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First edition
Áginak
(“il y a dans notre imagination
un effort pour progresser vers l’infini”)
ed Karcinak
(“…és megmutatta mesebeli kincsét/
az ősz égbolton a tiszta holdat”)

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“When you look at the stars at night, you get the impression deep down in your gut that you don’t know who you are, that you know more about what is going on out there than what is going on down here,” says Jay to Kay in the second part of *Men in Black (MIIB).*

Maybe, after all, he’s right.

Or rather, as you suggested to me when you came to meet me one night: Our time and our orientation in space, here, on our Earth, is widely determined by what is weaving its way through the cosmos. You were waiting for the bus, you told me, and you were impatiently looking at the indication of how long you’d have to wait, which wavered, until a message notified you and the other bus riders that the geo-satellite system for following traffic was momentarily out of order. “Have you ever thought about it?” you asked me with surprise. “In our lived experience of time passing and moving through space, we depend on data that come back to us from what we emit beyond the earth’s atmosphere.”

“It’s true,” I thought while I listened to you, “you’ve come back from far away. Your little feet on this Earth, as that other guy would say, are inhabited by a giant’s leaps.”
Of course, our movements *down here*, our perceptions, our access to the sensible are increasingly guided by devices that orient us from *out there*, from what Hannah Arendt described as an “Archimedean point” that moves away from our planet and on the basis of which we act on it. But, as we have seen by stalking extraterrestrials all the way into the corners of the Kantian sublime, the cosmonomic distribution of what is offered to our senses hasn’t waited for recent geo-satellite technologies to settle into place. The sensible *is distributed* [se partage] from the heart of aesthetic experience, which is for that very reason—because it is a question of distribution—immediately political. Or rather cosmopolitical since the opening of each human point of view immediately implies the philosofiction of the extraterrestrial wholly other. This is so much the case that one could speak, as we have done following Carl Schmitt, of a *nomos of the sensible*, inscribing the stakes of its division in a cosmic perspective, which, far from being futurist or utopian, far from simply being a matter of science fiction in the habitual and restricted sense of this term, is at work within each of our gazes on the world.

This cosmotheoretical and cosmopolitical gap that carves out our points of view, running through them like the fold of the difference that makes them possible, would thus be the philosofictive extra-earthliness of the wholly other, imprinting itself in the depths of the sensible. This *Archimedean point of the sensible* where its *nomos* and geopolitics are traced and retraced—Kant is no doubt the first to have glimpsed it and indicated it in between the lines of his writing—Kant, who, as we were saying, is also the last representative of a long pluriworldist philosophical tradition.

The last one?

When others, after Kant, have evoked diverse figures of extra-earthliness in their discourse, it was most often in a sporadic and fugitive way. There is nonetheless one exception that must be mentioned here and that would itself merit a very careful reading: I am thinking of a surprising manuscript by Husserl that was
long unpublished, written in May 1934 and devoted to “a reversal of Copernican doctrine.”

Imagining “flying arks” and “humanities”—in the plural—transported into the stars (“Originary Ark,” 127), Husserl would seem here almost to share Carl Schmitt’s interest in science fiction. Whatever the case may be, several years after the Schmittean formulation that held our attention for quite a while (“Humanity as such . . . has no enemy, at least not on this planet”), Husserl carries out a thought experiment and engages in philosofictive variations that bring him to consider the existence of more than one Earth (e.g. “two earths” [125]) as well as—supreme and apocalyptic philosofiction—the total destruction of our globe (“It is possible that entropy will put an end to all life on earth, or that celestial bodies will crash into the earth, etc.,” 131).

And here too, as with Schmitt, the maritime paradigm and its naval or nautical vocabulary, allows us to feel the possible extra-earthly extension of the “house” and “home”:

If I am born a sailor’s child, then a part of my development has taken place on the ship. But the ship . . . would itself be my “earth,” my homeland. But my parents are not then primordially at home on the ship; they still have the old home, another primordial homeland. . . . Let us now consider the stars . . . as mere “airships,” “spaceships” of the earth, by departing from it and then returning back to it, inhabited and guided by human beings who . . . have made their home on the earth-ground as their ark. . . . The earth-ark itself . . . is not . . . a star among other stars. Only when we think of our stars as secondary arks with their eventual humanities, etc., only when we figure ourselves as transplanted there among these humanities, perhaps flying there, is it otherwise. Then it is like children born on ships, but with some differences. (“Originary Ark,” 126–27)

Like Schmitt, and even more than Schmitt, Husserl goes a long way with the unearthing hypotheses of a navigator floating in

