THINKING DIFFERENTLY ABOUT COSMOPOLITANISM

Theory, Eccentricity, and the Globalized World

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Marianna Papastephanou
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Introduction

The book argues that a new conception of cosmopolitanism is needed and addresses this need by formulating a conception of cosmopolitanism as an “eccentric” ethico-political ideal. Such cosmopolitanism is eccentric in the sense that it decenters the self, cultivates centrifugal virtues, and questions the inflated concern for the globally enriched self. It does so for the sake of an as yet deflated concern for strong ethico-political demands that otherness makes upon the self. The demands in question will be presented in the book as higher than the currently fashionable ones of tolerance, respect, charity, duty, and moral/legal obligation.

The why of discussing cosmopolitanism in fresh semantic-conceptual terms emerges through the following rationale: (1) the academic currency of diverse but often incompatible meanings of cosmopolitanism causes unease to many academics and students and creates the impression that cosmopolitanism is elastic enough to mean just about anything related to globality; (2) the reluctance to discuss some of those meanings frequently leads to uncritical dissemination of fashionable though facile and even undesirable conceptions of cosmopolitanism; (3) the overreliance on the modern understanding of cosmopolitanism and failure conceptually to go beyond it reintroduce pathologies (e.g., toxic universalism, Eurocentrism, developmentalism) that have been associated with modernity—or do not hold them sufficiently in check; and (4) the failure to handle conceptual requirements adequately consolidates and reproduces problems of needless internal contradiction or needless preoccupation with false dilemmas. Many approaches that omit conceptual work fall, precisely due to this omission, into the trap of contradictory uses of cosmopolitanism, for they employ it both
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as a negatively and as a positively meant concept often even within
the very same text. And other approaches fail to navigate through
drastic choices and unproductive tensions between cosmopolitanism
and patriotism, among other things, because they lack the conceptual
means for transcending terminological accounts that typically entail
such dichotomous thinking.

A more detailed explanation of the necessity for conceptual work is
given in Chapter 1, and some further defense of it is provided in Chapter 8. However, it is important here to note that a turn to conceptual
work on cosmopolitanism is not proposed as a mental exercise but
rather as a springboard for a new outlook on political praxis. The
necessity of conceptually revisiting cosmopolitanism is not simply
semantically and logically compelling but also theoretically and practi-
cally crucial for the following reason. When the necessity of discussing
what should count as cosmopolitanism is ignored, people tend to rely
on established and easily digestible meanings of cosmopolitanism—the
most popular being the perception of cosmopolitanism as mobility,
border crossing, readiness to live and work abroad, and openness to
anything foreign. Consequently, the borders that the self has to cross
in order to merit the attribute “cosmopolitan” appear to be external
(e.g., walls, checkpoints, frontiers).

Against such an outlook on cosmopolitanism, this book claims
that the real borders to be crossed by true cosmopolitans are internal
and, regrettably, traversable, raised at an early age, preserved through
education, and carried along wherever one goes. The most important
such internal barriers are not those that restrict one's physical move-
ment in space (e.g., fear of traveling, sedentary habits of life, emotional
dependence on rootedness) but rather those values, mentalities, and
motives for action (as well as their rationalizations) that accompany
a self everywhere and underpin the self’s uncumopolitan treatment
of others and of the environment. Because such internal barriers are
cultivated from a very early age through upbringing, education, and
acculturation, they are not easily shaken just by the self’s mere exposure
to alternative lifestyles that are noticeable outside her country. A truly
demanding cosmopolitanism requires a capacity on the part of the self
to critically reconsider the impact of her priorities and values on others
and nature; whether her actions and practices are ethico-politically defensible; and the extent to which the self should rethink her own intellectual, ethical, and emotive “boundaries” regardless of her mobility or rootedness in space. In other words, this book argues that a redefined cosmopolitanism requires nothing less than an ongoing decentering of the self and an education that enables such eccentricity.

The book’s main argument is deployed in eleven chapters. Chapter 1 sets up and previews the direction that the book will take and forecasts the discussion of the “eccentric” conception of cosmopolitanism. It aims to cover the intellectual ground that works as a prelude to some of the arguments of the book. Chief among its concerns are to get to the heart of current debates on the desirability of cosmopolitanism that make the necessity for reconceptualization more compelling and to explain the “eccentric” in the proposed conception of cosmopolitanism by contrasting the standard illustration of cosmopolitanism through the geometrical image of concentric circles with the as yet nontheorized illustration of cosmopolitanism through the image of eccentric circles. It will be argued that the latter helps us illustrate a more complex relation of selfhood, multiple identities, and cosmopolitanism.

