

# The Cosmopolitan Turn: Recasting 'Dialogue' and 'Difference'

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*This paper draws attention to the potential pitfalls and possibilities of a new cosmopolitanism. The first part of the paper briefly portrays cosmopolitanism as a name and metaphor for a way of life, an ideal and an outlook. The second part, however, discloses a paradoxical attribution of the metaphor, revealing the ways in which it assumes something which it is not. The third part of the paper further explores the powers of this paradox, arguing that the new cosmopolitanism can be seen as a riddle that surprises, bewilders and educates: The surprise is in the deviation from current and most common ways of speech. The bewilderment happens as the mantra of cosmopolitanism is bringing together logical opposites, jumbling categories and disturbing pre-existing modes of thought. The educational work of cosmopolitanism thus occurs as a violation of the cognitive framework and logical categories generating our very modes of learning. The vital work of the new cosmopolitanism is therefore in the ways in which it creates epistemic ruptures, recasts our mental categories, generates radically new modes of learning, and thus completely new ways of experiencing, seeing and knowing a world of change. But what are the potential pitfalls and possibilities of a discourse jeopardizing the very vision of the social world, and thus the world itself?*

## Introduction

This paper draws attention to the potential pitfalls and possibilities of a new cosmopolitanism. As the world is becoming a smaller place, with intensified contacts within, across and beyond national, social, political, cultural and religious borders, new ways of knowing and seeing a world of change emerge. Several authors thus speak of a “cosmopolitan turn” within and beyond the sciences, including within the discipline of education (Beck, 2006, Beck & Sznaider, 2006, Delanty, 2006, Pieterse, 2006). According to Fine (2003, 2007) this turn can be identified, first, by a shared aspiration to overcome national presuppositions and prejudices; secondly, by the widespread acknowledgment of the vision that humanity has entered an era of mutual interdependence on a global scale; and thirdly, by the rising numbers of normative and prescriptive theories of global citizenship and cosmopolitan democracy. The new “cosmopolitanism” thus carries a tension as it, on the one hand, denotes a way of the world, a condition, an evolving and extremely complex social reality, and, on the other hand, denotes a way of seeing the world, a form of consciousness, an emerging paradigm of social and political analysis.

“Cosmopolitanism” derives from Greek *kosmo politês* (‘citizen of the world’). Diogenes the Cynic (412 – 323 BC) is said to be the very first philosopher using the term. When asked where he

came from, he replied: “I am a citizen of the world”—which was a radical claim in a world where a man’s identity was strongly connected to him as a member of a particular city state. Living in exile, as an outcast, and as a man without identity, Diogenes thus made a mark on his contemporaries. Kant (1724 – 1804) later pictured cosmopolitan rights as the “right of hospitality” belonging to strangers in a foreign land (Kant 1795/2009). Derrida (1930 – 2007) followed this vision when he addressed the question of the cosmopolitan rights of asylum seekers, refugees, and immigrants in a speech to the international parliament of writers in Strasbourg in 1996. There, he revisited the issue of ‘open cities’ (*ville francaes*) or ‘refugee cities’ (*ville refugees*) where migrants may seek sanctuary from the pressures of persecution, intimidation and exile (Derrida 2001). Today, however, cosmopolitanism evokes an image of coming generations holding global citizenships and forms of symbolic capital—a cosmopolitan ethos—that makes them strangers nowhere in the world (Nussbaum, 1997). As an educational ideal, cosmopolitanism thus expresses the idea that all human beings—regardless of national, religious, cultural, or political affiliations—should be seen as members of the same community, and that this community should be cultivated. The current mantra of cosmopolitanism thus seems to be carrying images and visions that not only serve to name the world, but also to recast the very visions of the world and our place in it. But what is in this particular name? And what happens in the act of naming?

In this paper I explore the work of the name *cosmopolitanism*. I start by briefly portraying the new cosmopolitanism as a way of life, an ideal and an outlook. In the second part, however, I disclose the ways in which the name and metaphor carry paradoxical attributions. In the third part I explore the powers of this paradox: In what ways may the inherent contradictions of the new cosmopolitanism affect its making? And what may be the potential pitfalls and possibilities of a discourse that jeopardizes the very vision of the social world?

