



Existenz

An International Journal in Philosophy, Religion, Politics, and the Arts

Volume 21

Number 1

Spring 2026

ISSN 1932-1066

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Democracy and Cosmopolitanism

The theoretical underpinnings of both democracy and cosmopolitanism present highly laudable ideas that outline the human efforts to create a sustainable, inspiring, and fair organization of social communities on planet Earth. Democracy tends to be favored by those who are gifted with grasping the subtle nuance of the appealing proposal, namely *dēmos kratos*, rule by the people.

With the increase in complexity of social systems, various types of democracy have had brief appearances on the world stage, attempting to tackle the crucial point: who is most competent to safeguard the interests of the investor class without upsetting the masses and thereby guaranteeing unrestricted accumulation of wealth. The two appealing features of direct and representative democracy are the promise of upward social mobility and the promise of inclusion of diverse populations and viewpoints. Yet, this promise turned out to be a helpful tool to keep these *dēmos* busy with one another, thereby shaping favorable conditions for the aforementioned accumulation of wealth and influence.

So far, the promise of democracy has not yet come to fruition. Besides intelligence and cognitive abilities, it requires a solidly educated and informed populace to cut through the fog of political sophistry. Formal education of the masses is increasingly kept at a minimal level, and the means of influencing the minds of an electorate through geofencing, digital canvassing, and soon-to-come neural link technology have surpassed previous strategies of winning the hearts and minds of people.

Similarly, cosmopolitanism has undergone different incarnations, ranging from being a well-traveled person who has visited and is shaped by different cultures, to recognizing and acknowledging the humanity of others and thereby accepting responsibility for the well-being of all humankind. Under the pretext of these idealistic goals, cosmopolitanism has become an instrument of globalist aspirations by proponents of global capital markets and global trade, spearheaded by a singular world government. The apparent incompatibility of the current renditions of democracy and cosmopolitanism suggests the dawn of a new attempt toward totalitarian rule, irrespective of the changing dynamics of global power relations.

This volume comprises five essays and one book review. Each essay addresses Jaspers' view on either democracy or cosmopolitanism in conversation with other philosophers. The book review thematizes aspects of universal communication.

August 31, 2026

Helmut Wautischer
Editor-in-Chief

Additional presentations on this topic are posted at <https://www.youtube.com/@ExistenzJournal/videos>.

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