Chapter 16
Concentric, Vernacular and Rhizomatic Cosmopolitanisms

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16.1 Introduction

Most cosmopolitan discourses employ self-descriptions or self-declarations of cosmopolitanism and rely on the problematic self-referential proclamation, 'I am cosmopolitan' or 'We, cosmopolitans'. This proclamation is problematic for various reasons, chief amongst them, because, as David Hansen argues, there is something awkward and amiss in rendering cosmopolitanism a badge (2008: 213) and in employing it self-indulgently. Within declarative and self-descriptive frameworks,[1] cosmopolitanism is assumed as an accomplished reality or trait and not as a regulative ideal. Also, such self-referentiality involves a risk of exclusion of those dwelling outside the homely space of 'We' or of those who are typically contrasted to the cosmopolitan 'I'.

This self-referentiality chimes, in my view, with the more general tendency of the relevant discourses to view cosmopolitanism monologically rather than relationally.[2] This is all the more astonishing if we recall that since the linguistic turn (in the analytic philosophical persuasion), the relentless critique of modern individualism (in the poststructuralist camp) and the dialogic shift of perspective (in the broader continental framework), relational dimensions of being seem to have gained philosophical priority. For instance, Jürgen Habermas has repeatedly emphasized the dangers of monological approaches to ethics and politics. In his latest book, where

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[1] In Papastephanou (2013), I develop a more detailed critical discussion of the declarative self-description and its operations in the cosmopolitanisms of Diogenes, M. Nussbaum, J. Waldron and K. A. Appiah. The ground that is covered there is presupposed here; it is not repeated for reasons of space as well as for purposes of providing new, original material.

[2] An explanation of these terms follows in the next section.

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Habermas deploys his vision of a European political union, in a chapter discussing Martin Buber, he returns to the issue of the priority of 'dialogical mutuality' over the 'monological self-relation' (Habermas 2015: 129). Yet, in most other political-philosophical approaches, topics such as cosmopolitanism appear theoretically confined to the I-perspective.

This coda briefly illustrates how the 'concentric circles' metaphorization of cosmopolitanism reflects and serves a monological perspective. Yet, even polycentric alternatives often fail to capture the more relational challenges that cosmopolitanisms worthy of the name should meet. Thus, critical attention is necessary not only concerning the established concentric outlook on cosmopolitanism but also concerning those post-colonial and culturalist theories that voice criticisms of concentric circles. The discussion below unpacks this claim through reference to vernacular and rhizomatic cosmopolitanisms. The as yet non-theorized metaphor of eccentric circles is introduced as an option suitable to cover relational normative grounds of cosmopolitanism beyond concentric and polycentric ethico-political deficits.

16.2   Introducing the Eccentric

David Hollinger summarizes the task that 'new cosmopolitans' assign to cosmopolitanism as follows: 'cosmopolitanism urges each individual and collective unity to absorb as much varied experience as it can, while retaining its capacity to *achieve self-definition and to advance its own aims effectively*' (2001: 239; emph mine). In such contexts, cosmopolitanism emerges as cultural-cognitive enlargement or existential enrichment of the self through exposure to diversity and alterity. But, in my view, this trendy cosmopolitanism is still too individualistic to cover the normative requirements of a 'politics' of 'cosmos'. Even attractive and thoughtful engagements with cultural exchange, which are involved in the so-called culinary cosmopolitanism and in its multicultural 'vernacular foodways' (Jonas 2013: 119), are ultimately monological in reflecting back upon an enriched self whose other dealings with alterity may not be sensitized. After all, the cosmopolitan, no matter how hybrid and enriched with borrowed elements, sets her aims by herself and advances them effectively.[3] Within this context, the other is a mere source of self-enrichment and hardly emerges as a source of responsibilities or of relational demands that set limits to the 'cosmopolitan', self-referential goal setting.

Important as many 'new cosmopolitan' insights may be, they operate in a monological framework – where 'monological' means something that begins with the self and, ultimately, concerns or benefits primarily the self. When the monological framework becomes exaggerated to the point of constituting all that is supposedly needed for a person to declare herself a cosmopolitan, relational ethico-political preconditions of cosmopolitanism remain non- or under-theorized. The term

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[3] Notice here the modernist (and ultimately un-cosmopolitan) undertones of each term in the construction: 'to advance my own aims effectively'.

