Cosmopolitanism as Cultural Capital: Exploring the Intersection of Globalization, Education and Stratification

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Cosmopolitanism as Cultural Capital: Exploring the Intersection of Globalization, Education and Stratification

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Abstract
In recent years, sociological research on cosmopolitanism has begun to draw on Pierre Bourdieu to critically examine how cosmopolitanism is implicated in stratification on an increasingly global scale. In this paper, we examine the analytical potential of the Bourdieusian approach by exploring how education systems help to institutionalize cosmopolitanism as cultural capital whose access is rendered structurally unequal. To this end, we first probe how education systems legitimate cosmopolitanism as a desirable disposition at the global level, while simultaneously distributing it unequally among different groups of actors according to their geographical locations and volumes of economic, cultural, and social capital their families possess. We then explore how education systems undergird profitability of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital by linking academic qualifications that signal cosmopolitan dispositions with the growing number of positions that require extensive interactions with people of multiple nationalities.

Keywords
cosmopolitanism, cosmopolitan, cultural capital, education, globalization, stratification, universities, higher education, Bourdieu

Over the past decade, sociologists have begun to examine how people acquire and express cosmopolitanism – an orientation of openness to foreign others and cultures.

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Today, this new research on cosmopolitanism is taking shape as a recognizable field of sociological inquiry (Delanty, 2012; Nowicka and Rovisco, 2009). While main figures in this new field tend to shed positive light on cosmopolitanism as a key to solving economic, political, and ecological problems at the global level (Beck and Sznaider, 2006; Delanty, 2009), other researchers have voiced critical concerns about how cosmopolitanism may well be deeply implicated in economic inequalities and power relations around the world (Calhoun, 2003, 2008a; Harvey, 2009). In recent years, some of these critical voices have begun to coalesce around Pierre Bourdieu’s work on stratification and to examine cosmopolitanism as a new element of cultural capital, a locus of struggles for dominant positions in a global world (Kim, 2011; Weenink, 2007, 2008; Weiss, 2005).

In this paper, we examine the analytical potential of the Bourdieusian approach by exploring how cosmopolitanism can operate as cultural capital that becomes a locus of stratification on an increasingly global scale. The existing studies tend to simply invoke, rather than systematically apply, Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital (1983, 1984, 1990, 1999) when examining the relationship between cosmopolitanism and stratification. As a result, they often leave out crucial questions. How does cosmopolitanism get institutionalized as cultural capital? If cosmopolitanism indeed operates as cultural capital, how do different groups of people accumulate it in an embodied, objectified, or institutionalized state? How do other forms of capital, such as economic and social capital, mediate the accumulation of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital? These questions need to be carefully considered if sociologists are to succeed in making use of Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital to further develop a critical approach to cosmopolitanism.

To answer these questions, we propose to focus on the role of an institutionalized state of cultural capital to examine the linkage between cosmopolitanism and stratification in a globalized world. While cosmopolitanism as openness to foreign others and cultures can be acquired as part of habitus (an embodied state) and through consumption of foreign commodities (an objectified state), we hypothesize that it becomes most clearly integrated into stratification, struggles for dominant positions within society, when it takes the institutionalized form of academic qualifications (Lareau and Weininger, 2003). To elaborate our hypothesis, we first combine Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital with a world-polity theory of education (Benavot and Braslavsky, 2007; McEneaney and Meyer, 2000) to clarify how education systems generate the seemingly contradictory nature of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital, i.e. simultaneously operating as a marker of inclusiveness and as a basis for exclusion. Simply put, education systems operate as central institutional mechanisms that legitimate cosmopolitanism as a desirable attribute of the person living in a global world, while distributing this universally desirable attribute unequally within a population.

We then examine how different social classes, endowed with different volumes of cultural, economic, and social capital, are likely to pursue different educational tracks that offer different volumes of cosmopolitanism. Based on available evidence, we also explore how the acquisition of cosmopolitanism, as well as conversion of cosmopolitanism into profits, is fundamentally mediated by specific regional and national contexts. While education and stratification are increasingly globalized, we argue that struggles for cosmopolitanism and its profits continue to be geographically uneven, given power relations and historical connections among different regions and countries.
Cosmopolitanism and Bourdieu

