

***A Republican Europe of States: Synopsis and Introduction to the
Symposium***

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Abstract: This introduction offers a synopsis of the book, *A Republican Europe of States*, outlining its main arguments, followed by an overview of the symposium.

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A Republican Europe of States (Bellamy 2019) undertakes two main tasks. First, it situates the debate about the EU's legitimacy in the normative literature on global justice and cosmopolitan democracy. My aim in doing so is to ask whether there are general arguments of a principled nature that might justify the creation of an organisation such as the EU and guide the tasks it should undertake and the way it is structured. Second, given the EU is by some way the most developed regional organisation, it offers something of a test case for considering in more detail than most philosophers care to do what different normative models might require institutionally, and the empirical constraints they might confront. If the first task involves a response to the question 'What morally important purposes (if any) require something like the EU in order to be pursued?', the second task seeks to answer the question 'How might the EU be

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most appropriately and legitimately designed so as to best achieve those purposes?

As the various critiques of the contributors to this symposium testify, my replies to the what and how questions are not uncontroversial. Moreover, nor is the view that in certain crucial respects the two are related, and that ought implies can – not simply for pragmatic or practical reasons, but as a matter of principle. With regard to the ‘what’ question, the book argues that the EU responds to two related functional and moral demands associated respectively with interconnectedness and cosmopolitanism. Interconnectedness ties states and their citizens into various institutionalised global processes that result in their respective domestic collective decision-making and arrangements affecting and potentially undercutting each other in various ways. It also makes them more susceptible to being affected by the activities of various non-state actors that operate across states – from multinational companies to terrorist organisations. Cosmopolitan morality considers that these institutionalised global processes should be so arranged that they treat those subject to them with equal concern and respect (Barry 1999: 35-36). However, there are various ways that this moral requirement might be cashed out - moral cosmopolitanism need not involve political cosmopolitanism (Beitz 1998: 83; Pogge 2008: 175). The ‘how’ question enters here. Two main considerations govern my response in this regard, both of which can be related to what Rawls termed ‘a realistic Utopia’ (Rawls, 1999: 6-8, 11-12). As I cash this out, the ‘realist’ constraints on the ‘utopian’ goal of a world committed to realising the cosmopolitan moral ideal are empirical and normative at the same time (Bellamy 2019: 15-20; Bellamy 2021). First, they involve taking the actual normative attachments of people seriously. For example, most people accept that attachments to family constrain how we might seek to realise equality for all children, even though family background can be a source of inequality. As a result, an acceptable scheme will stop short of disregarding the value of family life entirely and

suggesting all children should be brought up in public facilities. Rather, the attempt will be to combine the value of family with a broader commitment to social equality. Likewise, I consider pluralism more generally as a basic fact of the human condition, with what Mill called ‘experiments of living’ enabling different groups of people to combine the various elements of human well-being in diverse ways. Self-determination in states facilitate and legitimate such experimentation. A second realist consideration enters here. Following Bernard Williams (2005), I adopt a realist stand point whereby questions of justice entail as a first step the existence of a legal and political system whereby they can be legitimately discussed and decided upon. On this account, rights can only be rightfully claimed if the deciding factor among various rival claims does not involve simply an exercise of might. For that to be the case assumes a certain legal and political context, the features of which I argue are captured by the neo-Republican notion of freedom as non-domination (Bellamy 2019: ch. 2).

Putting together these two sets of considerations leads me to argue that that the functional and related moral demands posed by globalisation can be best met through what I call a republican association of sovereign states. In such an association, each of the member states must instantiate a credible republican system of government that secures that status of non-domination for their own citizens. However, they must also seek to mutually agree rules that govern their interactions with the other states and govern transnational processes more generally in ways that treat the citizens of the associated states in non-dominating ways. To achieve this result involves the rules of the interstate order meeting the normative requirements of a two-level game – securing the democratic agreement of both the governments of the association and their respective citizens (Bellamy and Weale 2015). I classify this form of global governance a species of what Kalypso Nicolaïdis (2004; 2013) calls democracy that I term ‘republican intergovernmentalism’ (Bellamy 2013; 2019: 11). One key feature of this arrangement, though, is the free movement of citizens among

the associated states – albeit on mutually agreed terms that involve mobile citizens abiding by the norms of the host state and contributing to the support of its system of justice, with the possibility of naturalisation (Bellamy 2019: ch 5).