However, a complex relation of selfhood and cosmopolitanism presupposes that the self who aspires to approximate, or is regulatively guided by, the cosmopolitan ideal perceives, to a sufficient extent, the distance that separates the ideal from the real. Against hasty identifications of cosmopolitan ideality with globalized reality, Chapter 2 discusses the world, which, in Jacques Derrida’s parlance, “has been shaken, fissured, and rearranged by all kinds of quakes” (2006, 408), as a globalized rather than as a cosmopolitan world. Hence, a first step toward a reformulation of cosmopolitanism involves a clarification of its difference from globalization and its many faces, from the global imaginary, and from globalism as the discourse of and about the globalized world. The chapter ends with the main positions of general globalism, which are traceable and informative in educational globalism too.

A further step, one that is taken in Chapter 3, involves the kind of critique of globalism that eases the passage to formulating cosmopolitanism as an ethico-political ideal that presupposes a more complex outlook on current realities. For instance, the uniform, homogeneous
treatment of the subjectivity that is influenced by globalization is deemed implausible. Globalist discourse is thus criticized regarding its main assumptions about how globalization affects unity and plurality, social and international justice, emancipatory enrichment of humanity, and protection of natural life. This critique is woven around issues of (1) the nation-state and territoriality, (2) diversity and homogeneity, (3) identity and rootlessness, and (4) equality and life options. It leads, finally, to the question of how to steer clear of both national or cultural organismism of original belonging and internationalist, globalist, and globalizing marketization.

Chapter 4 translates the question with which the third chapter ends into the broader set of “identity-versus-difference” dilemmas that are often encountered in various current theorizations of cosmopolitanism. The discussion of “identity and difference politics” in this chapter aims to challenge the confines of the largely constructed opposition between these two edges of globalist discourse and to show that cosmopolitanism can take some necessary distance from both. The whole problem sometimes appears to boil down to a dichotomy of communal ethos versus strangeness—a dichotomy that informs much educational globalism too. The chapter responds to it by handling the cliché of the “cosmopolitan stranger of the world” in a way that drives home criticisms of both the unreflective communal affect and the reduction of strangeness to adaptability to life beyond borders—a reduction that operates at the expense of a more thorough challenge of the self’s “internal” borders.

The above paves the way for critiquing the conception of cosmopolitanism that is promoted by much educational philosophical globalism today, which I term “culturalist cosmopolitanism.” Such a critique is undertaken in Chapter 5 where the ideal self-description of the purportedly “cosmopolitan” self is exposed as a tacit prescription of an idealized global self, one that relies on stereotypical and domesticated otherness, a harmless, anodyne “strangeness,” which is, in the end, self-affirmative. As a contrast to such an ideal self-description, and in critical response to contemporary demands for illustrating cosmopolitanism through more embodied rather than abstract avatars, the chapter singles out historical figures who personify cosmopolitan existence in ethico-political rather than simply culturalist terms. The
ethico-political responsibility that makes higher demands upon the self than those (e.g., tolerance, respect for diversity) made by culturalist cosmopolitanism is thus premised (in a preliminary way) on a caustic and eccentric cosmopolitan idiom. Such an idiom shifts attention from the agreement to the treatment perspective on otherness and sees home and homelessness in a different light.

Chapter 6 asks more explicitly the question that operates below the surface in Chapter 5. Who is cosmopolitan then? A head-on discussion of this question with an eye to a cosmopolitanism expected to decenter the self confronts popular self-images of the cosmopolitan that make things too easy for subjectivity. They do so because they function within the limits of a monologically understood cosmopolitanism and neglect the stronger, relational dimensions of cosmopolitanism. They thus turn cosmopolitanism into a badge, a self-bestowed attribute that secures for the self the positive moral image of cosmopolitanism being one's accomplished reality, as shown in the declaration, “I am a cosmopolitan.” To challenge all this, the chapter makes the origin of cosmopolitanism recede further back into ancient times through reference to Democritus and suggests his “third-person” cosmopolitanism of wisdom and goodness as a line of thought that has not been mined yet. In so doing, the chapter deals with issues of intellectual, ethical, and emotional preconditions for a cosmopolitan encounter with otherness.