In recent years, a growing number of sociologists have begun to study cosmopolitanism as an empirical phenomenon rather than as a normative ideal. These sociologists typically define cosmopolitanism as an orientation of openness to foreign others and cultures and examine how it emerges in practices and institutions in a global world (Beck, 2006; Calcutt et al., 2009; Phillips and Smith, 2008; Saito, 2011; Skey, 2012; Szerszynski and Urry, 2006; Woodward et al., 2008). They have so far delineated two main mechanisms that facilitate the emergence of cosmopolitanism. One is the growth of transnational flows of foreign people and cultures, which expands the horizon of everyday practices beyond national borders. Another is the worldwide institutionalization of a human-rights discourse that takes humanity, rather than nationality, as a primary frame of reference. Put another way, ‘glocalization’ of everyday practices (Robertson, 1995) and institutionalization of ‘world culture’ (Lechner and Boli, 2005) enable people to acquire cosmopolitan orientations. Overall, these sociologists regard cosmopolitanism as a desirable tendency immanent in a global world and suggest that it should be fostered as a potential solution to political, economic, and ecological problems at the global level (Beck, 2003; Delanty, 2009).

At the same time, however, some researchers have insisted on a more critical approach to cosmopolitanism by probing how it is implicated in stratification on an increasingly global scale. Craig Calhoun, for example, criticizes the sociology of cosmopolitanism for presenting openness to foreign others and cultures as if it were ‘simply a free-floating cultural taste, personal attitude, or ethical choice’, decoupled from material conditions in which people’s lives are embedded (2008a: 109). In fact, the acquisition of cosmopolitanism is ‘often made possible by capital – social and cultural as well as economic’ (Calhoun, 2008b: 443). Calhoun therefore cautions sociologists of cosmopolitanism not to uncritically celebrate cosmopolitanism because it can be simply the ‘class consciousness of frequent travelers’ (2003), a means for dominant groups to exercise symbolic violence against the dominated. Similarly, Don Weenink (2007) argues that cosmopolitanism is a new source of power in the age of globalization. Specifically, it is a new form of capital that helps its owners in ‘globalizing social arenas … in which the struggle is for privileged positions’ that require competencies to effectively interact with people of multiple nationalities (Weenink, 2008: 1092). Jongyoung Kim also considers ‘cosmopolitan attitude and lifestyle’ as part of ‘[g]lobal cultural capital … understood as exclusive resources that designate one’s class and status, globally operate, circulate, and exchange’ (2011: 113), and argues that cosmopolitanism is becoming part and parcel of stratification in a global world.

Explicitly or implicitly, these critical sociologists of cosmopolitanism borrow Pierre Bourdieu’s key concepts, most notably ‘cultural capital’, to shed light on how cosmopolitanism, which appears to be desirable at first glance, may in fact perpetuate stratification, an unequal distribution of power within a population. While we agree that Bourdieu’s concepts offer a promising point of departure for a critical examination of cosmopolitanism, we are also concerned that the existing applications of Bourdieu’s concepts lack sufficient rigor, even though they are very suggestive. Weenink, for example, argues that ‘cosmopolitanism (cosmopolitan capital) is a form of social and cultural capital’ (2007:
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495), even though he subsequently elaborates cosmopolitan capital as habitus, a set of ‘bodily and mental predispositions and competencies (savoir faire) which help to engage confidently in such [transnational activities]’ (2008: 1092). But this kind of definitional confusion could prevent sociologists not only from systematically applying Bourdieu’s concepts to research on cosmopolitanism but also from examining an important Bourdieusian question of how different forms of capital (e.g. cultural, economic, social) are converted into one another (Erickson, 1996; Portes, 1998). In this respect, Kim’s discussion of cosmopolitanism as ‘global cultural capital’ is conceptually clearer because he associates cosmopolitanism simply with cultural capital; however, he also falls short on examining how a counterpart of global cultural capital – a global field of struggles for dominant positions – is constituted. Since ‘capital’ and ‘field’ presuppose each other in Bourdieu’s conceptual framework (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992), it is problematic to decouple discussion of how cosmopolitanism operates as global cultural capital from discussion of how a certain field that defines cosmopolitanism as such is constituted.