### **Cosmopolitanism as a Way of Life, an Ideal and an Outlook**

Contemporary philosophers of education use cosmopolitanism as a metaphor for *a way of life* made possible by the kinds of tolerance, flexibility, and openness towards otherness that is characterized by an ethics of social relations in an interconnected world of change (e.g., Appiah, 2008, Kemp, 2005, Nussbaum, 1997, Papastephanou, 2005). But what does this way of life look like? An extensive study (Molz, 2006) of contemporary round-the-world travelers, from ages seven to sixty, found that this group of travelers “literally embodies cosmopolitanism” (p. 17). The cosmopolitan characteristics of flexibility, adaptability and openness to difference and risk are to them embodied performances of fitness and fitting in. They are “fit to travel” by their privileged position, vaccinated and well-trained bodies, and global appearance. Accordingly, they do whatever to “fit in” by adapting their bodies to changing environments, hiding their stigma of provinciality, and reaching for an identity as global nomads. The round-the-world-travelers desire to “be like chameleons”, not necessarily by adapting and blending in with the locals, but rather blending in with a given image of a “traveler”. In this way, the round-the-world-traveler manifests an image of a cosmopolitan lifestyle generated by a cultural climate of mobility, urban sophistication, privileged detachment, and transnational relations. This image of cosmopolitanism as a form of cultural capital is confirmed by a recent survey of 535 Dutch parents whose children attend international schools (Weenink, 2008). The majority of these parents—“the pragmatic cosmopolitans”—saw the advantage of an international orientation (for example, to learn advanced English). But they did not relate to a vision of the world as open, to be explored by everyone, or to a dedication of cultural openness, despite admitting the benefit of such an attitude for the future of their children. They expressed an image of cosmopolitanism as a range of competencies—skills and attitudes—that provide competitive advantage in the future careers of their children. However, a large minority of the parents—“the dedicated cosmopolitans”—advocated flexibility, open-mindedness, and the willingness and ability to look beyond borders. But their multicultural ideology seemed class biased as they expressed a larger interest in western or westernized foreigners, and a tendency to avoid other

groups of foreigners. The idea of cosmopolitanism thus seems to be one of advocating a rather superior way of life as well as an ethos nurtured among those privileged that have access to such a lifestyle.

As an educational *ideal*, however, the term “cosmopolitanism” expresses the idea that all human beings—regardless of national, religious, cultural, or political affiliation—should be seen as members of the same community, and that this idea should be cultivated. But a vital dilemma is the tension between an abstract universalism from above versus a concrete moral commitment from below. Ossewaarde (2007) argues that the ideal of cosmopolitanism is nothing more than a manifestation of the mindset of a global elite who have “more in common with partners in Manhattan, London, Singapore or Hong Kong than with locals or nationals that are not plugged into a network of global connectedness” (p. 373). The ethos of the new cosmopolitan, he holds, is about flexibility, objectivity, detachment and the ability to create a distance to cultural patterns and existing loyalties. Cosmopolitans render cultural differences superfluous as they “become friends of humanity”. The new cosmopolitanism from above thus recognizes humanity before sociality. This outlook is confirmed by Nussbaum (1997) who opts for a stoic cosmopolitanism that transcends local loyalties and traditions. She holds that cosmopolitanism is “an invitation to exile” (p. 7). By contrast, Appiah (2007) argues for a cosmopolitanism flowing from, rather than transcending, rooted ways of life. However, the tension between a somewhat abstract cosmopolitanism from above and a rooted cosmopolitanism from below remains one of the major problems of contemporary cosmopolitanism. Benhabib (2006) addressed the issue in her 2004 Berkeley Tanner lectures. Taking the dilemma between a somewhat abstract and enlightened morality on the one hand and the complex aspirations of the hybrid identities of citizens not belonging to any primordial community or nation on the other hand, she argued that the task of a normative cosmopolitanism should be to “mediate moral universalism with ethical particularism” (p. 19). But this dilemma remains unresolved.

