

PETER NICOLAISEN
HANNAH SPAHN
Editors

Cosmopolitanism and Nationhood in the Age of Jefferson

American Studies ★ A Monograph Series

Volume 238



Universitätsverlag
WINTER
Heidelberg



AMERICAN STUDIES — A MONOGRAPH SERIES

Volume 238

Edited on behalf
of the German Association
for American Studies by
REINHARD R. DOERRIES
GERHARD HOFFMANN
ALFRED HORNUNG



Cosmopolitanism and Nationhood in the Age of Jefferson

Edited by

PETER NICOLAISEN (†)

HANNAH SPAHN

Universitätsverlag
WINTER
Heidelberg

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation
in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie;
detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet
über <http://dnb.d-nb.de> abrufbar.

COVER ILLUSTRATION

The cover illustration is based on John Trumbull,
Declaration of Independence (1818), Rotunda, United States Capitol.

The illustrations found in this book are by courtesy of the Independence
National Historical Park, the White House Historical Association,
the Smithsonian Institution, and the American Antiquarian Society,
respectively.

ISBN 978-3-8253-6238-6

Dieses Werk einschließlich aller seiner Teile ist urheberrechtlich geschützt.
Jede Verwertung außerhalb der engen Grenzen des Urheberrechtsgesetzes
ist ohne Zustimmung des Verlages unzulässig und strafbar. Das gilt ins-
besondere für Vervielfältigungen, Übersetzungen, Mikroverfilmungen und
die Einspeicherung und Verarbeitung in elektronischen Systemen.

© 2013 Universitätsverlag Winter GmbH Heidelberg

Imprimé en Allemagne · Printed in Germany

Druck: Memminger MedienCentrum, 87700 Memmingen

Gedruckt auf umweltfreundlichem, chlorfrei gebleichtem
und alterungsbeständigem Papier

Den Verlag erreichen Sie im Internet unter:
www.winter-verlag.de

Contents

Acknowledgments.....	vii
Preface	1
HANNAH SPAHN	
Introduction.....	3
GORDON S. WOOD	
The Invention of the United States.....	23
ARMIN MATTES	
“Une et indivisible”? Thomas Jefferson and Destutt de Tracy on the Idea of the Nation.....	41
THOMAS CLARK	
“Beware the wit of Voltaire”: Benjamin Rush and the Limits of American Cosmopolitanism	75
MAURIZIO VALSANIA	
Beyond Particularism: Thomas Jefferson’s Republican Community.....	93
HANNAH SPAHN	
Cosmopolitan Imperfections: Jefferson, Nationhood, and the Republic of Letters.....	113
GAYE WILSON	
Thomas Jefferson and Creating an Image for a New Nation	137
FRANCIS D. COGLIANO	
A “Philosophical vedette”: William Dunbar, Thomas Jefferson, and the Republic of Letters	169

CATRIN GERSDORF

Early American Cool: Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson,
and the Affective Foundation of Republican Government.....195

PHILIPP ZIESCHE

American Exceptionalism: Cosmopolitanism by Another Name?.....225

PETER S. ONUF

Cosmopolitanism and Nationhood in the Age of Jefferson:
Epilogue239

Contributors255

Acknowledgments

Cosmopolitanism and Nationhood in the Age of Jefferson grew out of the research project “American Cosmopolitanism,” funded by the German Research Foundation and situated at the Department of Culture of the John F. Kennedy-Institute for North American Studies, Freie Universität Berlin. To begin with, it is a pleasure to thank the supervisor of the project, Winfried Fluck, for his continuous encouragement of “going back to the roots” and examining the political, philosophical, and cultural foundations of American cosmopolitanism in the transatlantic Enlightenment generally and in the context of the American Revolution more particularly. As part of the project, the interdisciplinary conference “Cosmopolitanism and Nationhood in the Age of Jefferson” on December 1–2, 2010, brought together an international group of scholars at the Kennedy-Institute and provided the basis for the essays in this collection. It was made possible by a collaboration between the Kennedy-Institute and the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies in Charlottesville, Virginia. I am very grateful to Andrew O’Shaughnessy and Peter Onuf, the ICJS, and the Thomas Jefferson Foundation for generous personal, organizational, and financial support of this conference. Apart from the Jefferson Foundation and the German Research Foundation, the Alumni-Association of the Kennedy-Institute and Stiftung Luftbrückendank provided additional funding. I am further indebted to my colleagues and the staff of the Kennedy-Institute, notably Regina Wenzel and Sabine Riefler, for their help in preparing the event. Many thanks to Andreas Etges, Michaela Hampf, Ulla Haselstein, and Kirsten Twelbeck who acted as panel chairs, and to all of the participants of the conference for contributing to its success. In preparing this volume for publication, I have incurred further debts of gratitude. I am very grateful, first of all, to Alfred Hornung for his interest in the project and his support of the publication. Many thanks as well to Andreas Barth and the editorial team of Universitätsverlag Winter. Last but not least, I would like to thank Paula Ross for her accomplished copyediting and Jens Temmen for his experienced formatting of the manuscript as well as, again, the authors of this volume for a pleasant and productive collaboration.