Once these conceptual confusions are cleared up, however, we believe that Bourdieu’s conceptual framework can be effectively deployed to advance the sociology of cosmopolitanism in a critical direction. To begin, Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital has a clear affinity with the prevailing definition of cosmopolitanism as openness to foreign others and cultures. According to Ulf Hannerz’s foundational definition, cosmopolitanism refers to ‘an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness toward divergent cultural experiences’ as well as ‘the aspect of a state of readiness, a personal ability to make one’s way into other cultures … a built-up skill in manoeuvring more or less expertly with a particular system of meanings and meaningful forms’ (1990: 239). This definition of cosmopolitanism dovetails with Bourdieu’s concept of habitus as an embodied state of cultural capital (1983: 243): the latter can include both dispositions of openness to foreign others and cultures and competencies to enact such openness with ease. In addition, openness to foreign others and cultures can manifest in an objectified state of cultural capital, i.e. foreign cultural products that people consume, ranging from food to art works, to express their omnivorousness (Germann Molz, 2012; Lizardo, 2005).

Although, in theory, anybody can become a ‘banal cosmopolitan’ by consuming foreign cultural products (Skribis et al., 2004; Tomlinson, 2002), available evidence suggests that omnivorous patterns of cultural consumption, associated with cosmopolitan openness to foreign others and cultures, are more likely to be found among the upper class than among other groups (Bryson, 1996; Cheyne and Binder, 2010; Peterson and Kern, 1996). This exclusive nature of cosmopolitanism is expected to be even stronger with regard to the acquisition of competencies to interact expertly with foreign others and cultures. For example, an ability to speak foreign languages and navigate through foreign cultural environments is typically acquired through extensive international travels and experiences of studying or living abroad. Since these practices to develop cosmopolitan competencies often require a sufficient amount of economic resources, their access is likely to be limited to the upper class. Hence, cosmopolitanism, which signifies open and inclusive attitudes, can be seen as ‘a new kind of distinction’ (Lizardo, 2005: 106, emphasis in original), that is, as a new basis of exclusion.

We suggest that the relationship between cosmopolitanism and stratification becomes clearest in an institutionalized state of cultural capital as ‘academic qualification[s], a
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certificate of cultural competence’ (Bourdieu, 1983: 248). In this institutionalized form, the function of cultural capital to effect ‘social exclusion … from jobs and resources’ comes to the fore (Lamont and Lareau, 1988: 156, emphasis in original): cultural capital is a locus of struggles for dominant positions in society. More importantly, the institutionalized state of cultural capital points to education systems as central institutional mechanisms that determine the definition and value of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital. Education systems have become integral to stratification in the contemporary world because they institutionalize academic qualifications as objective proxies of competencies of their holders, legitimate academic qualifications as requirements for occupying positions in society, and distribute them unequally to different groups within a population (Breen and Jonsson, 2005; Kerckhoff, 1995; Meyer, 1994).

Here, the crucial question is whether cosmopolitanism is indeed becoming institutionalized as cultural capital through education systems and, if so, precisely how. This question needs to be carefully examined before we can proceed with the emerging Bourdieusian approach to the relationship between cosmopolitanism and stratification in a global world. In the next section, we turn to this question.

Cosmopolitanism, Education, Stratification

Originally, modern education systems did not promote cosmopolitanism because they developed primarily as state apparatuses of nation-building. According to Bourdieu, modern states deployed education systems, among other state apparatuses, to institutionalize ‘common forms and categories of perception and appreciation’, i.e. ‘(national) common sense … what is commonly designated as national identity’ (1999: 61–8). But recent comparative studies by world-polity theorists of education have demonstrated that education systems around the world now legitimate cosmopolitan schemas that take humanity, rather than nationality, as a primary frame of reference (Benavot and Braslavsky, 2007; McEneaney and Meyer, 2000; Schissler and Soysal, 2005). Specifically, more and more education systems define desirable attributes of the person as follows:

The individual needs to know a world language – almost certainly English. The individual should be able to function as a supra-national citizen, and reflect from a more universal point of view on local and national history. In other words, the individual student is to become a member of a newly-developing identity called ‘humanity’. (Meyer, 2007: 266)

Thus, education policies and school curricula increasingly define students as members of humanity by emphasizing the importance of openness to foreign others and competencies to coexist and cooperate with them in a global world. UNESCO reports and recommendations, for example, have helped institutionalize human-rights education, which promotes international understanding, global awareness, and world citizenship (Ramirez et al., 2007).