Part 1 of the book defends this model in general terms. Chapter 1 lays out the functional and moral demands posed by interconnectedness and cosmopolitanism, and points towards a cosmopolitan statist approach to meeting them whereby states regulate their mutual interactions in conformity with cosmopolitan norms. Chapter 2 defends both a realist approach and the republican notion of freedom as non-domination as the key criterion for assessing the normative attractiveness of any institutional arrangement of domestic or global governance. Chapter 3 contends that sovereignty provides a required feature of any non-dominating legal and political system. Sovereignty involves an agent(s) or agency(ies) possessing final, supreme and comprehensive authority over those subject to their rule. I argue such an arrangement is necessary for the accountability of rulers to the ruled, and a sensitivity to the knock-on effects of different policies and decisions on each other. It also encourages a sense of solidarity among citizens as members of the same polity. However, sovereignty is compatible with its downward or upward delegation to subnational and supranational units respectively. Therefore, a republican association of sovereign states may create supranational regulatory bodies that do not themselves possess sovereign powers - merely delegated powers under the joint and several control of the delegating states. I argue that as a result non-domination does not call for a cosmopolitan state to be secured at the global level. Indeed, such a solution would increase the prospect of domination through a failure to encompass pluralism. Moreover, while the association itself lacked sovereignty this does not herald a move beyond sovereignty, as some transnational cosmopolitan theorists advocate. Again, I contend such a shift would increase the risks of domination by weakening

accountability and a sensitivity to the relations of different decisions and policies to each other.

Part 2 applies this model and fleshes it out as a way of understanding the EU. I contend that many features of the EU accord with this model and reflect aspects that tend to be either ignored or regarded as regressive by more supra- or trans- national approaches to European integration. In particular, I defend three features of a republican intergovernmental approach. In chapter 4 I argue that national parliaments could play a greater role in EU level decision making, thereby weakening the democratic disconnect. In chapter 5 I defend EU citizenship as being a supplement to member state citizenship rather than an independent status, with free movement constrained by the duty to support the citizenship regime of the host state. Finally, chapter 6 defends the possibility for differentiated integration to accommodate both socio-economic and political-cultural heterogeneity among the member states. The arguments here parallel those that have been deployed within many member states for the devolution of power, often in asymmetrical ways, to minority national groups. These issues have tended to be neglected by both EU advocates of supranationalism and many cosmopolitan democrats. They often seem to propose political models that appear more unitary in nature than most member states. Yet, given the diversity within the EU, not to say globally, is far greater, the EU is far more likely to resemble Belgium than France, with the attendant need for a democratic system that tends towards the proportional rather than the majoritarian, and allows for a high degree of differentiated and devolved decision-making.

That is not to suggest that this account is wedded to the status quo. On the contrary, I follow Rawls in seeking ‘an achievable social world’ that nonetheless ‘extends what are ordinarily thought of as the limits of practical possibility’ (Rawls 1999: 6), by reflecting on the implications of the principles lying at the heart of domestic democratic systems for their mutual interactions

in systems such as the EU. The view of the EU that emerges differs in key respects from how it currently exists, yet is recognizable as a possible development of the present reality – one that enhances its intergovernmental features and allows for greater differentiation, yet in ways I argue that are likely to improve its equity and effectiveness, and render pan-European solidarity more likely.

The papers in this symposium are among those given in different seminars devoted to the book at the European University Institute, LUISS, UCL's European Institute, the ECPR General Conference in Wroclaw, and the Collegio Europeo di Parma. I'm grateful to the organisers and to the other participants at these events, especially Sandra Kröger, Albert Weale, Kalypso Nicolídis, Vittorio Bufacchi, Markus Patberg, Andrea Sangiovanni and Philippe Van Parijs. In this symposium, the participants mainly engage with the first – more theoretical - part of the book. Valentina Gentile challenges the utopian realist attempt to link cosmopolitanism with statism, Dorothea Gädeke the extent to which non domination can be achieved at the global level through equality between states rather than individuals, a point also taken up by Dimitris Efthymiou, who focuses on chapter 5 on EU citizenship, and Glyn Morgan - with whom we begin - questions whether my account is realist enough when dealing with the challenges of interconnectedness beyond the EU, particularly the security threats posed by China and Russia, or the trading threat of the USA and China. I close the symposium with an attempt to respond to these trenchant and perceptive criticisms.

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Notes on contributor: Richard Bellamy is Professor of Political Science at University College London (UCL), University of London. His most recent books are *A Republic of European States: Cosmopolitanism, Intergovernmentalism and Democracy in the EU*, (Cambridge University Press, 2019); (with Dario Castiglione), *From Maastricht to Brexit: Democracy, Constitutionalism and Citizenship in the EU*, (ECPR Press/Rowman and Littlefield, 2019); and (with Sandra Kröger and Marta Lorimer) *Flexible Europe: Fairness, Democracy, and Differentiated Integration*, (Bristol University Press/Policy Press, 2022).

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