Hannah Spahn

Preface

This book is dedicated to the memory of Professor Peter Nicolaisen, who passed away on February 23, 2013. His loss came as a great shock to all who knew him, including the scholars whose essays are assembled in this volume. At the conference “Cosmopolitanism and Nationhood in the Age of Jefferson” that we had organized together in December, 2010, it was Peter Nicolaisen who, after a long day of papers and lectures, proposed with his characteristically contagious enthusiasm to review and enlarge the conference contributions for a volume of essays. During the process of preparing this collection, he has shaped this book significantly both by his high academic standards and by his fundamentally generous, friendly, and open-minded personality.

A nationally as well as internationally renowned scholar, professor emeritus at the English department of the University of Flensburg as well as former guest professor at different American universities, Peter Nicolaisen was, of course, long used to transatlantic scholarly exchange. For many years, he had been in the Advisory Council of the International Center for Jefferson Studies, serving as the most important outpost of the Jeffersonian Republic of Letters in Germany. Although an eminent Jefferson scholar himself, Professor Nicolaisen’s research also extended (to name merely topics of his monographs) to writers such as Edward Taylor, Joseph Conrad, Ernest Hemingway, and William Faulkner, and it included, in particular, the literature and art of his native Northern Germany. Conversations with him were always informed by the wide range of his knowledge, which he combined with a genuine interest in younger scholars and a uniquely modest and witty way of looking at the world.

In so many ways, Peter Nicolaisen thus embodied the spirit of a cosmopolitan Enlightenment in its most humane and hopeful aspects. He is and will be greatly missed.

Charlottesville and Potsdam,
July 2013

Andrew O’Shaughnessy and Hannah Spahn

HANNAH SPAHN

Introduction

In what seems to be an overflowing cosmopolitan spirit, the first line of Fougeret de Monbron's *Le cosmopolite, ou le citoyen du monde* (1750) boldly blends the microcosm of the book with the macrocosm of the world at large: "The Universe is a kind of book of which one has read no more than the first page when one has seen only one's country." Combined with the epigraph, the cosmopolitan aphorism "*Patria est ubicumque est bene*" taken from Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*, this opening phrase ostensibly invites the reader to follow the cosmopolitan narrator in an open-minded quest transcending the limits of the first page and the epistemological borders of his native country alike. However, the remainder of the book deeply frustrates such expectations. According to the narrator, each new page in the book of the universe has merely succeeded in narrowing his perspective:

I leaved through quite a few, which I found almost equally bad. Such a perusal did not prove fruitless. I hated my homeland, and all the uncivilities of the various peoples among whom I lived have reconciled me with it. If I had reaped no other profit from my travels save that one, I should regret neither their cost nor the strain they caused.¹

His cosmopolitan project, the narrator leaves little doubt here, has mainly served to reinforce his national prejudice.

As a bitter commentary on the Ciceronean cosmopolitanism of the novel's motto, what Julia Kristeva called Fougeret de Monbron's

¹ This translation is by Leon Roudiez in Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*, 141–42.

“malevolent cosmopolitanism”² proves incapable of engendering any positive sense either of global belonging or of a limited patriotism, however construed,³ but only encourages the hatred and self-hatred at the bottom of a vicious nationalism. From the excesses of Monbron’s malevolent cosmopolitan, it may be possible to draw a line to other eighteenth-century critics of the concept,⁴ or to further literary versions of the type, such as, to take an American example, the figure of the Cosmopolitan in Herman Melville’s *The Confidence-Man* (1857). Most importantly, for the purposes of this volume, Monbron’s biting portrait of a cosmopolitan-turned-national chauvinist illustrates an awareness, at the apex of the Enlightenment in 1750, that contemporary ideals of world citizenship were deeply entangled in problems of the nation. If conceptions of cosmopolitanism and nationhood could be portrayed as irremediably intertwined, even at a historical moment predating the new nationalisms of the Seven Years’ War and of the revolutionary period, they can be expected to have developed jointly during the late Enlightenment as well, in complicated processes of acquiring their more familiar, modern forms. The American Revolution played a decisive role in the transformations of the “entangled cosmopolitanism” of the eighteenth century as the American project of nation-making was conspicuously based on, as well as productive of, a growing sense of global connectedness. As Robert R. Palmer argued in his transnational history of the revolutionary period more than fifty years ago: “The apparition on the other side of the Atlantic of certain ideas already familiar in Europe made such ideas seem more truly universal, and confirmed the habit of thinking in terms of humanity at large.”⁵ The essays assembled here

² See Kristeva’s discussion of Fougeret, *ibid.*, 140–44.

³ For an influential more recent discussion of this question, see Nussbaum, “Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism” and the responses to this essay in Nussbaum, *For Love of Country?*

⁴ Jean-Jacques Rousseau comes to mind here. Against the cliché of Rousseau as the eighteenth-century critic of cosmopolitanism, see Cavallar, *Rights of Strangers*, 284–305.