Once the above issues are sorted out, Chapter 7 questions in more detail the neat categorizations of patriotism as the discourse of the border and cosmopolitanism as the discourse of the borderless. Using colonial expansion as an example, the chapter shows that instead of always being oppositional, the border and borderlessness can make common cause in violence. In such a case, the only way to dissolve this complicity is by realizing, along with the ethical restrictions to particularist attachment, the ethical limits to border crossing. In simpler words, when the set of values that motivates mobility remains unchallenged, the connection of mobility and cosmopolitanism is nothing more than wishful thinking. Because, as has already been said, borders and obstacles to cosmopolitanism are internal, the interplay of walls and laws, of border and order, is far more complex than usually assumed within standard accounts of cosmopolitanism. And if patriotism
Introduction and cosmopolitanism, in their coarser, cruder, and more pernicious meanings, can make common cause in violence, they can also make common cause in justice—on the condition of their being conceived, internalized, and practiced otherwise.

The ground that eccentric cosmopolitanism can cover regarding the ethico-political treatment of otherness and the accommodation of patriotic concerns leads us again to issues of conceptualization. These crop up in Chapter 8 in relation to some educational philosophical approaches that can serve as examples of how and why the reconceptualization of cosmopolitanism (by now quite extensively prepared) is much more than a semantic question or a concern of “armchair philosophy.” Failures to revisit cosmopolitanism and patriotism are now more concretely shown to place cosmopolitanism and patriotism in an unproductive and disabling tension. The complementarity of patriotism and cosmopolitanism, anticipated in Chapter 5 through the interplay of home and homelessness and investigated in Chapter 7 through the interplay of border and order, is now more clearly spelled out.

As already indicated, however, the patriotism that can be reconciled with a reconceived cosmopolitanism invites its own share of conceptual elaboration. Chapter 9 attempts precisely this—yet only to a degree, since a more thorough reconceptualization of patriotism would sidetrack a book that focuses on cosmopolitanism. The degree to which patriotism is conceptually discussed is determined by the fact that the suggested compatibility of cosmopolitanism and patriotism presupposes that the meaning of not only the former but also the latter must be sufficiently clear and that such patriotism is not dangerously close to nationalism. To the extent that patriotism maintains an ethnic dimension, it is important to show that this “ethnic” element is neither the inoperative/folklore one of much globalist discourse nor the nationalist one of regressive political accounts—which is inimical to and incompatible with cosmopolitanism.

Chapter 10 places cosmopolitanism and patriotism in a relation of set and subset. Once again, this raises issues about whether particularist identities are not by definition problematic and thus hostile to cosmopolitan identity. Once such objections are met, the task then becomes to meet objections of the opposite kind, that is, objections that target
cosmopolitanism as either expendable (since its ground might be covered by a well-meant patriotism) or completely unrealistic. Answers to such quandaries are provided through a discussion of how justice authorizes the desirability of both patriotism and cosmopolitanism as distinct yet compatible ideals (and virtues). Within the suggested framework, obligations to locality and to otherness are seen through the lens of various aspects of justice and not through that of charity and aid. In this way, the ground is prepared for a redefinition and reconceptualization of cosmopolitanism that acknowledges the significance of the diachronic and synchronic entanglement of peoples and the pending moral debts that such entanglement has effected—making the order of treatment more urgent and compelling than the order of agreement.

Chapter 11 makes fall into place the nodal points of the ground of critique that the previous chapters have covered. The conception of eccentric cosmopolitanism now emerges as an all-encompassing set of ethico-politically significant aspects of relating to cosmos. The politics owed to cosmos is recast in light of the conception of cosmopolitanism as an ideal of love and care for the whole world; responsibility and accountability for individual and collective human impact on human and nonhuman existence; sensitivity and responsiveness to historical debts pending among peoples and cultures; epistemic and existential openness to cultural alterity; and economic/practical initiatives and measures for world survival and redirection. The various aspects of cosmopolitanism are then grouped in monological and relational categories, and their significance (and role) for cosmopolitanism is decided accordingly. All in all, an eccentric cosmopolitanism requires an all-encompassing synthesis of relational and monological aspects in interplay.

