home is not necessarily a place where cosmopolitanism is in exile" (1990, p. 249) as "the implosive power of the media may now make just everybody a little more cosmopolitan" (ibid). The potential resides, as Holton puts it, in the fact that "One can sit still, but nonetheless engage with the world in a cosmopolitan manner, often, as we shall see, through powerful communications media." (Holton, 2009, p. 116). Beck, in delineating the environment in which the process of cosmopolitanization makes us cosmopolitans 'whether we like it or not' says about the media that:

The more television, but also the mobile phone and the Internet, become part of the fittings of homes, the more the sociological categories of time, space, place, proximity and distance change their meaning. Because this domestic information technology interior potentially makes those who are absent present, always and everywhere. Sociability is no longer dependent on geographical proximity. It thus becomes possible – as recent studies have already shown – for people who live isolated from their neighbours in one place simultaneously to be tied into dense networks stretching

across continents. In other words: the sphere of experience, in which we inhabit globally networked life-worlds, is *glocal*, has become a synthesis of home and non-place, a nowhere place. (Beck, 2002b, p. 31. Emphasis in original).

For Tomlinson (1999) the question becomes how media technologies can "bring us phenomenologically closer" to distant events and lives (1999, p. 172). The question is hardly a new one - Schütz & Luckmann (1973) argued for a potential "expansion of zones of operation" and the following spatial rearrangement of the taken for granted reality arising out interactions with new technologies of communication (1973, p. 44). It is nonetheless a persisting question that posits a 'dissonance to the life-world' (Jansson, 2009, p. 243) resulting from the intensified meta-process of mediatization, the process whereby everyday life is increasingly 'colonized' by media technologies and institutions (Lundby, 2009). From the phenomenological perspective thus, the relation between subjective cosmopolitanism and the media materializes in mediatization, where our understanding of the 'world of our contemporaries' (see Schütz, 1932/1967; Schütz & Luckmann, 1973) is increasingly colonized by media institutions and technologies which have brought potentially *any* of our 'fellow-men' into the sphere of 'actual reach' and rendered distant places accessible (cf. Schütz & Luckman, 1973).

The phenomenological view presented here legitimizes the notion that a general involvement with the media might enforce a sense of subjective cosmopolitanism because of its potential spatial-cultural dissonances with the life-world. As I have noted before (Lindell, 2011) this perspective runs the risk of implying a functionalist view of 'the media' as an omnipresent structural platform that can function as making 'everybody a little more cosmopolitan' (Hannerz, 1990). Obviously, one should tread carefully in such waters and a certain amount of skepticism is called for but whereas some would surely hold the notion as false on anti-functionalist premises (see e.g. Couldry, 2003) my argument here is that the issue rather calls for empirical resolving.

However, empirical questions have mainly been addressed from the paradigm of "distant suffering" where the emergence of global or cosmopolitan compassion – the possibility of a transnational "electronic empathy" (Hannerz, 1996, p. 121) is what is at stake. Opinion leading scholar Chouliaraki (2006; 2008) deduces three separate categories of new texts (adventure-, emergency-, and ecstatic news) and concludes that adventure- and ecstatic news reproduce a communitarian, non-cosmopolitan logic: the former does so because of the 'maximum' semiotic-discursive distance it places between the spectator and sufferer, the latter fails because it only sustains a social bond between the already existing 'micro-sphere' of the West (2006, p. 188-189). Left is the category of "emergency news" which "presents the western spectator with a demand for engagement that does not exclusively follow from the pre-commitment to implicit obligations from the communitarian bond" (Chouliaraki, 2006: 189). For Joye (2009; 2010) televised discourses of

'distant suffering' fails to create the "proper distance" (cf. Chouliaraki, 2006; Silverstone, 2007) between those who suffer and those who watch. Rather, the way in which reporting on suffering is textually constructed resemble a 'spectacle of misery' which suggests that television reproduces the global asymmetries they depict (Joye, 2009; 2010; cf. Chouliaraki, 2006). And on the audience level, it has been concluded that transnational empathy arising in the reception of suffering such as 2004 Tsunami, Hurricane Katrina and the Kashmir earthquake is an "elusive and fragile condition" (Kyriakidou, 2008a, p. 162). Results from Höijer (2004) seem to reproduce this fragility as "we see a two-sided effect of global compassion on the one hand, and ignorance and compassion fatigue on the other" (Höijer, 2004, p. 528). In going beyond the paradigm of reception-of-distant-suffering and cosmopolitanism as empathy or compassion, in turning to a broader and more loyal definition of the cosmopolitan outlook as existing in the intersection of the political and the cultural, as an orientation of openness to the world as a whole (Hannerz, 2005; Holton, 2009; Robertson, 2010), empirical research is still needed. More specifically, the outlook whose origins one might, to some extent, trace back to the consumption of global media is the "break out of the self-centered narcissism of the national outlook" (Beck, 2006, p. 2). Ultimately, what is posed here is the question of the existence of a "mediated cosmopolitanism" in which the main concern involves whether or not one can "become cosmopolitan" via media consumption, and whether cosmopolitanism can be mass-mediated (Rantanen, 2005, p. 122). This potential, however, is located in social space, where empirical research has connected to the cosmopolitan outlook a class basis. Cosmopolitanism here, in contrast to more normative accounts arguing for cosmopolitanism as emerging 'anywhere, at any time' (Delanty, 2009, p. 13; cf. Werbner, 1999) is located in relation to- or in symbiosis with different forms of capital – especially cultural capital manifested in e.g. educational level (Weenink, 2008; Phillips & Smith, 2008; Jansson, 2009; Lindell, 2011).