⁵ Palmer, *Age of the Democratic Revolution*, 1:282. From a different angle, and with a different periodization, Benedict Anderson’s oft-quoted thesis of a “creole nationalism” in *Imagined Communities* also stresses the crucial conceptual significance of the Western hemisphere in the revolutionary

explore what this universalist “habit of thinking in terms of humanity at large” entailed, in the particular context of the simultaneous “invention,” to use Gordon Wood’s title in this volume, of a nation.

The question of the relationship between eighteenth-century conceptions of world citizenship and nationhood goes to the roots of the term *cosmopolitanism*. Habitually criticized for its superficiality and its inflationary use, cosmopolitanism has been attacked for being a concept that is no concept at all, or for covering such a vast array of phenomena that it automatically subverts any attempt at definition, as if it were essentially unc cosmopolitan to define cosmopolitanism.⁶ In the context of this volume, the term can perhaps best be approached through its inherent duality. In the original Greek, it manages to unite the smallest political unit (the citizen or *polites*) with the largest (the *kosmos*). In modern languages, the borrowed compound *cosmopolitan* has a vaguely sophisticated appeal of its own—whether mainly due to its extravagant sound, or due to a secondary meaning of *kosmos*, which not only signified “universe” or “order” in ancient Greek, but could also have the particular sense of “ornament.” *Cosmopolitan* can have almost opposite meanings, referring to world citizenship as well as to worldliness: to an abstract conviction of the unity of mankind *and* to a very concrete recognition that universal principles have to be adjusted to the particularities of the world as it is, also as it is present to the senses.⁷ To conclude from its etymology alone, *cosmopolitanism* can be understood as a qualified universalism—as “universalism plus difference,” according to Anthony Appiah’s sufficiently worldly formula⁸—but as a quali-

period. For a critique of the implications of Anderson’s argument for the specific context of the (U.S.-)American Revolution, see White, “Early American Nations as Imagined Communities.”

⁶ See Breckenridge et al., “Cosmopolitanisms,” at 577; Simpson, “Limits of Cosmopolitanism.” An inherent resistance to definition may already be detected in the eighteenth century, to conclude from the brevity and humorous tone (“en plaisantant”) of the article “Cosmopolitain, ou cosmopolite,” in Diderot and d’Alembert, eds., *Encyclopédie*, 4:297.

⁷ Scrivener, *Cosmopolitan Ideal*, 1: “That cosmopolitan signifies both world citizen and wordliness suggests a dialectical relationship between political arrangements and cultural-psychological dispositions.”

⁸ Appiah, “Cosmopolitan Reading,” at 202.

fied universalism whose two components do not always have equal weight. In many contexts, there appears to be an intrinsic inclination away from the universalist pole and toward the particularist pole of *cosmopolitanism*, towards the sensory and emotional attraction of the local and the individual. Its entanglement in questions of nation or empire should therefore not come as a surprise: in a sense, it can indeed be traced back to the first known use of the term in the times of Diogenes and Alexander.⁹ Comparably to the twentieth-century term *transnationalism*, which oddly emphasizes the national context that it seeks to transcend,¹⁰ eighteenth-century cosmopolitanism can thus be assumed to be closely intertwined, or so the essays of this volume will claim, with the development of contemporaneous conceptions of nationhood.

This volume, then, aligns itself with the third of what can be identified, roughly, as three different, partly overlapping tendencies in the interpretation of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism. The first of these may casually be called a “rise and fall”-interpretation: scholars in this tradition have argued that, following cosmopolitan thinkers in Hellenistic antiquity and the Renaissance, the “third-generation cosmopolitanism” of the Enlightenment was the mainstream attitude of its century and experienced a radical “decline” in the 1790s, followed by the “rise” of Romantic nationalism in the nineteenth century.¹¹ Simply put, the eighteenth century was predominantly cosmopolitan in spirit, the nineteenth century, nationalist. The second line of interpretation adds to this emphasis on temporal sequence a dialectical element, claiming that the modern national state and nineteenth-century nationalism emerged “out of” eighteenth-century cosmopolitanism, as a more or less natural outgrowth of its philosophical claims. Like those of the first interpretation,

⁹ On the uses made of Cynic cosmopolitanism in the eighteenth century, see Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*, esp. 134–40; for a twentieth-century reference, Nussbaum, “Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism,” 16–17.

¹⁰ Hannerz, *Transnational Connections*, 6: “there is a certain irony in the tendency of the term ‘transnational’ to draw attention to what it negates—that is, to the continued significance of the national.”