Moreover, a vital issue is whether a Western notion of cosmopolitanism overshadows non-Western visions. Paralleling European cosmopolitanism with the modernist philosophers’ quest for certainty, Toulmin (1990) exposes the hidden, but yet persistent agenda of a cosmopolitanism of the West: A vision of society as rationally ordered as the Newtonian view of nature. Toulmin thus claims that the pursuit for abstract neatness and theoretical simplicity has “blinded the successors of Descartes to the unavoidable complexities of concrete human experience” (p. 201). Toulmin’s analysis also reveals how Western cosmopolitanism carries a whole cosmogony; a deep-seated image of creation; a theory of how a perfect society can come into existence. A cosmogony of the West is hallmarked by having chaos (not nothingness) as its starting point and the rational word (not play, breath, or spirit) as its creative principle. Consequently, Western cosmopolitanism seems to oppose the lively and creative hubbub of a globalised world since it carries connotations of a perfect well-ordered society born out of chaos by the use of words. The contrasts between divergent cosmopolitan visions thus come forward as an impossible dilemma, since a biased cosmopolitanism of the West may well disturb and continue to marginalize non-Western representations, visions and experiences. Westernized images of a harmonious, well-ordered, orderly, and rational global society also contrast with the worldly, lively and creative cities of today, whether in the west or ‘the rest’. Apparently, there are pitfalls that come with blindly adopting a vision of cosmopolitanism deeply embedded in a long-lasting European philosophical discourse and to force it into a vision of a new world order. Nevertheless, several authors point to an evolving “cosmopolitan outlook” within and beyond the sciences.

The *cosmopolitan outlook* signifies a new way of seeing the world and a new and emerging paradigm of social and political analysis. With a cosmopolitan outlook earlier worldviews and ways of categorizing, such as “the old differentiations between internal and external, national and international, us and them” (Beck, 2006, p. 14) lose their validity. Following Beck and Sznaider (2006) the current cosmopolitanism signifies an emerging global awareness, altered images and new habits of thought, and may thus be characterized as a “globalization from within”. Beck and Sznaider do not undermine the fact that “people, from Moscow to Paris, from Rio to Tokyo, have long since been living in *really-existing*

*relations of interdependence*” (p. 9). But, “what’s new is not forced mixing but global awareness of it, its self-conscious political affirmation, its reflection and recognition before a global public via mass media, in the news and in the global social movements of blacks, women and minorities, and in the current vogue for such venerable concepts as ‘Diaspora’ in the cultural sciences” (p. 10). In other words, shared images, worldviews and habits of thought and action are, on the one hand, becoming more and more cosmopolitan. On the other hand, there is a growing worldwide awareness of these new images, worldviews and habits of thought and action. Fine (2007) sees this new outlook as the new cosmopolitanism’s reflexive—or interpretative—moment. Beck (2006) further indicates how this new outlook concurrently serves as a diagnosis of the current age and a normative stance supporting, for example, moral judgment and political action. But as a cosmopolitan outlook is unavoidably generated by social conditions, it may serve to justify, uphold and reproduce the ways of the world that is diagnosed, understood and recognized by this outlook. It is therefore vital to further explore in what respects the cosmopolitan turn possibly can imply genuinely new ways of naming and reading the world.

### Naming the World

Despite being an ambiguous and contested term, “cosmopolitanism” has been adopted as a symbolic representation of the contemporary ways of the world. But what is in this particular name? And what happens in the act of naming?

The term “cosmopolitanism” is composed of ‘cosmos’ and ‘polis’: ‘Cosmos’ derives from the Greek *‘kósmos’*, which literally means “order”. ‘Cosmos’ is the antithesis of ‘chaos’ and carries the connotation of a universe regarded as a well-ordered whole. To Eliade (1952) cosmos is the ideal archetype of an orderly system, embracing “all that is perfect, complete, harmonious or fruitful ... Cosmos is the pattern created by the gods, their masterpiece” (p. 64). ‘Polis’ literally means “city” or “city-state” and carries the connotation of a body of citizens. ‘Citizens’ are distinct from ‘nomads’, in that they signify stability rather than movements or relocation; ‘Citizens’ are also distinct from ‘barbarians’ in that they are educated; ‘Citizens’ are natives of a civilized community or city. The term “cosmopolitanism” thus carries an essential contrast, as ‘cosmos’ is here juxtaposed to ‘polis’; an orderly whole juxtaposed to a lively particular; an unlimited order to a limited space; an all-encompassing universality to a definite body of fellow citizens; a divine design to a really existing reality. This binary feature of cosmopolitanism draws attention to the logical order of “cosmo-polis”, which is paralleling the harmonious patterns of ‘cosmos’ with the social dynamics of ‘polis’. “Cosmopolitanism” thus literally denotes the idea of a well-ordered civilization. But the term should not be read literally. On the contrary, “cosmopolitanism” is a name and metaphor, also used in a figurative sense.