Study Design

This study uses ESS (European Social Survey) Round 5, 2010¹ to answer the research question of whether or not a "mediated cosmopolitanism" exists in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Scandinavia in general and how a potential 'media effect' compares to the influence of gender, age and education. As such, the study deploys a regression analysis (OLS).

An omnipresent problem with utilizing cosmopolitanism as an analytical concept is the problem of operationalization (Skrbis & Woodward, 2007, p. 734). Scholars have emphasized the risk of 'incoherent chaos' (Holton, 2009, p. 29) or 'conceptual disarray' (Phillips & Smith, 2008, p. 349) in a body of research

¹ ESS Round 5: European Social Survey Round 5 Data (2010). Data file edition 1.0. Norwegian Social Science Data Services, Norway – Data Archive and distributor of ESS data.

in which 'there is no uniform interpretation of cosmopolitanism' (Roudometof, 2005, p. 116). Given this problem, the first methodological step in the course of this study was explorative in character: the responsibility of finding a cosmopolitan outlook that captures the intersection of the political and the cultural as emphasized above was given to empirical reality itself.

In this sense, a PCA (Principal Component Analysis) was used in order to find common structures within different variables that together potentially could create one scale that properly could capture the different aspects of the cosmopolitan outlook. A PCA of the variables B10 "How much do you personally trust the UN", B39 "Would you say that [country]'s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?" and B40 "Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?" created one dimension (all components > .3) and have been merged into a scale (Cronbach's alpha > .6) which constitutes the dependent variable in the analysis. Here, the political dimension of cosmopolitanism is captured with level of trust in the supranational and humanitarian project of the United Nations (see Mau, 2010), and a moral-cultural dimension is captured with on the one hand a 'cultural curiosity' or 'willingness to engage with the other' (Hannerz, 1990) in variable B39, and on the other hand the attitude that multiculturalism has positive consequences on the local context of living (B40).

In order to include media consumption in general, respondents were asked how much time on an average weekday they spent watching television (A1), listening to the radio (A3) and reading the newspaper (A5). The same question was asked in relation to respondents' news consumption (A2, A4, A6). For Internet use, variable A7 "How often do you use the Internet" was used. The influence of these variables on the dependent cosmopolitanism-scale was compared with those of gender (F2), age (F3) and level of education (F15).

Results and analysis

This section attempts to answer the research questions posed above. Table 1 analyzes the extent to which the cosmopolitan outlook is explained by high news consumption (press, radio, TV), and how this relation compare to those of age, gender and education. Table 2 turns to media consumption in general (press, radio, TV, Internet), and compares the effects to those of age, gender and education.

In accord with previous research on Sweden (Lindell, 2011) the results presented in Table 1 show that, taken together, the effect of news consumption is very weak and not statistically significant ($p \leq 0.05$). Especially when looking at news consumption through the media of radio and television, the ambivalence of the role played out by news media materializes in the fact that the effects vary between positive and

negative, but mostly remaining near 0 between the countries and Scandinavia while not living up to the threshold of statistical significance. This leaves us with the exception of news consumption (press) which display a cross-sectional positive effect on cosmopolitan outlooks throughout the different countries and Scandinavia in general. "Sweden" is the only model in which this relation is not statistically significant. In Denmark, this relation proves the strongest (0.74***) - the difference between a Dane who do not read the news at all and a Dane who spend more than 3 hours a day reading news is 5.2 steps on the 30-scale index measuring cosmopolitan outlooks. This relation is stronger than that of gender and age who both, while statistically significant throughout the model, are very weak. Generally, for gender, women are slightly more cosmopolitan than men, a tendency observed also in relation to 'gendered compassion' (Höijer, 2004, p. 525-527). For age, there is a slight indication that younger generations are more likely to be cosmopolitans. In accord with previous research (Phillips & Smith, 2008; Weenink, 2008; Mau, 2010; Lindell, 2011) level of education remains a relevant source from which cosmopolitan outlook partially spring. Within the Scandinavian population, the cosmopolitan outlook increases 0,27 on the 30-scale index for each added year spent in education. In all models (Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Scandinavia) the difference between an averagely educated person (Scandinavian mean = 13.18 years) and a person completely lacking education is 3.5 steps on the 30-scale index measuring cosmopolitan outlooks (see Table 1).