In addition, the educational emphasis on the competencies to function in a global world is reinforced by the growing influence of neoliberalism over education policies and school curricula (Apple et al., 2005; Brown and Tannock, 2009; Spring, 1998). While education systems were defined as vehicles of national economic development in
the past, neoliberalism has shifted the focus from the national to the global economy. Accordingly, new educational imperatives have emerged ‘that have more to do with flexibility and adaptability (for instance, in responding to rapidly changing work demands and opportunities), with learning how to coexist with others in diverse (and hence often conflict-riven) public spaces’ (Burbules and Torres, 2000: 22). Here, neoliberal education defines cosmopolitanism as a desirable attribute of the person who needs to thrive in the global economy: it aims to educate ‘strategic cosmopolitans … oriented to excel in ever transforming situations of global competition, either as workers, managers or entrepreneurs’ (Mitchell, 2003: 388). The World Bank and the OECD, for example, have produced reports and recommendations to promote cosmopolitan competencies within the context of the global economy (Spring, 2009). Globalization of education has also been promoted by business schools and the growing transnational networks of their alumni (Drori et al., 2006; Hall, 2011). In short, not only human-rights education but also neoliberal education legitimates cosmopolitanism as a prerequisite for functioning in a global world.

Unequal Access to Cosmopolitanism

For cosmopolitanism thus legitimated to operate as cultural capital, however, its access has to be unequal. Cultural capital becomes a locus of stratification because of its ‘unequal distribution’ among people in a given field (Bourdieu, 1983: 246). Based on available evidence, we suggest that a global field of education is indeed emerging that is structured hierarchically to render access to cosmopolitanism unequal among different groups of actors. First and foremost, higher education – a key institution that confers academic qualifications as cultural capital – plays a decisive role in constituting a hierarchically structured global field against a backdrop of the emergence of worldwide university rankings in the early 2000s. The most famous ones include QS World University Rankings (by Quacquarelli Symonds, a London-based education company), Times Higher Education World University Rankings (by Times Higher Education, a London-based publisher, in collaboration with the Canadian company Thomson Reuters), and the Academic Ranking of World Universities (by Shanghai Jiaotong University). By hierarchically ordering universities around the world according to the same set of criteria and thereby unequally distributing prestige, these rankings legitimate the global as a proper scale of competition among higher-education organizations.

In addition, ‘position-taking’ by universities in response to the worldwide rankings seems to reinforce the hierarchical nature of the global field. University administrators take into consideration these rankings when formulating strategies to improve the prestige of their universities as well as to carve out unique niches for their universities in a global field of higher education. The more university administrators refer to the worldwide rankings when making decisions, the more the global field of higher education becomes institutionalized. In other words, the worldwide university rankings and responses from university administrators progressively institutionalize global competition among higher-education organizations for ‘symbolic capital’, a source of power to define certain evaluative standards as legitimate (Bourdieu, 1991). Indeed, top universities in the worldwide rankings, which are concentrated in North America and Western
Europe, are seen as embodying the highest standards of academic excellence, whether or not lower-ranked universities can actually emulate them.

Furthermore, students who pursue higher education outside their home countries help structurate the hierarchically organized global field. Specifically, a growing number of students from non-European countries, such as China, India, and South Korea, move to North America and Western Europe to pursue undergraduate and graduate degrees (Chen and Barnett, 2000; Institute of International Education, 2012; Marginson, 2006). Far more students flow from the ‘non-West’ to the ‘West’ than the other way around because students in non-Western countries regard higher education in the West as not only superior but also more cosmopolitan and thereby helpful in securing jobs in the increasingly globalized economy (Kim, 2011, 2012). Put in Bourdieusian language, students in the non-West participate in the institutionalization of the global field of higher education by internalizing the doxa, a set of ‘evaluative presuppositions whose acceptance is implied in membership’ in the field (Bourdieu, 2000: 100).

Thus, the emergence of worldwide university rankings vis-à-vis organizational and individual responses seems to institutionalize university degrees in North America and Western Europe as proxies of cosmopolitan dispositions and competencies to excel in a global world. University degrees in North America and Western Europe enjoy such prestige because countries in these regions were once imperial powers and now serve as centers of the global economy, politics, and culture (Carroll and Carson, 2003; Harvey, 2009). Languages and cultural practices in the West therefore continue to define ‘global standards’. This means that it is easier for people who were born and grew up in the West to acquire cosmopolitanism as cultural capital because academic qualifications that are only local or national for them are simultaneously regarded as global by people in the non-West. Indeed, ‘[c]ultural capital can be acquired, to a varying extent, depending on the period, the society, and the social class, in the absence of any deliberate inculcation, and therefore quite unconsciously’ (Bourdieu, 1983: 245). Thus, due to the hierarchical structure of the global field, people in the West can begin to accrue their advantages over people in the non-West already at the levels of primary and secondary education, prior to their entry into higher education.