“Metaphor”, according to Aristotle, “consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else; the transference being either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy” (Poetics 1457b 6-9). To name the present ways of the world “cosmopolitanism” is thus implicitly to compare and contrast the contemporary reality with an image of something that it is *not*. The reason is that a metaphor is a relation between two references—the one being the images of the world provided by the metaphor’s name, the other the contemporary ways of the world that are being designated. It is exactly this dual reference that distinguishes the metaphorical statement from the literal one. In the case of “cosmopolitanism”, *the metaphor is the relation* between an image of a perfect design and the dynamic social and political order of today. Or to be more exact, the metaphor is the *proposed* relation between an image of a perfect well-ordered civilization and the contemporary ways of the world. The work of the metaphor happens through this relation, as—according to Aristotle—the relationship is about “*giving* the thing a name that belongs to something else”, and thereby *transferring meaning* “from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy” (1457b 6-9, my emphasis). Adopting the name

“cosmopolitanism” is thus adopting a relationship that parallels, compares and contrasts the contemporary ways of the world to an image of something which it is not—namely, an orderly, ordered, stable, and harmonious whole.

In this way, the metaphor of cosmopolitanism concurrently emphasizes difference and resemblance, in saying that the perfect blueprint of a harmonious city-state differs from the contemporary ways of the world while simultaneously pointing to the similarities between the two. Such dissimilar similarities lie at the heart of metaphors, as “... a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars” (Poetics 1459 a 3-8). The quality and vigor of a metaphor thus depends on the ability to perceive the similarities of very different things. Aristotle offers some examples:

As in philosophy, too, it is characteristic of a well-directed mind to observe the likeness even in things very different. Thus, Archytas [the Phytagorean philosopher] said that an arbiter and an altar were the same thing; for one who has committed a wrong flies to both. Or [another example is] if someone said that an anchor and a rope hung from a hook are the same thing, for both are the same, but they differ in that one is hung from above and one from below. And to say that [the allotment of land in] cities “have been equalized” is the same thing in widely different cases: the equality is in the surface of land and the powers [assigned to each citizen]. (Rhetoric 1412a 14 – 23)

These examples illustrate that the work of a metaphor depends on the ability to observe the likeness in very different cases. Or—as Ricoeur puts it—“the dynamic of metaphor would rest ... on the perception of resemblance”. (Ricoeur 1977, p. 24)

The name and metaphor of “cosmopolitanism” thus carries some ambiguities: First, the name itself carries an essential ambiguity, as ‘cosmos’ is here juxtaposed to ‘polis’; an orderly whole to a lively particular; an all-encompassing universality to a definite body of fellow citizens; a harmonious design to a dynamic social reality. Second, the name and metaphor compares and contrasts the contemporary ways of the world to this impossible image, while concurrently saying that “this is that” and “this is not that”. Some contradictions thus emerge: Initially in the name, which actually contradicts itself in simultaneously saying that “polis is like cosmos” and “polis is not like cosmos.” Next in the way the metaphor compares, contrasts, and parallels the contemporary ways of the world to this ambiguous and conflicting image, and thereby providing a contradictory outlook of the contemporary ways of the world as concurrently “cosmopolitan” and “not cosmopolitan”. The mystery of “cosmopolitanism” is therefore that it compares reality with an impossible image, while concurrently asserting it to be something which it is not, namely this impossible image (Black 1962; 1979, Derrida 1982, Laclau 1998, Ricoeur 1977). “Cosmopolitanism” thus appears as a paradox.

A paradox occurs as a self-contradiction. Or to be more accurate, a paradox is an argument where the premises are true and the reasoning appears to be correct, but the conclusions contradictory or mutually excluding (Olin 2003, Sainsbury 1995, Quine 1966, Ricoeur 1977). Paradox leads, just as with metaphor, by accepted ways of reasoning concurrently to two inconsistent, contradictory and mutually excluding conclusions: “this is that” and “this is not that”. Quine (1966) holds that these kinds of paradoxes (anomalies) are productive as they “bring on the crisis in thought.” In taking us by surprise paradox “... establishes that some tacit and trusted pattern of reasoning must be made explicit and henceforward be avoided or revised” (p. 7). To Quine, metaphors thus help expand already existing ways of knowing.