THE ARCHIMEDEAN POINT OF THE SENSIBLE (125
weightlessness. Yet at the end of his trajectory, he, too, reaffirms the original and founding character of earthly ground. Despite the audacity of his considerations on interplanetary flight—which bring him almost literally to anticipate the gripping Schmittean formulation, “To make of the planet we inhabit, to make of the Earth itself, a spaceship”—they do not in the end change anything at all of the uniqueness and centrality of our planet Earth. And the Robinsonian philosofiction of the deserted island, which crosses through the sidelines of this stunning and sidereal [sidérale et sidérante] scene, can only confirm the geocentrism of these pages:

I could just as well think of myself as transplanted to the moon. Why should I not think of the moon as something like an earth, as therefore something like a land for animal habitation? Indeed, I can very well think of myself as a bird flying off from the earth to a body that lies far away, or as a pilot of an airplane that flies off and lands there. Certainly, I can conceive of human beings and animals already being there. But I ask, perhaps, “how have they gotten there?”—then, just as similarly in the case of a new island where cuneiform writing is found, I ask: How did the people in question come there? All animals, all living beings, all beings whatsoever, have ontic being only on the basis of my constitutive genesis and this has “earthly” precedence. Indeed, a fragment of the earth (like an ice floe) may have become detached, and that has made a particular historicity possible. But that does not mean that the moon or Venus could not just as well be conceived as primordial homes . . . and that does not mean that the being of the earth is precisely only a fact [meaning a mere contingent fact] for me and our terrestrial humanity. There is only one humanity and one earth—all the fragments which are or have been separated from it belong to it. But if this is the case, need we say with Galileo: eppur si muove? . . . It is certainly not so that it rests in space . . . but rather, as we tried to show above, the
earth is the ark which makes possible in the first place the
sense of all motion and all rest as mode of one motion. (“Origi-
nary Ark,” 130, translation modified)

Wherever we go, wherever we fly, Husserl’s transcendental Earth
comes with us and even precedes us as a “carnal flight-vessel”
(Leib-Flugschiff) (125).

This movement ultimately conceived of on the basis of the Earth,
this re-earthing gesture is one which Kant, as we’ve seen, also did
not escape. But what gave his thinking its particular reach, all at
once cosmotheoretical, cosmopolitical and cosmetic, is the fact that
extra-earthliness was constantly returning in order to destabilize in
spite of it all the earthly anchoring of the subjects that we are.

This is also the impression we get from these pages of Husserl.
They may well repatriate us back to Earth in the last and original
instance; they may well situate our originary home there as tran-
scendental subjects, their undeniable textual effect, their effiction
in spite of themselves is to make the earthly bedrock tremble.

And yet for Kant as for Husserl, as it was in all the preceding
pages, an opposition remains between down here and out there.
This is no doubt as it should be since, until further notice, we
spend the vast majority of our time on Earth. And for the time
that still remains for us to spend here as humans, even as we phi-
losifically allow ourselves from time to time to announce its
end,7 in this meantime that assigns us to the finitude of the bed-
rock that carries the finite beings we are, what we must think is a
cosmopolitics of the sensible ever more increasingly turned away
from its telluric, earthly anchoring toward and by a movement
that implicates the extra-earthliness of a cosmos that is thus any-
thing but a mere outside.

“One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind,” declared
Neil Armstrong when he put his foot down onto lunar ground in
1969.
We, too, have taken a few steps and made a few leaps since we launched this philosofictive adventure that will have taken us through quite a few spaces of thought. We leaped in ways that defied the laws of gravity in reason: We went from space tourism to Carl Schmitt, from Schmitt to Kant, from Kant to film—and back, from film or TV series to Kant, from Kant to contemporary geopolitics and to the most urgent planetary or ecological questions. . . . All of this was done without the least apparent concern for a particular kind of gravity, for a certain weight of thought [pesée de la pensée]. For if thinking and weighing, penser and peser, have a common origin in Romance languages (the Latin pensare is the intensive form of pendere), the weight of a thought, its load, should reside at least in the way it ballasts its objects, the way it does not allow them to fly away or disappear, forces them to gravitate around what it interrogates by forming a regulated constellation.

Is it then mere lightness that brought us to make these leaps? Is it not much more an undeniable proximity that made us jump from one planet or sphere to another (from Kant to film, from Schmitt to science fiction . . .), like the protagonist in one of Calvino’s tales who, at a time when the Moon was thought to be much closer to the Earth than it is today, is constantly spanning the distance separating the two stars, his major project being to move from the one to the other without respite?

If we suppose, for example, that in this case Kant is the Earth and cinema is the Moon (though it could also be the other way around, a truly weighty thinking should certainly justify this casting), it does indeed seem difficult while staying close to the Königsberg thinker’s texts, on Earth, not to exclaim like that other character from Calvino’s book, perched on top of a ladder and getting dangerously close to the satellite, “Stop! Stop! I’m going to bang my head!”