This unequal access to cosmopolitanism at the global level seems to be reproduced at the national level. Here it is useful to map a vast number of possible educational tracks, generated by different combinations of school and curricular types, onto a single continuum where one end is national and the other international: educational tracks on the international end offer larger volumes of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital than on the national end. For example, students enrolled in national education systems in their home countries are likely to be situated near the national end. This is because while national education systems around the world have institutionalized cosmopolitanism into school curricula, most students acquire cosmopolitanism by taking courses in foreign languages, world history, and civics with their co-nationals, not with foreigners. Since their educational trajectories are embedded firmly in their home countries, these students are likely to occupy domestic positions that do not require extensive interaction with people of multiple nationalities.

In contrast, students who attend international schools are likely to select educational tracks that help them acquire large volumes of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital. These
students tend to have parents who work for embassies, multinational corporations, and intergovernmental organizations. They are called ‘third culture kids’ who are comfortable and competent within multicultural settings (Hayden and Thompson, 1995; Useem and Downie, 1976). Importantly, the majority of these international schools adopt North American and Western European curricula. In non-Western countries, American schools and other international schools that adopt the International General Certificate of Secondary Education or the International Baccalaureate programs are regarded as stepping stones to enter universities in the West and eventually succeed in a globalized world (Cambridge, 2002; Resnik, 2012). Students who attend international schools are likely later to occupy positions that require extensive interactions with people of multiple nationalities because their academic qualifications serve as proxies of their cosmopolitan dispositions and competencies. Thus, at the national level, different combinations of school and curricular types create different tracks that determine different volumes of cosmopolitanism that students can acquire as cultural capital, while reproducing the hierarchy between the Western and non-Western countries that exists in the global field of education.

Although we have focused on cosmopolitanism in the institutionalized state of academic qualifications, this does not mean that other states of this cultural capital are irrelevant or that education is the only means to acquire cosmopolitanism. The embodied state of cosmopolitanism, for example, could propel some people to actively seek international educational tracks and thereby accumulate cosmopolitanism in the institutionalized state. The embodied state of cosmopolitanism in turn can be acquired through non-educational channels, such as forced or voluntary immigration (Werbner, 1999) and lived experiences of everyday life (Lamont and Aksartova, 2002). In the next section, we address these issues – how dispositional and non-educational factors feed into attainment of cosmopolitanism in the institutionalized state of academic qualifications – by exploring how children’s educational tracks are mediated by different volumes of cultural, economic, and social capital that their families possess.

**Mediation of Parental Cultural, Economic and Social Capital**

First of all, parents transmit cultural capital to their children in an embodied state, and this cultural transmission of habitus at the earliest stage of socialization decisively shapes subsequent trajectories of acquisition of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1983: 245–6). Children of families whose parents work for embassies and multinational corporations, for example, are likely to choose international educational tracks (Goodman, 1990) because they feel more comfortable in international schools. Moreover, existing studies indicate that children of families with higher socioeconomic statuses (SES) are more disposed to pursue cosmopolitanism as cultural capital because their parents are more likely to possess cosmopolitanism in the first place: levels of education are correlated with levels of openness to foreign others and cultures (Mau et al., 2008; Olofosson and Öhman, 2007; Pichler, 2009). Since education systems now promote cosmopolitanism, those who acquire more education seem to become more cosmopolitan. Accordingly, children from higher SES families are expected to acquire openness toward foreign others and cultures from an early age.
Second, different families possess different volumes of economic capital, which delimit educational tracks available to their children. For example, only the families with sufficient volumes of economic capital can afford to send their children to international schools and universities outside of their home countries because these types of education are costly. Volumes of economic capital available to families, however, do not automatically determine children’s educational trajectories. One mediating factor is the family’s class trajectory. In the Netherlands, Weenink (2007, 2008) found that old middle-class families tend to send their children to traditionally elite educational tracks that are more nationally oriented, such as gymnasiums. In contrast, new middle-class families tend to send their children to newly established international tracks. Weenink suggests that these two different parental educational practices are coterminous with emerging competition between old and new middle classes: the latter adopted international education as a way to overtake the former by better positioning their children to exploit increasing transnational economic opportunities created by the European integration. Thus two class fractions with similar volumes of economic capital can adopt different educational practices because of their different class trajectories.