The book tasks the ethico-political with the re-visioning of politics, that is, of polis, the second component of cosmopolis. But this does not mean that the first component, that is, cosmos, need not be seen otherwise. For it is typically treated in most contemporary literature as the opposite of chaos and equated with order. The book concludes with objections to this treatment of the term “cosmos” and by placing cosmos in a more complex relation with chaos and order. The opposite
of cosmos, the Other that should be excluded from an otherwise all-encompassing ideal, is only ethical obtuseness and cruelty, the internal borders that separate the supposedly mixed-up, modern world from its created underworld and push the planet to the brink of disaster.
Chapter One

Setting Up the New Cosmopolitanism

Cosmopolitanism and relevant notions—that is, notions that appear either as synonymous or allied with, or even inimical to, cosmopolitanism (e.g., globalization, universalism, multiculturalism, citizenship, patriotism, nationalism)—are widely discussed in philosophy of education and, more generally, in educational studies. There has been a vast literature on such topics, deriving from diverse and often contradictory accounts of what cosmopolitanism is about. The diversity of sources, the complexity of associated themes, and the richness of diverging perspectives are often experienced as disconcerting by many readers and researchers, who feel unable to locate in most of the available theoretical production an incentive for a discussion in fresh terms of what cosmopolitanism might be; of what related, alternative, or even opposed conceptions might involve; and of why cosmopolitanism might constitute an educational ideal. Therefore, the abundance and proliferation of material related to cosmopolitanism invites conceptual discussion and requires some work in the direction of crucial clarifications.

This book attempts some such discussion and clarifications. However, against the perfunctory character that such an attempt might take, or be expected to take, the challenge that the book confronts is more critical rather than introductory-descriptive. The challenge is to put forward a specific reworking of cosmopolitanism that breaks with some problematic, though still quite fashionable, accounts of it. The need for new conceptual work is all the more pressing now that the political exploitation, the facile use, the confounding, modish ubiquity of
terms such as cosmopolitanism and globalization (or their contrast and, more rarely, their coupling with patriotism or resurgent nationalisms), and the academic capitalization on them are widespread and, mostly, uncritically received. Such “utility” (and “utilization”) of these terms makes their meaning and their relation extremely familiar but, at the same time, extremely unclear to many students and academics.

But even if the above complications were not operative, the necessity for conceptual work would still be there for many scholarly reasons. For example, should we teach (or, more subtly, cultivate) cosmopolitanism? A no answer usually reflects an identification (or a strong connection) of cosmopolitanism with Eurocentrism and expansionism. Defenders of cosmopolitanism have often confronted, and responded to, charges such as elitism, rationalism, and utopianism (Lu 2000); coldness and aloofness (Nussbaum and Cohen 1996); and uncritical universalism, moral rootlessness, disguised ethnocentrism, and elitist aestheticism (Hansen 2010).

Now, if we opt for a yes answer to the question about teaching cosmopolitanism, will that mean that we must focus on preparing students to live and work across borders? Or is cosmopolitanism something else, something not quite identical to adaptability to unfamiliar contexts and not exhausted in tolerance of harmless cultural difference? From another perspective, should we associate cosmopolitanism exclusively with global crises and imagine it as a solution to political world problems? In that case, do we not presuppose a perception of cosmopolitanism as a reaction to crises, thus rendering it parasitic upon “rupture, strife and fragmentation” (Hansen 2008b, 206)? Should we rather view it as a cognitive ideal of human open-mindedness and broadening of one’s horizons, regardless of the global condition and the inequalities of power that usually invite the association of cosmopolitanism with politics? Do we have to make any such drastic choices, or is it possible to work out a more comprehensive account of cosmopolitanism?

Further, does the teaching of cosmopolitanism mean that the cultivation of patriotism should be more limited or is perhaps ill-suited to a cosmopolitan curriculum? Another yes here would rely on the assumption that patriotism and cosmopolitanism are either antagonistic or even mutually exclusive ideals. A no answer, one that
makes patriotic teaching either necessary or at least permissible in a cosmopolitan curriculum, demands some explanation of the implicit assumption that cosmopolitanism and patriotism are compatible or even complementary. Both possibilities enjoy wide textual support in recent political philosophical sources, but the ultimate and deepest response to them depends on what the meaning of the juxtaposed terms might allow or preclude.