Once we attempt, with Kant, to think what is called a point of view, our head, as we have constantly had occasion to verify, is in the stars: Reading Kant with a certain eye, we are structurally on the Moon, already, in other words, at the movies.
Film is in effect perhaps above all an affair of point of view. It’s an incredible experience of point of view and its variations, shifts, and extensions; it is the always singular invention of a wholly other point of view, of a point of view beyond points of view that would be the very limit, constantly retraced, of any possible point of view. And this is why, beyond the whims of fashion and the choices that govern a screenplay’s writing, beyond even filmic genres, cinema has always had something telescopic about it, even in its close-ups: It is always stretched toward that distance, however close it may be, from which seeing is constituted into a point of view while becoming unstable, vacillating and losing its footing.10

If Eisenstein was able to say that “Diderot spoke of cinema,”11 one could paraphrase this scandalous anachronism and affirm that Kant analyzed in advance the states that we, Earthlings that we are, live out in front of screens populated with extraterrestrials. Yes, with Kant just like at the movies, inhabitants of other worlds besiege us. But not like invaders that come from outside: rather, like those who have always already been there, inhabiting our point of view with their extraneity that makes it possible.

If this is true, it would then be necessary to write, with Kant, following the Kantian gaze in its constitution from the point of view of the wholly other, a genealogy of science fiction in film. But this would be another book entirely. A book I’ve dreamed of, a real book, perhaps, of philosofiction. Here, I’ll content myself with simply imagining its beginnings.

\[\text{Incipit fantascientia, once again.}\]

In 1902, Georges Méliès directed his *Trip to the Moon*. Astronomers have gathered for an extraordinary meeting and attend the conference of a great professor (Barbenfouillis) who is presenting his project: sending people to the Moon in a bullet shot by a giant cannon. They protest, incredulous, but five of them, the bravest ones, agree to participate in this crazy enterprise. The day
of departure finally arrives. The bullet flies toward the Moon that awaits it and that, little by little, as it gets closer and closer, looks like a face made up in white, with eyes, a mouth, a nose. All of a sudden, while the camera shows this human face of the lunar star, the bullet comes up and gets stuck in her right eye. The Moon’s eye is poked out. White like a cream tart or a screen within the screen, the moon was watching us, but she doesn’t see very well any more, having just received an emission from earth right in her eyes. She’s half-blind.

The scene changes. In a kind of cosmicomic countershot, the Moon’s face as seen from the Earth makes way for the image of the five astronomers landing on lunar ground. They emerge from the bullet and, waving their hats, see the earth lit up from afar before wrapping themselves in blankets to go to sleep while a comet passes over their heads. Stars light up during their sleep and they, too, have faces. They are awakened by a shower of stellar dust and get up to venture inland, into a cave invaded with

*Le Voyage dans la Lune* (Georges Méliès, 1902)
giant mushrooms. This is where the Selenites appear, the inhabitants of the Moon who capture the five astronomers. But they manage to escape: They make their way back to their bullet, which seems to be hanging right at the edge of a cliff and, pulled in by earthly gravity, they allow themselves to fall into the ocean, where a paddle boat tows them for the festivities and honors awaiting them at the conclusion of this fantastic voyage.

In this ultimately banal story, in this tale inspired by Jules Verne (*From the Earth to the Moon*, 1865) that turns the Selenites into entirely predictable anthropomorphic savages, why does Méliès make this gesture, now engraved into the visual memory of film history as a veritable icon, of putting the Moon’s eye out? Of course, this is in part inherited from farce, the cream tart slapped in the face, the circus comedy whose tradition of clowning is thus put into film. But the gesture goes far beyond its eventual precedents: With its whiteness given eyes, the Moon, as we were saying, is a kind of screen within the screen. It’s the screen
showed on the screen, the screen that appears on the screen as the very apparatus \textit{[dispositif]} of sight. And thus ripping the
screen \textit{[crever l’écran]} means piercing it with a gaze sent toward
its galactic outside, toward a cosmotheoretical perspective that is
like the horizon without horizon of any possible point of view.
Only this perspective, lodged somewhere beyond the screen,
would allow us to appear to ourselves, to see ourselves as an
earthy species with looks.

But this lunar point of view is barred to us; it is prohibited. We
rip it in the very experience we attempt to have of it. Or rather,
and more precisely, we rip it halfway; we only put one eye out
while the other, blinking and trying to see as best it can, accords
us, as if in a blink and for no longer than an instant before get-
ing lost, a glimpse of ourselves as seers \textit{[une entrevue sur nous-
mêmes en tant que voyants]}.