Aristotle, however, seems to argue that the paradoxical attribution of metaphors also carries the potential to provide genuinely new knowledge. As when he underlines the productivity of a riddle spoken in metaphor: “Good riddles are pleasing for the same reason; for there is learning, and they are spoken in metaphor, as is what Theodorus calls *ta kaina legein* [saying new things].” Aristotle further stresses that “... this occurs when there is a paradox and not, as he says, in opposition to previous

opinion; rather it is like the bogus word coinages in jests” (Rhetoric 1412a 33 – 38). The mystery of the paradoxical attribution of cosmopolitanism is thus that it articulates truly new things in an unexpected manner. In this way, the metaphor of cosmopolitanism may not only serve to *expand* earlier ways of knowing, but also to *produce truly new forms of knowledge*. But how does that happen? And what may be the potential pitfalls and possibilities of a mysterious riddle that seems to jeopardize the very vision of the social world?

### Cosmopolitanism Surprises, Bewilders and Educates

The mystery of cosmopolitanism is that it compares and contrasts reality with an impossible image, while concurrently asserting it to be something which it is not, namely this impossible image. However, it is precisely this paradoxical attribution that signifies its impossible possibilities: Providing contradictory images of the world as concurrently “cosmopolitan” and “not cosmopolitan”, the emerging new cosmopolitanism appears as a riddle. Of which Aristotle says: “The very nature indeed of a riddle is this, to describe a fact in an impossible combination of words (which cannot be done with the real names for things, but can be with their metaphorical substitutes)” (Poetics 1458a, 24-29). And further: “Good riddles are pleasing ... for there is learning” (Rhetoric 1412 a 26). But can we recognize the riddle of cosmopolitanism as a good riddle? In order to find out we are invited to explore the ways on which the mysterious riddle of cosmopolitanism surprises, bewilders, and educates.

#### *Surprise*

The metaphor of cosmopolitanism *surprises*. Immediately, it seems surprising to adopt such an alien name—“cosmopolitanism”—in picturing the new ways of the world. However, the surprise is not in the new cosmopolitanism’s alien name. The surprise is rather in the act of moving, shifting, or changing from one scene to another. Let me explain: To Aristotle metaphor is something happening, an act of naming, or of “*giving* the thing a name that belongs to something else” (Poetics 1457b 6, my emphasis). Ricoeur (1977) pictures this activity as a movement, a displacement, or a transposition of meaning “from ... to...” (p. 17). But the metaphor is not labeling this activity. Rather, *the metaphor is the activity itself*. The metaphor of cosmopolitanism should thus be conceived as a verb, a process, an activity, a discourse, or simply something happening. This is underlined by the fact that Aristotle’s term *meta-phora* literally means “between-motion”, which in and of itself is a metaphor for a kind of change (*phora*) or ‘meta-change’, namely the transposition of meaning from one location to another (Derrida 1982). The new “cosmopolitanism” is therefore not just a novel noun, distinction, or category. Rather, the new cosmopolitanism is an event, a surprising *shift* between scenes, a *movement* from one realm of language to another, a *transposition* from one outlook to another.

This transposition happens, first, as a *deviation* from the current, most common and ordinary modes of speech. The reason is that the metaphor’s “alien name” (Poetics 1457b 31) or “name that belongs to something else” (1457b 7) provides a discursive rupture by breaking away from ordinary language use. This is just as with the unfamiliar term “cosmopolitanism”, which differs from frequent terminology and thus breaks away from common academic discourse. The breaking away is underlined by the fact that recent cosmopolitanism is still an empty concept, not pre-given or foreclosed by the definition of any particular society or discourse. The metaphor of cosmopolitanism thus speaks *para to kurion*—against the *current*. The metaphor of cosmopolitanism also speaks *para to eidhōn*—against the most *common*. However, here lies the power of the metaphor, because in deviating from the current, the most common, and ordinary modes of speech, the metaphor carries a potential to escape banality: “The Diction becomes distinguished and non-prosaic by the use of unfamiliar terms” (Poetics 1458a 21).