Surely, the choice is not always between yes or no answers. But even a qualified educational welcome of an idea (or an overcautious and undecidable stance) does not avoid the semantic challenge and its theoretical and practical implications.

Then again, the whole issue is not one of a simple redefinition of a term. Any understanding of cosmopolitanism, to the extent that the latter is presented as an ideal to be followed, involves both normative and descriptive levels. In simpler words, it involves an urge, an exhortation, toward an Ought that must guide, regulate, and redirect action if a specific, desirable situation is to be approximated, and it involves a description, an account of the self, the world, and the current situation, that justifies the necessity for, and the desirability and feasibility of, such redirection against dangerous alternatives. For instance, when Sharon Todd claims that “cosmopolitanism as a set of ideas that seek more peaceful forms of living together on a global scale is in need of a theoretical framework that faces directly the difficulties of living in a dissonant world” (2010, 216), she actually couples a specific normativity (the sought-for peaceful forms of living together on a global scale) with the kind of descriptive accounts (the specificities of living in a dissonant world) that protect that normativity from turning into its undesirable double, that is, into a facile notion of peace that ignores conflict and dissent in a multidimensional reality. After all, more peaceful forms of living can be the ideal of that old order that is largely known as Pax Romana or even of a new order that resembles it. For any normative discussion of peace not to slide into Eurocentric, toxic universalism, a new description of the world and a new specification of what counts as true peace are needed.

As we will see below, some authors (for instance, trends drawing from Michel Foucault or from poststructuralism and often from
postcolonial studies) use the term “cosmopolitanism” negatively, projecting on its ideal and normative plane the descriptive ground on which the modern Western world attempted to base cosmopolitanism. In other words, they identify principles of universality and cosmopolitanism with the kind of universalizing aspirations upheld by the so-called Western world in its most expansionist and imperialist moments. They thus incriminate normative cosmopolitanism as such. Many others leave the modern descriptive basis untouched while defending and promoting cosmopolitan principled normativity, as if it were independent from and unaffected by the faulty descriptive level. Others perform changes in the normative or in the descriptive level that range from minimal to drastic modifications. Finally, others jettison the normative level for the sake of a—supposedly—purely pragmatic cosmopolitanism qua globalized reality. The position that this book defends operates at both the normative and descriptive levels, as it views the semantic reworking of cosmopolitanism in the light of elaborations on the ethical vision of cosmopolitanism and in the light of accounts of the self, the world, and current global realities.

The recently revived interest in cosmopolitanism has created, in my opinion, three major tendencies. One is to understand cosmopolitanism in negative terms as identical with a toxic universalism. Another is to understand cosmopolitanism positively, but in a pragmatic way, as mobility, rootlessness, openness to different lifestyles, and detachment from the nation-state. This tendency typically associates cosmopolitanism with a particular class of people (notice the uncosmopolitan exclusivism here), as becomes obvious in the following citation: “The new professional-managerial groups have become less concerned about national interests and turned their back on the nation-state: they display cosmopolitan tendencies” (Isin and Wood 1999, 101). In this citation, those who display cosmopolitan tendencies are new professional-managerial groups, that is, footloose and rootless people of a specific social position; by implication, those who may not belong in such groups or who may be concerned about national interests (even in a benign way) are by definition excluded from displaying cosmopolitan tendencies. Thus cosmopolitanism becomes an attitude of some and not, potentially, of all people—unless, of course, one can
show that all people may enter the cohorts of managerial classes or that all will eventually abandon any interest in the nation-state in order to qualify as “cosmopolitans.” The third major tendency also affirms cosmopolitanism, but it differs from the second in adding to pragmatic cosmopolitanism cultural and legal or political and ethical dimensions. Some approaches clearly side with the negative option, while many others side with the positive options. Several treatments of cosmopolitanism waver between the positive and the negative, and some others hope to combine the two by recruiting the notion of aporia, or productive tension.

