In recent years, many major philosophers have been eager to demonstrate that national and cosmopolitan allegiances can be reconciled. The pragmatist Richard Rorty has shown how nationalism and cosmopolitanism can be different but overlapping constructions of loyalty (Rorty 1998b). The utilitarian Peter Singer has suggested that nations can be useful tools to the extent that they help us to redress global wrongs (but also that our national allegiance should end when they serve only to exacerbate those wrongs) (Singer 2002, 7). And the Kantian Martha Nussbaum (like nearly all of the many influential contributors to her For Love of Country?) offers different approaches to reconciling a love of country with a love of humanity (Nussbaum 2002).

But is the problem of reconciling nationalism and cosmopolitanism as significant as these philosophers’ eagerness to solve it would suggest? As Pheng Cheah reminded us in an essay opening the influential 1998 collection Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation, advocates of Enlightenment cosmopolitanism and of the nationalism that followed generally understood one another to be allies rather than opponents. For example, Immanuel Kant’s cosmopolitan ideal was ‘not anti- or postnationalist’ but rather ‘a prenationalist attempt to reform absolutist statism’ (Cheah 1998, 24). Early nationalists followed his and other cosmopolitans’ footsteps. As Cheah puts it, before these early nationalists found their states, ‘the ideals of cosmopolitanism and European nationalism in its early stirrings [were] almost indistinguishable’ (25).

In contrast to today, then, attachment to both one’s nation and the world was fairly unremarkable during this earlier period, a period that extends, I will emphasise here, further into the nineteenth century than is usually reckoned. Eventually this chapter will evolve into an appreciation of this neglected nineteenth-century nationalist cosmopolitics, but not
before pondering what makes the notion of dual attachment such a difficult one for us today. For I believe that when the nature of our own difficulties with dual attachment is properly identified, we can appreciate better the accomplishment of these overlooked nineteenth-century nationalist cosmo-politans.

Contemporary commentators superficially depict the challenge of holding dual attachments as a matter of determining which ones should come first and when new ones should be added. For example, many of the contributors to *For Love of Country?* are drawn to the metaphor of concentric circles of attachment (from family to neighbours to city and so forth), but they debate how quickly new ‘outer’ attachments should be pursued, or even if attachments should begin at the outside and move inward.¹ A closer examination of the way commentators make these arguments, though, reveals that what is often being debated is not really how to multiply our attachments, but rather whether the various attachments are indeed of equivalent value. This nastier debate usually happens at the level of rhetoric. Consider some examples from this representative volume (the emphases that follow being my addition). Some of the cosmopolitan commentators, like Nussbaum, believe our first attachments must include humanity as a whole, for to begin strictly with just family, friends and neighbours would be to ‘stunt our moral imaginations’ (2002, xiv). ‘One of the greatest barriers to rational deliberation in politics’, Nussbaum adds later, ‘is the unexamined feeling that one’s own preferences and ways are neutral and natural. An education that takes national boundaries as morally salient too often reinforces this kind of irrationality’ (2002, 11). The nationalist commentators, though, believe our first attachments must be local, for to begin with the global is to begin, in Benjamin Barber’s words, with ‘the thin gruel of contract relations’ (2002, 31) or, in Michael W. McConnell’s, ‘a … moral education that is too bloodless to capture the moral imagination’ (2002, 79), an education that will ‘likely [be] destructive of the moral communities that have managed to persist in the face of Western materialism and cynicism’ (81–2).

It would seem, then, that if what today’s nationalists and cosmo-politans debate on the surface is the proper order in which to add new attachments, the more coded but more fundamental debate is really about the intrinsic value of these attachments. And, once that more fundamental debate is recognised, one begins to see an important continuity between our contemporary debates about nationalism and cosmopolitanism and the undisguised ideological warfare of the early- and mid-twentieth century. To be sure, today’s nationalist theorist does not flippantly toss the