'relational', as meant here, denotes what primarily involves the other and presupposes a decentring of the self. Such decentring comes from reflection on how the collective 'we' has treated various human and natural 'others'; the diachronic entanglement of peoples and the ethico-political quandaries, pending debts, unresolved issues and prospects for a different future all this may open. Instead of granting the self the image and title of the 'cosmopolitan', the relational makes higher demands on the self, at least, higher than those made by the monological framework. It does not assume that all that it takes for one to be cosmopolitan is to cross external borders, to escape the 'order' of localized existence and to welcome the real, supposed or imagined 'disorder' that exposure to difference introduces to one's life.

After all, some borders are internal and require other kinds of transcendence in order to be crossed, not facile ones of rootlessness, mere displacement or hybrid post-coloniality. Ironically, a resilient Cartesian solipsism seems to operate underneath those (post-)modern conceptions of cosmopolitanism that continue to put the self centre stage despite their anti-Cartesian declarations; interestingly, the otherwise vehement postmodern critique of Cartesian subjectivity falls far short when the issue of cosmopolitanism is at stake. Hence, some valuable criticisms (e.g. by Hansen 2008) of discursive operations related to proclaiming oneself a cosmopolitan can be pushed further. It can be shown that such criticisms of established outlooks are better served by another conception of cosmopolitanism, one that is not reducible to the mere pollination of subjectivity and cannot be so easily considered attainable or accomplished.

Concentric cosmopolitanism typically demands on the self to negotiate her distance from others who inhabit the space that is demarcated by ever outer circles. In more culturalist versions of cosmopolitanism, this negotiation concerns what is cognitively, aesthetically, culturally and, more generally, existentially on offer in the outer circles. A successful negotiation of distance in such cases invokes a less parochial and rather rootless existence. In more legal-moral versions of cosmopolitanism, the crucially contested and negotiated space concerns moral obligations and/or provinces of legal action. A successful negotiation of distance in such cases invokes a less community-centred demarcation of duties and more 'learned' and responsive stances to the rights, needs and expectations of the groups that populate the outer circles or more legal interventionist stances to world injustices. Though such legal-moral cosmopolitanism is more relational than the culturalist, it may nevertheless share with it the monological point of departure. This happens when all begins from the self who is invited to shorten the distance that separates her from others with little reconsideration of, or critical reflection on, the self's standpoint. For instance, the neglect of ecological cosmopolitanism (or the adoption of ecological ethical concerns only when environmental destruction has an impact on the quality of human life and entails risks for the self) (Spector 2015) illustrates the centripetal tendencies of a cosmopolitanism that is otherwise more relational than the culturalist version.

To the dominant, concentric centrality of subjectivity, I argue, another geometrical metaphor might be an appropriate theoretical response: cosmopolitanism can be illustrated through the image of eccentric circles. The fact that eccentric circles are

not drawn around the same centre offers some new possibilities for illustrating the relation of cosmopolitanism with multiple identities. It accommodates, say, cases of multiple allegiances (all of them being subsets of the all-encompassing cosmopolitan allegiance), which become politically activated even when they do not have the self as their common centre. For instance, one does not have to be constructed as a 'woman' in order to endorse demands typically associated with feminism; and one does not need to defend the preservation of endangered species on grounds of that species 'utility' for human life or not. Eccentric circles as figures of particular allegiances (relatively stable or momentary) that do not necessarily emanate from egocentricity can also disrupt the harmonious and proportionate geometrical order that concentric circles evince. Thus, they better reflect the more complex character of real human attachments to particularities. They make room for the complexity of a political philosophy that does not take the self for granted, at least not in old ways that evoke solipsism, essentialism, purist authenticity and fixity.

The decentring of the subject through eccentricity neither effaces the self, nor does it discard the concentric circles. It aims to enrich the cosmopolitan perspective with ever-shifting circles where the centre is often the other. It invites us not quite to shrink our distance from otherness but rather to create a distance from what appears to be our own, from what pertains to our self or describes our self at a given time. In other words, true harkening to alterity sometimes requires us to reconsider and *describe* our self. What comprises, for instance, our consolidated practices, perceptions, interpretations and actions that affect otherness constitutes a 'baggage' that constitutes the traveller who never travels light, much against the self-understanding of footloose élites. The baggage of our self being already constructed in ways that filter our responsiveness to otherness is usually carried along even when we literally cross borders or when we endorse moral prescriptions of global aid or assume the posture of the global benefactor.