Next, the transposition—*meta-phora* or meta-change—happens through a *borrowing*: “Metaphor consists in giving the thing a name *that belongs to something else*” (1457b 9, my emphasis). To ‘metaphorize’ is to borrow meaning from another discursive order, time, place, or realm and to displace it into a new order. Ricoeur (1977) thus holds that “it is always possible to specify metaphor’s place of origin or of borrowing” (p. 19). As in the case of “cosmopolitanism”, which deviates from ordinary language usage by adopting the alien terms *kósmos* (order) and *polis* (city) borrowed from Greek. By implication, some hold that the emerging new cosmopolitanism is nothing more than a borrowing from ancient Greek or Western modernist philosophies adapted and applied to the contemporary ways of the world. This borrowing may be conceived as parallel to how the Stoics borrowed Diogenes’ non-conformist idea on the *kosmo polités* and developed it into a universal ideal on a moral and political consciousness that crosses the barriers of national, ethnic, religious, or political affiliations (Nussbaum 1997). However, the work of metaphor goes *beyond* a break with the current practices and borrowings from tradition. The work of metaphors also occurs as a bewildering mixing of categories.

### ***Bewilderment***

The metaphor of cosmopolitanism *bewilders*. The bewilderment happens as the metaphor brings together logical opposites, namely a divine design versus the actually existing reality: “Cosmopolitanism” denotes an idea that all humanity belongs to the same community. But in fact, such a community is a utopia not yet known to exist. “Cosmopolitans” are never strangers, no matter where in the world they might be. But in fact, increasingly more people are now strangers no matter where in the world they are. Moreover, it appears a common belief that education should nurture a cosmopolitan ethos of genuine global solidarity. But in fact, recent studies reveal that “cosmopolitan education” serves as symbolic capital, a head start for the future carriers of those who are part of a global knowledge society. Nevertheless, despite being a utopian idea carrying ugly connotations and promoting somewhat distorted and disturbing practices, the notion of cosmopolitanism has been adopted as a symbolic representation of the new ways of the world. As a result, the metaphor jeopardizes the very vision of the social world by deviating from ordinary discourse and thus disturbing the existing logical order.

In addition, while borrowing meaning from an external realm and displacing it into a new one, metaphor has power to re-describe reality (Black 1962, Ricoeur 1977, Petrie 1979). So, as the metaphor operates in an order already existing and in a game with rules already given, the metaphor confuses the very rules of the game and thus the game itself: Metaphors “make everything move and live” (Rhetoric 1412a, 9). By implication, metaphor does not only violate the rules of the game by speaking paradox—against the pre-existing doxa. Metaphor also carries the potential to transpose meanings, to re-describe reality, and thus to create anew. While bewildering our modes of classification and changing our framework of understanding, the work of metaphors happens through and beyond its paradoxical attribution. Thus metaphor, according to Ricoeur (1977), works at the root of classification, at the very origin of logical thought: “The ‘metaphoric’ that transgresses the categorical order also begets it” (p. 24). In other words, while the metaphor of cosmopolitanism brings together logical opposites it first surprises, then bewilders, and finally educates by uncovering a relationship hidden beneath the paradox.

### ***Education***

The metaphor of cosmopolitanism *educates*. Education occurs as the metaphor proposes an impossible image of the world as concurrently “cosmopolitan” and “not cosmopolitan”. The paradoxical attribution of the new cosmopolitanism therefore opens possibilities of learning or envisioning something radically new. But is it possible to learn something completely new, to make intelligible the acquisition of fundamentally new ways of developing knowledge, or to make comprehensible completely new epistemic approaches? This is the famous Meno paradox of Plato “...a man cannot

enquire either about that which he knows or about that which he does not know; for if he knows, he has no need to enquire; and if not, he cannot; for he does not know the very subject about which he is to enquire". However, Petrie (1979) holds that metaphors, with their paradoxical attributions, operate in a way that opens possibilities of acquiring genuinely new knowledge. Realizing that metaphors “*create* similarity rather than formulate similarity already existing” (Black 1962, p. 37), Petrie maintains that metaphor “is one of the central ways of leaping the epistemological chasm between old knowledge and radically new knowledge” (p. 440). But how does this happen?