¹¹ A traditional history-of-ideas approach to be mentioned here is Schlereth, *Cosmopolitan Ideal*; “third-generation cosmopolitanism” is his term, at xvii–xxv.

the roots of this argument go back to the self-understanding of the period's contemporaries: Monbron's *Cosmopolite*, as we have seen, can to some extent be read as an *avant-la-lettre* satire of this dialectic. For the German context, the classical historical argument in this vein was presented by Friedrich Meinecke a century ago. As he memorably summarized a part of what was for him, looking back in 1907 to the historical context of Johann Gottlieb Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation* (delivered in 1807), still mainly a history of progress: "It is no coincidence that an era of individualistic strivings for freedom immediately preceded the era of modern national thought. The nation drank the blood of free personalities, as it were, to attain personality as well."¹²

A third mode of approaching the cosmopolitanism of the revolutionary period, as practiced by the essays in this volume, builds up on insights from the first and the second lines of interpretation, but tends to widen their field of inquiry. Accordingly, of course, it does not attempt to deny that a time of rather uncosmopolitan xenophobia and bloodshed followed a time of high cosmopolitan hopes, or that the nationalist "blood sprees" of the Napoleonic wars, to use Meinecke's metaphor, sought to derive much of their rhetorical justification from cosmopolitan arguments. The third approach differs from the "rise and fall"-interpretation, however, in that it does not treat cosmopolitanism and nationalism as polar opposites that can best imagined in terms of personal contradiction or temporal sequence. Instead, it holds that, as "entangled" concepts, they often overlapped, sharing important premises such as a general emphasis on civic equality in opposition to traditional divisions by rank. Compared to the dialectical "blood spree"-interpretation, meanwhile, the third approach presented here tends to deemphasize the aspect of historical necessity in the "emergence" of the modern nation, being more inclined to accept contingent continuities and differences within and between Enlightened and Romantic notions of cosmopolitanism. As a consequence, the approach also focuses on aspects of eighteenth-century cosmopolitan thinking that cannot immediately be construed to have had the national state as their telos. Further, it seeks to open up

¹² Meinecke, *Cosmopolitanism and the National State*, 15. On Meinecke and Fichte in an Americanist context, see N. Onuf and P. Onuf, *Nations, Markets, and War*, 149–56.

avenues into nineteenth-century conceptions of world citizenship as a topic that is not merely derivative of cosmopolitanism's "golden age" in the eighteenth century, but may be an interesting problem in its own right.¹³

The "Age of Jefferson" has proved a productive frame of reference for these new concerns. In the half-century between July 4, 1776, and his death on July 4, 1826, the third president of the United States embodied, to a certain extent, the scope of his period's entangled cosmopolitanism, its possibilities as well as its limitations. He was the only revolutionary involved in the formulation of *both* major national-cosmopolitan founding documents of his time—the American Declaration of Independence and, anonymously, the French *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen* of 1789. Sometimes held responsible for coining the term "Americanism," he combined in his person different modes of affiliation, including the identities of a broad-minded cosmopolitan, a glowing patriot, and a provincial planter who remained, despite what he regarded as his lifelong fight for liberty, one of the largest slaveholders of his native state. Jefferson's genuine interest in Native American cultures, to take another example, did not prevent him from conspicuously incorporating the figure of the vanishing Indian into his historical narrative of national progress. His cosmopolitan insistence on the "natural" equality of Native Americans allowed him to describe the people still populating a major part of the continent during his lifetime as heroic ancestors of Euro-Americans and thus, according to his conception of generational sovereignty, essentially as members of a dead generation who could not claim any political and moral rights in the present.¹⁴

From a larger perspective, American cosmopolitanism in the "Age of Jefferson," whether in its modes of national mythmaking or in other

¹³ Recent approaches in this vein, opening windows into nineteenth-century cosmopolitanism, include Scrivener, *Cosmopolitan Ideal*; Jacob, *Strangers Nowhere in the World*; Ziesche, *Cosmopolitan Patriots*. On nineteenth-century cosmopolitanism itself, see Anderson, *Powers of Distance*; Simpson, "Limits of Cosmopolitanism"; Nwankwo, *Black Cosmopolitanism*; Malachuk, "Nationalist Cosmopolitics."

¹⁴ On the role of Native Americans in Jefferson's historical argument, see Onuf, *Jefferson's Empire*, ch. 1; and my *Jefferson, Time, and History*, ch. 5.

respects, was undergoing complex processes of democratization. In the beginning of the revolutionary period, elite forms of world citizenship—claimed, for instance, by Grand Tourists or by aristocratic officers in the army¹⁵—were transferred to new social contexts in an increasingly mobile Atlantic world. While efforts to mitigate its elitist bias have always been prominent in debates around world citizenship, from ancient and early modern criticism of the Stoics to this day,¹⁶ the problem clearly gained a new dimension in the revolutionary period. The Declaration of Independence, reclaimed from its status as national “American” scripture that it had acquired in the nineteenth century, and analyzed instead in its more original international and “global” context,¹⁷ epitomizes this new dimension. Performing on the stage of a secularized world theater the ur-cosmopolitan moment of a break-up of kinship ties, the Declaration effectively wrote into existence, not a privileged few, but an entire nation of world citizens. To some extent, moreover, its rhetoric made a “candid world” consider that this American world citizenry constituted a republic of “enforced” cosmopolitans.¹⁸ In this respect similar to today’s

¹⁵ The latter form of cosmopolitanism is described, for instance, in Bell, *First Total War*, ch. 2.