Instead of replacing the concentric, the eccentric aims to complicate the cosmopolitan perspective and to displace it in an ethico-political (rather than merely existential) sense. Cosmopolitanism demands an eccentric distancing from identity, a distancing which is not quite the by now theoretically fashionable denial of identity but rather a more profound, complex and often unexpected dialectical development. To unpack this claim, let us rephrase its deeper stake by putting the issue in the form of a question.[4] 'Is there any paradox in persons recognizing the history of their own identity and the ways in which it *intrudes* upon and shapes their outlook'? My answer to this question is more or less like this: our identities are constructed in multiple, fluctuating and intricate modes; this admission makes it easier for us to recognize the history of our own self. So, at times, we take some critical distance from our identities (denaturalize them) and see ourselves as hosts of various conditioning experiences. Subconscious operations aside, we may even act as discerning hosts, preparing ourselves to receive certain influences, to invite 'home' new 'inscriptions' (i.e. to let ourselves be shaped by new experiences) or to negate some

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[4] It is a question that Michael Peters raised to me at an interview and which elicited an answer that I am adapting here; see Peters and Papastephanou (2013).

'visitations', etc. But all this self-malleability should not be exaggerated or considered given just by virtue of a mere encounter with otherness. Our very decisions on, and acts regarding, what to host reflect, to varying degrees of force, the way we have already been shaped. In this sense, the term 'intrude' used in the above question appropriately describes this operation of the already familiar (to an extent, familial). Paradoxically, contrary to what is usually believed, the 'intruder' is not quite the foreign and the new, but rather the already established. Historically (i.e. spatiotemporally) constructed, our own 'current' selves intervene (intrude) in our operations as hosts and make us hostages to our own 'currency'.

But, instead of leading us to 'bad faith' and to various determinist interpretations of subjectivity, I believe that this paradox enables freedom and responsibility if we conceptualize it eccentrically. Rather than taking our construction as inescapable and non-negotiable, awareness of this paradox makes room for recognizing a 'paradoxa' ('doxa' denotes 'opinion, view'), another (and others') opinion of ourselves, one that, given the rich meanings of the preposition 'para', is always side by side with, and possibly contrary to, our currently held view on ourselves. Hosting the opinion of the other, being prepared to revisit our operations as host in light of the other's challenge of them, frees us, even if temporarily, from the position of the hostage to ourselves. In taking up the other's challenge, we accept the invitation to respond, to be responsive and to be held responsible for acts or negations of hosting. In other words, this 'para-doxa' helps us become more eccentric *qua* decentred.

Yet, often because neither the other's confrontational words succeed in shaking us nor are they necessarily framed in an idiom that does justice to their own legitimate demands, we cannot relegate the task of our decentring to others and we should not overlook the infinitely complex dialectic of 'us' and 'them' alternating in roles of host and hostage. Nor should we overlook operations that destabilize the brittle structures of 'we' and 'they', for the very category of 'we' and 'they' should never be treated lightly and uniformly. Therefore, goodness and wisdom in their constructive precariousness as ever-receding preconditions of cosmopolitanism, as I have interpreted the Democritean dictum that emphasizes them (Papastephanou 2013), seem to me to help in the direction of reclaiming the relational in a global context that continues, consciously or not, to glorify the monological. As never claimable 'attributes' of the self, goodness and wisdom motivate an ever-shifting eccentricity of the self, a critical dissatisfaction with, and reflective distance from, established and shaped selfhood.

16.3 Polycentric Cosmopolitanism

Having offered a rough sketch of the operations of the geometric metaphor of eccentric circles, let me further illustrate this approach by differentiating it from related alternative approaches. It is interesting critically to focus not on 'targets' that make things easy, so to speak, but on those post-colonial and culturalist theories that also voice criticisms of concentric circles. I have selected (a) Homi Bhabha's vernacular

cosmopolitanism and (b) W. E. Connolly's rhizomatic critique of concentric cultures as such polycentric alternatives. However, this critical discussion will remain only indicative for reasons of space:

(a) To Bhabha, 'it is the "disorder" of our books that makes of us irredeemable "vernacular" cosmopolitans committed to what Walter Benjamin describes as "the renewal of existence"' (1995: 5). Attributing the adjective 'cosmopolitan' so easily to people committed to the renewal of existence, as attractive as this ideal may be, makes one feel that much of what is an ethico-political ideality of cosmopolitanism is too quickly reduced to just existential enrichment or reshuffling of the self. The term 'cosmopolitan' is too easily conceded to just any movement of the academic flâneur and thus raises objections regarding the un-cosmopolitan exclusivism implicit in singling out a specific cast as eligible to the badge of the 'cosmopolitan'. Consider in such light Bhabha's following claim: 'In subtle ways that disorder challenges the shelved order of the study […] which persuades us that we are cosmopolitans of a more "universal", academic cast' (ibid). The disorder of the material that shapes us and renews our existence may indeed complicate a facile, concentric cosmopolitanization of the scholar. But it does not stave off the danger of such disorder effecting only more sophisticated and critique-immunized exaltations of the vernacular-cosmopolitan academic. Disorder as such does not lead the 'renewed', 'reinvented' self to eccentric reconsideration of his set aims and of his advancing them effectively.