In some cases, the (regrettably) sweepingly negative usage of cosmopolitanism can be explained as a reaction to very true and tangible complicities of self-proclaimed cosmopolitans of imperial times. For instance, Antonio Gramsci dismissed cosmopolitanism because, to him, the “cosmopolitan” implied a “superficial or ‘picturesque’ attachment to a cultural miscellany based on empire” (Brennan 1989, 16). Even today, that is, long after the formal collapse of the imperial political configuration, for some theorists, “cosmopolitanism” is one of those words that retain imperialist traces and should, therefore, be jettisoned. For Paul Gilroy, cosmopolitanism was “entangled with and tested by the expansion of Europeans into new territories and compromised, if not wholly discredited, by the consolidation and management of the resulting imperial orders” (quoted in Knowles 2007, 3).

But the outcome of such a sweeping incrimination of cosmopolitanism is often self-contradiction. Sam Knowles shows this with regard to Gilroy, but the criticism is pertinent to many other current positions too. In various instances, Gilroy makes a facile use of the very term that he has rejected; to avoid this contradiction, he requires a revised or redefined term. As he does not follow this option, Gilroy is “left without an alternative structure with which to strengthen his replacement for ‘multiculturalism’”; he is thus forced “to employ the previously-criticised term in entirely un-critical reference to ‘cosmopolitan conviviality’ (Gilroy 9) [and] in addressing ‘provocative cosmopolitan questions’ (Gilroy 18)” (Knowles 2007, 3).

Nevertheless, the complicities of cosmopolitan discourse (or, at least, of the descriptive grounds on which it was based) are justifiably
chastised by friends and foes alike. One cannot ignore the homogenizing universalism and the developmentalism that accompanied modern imperial conceptions of cosmopolitanism. The fallacy of developmentalism consisted “in thinking that the path of Europe’s modern development must be followed unilaterally by every other culture” (Dussel 1993, 68) because it supposedly exemplified the natural process by which a superior civilization deployed itself. This sense of superiority obliged modernity “to ‘develop’ (civilize, uplift, educate) the more primitive, barbarous, underdeveloped civilizations” (Dussel 1993, 75). It produced, among many other atrocious realities, “civilizing heroes” and their conquered, colonized victims. One might object that such rationales underpinned the universalistic cosmopolitanism of other times. Indeed, “at the request of newly independent states, the language of civilisation was removed from international law” (Tully 2008, 26). But, as James Tully remarks, it was removed only to be immediately “replaced with the language of modernisation, marketisation, democratisation and globalisation with the same grammatical structure, signifying universal processes of development and a single endpoint of modern citizenship and its institutions” (2008, 26).

The concern about undesirable vestiges of older outlooks on cosmopolitanism such as the above is evident in many contemporary endeavors to defend cosmopolitanism and see it through a less abstract-universalistic lens. Anthony Appiah’s effort to distance his cosmopolitanism from humanism reflects the extent to which the charge of a homogenizing universalism has gained popularity and infiltrated most globalist discourse. He states that it would be wrong to conflate cosmopolitanism and humanism “because cosmopolitanism is not just the feeling that everybody matters. For the cosmopolitan also celebrates the fact that there are different local human ways of being.” By contrast, Appiah continues, humanism “is consistent with the desire for global homogeneity. Humanism can be made compatible with cosmopolitan sentiments, but it can also live with a deadening urge to uniformity” (1997, 621).

This neat categorization invites the objection that, if cosmopolitanism can be purified of modernist undertones of uniformity, then why would one exclude humanism from such purification? After all,
humanism has also been a term of rich and diverse semantic content throughout history, some of which could resist the desire for global homogeneity. Besides, though it is true that cosmopolitanism is often conflated with the pernicious side of humanism, especially in some Foucault-inspired discussions of it, more often than not, it is cosmopolitanism as such that causes unease. For instance, within educational contexts, such an understandable unease about the very employment of the term has been expressed by Thomas Popkewitz (2008). However, in Popkewitz’s book we come across the same problem that we mentioned above in relation to Gilroy’s position. The recourse to the same term to denote desirable and undesirable meanings—for lack of an alternative term that would be tasked only with signifying the cultural theses of modernity—backfires because it reinforces what it sets out to criticize. Inevitably, the conclusion is that if we wish to talk about cosmopolitanism, all we have to rely on is the specific modern Western conception that now acquires transcendental value; that is, it becomes declared an inescapable human constant, the condition of possibility of any inclusive globality, so to speak. Therefore, all we can do is be aware of its duplicities and be cautious regarding its dangers. However, as I shall argue, when dealing with ideals, we need a sense of surplus, of a normativity that goes beyond sedimented meanings that the ideal may have taken at various times. This surplus helps us resist the transcendent-alization of the specific, historical meaning of an ideal and urges us to redefine and reapproach it.