¹⁶ For an eighteenth-century criticism of the Stoic cosmopolitan’s elitism, see the article “Philosophe” in Diderot’s *Encyclopédie* (whose intricate reference system guides the reader from the article “Cosmopolitain” to this article). Diderot and d’Alembert, eds., *Encyclopédie*, 12:509–b511a. For today’s criticism, from a very different perspective, of forms of cosmopolitan elitism in late capitalist culture, see, e.g., Calhoun: “Class Consciousness of Frequent Travelers.”

¹⁷ Onuf, “Declaration of Independence for Diplomatic Historians”; Armitage, *Declaration*, ch. 2, esp. 63–69.

¹⁸ On today’s conception of enforced cosmopolitanism, see, for example, Gikandi, “Race and Cosmopolitanism”; Breckenridge et al., “Cosmopolitanisms,” 582: “Cosmopolitans today are the victims of modernity, failed by capitalism’s upward mobility, and bereft of those comforts and customs of national belonging. Refugees, peoples of the diaspora, and migrants and exiles represent the spirit of the cosmopolitical community.” For enforced cosmopolitanism in a still more general context today, see Beck, *World at Risk*, 61–66.

ostensibly post-Enlightenment arguments¹⁹ for recognizing the claims of enforced cosmopolitans, such as migrant workers, exiles, or stateless persons, the Declaration's language of compulsion suggested that "the good people of these colonies" had been left alone in the world by their English blood relations, with no choice but to seek a new form of belonging elsewhere.

The democratization of early modern cosmopolitanism in the Declaration of Independence had further ramifications. Jefferson's radical draft of the document went so far as to evoke a parallel between two major kinds of enforced cosmopolitanism: it held the king responsible not only for the destruction of the Anglo-American family, but also for the destruction of African families by the ultimate evil of the Atlantic slave trade ("cruel war against human nature itself"). In hindsight, to be sure, this parallelism is far from complete: while the stress on the compulsory nature of Anglo-American cosmopolitanism in the Declaration has to be seen as mainly rhetorical, it was essential, of course, to the violent historical experience of the African diaspora. Nevertheless, the radical potential of the Declaration's cosmopolitanism could be appropriated by African American cosmopolitans in a long nineteenth century, in an ambivalent tradition ranging from Prince Hall's *Charge* of 1797 to W. E. B. Du Bois's claim, in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), that "there are to-day no truer exponents of the pure human spirit of the Declaration of Independence than the American Negroes."²⁰

Hall's powerful argument may provide an example here of how the contemporaries of the "Age of Jefferson" could make use of the cosmopolitanism of the Declaration of Independence, while also going

¹⁹ Today's discussions of cosmopolitanism have an inclination to present themselves as critical reflections of Enlightenment conceptions of world citizenship, often taking their points of departure from Jürgen Habermas's constructive, or Jacques Derrida's deconstructive criticism of Immanuel Kant. For a nuanced discussion of the potentially reductive treatment of the eighteenth century in many of today's works on cosmopolitanism, see Albrecht's introduction to her *Kosmopolitismus*, 1–21, at 1–3 (on Derrida and Habermas), 5–9 (for her compelling critique of falsely homogenizing approaches to the great diversity of cosmopolitan discourses in the Enlightenment).

²⁰ Hall, "Charge"; Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folk*, 13–14.

beyond Jefferson's own immediate goals. In part building up on the universalist claims of the Declaration ("that all men are free and are brethren," in Hall's words²¹), the *Charge* developed an alternative conception of world citizenship that still resonates in today's discussion. Oscillating between the particular and the universal, it spoke from a position in between the close ties of the family and the benefit of mankind, between a radical celebration of the revolution in Saint-Domingue, early forms of Egyptophilia, the cosmopolitanism of Freemasonry, and the less controversial universalism of Christianity.²² Like Jefferson in the draft of the Declaration, Hall made the violent rupture of kinship relations the moral center of his argument. Unlike Jefferson, however, he used the Atlantic slave trade as the starting point, rather than climax, of his argument.²³ From this primal catastrophe of modernity—its most radical example of an enforced cosmopolitanism—Hall moved on to the subsequent disruption of other national families by the "bloody wars which are now in the world" during the Atlantic revolutions.²⁴ The emotional break-up of the family in Jefferson's draft, by contrast, occurs after the king's warfare against humanity has been illustrated by his supposed responsibility for the Atlantic slave trade. Whereas Hall's argument begins with kinship ties and then widens its perspective, Jefferson's moves in the other direction: after a quasi-divine bird's eye view of the "course of human events" in the first paragraph, the conflict is presented as if in close-up, narrowed down at first to the viewpoint of a "candid world" on the list of the king's crimes, and focusing, eventually, on the fresh wound resulting from "the last stab to agonizing affection" in an inter-familial fight among men of "common blood." The component of "blood magic" in Jefferson's draft of the Declaration, if

²¹ Hall, "Charge," 514.