Bhabha criticizes Martha Nussbaum's cosmopolitanism and charges it with an ultimately exclusivist provincialism. These criticisms help us see how Bhabha's vernacular cosmopolitanism is framed in opposition to the concentric circles metaphor. 'In her attempt to avoid nationalist or patriotic sovereignty, Nussbaum embraces a "universalism" that is profoundly provincial, provincial in a specific historical sense'. To Bhabha, this is so because Nussbaum too readily assumes 'the "givenness" of a commonality that centres on the "self" – as the Satrap of a benign, belated liberal benevolence – as it genially generates its "cosmopolitan" concentric circles of equal measure and comparable worth. But who are our "fellow city dwellers" in the global sense?' (ibid: 6).[5]

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[5] My critique of Nussbaum on the point of unacknowledged historical (and often traumatic) positionality differs from Bhabha's critique. Let me indicate this in a skeletal way with the example of colonialism and with a very brief contrast of Nussbaum's cosmopolitanism with Frantz Fanon's insights (Papastephanou 2012). While Nussbaum takes the self as a given and unproblematic centre whose ethical gap from distant others should be narrowed, Fanon showed that resistance to colonialism was, amongst other things, a subjectivation process against the self-denying impact that colonialism had on the colonized. The identity of the colonized had to be redeemed from the confusions that colonialism had so methodically and ruthlessly cultivated (or "employed" in a less intentional sense of governmentality) in order to keep control over the colonies. In other words, instead of holding a uniform conception of the self of all cosmopolitans-to-be, Fanon exposed that the self of the dominated was not a given, a stable centre from which all else moved outward. It was an identity that had suffered attacks and damages and that, precisely because of this, had then to be 'healed', restored (*qua* de-traumatized) and reconstructed through national insurrection as a first, yet not final, stage and through an enlargement of consciousness as an end point (which would save the colonized from the risk of remaining a people trapped in a prolonged past and from

Critiquing Nussbaum's concentric circles, Bhabha turns to another source, Adrienne Rich's cosmopolitan subject and draws from there an alternative positionality of the self. He writes 'the boundaries and territories of the cosmopolitan "concentric" world are profoundly, and painfully, underscored and overdetermined'. In Rich's poetry, 'the "I" is iteratively, interrogatively staged; poised at the point at which, in recounting historical trauma, the incommensurable "localities" of experience and memory each time put the "I" in a different place' (ibid: 7). Though this may indeed point to a polycentric, even eccentric, cosmopolitanization of the subject, Bhabha's selection of examples reflects the sensibilities of the footloose global intellectual. It does so, in my view, in a rather un-cosmopolitan, localized and ultimately 'provincial' way. Bhabha's selection of examples marks an almost imperceptible (though political extremely important) passage from the above-quoted recounting of historical trauma to currently fashionable modalities of noticing and theorizing trauma worthy of cosmopolitan attention. It thus reflects an unquestioned privileging of synchronically crossing spaces and borders over considering diachronic ethico-political debts and performing genealogies that challenge the 'I' more radically. In this way, Bhabha's examples operate at the synchronic level, singling out instances (compatible with polycentric cosmopolitanism) that have already passed the stage of becoming safe Western metonymies of cosmopolitan challenge.

Let me clarify this. To the question about who Nussbaum's fellow city dwellers might be, Bhabha answers by continuing to ask rhetorical questions that exemplify his objections: 'The eighteen or nineteen million refugees who lead their unhomely lives in borrowed and barricaded dwellings? The hundred million migrants, of whom over half are fleeing poverty and gender persecution world-wide? The twenty million who have fled health and ecological disasters?' (ibid: 6–70). Important as these examples are (and certainly overlooked by Nussbaum), they all involve the moving subject. In fact, they mainly concern the subject who moves westwardly and, in so doing, the subject who manages to move the West. For, the Western self, valuing mobility as he does and considering himself constantly on the move, finds it much easier to identify and sympathize with the mobile subject than, say, with any rooted self. The latter may not require the West's cosmopolitan attention by coming ashore (and thus by problematizing Western comfort zones of citizenship). But she may nevertheless complicate facile assumptions of both concentric and polycentric understandings of cosmopolitan challenge[6] by making demands on the West based on pending ethico-political debts. For instance, the Ovaherero Namibian tribes (and their compensation claims against Germany for the genocide that they suffered

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chauvinistically consolidating identity). The image of eccentric circles can do more justice to this possible road to cosmopolitanism, I believe, than that of concentric circles.