Table 1. News consumption and the cosmopolitan outlook. Regression analysis (OLS). Non-standardized coefficients (standard deviation in parenthesis).

	Cosmopolitan outlook			
	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Scandinavia
News consumption (Press)	.39 (.22)	.49*** (.15)	.74*** (.20)	.48*** (.11)
News consumption (Radio)	.02 (.11)	-.10 (.09)	-.10 (.10)	-.10 (.06)
News consumption (TV)	-.12 (.15)	.08 (.12)	.21 (.13)	-.06 (.08)
Age	-.02* (.01)	-.01 (.01)	-.06*** (.01)	-.02*** (.01)
Education	.36*** (.04)	.32*** (.04)	.26*** (.03)	.27*** (.02)
Woman (ref: man)	1.09*** (.29)	.54* (.26)	.32 (.30)	.72*** (.17)
Constant	15.73	13.13	16.67	15.48
R_{adj}²	.12	.09	.12	.08
N	876	1171	895	2942

Comment: Source ESS (European Social Survey) Round 5, 2010. Levels of statistical significance *** $p \leq 0.001$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, * $p \leq 0.05$. Dependent variable "cosmopolitan outlook" is a scale (Cronbach's alpha

< .6) ranging from 0-30 from the original variables B10 "How much do you personally trust the UN", B39 "Would you say that [country]'s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?" and B40 "Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?". All original variables were measured on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 is the most negative and 10 the most positive. All variables measuring news consumption (A2, A4, A6) measures on a scale from 0 to 7 from the question "How much of your time [watching TV/Reading newspapers/listening to the radio] is spent on [watching/listening/reading] news/politics and current affairs?" with the answers 0 – No time at all, 1 – Less than 1/2 hour, 2 – 1/2 hour to 1 hour, 3 – More than 1 hour, up to 1 1/2 hours, 4 – More than 1 1/2 hours, up to 2 hours, 5 – More than 2 hours, up to 2 1/2 hours, 6 – More than 2 1/2 hours, up to 3 hours, 7 – More than 3 hours. Education was measured with amount of years of finished education. Age was measured with years of age. Gender was measured with a dummy-variables where 1 designate "woman" and 0 (reference category) "man". All missing values have been removed. Values have been rounded to two decimals. Scales are not standardized.

When it comes to the relation between media consumption in general and its influence on the cosmopolitan outlook the results in Table 2 display a clear hierarchy between different media. Similarly to the results displayed in Table 1, media consumption (press) is the only type of mass media that display a cross-sectional positive and statistically significant effect (with the exception of "Sweden"). Spending time listening to the radio or watching television, on the other hand has negative effects on the cosmopolitan outlook. This negative influence is not very strong however: in Scandinavia in general, the difference between a person who never watches television and a person who spends more than 3 hours on an average day in front of the television is only 1,5 index-step (Table 2). Internet use, in contrast, is positive and significant throughout the models: a Dane surfing the Internet on a daily basis is 2,6 index-step 'more cosmopolitan' than a Dane having no access to the Internet. As expected, it is quite naïve to simply put an all-encompassing 'the media' in the causing end of the shaping of cosmopolitan outlooks as it "makes little sense to speak of 'the media' as if they were one thing rather than the carriers of an enormously diverse set of messages, images and ideas" (McQuail, 2010, p. 455). As we have seen in these results, the media are not an only multi-faceted in themselves but also have their own social shaping and 'cultural forms' (cf. Williams, 1974/2003). Finally, the patterns of gender, age and education displayed in Table 1 remain in this analysis where education remains strong whereas age and gender are generally weak.

Table 2. General media consumption and the cosmopolitan outlook. Regression analysis (OLS). Non-standardized coefficients (standard deviation in parenthesis).