²² See Wallace, "Are We Men?"; Brooks, "Hall, Freemasonry, and Genealogy"; Pizarz-Ramirez, "Rhetorical Uses of Haiti"; Leveq, *Slavery and Sentiment*, 169–78.

²³ "Among the numerous sons and daughters of distress, I shall begin with our friends and brethren, and first, let us see them dragg'd from their native country by the iron hand of tyranny and oppression, from their dear friends and connections, with weeping eyes and aching hearts, to a strange land and strange people, whose tender mercies are cruel . . ." Hall, "Charge," 510.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

Ralph Ellison's term is appropriate here,²⁵ is thus paradoxically postponed until the moment when it has become impossible, when "the voice of justice & of consanguinity" has fallen on "deaf" (English) ears.²⁶

As exemplified by Hall's and Jefferson's arguments, cosmopolitan thought in the "Age of Jefferson" could go into different directions. Hall's *Charge*, while shaped by a universalist emphasis on human equality, allowed kinship ties to stand side by side with larger forms of belonging, in a highly precarious yet potentially feasible equilibrium. His conception of world citizenship may be read as part of the Stoic tradition of concentric circles reformulated by Martha Nussbaum at the close of the twentieth century, or in the terms of the many qualified, or "particularized," cosmopolitanisms discussed since then, whether "rooted," "local," "situated," "provincial," "discrepant," or "vernacular" cosmopolitanism, to name but a few.²⁷ Jefferson's cosmopolitanism overlapped with Hall's emphasis on the particular in that, for instance, his presentation of a disappointed love relationship in the draft of the Declaration suggested a residual longing for familial harmony. Meanwhile, it offered a different solution for filling the void created by the loss of "common kindred"²⁸: a new American nation conceived, to some

²⁵ Ellison, "Little Man at Chehaw Station," 505.

²⁶ The following quotations are from Jefferson's draft of the Declaration of Independence as included in his "Autobiography," *Jefferson: Writings*, ed. Peterson (hereafter *TJW*), 19–24. This phrase is included in the Congress version, at 23.

²⁷ Nussbaum, "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism," 9. The qualified cosmopolitanisms that emerged from the universalism debates of the 1990s tend to emphasize—tautologically, to some extent—the particularist, rather than the universalist tendencies within the cosmopolitan compound. For succinct discussions of late twentieth-century approaches to cosmopolitanism and their problems, see Cheah, "Given Culture" and Anderson, "Divided Legacies of Modernity." On the view that the "new cosmopolitanisms" are supposed to "bring cosmopolitanism down to earth, to indicate that cosmopolitanism can deliver some of the goods ostensibly provided only by patriots, provincials, parochials, populists, tribalists, and above all nationalists," see Hollinger, "Not Universalists, Not Pluralists," at 229. See also Hollinger, *Postethnic America*.

²⁸ Jefferson, "Declaration" (retained in Congress version), *TJW*, 23.

degree, as an alternative to older conceptions based on familial and dynastic ties.

It may accordingly be argued that Jefferson's American nation of world citizens was indeed a nation emerging, dialectically, out of the destruction of kinship ties and the shedding of "common blood,"²⁹ not so much historically as philosophically. From a stylistic point of view, in any case, Jefferson would probably have enjoyed Friedrich Meinecke's bloodstained metaphor for the birth of the modern nation as he was rather fond, in his own historical prose, of "rivers of blood" that had yet to "run out" before the global struggle for liberty and republicanism could be won.³⁰ However, after the "last stab to agonizing affection" in the Declaration of Independence, he tended to claim that American wounds had "already bled enough,"³¹ making large rhetorical efforts to direct the revolutionary blood flow into channels outside the United States, with a predilection for the arteries of the Old World. Jefferson's later rhetoric thus differed significantly from Hall's account of violence on American soil and his inclusion of the United States in the "bloody wars now in the world." As Jefferson tried to convince himself and others after the "Revolution of 1800," nations may have been addicted to drinking "the blood of free personalities" in Europe, as Meinecke would have it a hundred years later, but the United States practiced temperance in revolutions that remained, or were supposed to remain, intoxicant-free. With this important distinction, the cosmopolitan discourses emerging in the "Age of Jefferson" could provide the secular groundwork for an influential form of American nationalism. In ways unforeseen by Jefferson personally, they arguably became—interrupted by moments of national rebirth, such as during the renewed shedding of "common blood" in the Civil War—a powerful source of American exceptionalism in the centuries to come.

²⁹ Jefferson, "Declaration" (only in draft version), *TJW*, 23.

³⁰ Jefferson to Benjamin Austin, January 9, 1816, *TJW*, 1369–72, at 1370. On Jefferson's penchant for the "rivers of blood" trope, see N. Onuf and P. Onuf, *Nations, Markets, and War*, 343–52.

³¹ Jefferson, "Advertisement," *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 2.