The toxic universalistic and developmentalist ideology that passed for cosmopolitanism burdened the politically weak subject (the dominated, the marginalized, the under- or nonprivileged, the “lagging behind”) with the task of changing so as to meet the strong’s standards. Unlike it, a self-reflective cosmopolitanism should place demands on the politically strong subject, expecting higher levels of awareness of its global historical and contemporary responsibilities and redirection of its values and priorities. To distinguish the former cosmopolitanism from what cosmopolitanism can and should become, we need a specific term for denoting the wrongheaded, expansionist cosmopolitanism. To this end, I recommend the term “universalization” because it reflects more accurately the emphasis on the kind of universalism that the
modern era favored and the processual character (consider the ending “-ization” of the term) that toxic universalism acquired as a modern practice. As to why the term “cosmopolitanism” should not become synonymous with modern expansionism, it is simply that toxic universality as a process of expansion is not inherent in the “cosmos” and “polis” components of cosmopolitanism for reasons that will become apparent throughout this book. Hence, I suggest that we maintain the normativity that accompanies the term “cosmopolitanism” from antiquity to the present by distinguishing it from the “universalization” that the cultural theses of modernity have favored. Following Zygmunt Bauman (1998), I take the term “universalization”—by now fallen into disuse and by and large forgotten—as encompassing concepts such as “civilization,” “development,” “convergence,” “consensus,” and many other modern ideas, and as conveying the modern, Western hope, the intention and the determination of order-making. Those concepts were coined on the rising tides of modern powers and the modern intellect’s ambitions. They announced the will to make the world different from what it was and better than it was, and to expand the change and the improvement to global, species-wide dimensions. It also declared the intention to make the life conditions of everyone everywhere, and so everybody’s life chances, equal. (1998, 38–39)

I believe that, thus defined, universalization covers the same conceptual ground as Popkewitz’s negatively used “cosmopolitanism,” while being temporally more accurate to account for modern thought and normatively less overarching than the ideal of cosmopolitanism. And, as David Hansen asserts, not all conceptions of cosmopolitanism project “a prior human essence to which persons must conform.” In the wake of this, there can be a cosmopolitanism outside the kind of universalism that is understood as “a unified, aprioristic, and unquestioning stance regarding such matters as human nature and reason” (Hansen 2010, 161).

Therefore, the line of reformulation of cosmopolitanism that this book will follow views cosmopolitanism as an ideal about humanity’s relation to itself and to nature that comprises ethical, legal, political, historical, cultural, emotional, aesthetic, economic, and cognitive aspects that denaturalize established worldviews. This cosmopolitanism
is primarily about a responsible, lawful, loving, thoughtful treatment of the whole cosmos. Inclusion enters the picture through the word “whole,” a word that extends responsibility and obligation to an unlimited number of entities affected by human action and/or by the vagaries of time. But to have a cosmopolitanism worthy of the name, such an inclusion must be taken for granted, and the emphases and tensions must concern only what counts as obligation, how responsibility must be construed, and the level of awareness of historical debt that burdens (principally though not exclusively) those who have been very active in creating inequalities, global asymmetries, hunger, poverty, destruction, and other pathologies inflicted upon others or upon nature. By contrast, when inclusion is put center stage (e.g., as happens in the case of the No Child Left Behind educational controversy), the issue seems to be that we, the “advanced” and “progressive” of the world, set the various standards, and we are kind enough not to leave anybody out; in other words, we wish everybody to catch up. Worse, as Popkewitz shows, what lies behind such emphases on inclusion is more often than not a very uncospolitan effort to contain difference in order to normalize it and hold it in check. Certain universalizing educational practices and measures stem from a cultural territory marked by fears about failures of cognitive utility and procedural reform to redeem totality through the incorporation of alterity. In turn, the territory of alterity causes fear that the “civilized” space is threatened by the modes of living of the disadvantaged and risk-prone Others (Popkewitz 2008, 167). When inclusion becomes the most central stake of cosmopolitanism, we have already moved away from the more demanding cosmopolitanism for which the issue is not to identify and stigmatize the excluded in the moralist and condescending effort to include her or to eliminate risky diversity by turning all alterity into a liberally tolerable and harmless difference. The issue for a normatively more elaborate cosmopolitanism is rather to highlight and debate global ethico-political responsibility.