[6] As a case in point, consider here also the people of Chagos who, instead of asking citizenship rights in exile, they demand their right of return to their islands from which they were expelled by US and UK governments. Chagossians have failed to become metonymies and to crop up in sets of examples by academic cosmopolitans, vernacular or other. More on their case, in Papastephanou (2015).

between 1904 and 1907) (Werner 1990) escape the confines of Bhabha's above exemplarity since their case does not involve the movement that Bhabha (otherwise rightly) politicizes and the relativization of local affect that, as we will see below, Bhabha exalts. Thus, one wonders whether Bhabha's exemplarity is not closer to Nussbaum's than Bhabha might be prepared to acknowledge.

Bhabha's subtle exclusion of the 'rooted' subject from cosmopolitan attention becomes more evident when he dissociates the subject neglected by Nussbaum from local affect in a way that, thought through to its ultimate implications, reasserts rather than questions the Western self-mirroring (a *mesconnaissance*, anyway) (and that of favourite 'others') as 'rootless'. To Bhabha, the '"extreme" conditions [of the migrant and the refugee] are not at the limits of the cosmopolitan world', as much as they emphasize a certain liminality[7] in the cosmopolitan subject mobilized by Nussbaum. 'It is a subject peculiarly free of the complex "affect" that makes possible social identification and affiliation' (ibid). In my view, Bhabha challenges the spatial and geometrical metaphoricity of the concentric circles too literally. That is, he questions the self's inclusion in the particularist circles as such. He questions, and to a degree rightly, the belonging (and the corresponding affect, which, it is important to add, is not adequately differentiated in his text) of the refugee and the migrant in the new locality. True, refugees and migrants may not share with the city dweller a commonality of affect. But this does not rule out the possibility of a root-edness based on less literal (and less synchronic) affectivity, since there is no logical necessity that the mobile or migrant subject ceases affectively to belong to her original locality just by being forced away.[8] In Bhabha's text (read between the lines), refugees and migrants share with the footloose academic cast the movement in space and the experience of disorder that generates the renewal of existence. But is this simplistic description of the lack of affect not a homogenizing tendency as such? Does the freedom of the complex affect come about in the same way in the case of refugees and in the case of migrants? What about the Ovaherero mentioned above, for whom the memory of the suffered genocide and its pending, unfulfilled recognition (and concomitant compensation) has strengthened their sense of collective belonging (Werner 1990) instead of relativizing it?

Bhabha adequately concretizes his examples to make clear that he is not talking about the affect of the well-fed burgher who has learnt to live and work within and across borders. Still, he is not specific about how this freedom from the affect is obtained in the case of various migrants and refugees, if it is 'obtained' at all, and, more, how it might be relevant in visibly 'rooted' people who demand cosmopolitan attention. I place the verb 'obtain' in quote marks because I do not take the over-coming of the affect as a feat – though it is certainly felt so in Bhabha. Through

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[7] True, during liminal periods of life, social hierarchies may be reversed or temporarily dissolved and continuity of tradition may become uncertain. But this does not quite amount to wholesale freedom from local affect.

[8] The experience of most refugees and of many migrants is heart-rending, and this is more reason for many of them to 'carry along' their affect for their original locality/collectivity (and often to idealize and romanticize it) instead of 'overcoming' it in a deterritorializing mode.

what processes does the refugee (all refugees?) become deterritorialized and its local affect relativized?[9] Conversely, the fundamental assumption of lack of affect proves wrong when the other demands re-territorialization and defends her right to remain rooted. Bhabha's vernacular cosmopolitanism, despite its critique of concentricity, remains a reflection of and on the Western self because it cannot make room for those who wish to remain rooted and reclaim their rootedness and do not come ashore to demand the Western self's granting of citizenship rights. It also neglects those with whom the mobile Western self cannot easily relate because they do not share the Western self-understanding as 'rootless nomads' (even if, like many Herero, they are nomads in the literal sense within their own spatiality).

Two of Adrienne Rich's verses (cf Bhabha 1995: 7) can serve as an example of a decentring of the self that does not go far enough: 'I'm a table set with room for the Stranger I'm a field with corners left for the landless'. They reiterate patterns that domesticate critique and secure a moral self-image for the well-off Western subject. This subject feels that all she owes to the other is either charity or hospitality upon visitation, as if the political expectations of the less affluent or the refugee or the wronged are exhausted in acts of benevolence when the other becomes a visiting stranger. The 'spatiality' of the 'table' and the 'field', the self as surface and receptive chora, the making 'room' and the leaving 'corners' as ontological frames of the 'I' (consider the 'I am' in the verses) fail to evoke a more politicized, active search for debt and responsibility to the other apart from conceding space to the other in a moralist manner.