	Cosmopolitan outlook			
	Sweden	Norway	Denmark	Scandinavia
Media consumption (Press)	.15 (.18)	.26** (.09)	.37*** (.11)	.18** (.06)
Media consumption (Radio)	-.00 (.05)	-.12* (.05)	-.06 (.05)	-.10*** (.03)
Media consumption (TV)	-.18** (.07)	-.05 (.07)	-.19** (.07)	-.21*** (.04)
Media consumption (Internet)	.15* (.07)	.26*** (.07)	.37*** (.06)	.28*** (.04)
Age	-.02* (.01)	.01 (.01)	-.02** (.01)	-.00 (.01)
Education	.29*** (.04)	.25*** (.03)	.20*** (.02)	.21*** (.02)
Woman (ref: man)	.91*** (.25)	.46* (.24)	.37 (.24)	.64*** (.14)
Constant	16.38	12.33	14.79	15.03
R_{adj}²	.10	.08	.13	.09
N	1340	1483	1449	4272

Comment: All variables measuring mass media consumption (A1, A3, A5) measures on a scale from 0 to 7 from the question "On an average weekday, how much time, in total, do you spend watching television/listening to the radio/reading news papers?" with the answers 0 – No time at all, 1 – Less than 1/2 hour, 2 – 1/2 hour to 1 hour, 3 – More than 1 hour, up to 1 1/2 hours, 4 – More than 1 1/2 hours, up to 2 hours, 5 – More than 2 hours, up to 2 1/2 hours, 6 – More than 2 1/2 hours, up to 3 hours, 7 – More than 3 hours. Internet use was measured with variable A7 "How often do you use the internet, the World Wide Web or e-mail – whether at home or at work – for your personal use?" with answers 0 – No access, 1 – Never, 2 – Less than once a month, 3 – Once a month, 4- Several times a month, 5 – Once a week, 6 – Several times a week, 7 – Every day. See comments attached to Table 1 for more information.

In sum, the results displayed in the above analyzes display a relatively coherent pattern between the different Scandinavian countries. When it comes to the capacity of the news media to foster cosmopolitan outlooks, only news consumption (press) proves positive and statistically significant influences. This effect is notably stronger than age and gender, and matches well with that of level of education, indicating that to a very limited extent, the media can have a parallel influence to that of location in social space. The analysis of media consumption in general verified the hypothetical stance of multi-directionality and complexity. Here, media consumption (press) and Internet use stand out as having cross-sectional positive

and statistically significant effects whereas media consumption (radio, TV) has negative effects. In this latter model, education proves to be the stronger influence while gender and age remain low. Taken together the variables included in these models never explain more than 13 % of the total variation in the cosmopolitan outlook (see R_{adj}^2 for "Denmark", Table 2). So even if Mau (2010, p. 102) suggests that the media potentially has a greater impact than corporeal mobility, these results suggests otherwise and propose an empirical research agenda geared more towards the location of the cosmopolitan outlook in the space of social positions, including its relation with network- or motility capital (Kaufmann, Bergman & Joye; 2004; Urry, 2007) and cultural capital (Weenink, 2008; Jansson, 2011).

Combining the hierarchical and thus very limited nature of the semiotic-discursive capacity researched by Chouliaraki (2006; 2008) and Joye (2009; 2010) with the rather weak and multi-directional influence of 'the media' it seems reasonable to posit the argument that the concept of a "mediated cosmopolitanism", firstly advanced by Rantanen (2005) and implicitly clinging on in the sociological understanding of cosmopolitanism as an orientation to the world (see e.g. Beck, 2006; Holton, 2009) does not withstand empirical testing.

Conclusion

This study has examined the capacity of news media, and media in general to foster cosmopolitan outlooks in audiences and users. This was done by measuring the impact of the empirically neglected variables of 'ordinary news consumption' and 'general media consumption' on level of cosmopolitan outlooks in Scandinavia. Venturing beyond the realm of 'reception of distant suffering', however, did not provide any different answers to the role of the media as cultivating the cosmopolitan. Indeed, news consumption (press) and general Internet use displayed cross-sectional positive and statistically significant effects on the index measuring cosmopolitan outlooks but if there is such a thing as 'the media' we can safely say that "it" does not constitute as an agent of cosmopolitanization (cf. Beck, 2002b; 2006) as the general output was multi-directional and ambivalent.

This leaves us with three issues relevant for the prospect of future studies of the relation between media, communication and cosmopolitanism. Firstly, given the non-existence of an all-encompassing "mediated cosmopolitanism" researchers should remember Höjjer saying "There are different media systems, different news policies and different news journalists" (Höjjer, 2004, p. 529) and continue with detailed studies of different technologies of communication and different media content and their cosmopolitan affordances. Secondly, a 180-degree turning of the causal relation and examining not how different media might influence and cultivate cosmopolitan behavior or attitudes, but how cosmopolitans utilize different forms of technologies and communicative practices can reveal important insights into the uses and gratifications of

the contemporary media landscape (Lindell, 2011; cf. Merton, 1968). Thirdly, given the cross-sectional positive and statistically significant effects of Internet use and the generally low effect of mass-media (TV, radio) it might be relevant to see the cosmopolitan not as a member of the mass audience but as a 'participant in the mediapolis' (Silverstone, 2007, p. 107).

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