The essays assembled in this volume take an interdisciplinary approach to the complex relations between revolutionary American cosmopolitanism and nationhood, examining them in their political, social, cultural, literary, and philosophical dimensions. Gordon Wood's opening chapter emphasizes the historically unique character of the founding of the United States, which differed fundamentally, he argues, from the postcolonial movements of the twentieth century. When Americans fought their revolution by English means, they could not rely on a pre-existent sense of national identity: even the national identification of "Americans," Wood reminds us, was first used by British officials for the North American colonists, before they themselves and later U.S. citizens could appropriate "the name that rightfully belonged to all the peoples of the New World." Americans had to "invent" themselves as a nation, according to Wood, not so much before as during and especially after their revolution. For this invention of nationhood, he singles out two major sources: a cosmopolitan Enlightenment and the idea of Union. While the claim that the United States were the first nation based on Enlightenment values could obviously contain a promise for world citizens in other countries as well, the idea of the Union likewise had a quasi-cosmopolitan potential: it presupposed the reconciliation of differing local interests with a universal cause in what was sometimes regarded, in Wood's example, as the "diplomatic assembly" of the Continental Congress. For the consolidation of the federal Union, however, Americans had to prioritize homogeneity over heterogeneity, with little appreciation for the young nation's internal diversity. External war could appear as a productive means to strengthen the Union. As Wood argues, the War of 1812, fought in some measure against the interchangeability of American citizens with British subjects, could accordingly result in a newly self-confident sense of American nationhood.

After Gordon Wood's historical panorama of the founding period, the following chapters spotlight selected personal and regional variations within a wide spectrum of cosmopolitan thinking in the "Age of Jefferson." Rather than attempting to cover this broad topic comprehensively, they focus on different aspects illustrating the intricacy of the relationship between the period's conceptions of world citizenship and nationhood. Thus, they do not take for granted common assumptions that "the" cosmopolitanism of "the" Enlightenment expressed, either

naïvely or hypocritically, a false universalism that stood in some kind of necessary contrast to the racist and nationalist bias of the period's contemporaries. Instead, the chapters show that Enlightened conceptions of cosmopolitanism tended to be flexible enough to accommodate various kinds of particularism without having to contradict themselves—indeed, that their universalism and their particularism were often mutually supportive. Such tendencies are discernible even within the relatively homogeneous group of elite British-American males discussed below, and even in situations when, as it were (to do justice to the personal emphasis in some of the chapters) “Thomas Jefferson dined alone.” While this approach, of course, does not make the different cosmopolitan arguments under scrutiny here seem any less problematic morally or politically, it suggests that we may need to modify our twenty-first-century expectations on the intellectual world of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Cosmopolitan thought in the “Age of Jefferson” was not simply naïve, hypocritical, or somehow too feeble to go far enough: its real problems may have to be found elsewhere, and each time in a slightly different place.

In the first chapter of this sequence, Armin Mattes discusses the transatlantic conversation between Jefferson and the French ideologue Destutt de Tracy on the concept of the nation. While both men shared a vision of democratic nationhood as ultimately transcending all forms of national parochialism in a world union of equal nations, their writings demonstrate how the cosmopolitan roots of this vision could also contribute to generating exclusive and coercive forms of modern nationalism and exceptionalism. Following through the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries two different intellectual trajectories of the nation in France and the United States, Mattes shows how the two developments were interrelated, sometimes reinforcing, and sometimes at odds with one another. Thus, for instance, he argues that Jefferson's politicization of the concept received decisive impulses from the French experience, while he and Tracy strongly disagreed on the role of federalism in the creation of political union. As a result, the versions proposed by the two thinkers of a cosmopolitan nationalism, and also of a missionary national exceptionalism, while sharing basic premises, eventually took rather different shapes, a problem further discussed in several other contributions to this volume.

In the following chapter, Thomas Clark focuses on the physician and signer of the Declaration of Independence from the City of Brotherly Love, Benjamin Rush, to present, as he puts it, “a study of cosmopolitan ambivalence.” On the one hand, Rush saw himself as a cosmopolitan scholar—as visualized in Charles Willson Peale’s portrait of him wearing an oriental banyan—who greatly appreciated his European training and who thought, in classical fashion, that the “republic of science” should be able to transcend national boundaries even in times of war. Like many of his Anglo-American contemporaries, on the other hand, Rush had great difficulties welcoming the cultural diversity so conspicuous, for instance, in the Philadelphia of his time. His writings are characterized by a considerable fear of foreign corruption implying, at times, a strong communitarian and even nativist bias. The Pennsylvanian found a means of overcoming the tensions within his worldview in the traditional elitism of cosmopolitan thought. As Clark explains, Rush hoped that well-traveled men of the world, such as himself, would be able to safeguard more susceptible Americans, such as women, from the potentially corruptive influences of the world around them. His cosmopolitanism, in other words, had the great advantage, or disadvantage, that it could also serve as its own remedy.