Some debts to others may not involve charitable aid or redistribution of wealth, much less concessions of one's 'own' 'corner' or citizenship right. For instance, most of US military base construction has created pending ethico-political debts of a different kind. It 'required' and effected the removal of the inhabitants of the relevant place. It thus dislocated and made them refugees. The inhabitants' claims to justice involve neither Western making room for them as supposed 'strangers' nor leaving a corner to the landless, but, rather, acts that restore the now landless to what is theirs. And they also require a cosmopolitan outlook different from the mainstream that dominates even polycentric approaches.

(b) Like Bhabha, Connolly also criticizes Nussbaum's cosmopolitanism. He grants that 'Nussbaum does advise cosmopolites to pay attention to the "particularities" of other cultures. You compare your cultural assumptions to theirs to locate the element of commonality between them' (Connolly 2000: 608). He considers this recommendation good, but insufficient. 'For often enough, dominant commonalities across cultures themselves need to be subjected to critical scrutiny'. Connolly points to the fluctuating and unstable character of grouping. 'Previous conceptions of women, sexuality, race, and the necessity to ground a nation in one religion have carried considerable weight across several cultures at one time or another, only to be called into question at a later date by new movements within and across those cultures'. This has critical implications for what Connolly sees as too rigid universalism.

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[9] As such a challenging case, we may consider the processes by which the Chagossians were 'deterritorialized'. The Chagossians themselves use the Creole verb: 'deraciner' (Vine 2009).

'Because we are defined, to some uncertain degree, by the concentric circles in which we move, we need periodically to work on ourselves to deuniversalize selective particularities that have become universalized in or by us'. By further implication, concentric belonging appears again insufficient: 'it is not that the concentric image misrepresents territorial culture entirely or that thick universals must be scrapped'. But, to Connolly, without the complication that dense, rhizomatic connections crossing and exceeding concentric circles offer to cosmopolitanism 'the concentric image points you either to the ugly particularism of the nation/civilization (Huntington) or toward single-entry universalism in a putative world of territorial nations (Nussbaum)' Connolly 2000: 609).

To Connolly, rhizomatic connections decentre the self and challenge facile universalisms. 'While respecting the extra-national aspiration that governs Nussbaum's work, I invoke creative tension between concentric and rhizomatic forces in cultural life'. Such forces provide 'a double-entry orientation' to the universal, an element of contestability in any specific rendering of the universal. They also add 'a mode of compassion that includes critical responsiveness to new movements of identity and rights challenging the previous sense of sufficiency invested in concentric renderings of the universal' (Connolly 2000: 609). Thus, Connolly offers us another polycentric version of cosmopolitanism. In what follows, I will briefly indicate that the rhizomatic as such fails to decentre the self when a radically reflective and critical attitude to the collective self is lacking.

In Connolly's approach, the local affect is not wholesale incriminated and discarded. Connolly's cosmopolitanism does not 'delegitimize concentric identifications as such, for you need to participate in the family that nourishes you and the state that governs you' (2000: 603).[10] Emphasis is placed on rhizomatic possibilities, and the idea is 'to appreciate how concentric circles of political culture are complicated and compromised by numerous crosscutting allegiances, connections, and modes of collaboration'. Yet, such complication is subordinated to the ideal of enrichment of existence and individual choice through taking 'advantage of the possibilities created by the compression of distance to enact a more vibrant plurality of connections exceeding the concentric model'. Connolly exaggerates the pragmatic problematization of concentricity by stressing that, in reality, multiple identifications undo the supposed closure of the circles. 'For existing patterns of identification, allegiance and collaboration already exceed the concentric image of them' (ibid). This is true at the descriptive level, but it hardly justifies any stretching of this reality to ethico-political conclusions. That our allegiances are more complex and complicated does not mean that they sensitize us to realities that challenge our goal settings and make us better listeners of diverse others or ethico-politically responsive to them.

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[10] Notice, however, how the above phrasing (as well as Connolly's relevant text as a whole) reduces the immediate circles of family and state to household economy of need and to a household management of government, respectively. What is missing is any ideality that would make belonging in such collectivities ethico-politically more demanding and critical. Hence, the concentric circles are still interpreted in traditional, politically mainstream and uninspiring ways.