In addition, children’s own academic performance can mediate the relationship between parental economic capital and children’s educational trajectories. Johanna Waters (2005, 2007) studied Chinese middle-class families who migrated from Hong Kong to Vancouver and found that they decided to migrate because their children’s academic performance was not good enough to warrant entrance to the extremely competitive higher education system in Hong Kong. Children of these families unexpectedly entered international educational tracks when their parents decided to ‘buy out’ their academic failures from the national education system. To be sure, these Chinese parents could not have adopted the buyout strategy without sufficient volumes of economic capital that could be used to help their children acquire cosmopolitanism in the form of North American university degrees. But Waters’ studies show that unequal access to cosmopolitanism is not automatically determined by parental economic capital.

Third, different families possess different numbers of transnational connections that can be used as social capital to help their children’s acquisition of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital. The more foreign friends, colleagues, and relatives that parents have, the more likely they can use these connections to familiarize their children with foreign others and cultures as well as to prepare their children for international educational tracks (Weenink, 2007). In other words, the volume of social capital that the family can deploy for children’s acquisition of cosmopolitanism ‘depends on the size of the network of connections’ the family can effectively mobilize and ‘on the volume of the capital’ possessed by each of those to whom they are connected (Bourdieu, 1983: 249).

Here parents can be grouped into three types of cosmopolitans commonly found in the existing literature, according to the number of transnational connections that they possess as social capital for their children’s acquisition of cosmopolitanism. First, ‘elite cosmopolitans’, who are also called ‘transnational elites’ (Sassen, 2007) or the ‘global cosmopolitan class’ (Calhoun, 2008b), possess the largest number of transnational connections: they typically occupy high-ranking positions in multinational corporations and international governmental and nongovernmental organizations. Second, ‘rooted cosmopolitans’ (Appiah, 2006) possess the second largest number of transnational connections.
These cosmopolitans are usually fluent in at least two languages and have lived or worked outside of their home countries. Third, there are ‘banal cosmopolitans’ (Skribis et al., 2004; Tomlinson, 2002) who consume foreign cultural products and media representations of foreign others but lack regular and direct contact with foreigners. Banal cosmopolitans therefore have the smallest number of transnational connections that they can mobilize for educational practices to help their children acquire cosmopolitanism.

At first glance, these three types of cosmopolitans seem to be correlated with different social classes (elite = upper, rooted = middle, and banal = lower), but immigrants complicate this correlation (Werbner, 1999). In Western countries, for example, lower-class immigrant families can become rooted cosmopolitans, if they maintain contacts with people in their home countries. Then, their children can acquire extra cosmopolitanism in an embodied form (e.g. familiarity with foreign languages and cultures outside of the West) better than do their lower- and even middle-class non-immigrant peers whose parents are banal cosmopolitans with fewer transnational connections. Such early acquisition of cosmopolitan habitus may prime lower-class immigrant students to later pursue international educational tracks and academic qualifications that serve as proxies of cosmopolitan dispositions and competencies. But, to specify precisely how transnational connections as social capital may compensate small volumes of economic capital deployable for the acquisition of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital, more longitudinal research on immigrant students in the West is needed to illuminate the mechanisms through which transnational connections shape educational and career trajectories (cf. Portes and Rumbaut, 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008).

In sum, to theorize how cosmopolitanism gets institutionalized as cultural capital, both the production and consumption sides of education in a global world need to be considered. First, globalization of education helps institutionalize Western academic qualifications as proxies of cosmopolitanism as globally-circulable cultural capital while making access to this cultural capital unequal. That is, on the production side, volumes of cosmopolitanism available to students are unequally distributed across different educational tracks. On this consumption side, too, access to cosmopolitanism is unequal: students from different families, endowed with different volumes of cultural, economic, and social capital, have unequal abilities to pursue the kinds of educational tracks associated with large volumes of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital. Thus, cosmopolitanism begins to acquire the character of cultural capital – its universal legitimacy and unequal access – through education systems.