Petrie (1979) describes the educational work of metaphor in a step-by-step process. Applied to the metaphor of cosmopolitanism these steps look like this: (1) First, when assuming the metaphor of cosmopolitanism to be a claim on the contemporary ways of the world, the learner finds it obviously false: All humanity does not belong to the same community; numerous people are currently homeless wherever in the world; and a cosmopolitan ethos does by no way mirror a genuine solidarity, but rather a form of symbolic capital facilitating social positioning. (2) But next, the learner may overlook the bewilderment, read the implicit comparison, and embrace the resemblance. If so, the metaphor will be at work in the transposition of meaning from one location to another; from the learner’s image of a divine design to her outlook of the really existing reality. The metaphor of cosmopolitanism thus helps to extend already existing knowledge as it deviates from current modes of thought and borrows from another realm of discourse. But herein lies the pitfall of the new cosmopolitanism, since the making of it is in danger of being generated and justified by a cosmogony motivated by an escape from chaos. While seeing cosmos as the ideal archetype of an orderly system, Eliade (1952) holds that such a

cosmogony is the perfect pattern of whatever requires ‘doing’. This is not just because the Cosmos is the ideal archetype both of all creative situations and of all created things, but also because the Cosmos is the work of God. Hence it is made holy in its very structure. By extension, all that is perfect, complete, harmonious or fruitful, in short, all that is ‘cosmosized’, all that is like cosmos is holy. To do something well, to craft, to build, to create, construct, fashion, shape, form, all simply mean that something has been brought into existence, has been given life and, in the last resort, made to resemble that pre-eminently harmonious organism, the Cosmos. Therefore, the Cosmos, let it be said once more, is the pattern created by the gods, their masterpiece (pp. 474 – 475).

Such a cosmogony is undoubtedly appealing. But the danger is that it, in its borrowing from a traditional myth and endeavor to escape chaos, overlooks the existing ways of the world. (3) The vital educational work of metaphor thus happens beyond a deviation and a borrowing, as may be the case of the current cosmopolitan turn. In bringing together logical opposites, the metaphor of cosmopolitanism violates the cognitive framework and the logical categories generating our very modes of learning of and from the contemporary ways of the world. Further, the interactivity of the metaphor bridges the gap “between earlier conceptual and representational schemes and the later scheme of the totally unfamiliar to be learned” (Petrie 1979, p. 442) and initiates therefore radically new forms of thought. In this way, *the metaphor provides radically new ways of learning*. In other words, the metaphor of cosmopolitanism does not only initiate a growth of knowledge, cosmopolitanism also comes forward as an *invention*, since the name and metaphor instigate radically new modes of learning and new ways of seeing the world. The paradoxical attribution of the metaphor thus opens possibilities of learning something radically new. As Bateson (1972) also holds: The paradoxical attribution of metaphor does not facilitate learning. It is rather the very *condition* for learning radically new things.

## The Cosmopolitan Turn: Recasting Images, Experiences and Ways of the World

In sum, I have drawn attention to the contemporary cosmopolitanism and the ways in which it carries novel social images and epistemic shifts. In the first part of the article, I portrayed the new cosmopolitanism as a metaphor for a way of life, an ideal and an outlook. Next, I revealed how the name and metaphor of cosmopolitanism compares and contrasts with reality and projects an impossible image, while concurrently asserting it to be something that it is not, namely this impossible image. While assuming something that it is not, the name and metaphor carries a paradoxical attribution. The third part of the article explores the impossible possibilities of this paradox, which can be seen as a riddle that surprises, bewilders, and educates. The surprise is in the deviation from current and most common ways of speech. The bewilderment happens as cosmopolitanism brings together logical opposites, jumbles categories and disturbs existing modes of thought. Thus the educational work of cosmopolitanism occurs as a violation of the cognitive framework and logical categories generating our very modes of learning. Consequently, the vital work of the new cosmopolitanism is not in the ways in which it contributes to a growth of knowledge, nor in the ways in which the new cosmopolitanism produces truly new forms of knowledge. The vital work of the new cosmopolitanism is in the ways in which it may institute radically new modes of learning, and thus completely transform old ways into new ways of experiencing, seeing and knowing a globalised world of change.

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