This book focuses its conceptual effort on this issue. To do so, it draws and emphasizes distinctions between globalization, globalism, and cosmopolitanism, and it attempts critical work on some widespread conceptions of cosmopolitanism.
Beyond older, universalist conceptions and reconceptualized in a multicultural light, the cosmopolitanism that is now largely endorsed has come to be seen as a glorification of diversity and a celebration of global mobility and border crossing. In this way, cosmopolitanism is theorized in proximity to, perhaps even identification with, globalization. Within such a context, a crucial point on which most theoretical efforts converge is the primacy of culturalist cosmopolitanism, that is, a cosmopolitanism that concentrates only on challenging fixed cultural boundaries and that neglects any other possible tasks that would fall into its theoretical province (e.g., issues of redistribution of wealth and global equality).

Thus, I describe the notion of cosmopolitanism that is widely held in much political philosophy, cultural studies, and philosophy of education as “culturalist” cosmopolitanism. This kind of cosmopolitan discourse operates within the confines of a more encompassing theorethico-political discourse that revolves around globalization, a discourse that can be termed “globalist.” In a nutshell, the globalized world comprises, among other things, a self-referential discourse that glorifies cosmopolitanism and purports to uphold it as an educational ideal.

Yet, there are contradictions in this globalized world, just as in any other world: precisely when there is so much glorification of mobility and cosmopolitanism, things are not as one might expect in actual educational systems. The critical and cosmopolitan civic discourses “are marginalized in the curricular texts that define the standards and prominent meanings of citizenship taught in schools” (Knight Abowitz and Harnish 2006, 657). Even more threatening in my view, however, is the tendency to transfer into educational contexts the conception of cosmopolitanism that enjoys currency within globalism. This tendency enhances an educational globalism that, despite its merits, makes common cause with the culturalist and more generally undemanding notion of cosmopolitanism. Among other things, then, this book aims to challenge the educational dependence upon dominant trends within globalism and to suggest some enrichment of the notion, scope, and significance of educational cosmopolitanism.

The book approaches globalization as an empirical reality (accomplished as well as in process) that comprises global facticity, the
set of everyday experiences that make globalization constantly felt as an empirical phenomenon and the imaginary that reflects the varying reception of such a facticity. Globalization is viewed as an empirical reality that is *in a complex relation* to its corresponding globalist discourse and *at a considerable distance from* a more demanding cosmopolitan ideal. I argue that failure to grasp the distinctions between globalization, globalism, and cosmopolitanism derives from mistaken identifications of the Is with the Ought and leads to naive and Eurocentric glorifications of the potentialities of globalization. In the end, while culturalist cosmopolitanism and its educational expression purport to serve multiculturalism, inclusion, and diversity, they turn out to reproduce exclusions, divisions, and normalizations of global inequalities. Conversely, drawing the appropriate distinctions helps us articulate a more critical approach to contemporary cultural, economic, and political phenomena and to reconsider the current place and potential role of education within the context of global affairs. From this perspective, antagonistic impulses cultivated by globalization and by some globalist discourse (consolidating binary oppositions such as rootedness versus rootlessness, patriotism versus cosmopolitanism, and so forth) are singled out and targeted via a radicalization of educational orientations.

Current positive receptions of cosmopolitanism are also open to criticisms that invite some reworking of the semantic content and scope of the term that today enjoys so much popularity. The positive treatment of cosmopolitanism that rests on a pragmatic conception derives from an uncritical and undertheorized adoption of the everyday use of the term, which denotes mobility, glorification of travel, eclectic responsiveness to difference, adaptability, rootlessness, and development of qualifications that guarantee success all over a globalized world. “Propelled and defined by media and market, cosmopolitanism today involves not so much an elite *at home*, as it does spokespersons of a kind of perennial immigration, valorised by a rhetoric of wandering, and rife with allusions to the all-seeing eye of the nomadic sensibility” (Brennan 1989, 2). The more philosophical, positive treatment of cosmopolitanism sets out from a pragmatic cosmopolitanism to add to it some more demanding preconditions. Those vary from expectations