**Geographically Uneven Profits of Cosmopolitanism**

For cosmopolitanism to fully operate as cultural capital, however, it has to become convertible into ‘profits’ on labor markets since the institutionalized state of cultural capital is conceptualized as ‘the condition for legitimate access to a growing number of positions, particularly dominant ones’ (Bourdieu, 1983: 254). Since education systems have institutionalized academic qualifications (an institutionalized state of cultural capital) as prerequisites for access to positions within modern society (Breen and Jonsson, 2005; Kerckhoff, 1995; Meyer, 1994), we can conjecture that cosmopolitanism, which education systems around the world increasingly define as cultural capital, also yields profits
on labor markets, allowing its owners to gain access to the growing number of positions that require extensive interactions with people of multiple nationalities.

But few studies have actually examined this conjecture because the Bourdieusian research on the relationship between cosmopolitanism and stratification is still in its infancy. Nonetheless, available evidence indicates, first of all, that almost all types of stakeholders – students, parents, university administrators, and employers – believe that academic qualifications that signal cosmopolitanism lead to better job opportunities in the increasingly global economy (Brown and Tannock, 2009; Resnik, 2012; Weenink, 2008). To be sure, whether cosmopolitanism indeed yields profits is another empirical question; however, if stakeholders act according to this belief, their interactions can cause a self-fulfilling prophecy wherein cosmopolitanism will be progressively institutionalized to yield profits on labor markets. In light of the growing movement of students from non-Western to Western countries to seek higher education, cosmopolitanism may well be on course to turn into profits in the near future.

Available evidence also suggests that cosmopolitanism in the form of university degrees from North America and Western Europe advantages its holders in competition for positions that require extensive interactions with people of multiple nationalities, though this advantage is mediated by specific regional and national contexts. Jonathan Jarvis’ interview study (2013), for example, found that multinational corporations in South Korea tend to value job applicants more highly if their qualifications indicate their abilities to function in both transnational and national arenas rather than in either of the two. In addition, Johanna Waters (2009) and Remi Iijima (2009) showed that how cosmopolitanism turns into profits on labor markets in Hong Kong and Japan, respectively, depends on transnational social networks of employees and employers traversing the Asia-Pacific region: profits of cosmopolitanism are lower outside of these transnational networks. At present, then, cosmopolitanism does not circulate perfectly at the global level. Instead, its profit rate varies across regions, countries, and different segments of labor markets.

These findings are consistent with existing studies of transnational professionals. Generally speaking, movements of transnational professionals are regionally bound because the competencies and qualifications they acquire are embedded in cultural specificities of certain regions and are difficult to transfer to other regions of the world. For example, transnational professionals who started their careers in a particular region (e.g. Southeast Asia) are likely to continue to work in the same region (Beaverstock, 2002). Moreover, profits of cosmopolitanism are often mediated by histories of imperial expansion and colonial domination. A case in point is the tendency that circulation of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital retraces transnational connections between former metropoles and colonies (Beaverstock, 2005; Yeoh and Willis, 2005).

Indeed, not only profits but also the very definitions of cosmopolitanism tend to be embedded in regional and national contexts. In Europe, for example, cosmopolitanism is defined primarily in terms of pan-European dispositions and competencies: the European Union instituted student exchange programs (e.g. the Socrates and Erasmus Programs), as well as the Bologna Process that aims to standardize higher education across EU member countries, to make Euro-specific cosmopolitanism a locus of struggles for positions at the European level. Similar variations in what counts as cosmopolitanism can be
found across Africa, Asia, and Latin America, depending on their colonial and postcolonial relations with powerful countries in the West (e.g. the United States, Britain, France). Thus it seems inevitable that the emerging global field of struggles for cosmopolitanism as cultural capital is geographically heterogeneous.

Moreover, we believe that this geographical unevenness in profits and definitions of cosmopolitanism is magnified by the persistence of nationalism in a globalized world. Even though nationalism has lost its primordial character, it continues to enjoy legitimacy as an institutional logic to constitute and regulate organizations, practices, and schemas based on the idea of the nation (Meyer, 2000; Schissler and Soysal, 2005). While governments around the world promote human rights and facilitate transnational economic activities, they continue to legitimate national citizenship. This coexistence of cosmopolitanism and nationalism as institutional logics indicates that a larger volume of cosmopolitanism does not automatically translate into a better chance of success on labor markets and in other arenas of social life. What maximizes the chance of success seems to be the ‘right’ combination of cosmopolitan and national academic qualifications that signal their holders’ dispositions and competencies to function effectively in both global and national arenas (Jarvis, 2013; Nukaga, 2013). But again, the right combination of the two types of academic qualifications is likely to vary according to how education systems vis-à-vis labor markets in a given country institutionally combine cosmopolitanism and nationalism. Indeed, how cosmopolitanism and nationalism are articulated is a crucial but unresolved question in the sociology of cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2006; Calhoun, 2008b).