Maurizio Valsania’s chapter approaches Thomas Jefferson’s typical blend of universalism and provincialism through what Valsania calls Jefferson’s “specific cosmopolitanism”: an adaptable worldview grounded in the idea of an organic republican community. This community, with strong ties to Jefferson’s idea of the ward, his personal life at his main plantation Monticello, and his conception of generational sovereignty, ideally expanded to include all humanity, but could also contract in times of crisis. Unlike the communitarian aspects of Rush’s thought, as interpreted by Thomas Clark in the preceding chapter, Jefferson’s ideal of a living community was no obstacle to a positive sense of global connectedness. Thus, Valsania presents an argument for the consistency of Jefferson’s cosmopolitanism, distancing himself from selective readings that tend to assume, from the hindsight perspective of the later nineteenth century, a fundamental incongruity between Jefferson’s nationalism and his emphasis on states’ rights.

In the following chapter, I continue to explain Jefferson’s cosmopolitanism as a more or less coherent worldview that could integrate various forms of provincial, national, and global belonging. Focus-

ing on a question central to the Enlightenment generally—the question of the constitution of knowledge in a world of strangers—I argue that Jefferson’s views on the exchange of ideas in a transatlantic Republic of Letters became an important factor in his developing conception of American nationhood. Personally exemplifying the problem of dual citizenship in the two republics as U.S. president and president of the American Philosophical Society, Jefferson employed and manipulated central conventions of the Republic of Letters to make them serve national ends: a stress on the equality of its members, an emphasis on the collaborative structure of knowledge, and the resulting professions of openness to further discussion. In particular, Jefferson’s cosmopolitan inclination to admit “imperfections”—of his own perspective, of scientific measurements, of translations, of national character—enabled him to consolidate the boundaries of his new nation, whether in his notorious exclusion of African Americans or in his confrontation with more centralistic forms of French cosmopolitanism.

In her chapter on the visual culture of the 1790s, Gaye Wilson highlights the transatlantic structure of early American conceptions of nationhood from another perspective. She focuses on two portraits of Thomas Jefferson dating from the beginning and the conclusion of that tumultuous decade: Charles Willson Peale’s 1791 painting and the work executed by one of Peale’s artist sons, Rembrandt Peale, in 1799/1800. Wilson uses the striking differences between both portraits to discuss far-reaching changes in the period’s modes of personal and national self-presentation. Despite contemporary assessments of Jefferson as a Francophile fashion victim, Jefferson himself thought of his portraits—as did the artists who created them—as important documents in the visual history of the new nation. As Wilson shows, cosmopolitan aspects of etiquette, fashion, and portraiture were thus able not only to transcend national boundaries, but also, in the final analysis, to help enforce them.

Frank Cogliano’s chapter makes a case for the geographical expansion of the Jeffersonian Republic of Letters into the borderlands of the American Southwest during the years leading up to the Louisiana purchase. Illustrating the fluidity of national identity in that place and time, it presents William Dunbar, a boundary-crossing settler of Scottish origin who served the Spanish authorities as surveyor and interpreter and eventually became a large landowner and slaveholder in the Mississippi Territory. Although a Loyalist during the revolution and often

regarded as a man of uncertain political affiliations, Dunbar became an eager correspondent of President Jefferson's, who patronized him as a western outpost of the Republic of Letters. As Cogliano argues, the shared scientific interests of both slaveholding *philosophes*—their collaboration in the collection of Native American vocabularies, for instance—provided the basis for the planning of expeditions that combined a scholarly urge to fill the white spots on the map with the promotion of the strategic territorial interests of the United States.

From a different angle, Catrin Gersdorf sheds further light on the problems of cosmopolitan nationalism in the "Age of Jefferson." Her reflections on the relationship between republican government, its affective foundations, and property (understood as the *objective correlative* of particular collective emotions in the revolutionary world) range from Benjamin Franklin's late colonial writings, Jefferson's Declaration of Independence and his *Notes on the State of Virginia* to Abraham Lincoln's appropriation of Jeffersonian principles. Gersdorf's focal point is a transnational conception of "coolness," interpreted as a central mode of revolutionary anger management with intellectual roots in the Scottish Enlightenment. Linked to the ability to take an outside perspective on one's position, revolutionary American coolness, with its unacknowledged parallels in eighteenth-century African American culture, was to play a crucial role in exceptionalist arguments for the uniquely "temperate" character of the American Revolution.

Opening with the question of the state of American exceptionalism today, Philipp Ziesche's chapter likewise discusses vital continuities of the cosmopolitan nationalism of the founding period. Revolutionary American cosmopolitanism and American exceptionalism, he argues, not only shared important philosophical premises, they also faced many of the same difficulties. Both had to rely on constant international comparison to define the young nation's place in the world, and both had little explanatory power in regard to domestic political conflict. Especially in the context of slavery, these inherent weaknesses proved fateful for the advent of the Civil War. They did not, however, characterize the United States alone. Taking the French notion of a *mission civilisatrice* as an example, as touched upon in several other contributions, Ziesche calls for comparative studies of different national cosmopolitanisms to assess the historical roles played by different national exceptionalisms—including the particularly exceptional