Let me explain this with an example. US and UK officials who approved the displacement of locals in then prospective US bases such as Chagos (Papastephanou 2015) were not lacking crosscutting connections and experiences of rhizomatic deterritorializations. But in their minds, the morally repugnant, indeed, criminal approvals of those dislocations of the rightful inhabitants of places such as Chagos were justified as follows: the supposed gains to be realized from the base (for US/UK policies) were much higher than any consideration of human rights. Though the officials knew the destructive effects of those removals for the locals, they felt that the impact of their displacement on US aims, purposes and interests would be limited or even totally insignificant. Protests by relatively small numbers of people (in many cases, 'under colonial control and of non-"white", non-European ancestry' Vine 2009: 16) cannot easily be heard. Kant's (and later cosmopolitans') assumption,[11] as I stated it in the introduction of this book, that a violation of rights in one part of the world is felt everywhere, does not hold in the case of small numbers of people. Likewise, Connolly's following assertion misfires when cases such as Chagos are at stake: 'the speed and global scope of communication make it difficult to avoid the question of indigenous peoples in "settler societies"' (Connolly 2000: 610). Despite conditions such as speed and enhanced communication that effect rhizomatic complexity, the Chagos case of displacement and the ongoing protests and demands of the Chagossians to return to their homes have easily been avoided by 'rhizomatic cosmopolitans' and remain sweepingly unknown to most global academia and publics. Thus, I do not share Connolly's optimist faith in the rhizome because precisely this faith effects its own normalizations and marginalizations of claims that do not manage to pass the filter of Western hegemonic metonymization of crises and injustices.

Rhizomatic, culturally enriched and hybrid 'cosmopolitan' experience does not suffice on its own to bear ethico-political fruit. Henry Kissinger's attitude to displaced populations is a case in point: Kissinger 'once said of the inhabitants of the Marshall Islands, "There are only 90,000 people out there. Who gives a damn"? (Vine 2009: 183). In fact, if we think that hybridity, mobility and enrichment of one's selfhood through other cultures 'while retaining its capacity to achieve self-definition and to advance its own aims effectively' (Hollinger 2001: 239) are the requirements for granting one the badge of the cosmopolitan, we realize that some of those US officials (and Kissinger amongst them) meet all such facile and ultimately monological requirements, despite their ethico-politically repugnant handlings. Was Kissinger not hybrid or mobile enough when he translated the number of the Marshall Islands' inhabitants into eligibility to displacement? Could he be an avatar of cosmopolitanism just in virtue of his hybridity and mobility or on

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[11] Let us recall it: 'the peoples of the earth have thus entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it has developed to the point where a violation of rights in one part of the world is felt everywhere' (Kant 1992): 107–8.

grounds of the fact that his latest book deals with a cosmopolitan theme such as the new world order and has already attracted the attention of global academia?[12]

Let me deploy my critique more concretely through Connolly's own examples. Those do not really challenge the centrality of the self; they just show that commitments may have changed into becoming more virtual, less reflecting of older attachments: 'You might cultivate ties to ecologists or feminists in South America that are more significant than those you share on these two issues with some neighbors, in-laws, or corporate leaders in your own state'. True, though not quite unprecedented, this interconnection is enhanced through speed and technology. Yet, surprisingly, the ties, say, of internationalized feminism have not proved sufficient to make the voice of Chagossian women (continually at the forefront of the Chagossian movement- Papastephanou 2015) heard in the West and acknowledged by the academics who otherwise exalt crosscutting allegiance. 'You might support cross-country citizen networks designed to protect rain forests in several countries (including your own) or to reduce toxic emissions in the world, doing so to nourish the future of life anywhere and everywhere on the planet' (Connolly 2000: 604). True again, but, do all these make higher demands on the current self, on the by now more accustomed subject to considering ecological threats that primarily set the subject and his society at risk? The pinpointed allegiances are just different kinds of concentric circles to the extent that the self remains the centre of them; what changes is only the name and the breadth of the circle, e.g. as in the geometrical case where the centre is stable but circles interlock. Certainly, it also depends on what kind of self we are talking about, but the displacement of the self (left so vaguely theorized by Connolly), i.e. the movement toward different forms of allegiances that depend less on physical coexistence than in the past, does not quite entail that internal ethico-political borders are challenged or overcome just through the spatial complication of the self.