**Conclusion and Implications**

In this paper, we have explored the analytical potential of the Bourdieusian approach to cosmopolitanism by elaborating how cosmopolitanism can operate as cultural capital, a locus of stratification in a global world. Specifically, in light of existing studies, we have proposed education systems as central mechanisms that institutionalize cosmopolitanism as cultural capital in three steps. First, education systems legitimate cosmopolitanism, a set of dispositions of openness to foreign others and cultures, as well as competencies to enact such openness with ease, as universally desirable for people living in a global world. Second, education systems nonetheless make access to cosmopolitanism unequal. On the production side, education systems distribute cosmopolitanism unequally across different countries, schools, and curricula in terms of the hierarchy between the West and the non-West. On the consumption side, families with large volumes of cultural, economic, and social capital are advantaged to pursue educational tracks associated with large volumes of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital. Finally, education systems link academic qualifications that signal cosmopolitanism with positions that require extensive interactions with people of multiple nationalities. Thus, education systems implicate cosmopolitanism in stratification at the global level by conferring on it the character of cultural capital: being defined as universally desirable, while its access and profits are unequally distributed across different groups of actors around the world.

If Bourdieusian research on the relationship between cosmopolitanism and stratification is to fully develop, however, future research needs to address remaining conceptual and empirical gaps. First of all, since the Bourdieusian approach tends to take the
individual as a unit of analysis (Martin, 2003), few pieces of research have been done on how education-related organizations, ranging from UN organizations and government agencies to universities and primary and secondary schools, engage in struggles over the definition and value of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital (cf. Marginson, 2008). Such organizational analysis of structuration of the global field of education vis-à-vis cosmopolitanism as cultural capital will be doubly useful: it will advance the sociology of cosmopolitanism’s understanding of the ongoing formation of the global field as well as help overcome a weakness in Bourdieu’s conceptual framework, its inability to explain the emergence of a field (Fligstein and McAdam, 2011).

Second, we currently lack sufficient evidence that cosmopolitanism turns into profits on labor markets. Indeed, existing quantitative studies have not established a clear causal relationship between cultural capital and stratification because they are marred with different and even inconsistent operationalizations of cultural capital (Lareau and Weininger, 2003). Although it is possible to devise similar quantitative studies to examine the relationship between cosmopolitanism (e.g. university degrees from North America and Europe) and stratification (e.g. income), we suggest that it is more productive to start with qualitative studies. Before we can proceed to quantitative research, we need to shed light on how stakeholders, especially employers and job interviewers, define and evaluate cosmopolitanism as cultural capital. Researchers have begun to examine this issue (Iijima, 2009; Jarvis, 2013; Waters, 2009), but much more data are needed to understand how stakeholders institutionalize the link between cosmopolitanism and access to positions.

Finally, additional case studies can illuminate precisely how the working of cosmopolitanism as cultural capital is mediated by specific regional and national contexts. As a heuristic, it is useful to conceptualize a global field of education vis-à-vis stratification according to hierarchical relations between the West and the non-West (Marginson, 2006, 2008) or between the core, semi-periphery, and periphery (Weiss, 2005). In reality, however, the global field is filled with regionally and bilaterally specific networks built on legacies of imperial expansion and colonial rule, which defy simple hierarchical ordering. As a result, definitions and profits of cosmopolitanism are geographically heterogeneous. For example, fluency in English and possession of a North American university degree can produce more profits in some regions (e.g. former American and British colonies) than in others (e.g. Europe and former French colonies). Better understanding of geographical variations in definitions and profits of cosmopolitanism can lend more precision to the growing research on how mechanisms of stratification and inequalities are becoming unbounded beyond national borders (Brown, 2000; Harvey, 2009).

We are able to delineate these conceptual and empirical problems precisely because the Bourdieusian approach is generative, not because it is problematic. By shedding new and critical light on ways in which cosmopolitanism is implicated in power relations in a global world, the Bourdieusian approach can make important contributions to the sociology of cosmopolitanism.

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