Connolly privileges the rhizomatic over the concentric in a way that raises too many expectations from the rhizomatic as such. 'If you have a concentric image of culture, you see little reason why such strategies are needed to bring into the fore rhizomatic dimensions of life obscured by the hegemony of that image' (ibid: 608): thought through, this may mean that the overcoming of the concentric image and the acknowledgement of the rhizomatic dimensions of life automatically ease the passage to something better. If this is indeed a valid reading, then, my objection is as follows. The assumption that cultures have as such a rhizomatic dimension is correct and a useful reminder of potentials inherent in all everydayness and not just in the quotidian as experienced in exceptionalist contexts or in footloose lifestyles; however, it nevertheless involves a danger of self-indulgence (with obviously concentric effects). For, it presents cosmopolitanism as an ideal already approximated due to technology and the compression of time and the changes this has effected or an ideal already accomplished through rhizomatic structures which are already there. From then on, all we need to do is to notice those structures and respect them. This is not only normatively and critically-politically too simplistic. It also fails to

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[12] As I am writing this coda (early 2015), Kissinger's new book on world order has already received the astonishing number of 40 citations although it appeared as late as 2014.

acknowledge realities at the empirical level that disprove the assumption that the mere acknowledgement of rhizomatic structures makes us true cosmopolitans.

16.4   Conclusion

David Hollinger stated back in 2001 that 'one prominent feature of the new movement [of cosmopolitanism – M. P.] is the reticence of most of the discussants about the label, cosmopolitanism. This reticence is displayed in the frequency and earnestness with which its apparent adherents modify the naming noun with one or more of a remarkable string of adjectives'. And he mentioned 'vernacular cosmopolitanism, rooted cosmopolitanism, critical cosmopolitanism' etc. (2001: 237).

Hollinger sees this feature as an effort of 'new cosmopolitans' to insert some distance from modern, Enlightenment cosmopolitanism. To some extent, and at first sight, this may seem to be the case with eccentric cosmopolitanism. It is indeed differentiated from many modern conceptions of cosmopolitanism. But, as I hope to have shown, it is also differentiated from current accounts of cosmopolitanism and thus takes distances from what is seen as 'new cosmopolitanism'.[13] Much more, I have indicated (though surely not argued out) that modern 'cosmopolitanism' was so narrowly defined and conceptualized that in most cases it could not do justice to the potential of the term itself (cosmos, politics) or to the paths that had been paved (though certainly not pursued) in antiquity. It was understood as a universalization that suited the purposes of modern expansion, it did not pursue the counterfactual possibilities of cynic and early Stoic eccentricity (let alone the older, Democritean one- Papastephanou 2013) and it did not dethrone the individual and collective self for the sake of cosmos; it just made cosmos an extension of the self and of the state. Thus, what Hollinger mentions about 'new cosmopolitans' and their criticisms that modern cosmopolitanism 'was insufficiently responsive to diversity, particularity, history, the masses of humankind, the realities of power, and the need for politically viable solidarities' (2001: 237) does not apply to what I have argued in this coda. For, my attempt has not been to preserve modern conceptions of cosmopolitanism and just modify them with qualifiers. My attempt has been to show that the concept 'cosmopolitanism' can be reconstructed, surely with a critical eye to its conceptual history, but more than that, through a different optics that begins with the highest demands that cosmos makes on humanity.

Thus, let me conclude with a disclaimer: my own adjectival qualification of cosmopolitanism with the word 'eccentric' should not quite convey a reticence regarding cosmopolitanism, as if cosmopolitanism were indeed something different from the adjective that aspires to determine it or hold it supposedly in check. I do not preserve the modern conception of cosmopolitanism and modify it with an adjective

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[13] In evoking Democritus' view (that goodness and wisdom make any part of cosmos a patria for those who strive for such goodness and wisdom, see more in Papastephanou 2013) one might say that the conception of cosmopolitanism explored here is in fact rather old instead of new.

that aspires to protect it from degenerations. The conception of cosmopolitanism that I defend is not dependent on the conceptual history of the term other than in a critical mode. As I explain elsewhere (Papastephanou 2012) and have indicated in the introduction of this book, at a definitional level, there are conceptual possibilities inherent in the words that compose the term 'cosmopolitanism', 'cosmos' and 'polis/politics' that should be brought to the fore and turned into enabling metaphors. I believe that, to deserve the name, cosmopolitanism as ideal and virtue can make sense in being as such, i.e. inherently, eccentric as much as it may be concentric, vernacular, rhizomatic or other. A concentric view that excludes eccentricity condemns cosmopolitanism to being primarily about the self rather than about cosmos, and this brings it against its own terminological invocation of the fact that cosmos as the totality of biota and non-sentient beings invites the self to imagine and surrender to a vision of an ideal polis.

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