This is the impossible interplanetary effect of the shot and
countershot of which Kant also spoke. Yet the infinite space, the
interstellar space implied in such a (counter)shot, in a way that is
both improbable and necessary, this space is not only that of
journeys to the Moon, or even of cosmic journeys. As Méliès’s
film shows no doubt in spite of itself, this space is already that of
every intraterrestrial experience. It’s the space that opens within
every human or earthling point of view in order to make possible
a point of view as such: If, in Méliès’s science fiction as in so
many others, including those of Fontenelle or Kant, the Moon
and the other planets appear as a projection of our geocentric
geography, as a cosmotheoretical enlargement of our human, all
too human, perspectives, this is not, or not only, because the
other cannot be given any figure other than in the characteristics
of the same; it is also because the intersidereal distance sum-
moned by these stories is already lodged in what is smallest in
each terrestrial gaze.

If in the end Méliès’s astronomers seem to have never left the
Earth, if they find the world here without much change in the
world out there, this is because they have only made the Earth
itself distant from itself, projected to an interplanetary distance from itself. As if this cosmic adventure already actually took place every time we look.

As if telescopy were already lodged in the myopic microscopy of each gaze in order to make it possible as a point of view: there where some vision blinks, starting to peep through while hesitating to be [à poindre tout en menaçant de n’être point].

)* ()

Incipit fantascientia, again and again.

In the prologue to Steven Spielberg’s adaptation of War of the Worlds (2005), a voice-over, serious and as sententious as always, accompanies the first images, those of the Earth that seems at first to be contained in a drop of water that’s fallen onto a green leaf. The voice warns us: “No one would have believed in the early years of the twenty-first century that our world was being watched by intelligences greater than our own.”

Even if Spielberg gives it a new little ecological twist that Al Gore would not deny, the story is well known and has become banal and cliché: Extraterrestrials, having exhausted their home’s resources, are going to attack this world and exploit it until it is destroyed.

Buried underground for millennia, they were, however, already here, and they now awaken to cause massive destruction. Among the few survivors being chased by immense tripods with tentacles, Ray (Tom Cruise) and his daughter Rachel (Dakota Fanning) have burrowed into a basement in order not to be seen and to escape death. All of a sudden a tentacle climbs down into their refuge, slowly, scrutinizing every corner to make sure no Earthlings are hiding in them. Seen in a close-up, the end of the mobile arm that serves as the creature’s eye looks like a camera lens. It is a glass surface on which surrounding space is reflected. This is a detail Spielberg took from the first film adaptation of the novel done by Byron Haskin in 1953, for Herbert George Wells only speaks of “a long metallic snake of tentacle [that] came feeling slowly through the hole.”13
In Spielberg’s adaptation, then, the camera thanks to which we spectators see, the camera that shows us the film’s world and a quasi lens on the tentacle, this camera seems to be, in this sequence where we hold our breath, faced with a double of itself. The extraterrestrial eye is the filmic eye itself, filmed in the film. Like the camera’s eye, it is mobile, can go into any space, into the slightest interstices of this underground basement. In short, we Earthlings, we who, like Ray and Rachel, look at this eye coming to find us even underground and “penetrating, in the most intensive way, into reality,”14 we find ourselves confronted with our own cinematographic gaze, so near, so troubling and yet infinitely faraway.

In the few yards that separate Ray and Rachel’s eyes from this inhuman eye is lodged all the abyssal distance that exists between our gaze and itself: a necessary distance that must inhabit the human and earthly vision for it to be able to adopt a point of view, this particular point of view instead of another. For there is

War of the Worlds (Byron Haskin, 1953)
always more than one point of view, and this plurality besieges or haunts each singular point of view by making it possible as such.

Ray and Rachel, the film’s characters being filmed by the camera that is our eye, attempt to flee this other camera, this other eye that is hunting them. We see them, they who live only through and for our gaze; we see them as if they were attempting

War of the Worlds (Steven Spielberg, 2005)

War of the Worlds (Steven Spielberg, 2005)
to remove themselves from what nonetheless makes them possible as filmic beings. And once the unfortunate fall of an object attracts the attention of the ocular tentacle, Ray hides with his daughter behind a mirror: The extraterrestrial quasi camera is reflected in it; it sees itself there and gazes at its reflection, just as it itself reflected the image of our gaze back to us. Face to face, only a few centimeters apart, the eye from elsewhere and the Earthlings burrowed in the basement are nonetheless separated by the infinite distance between a gaze and its double in the mirror. They are distanced by the cosmotheoretical distance that inhabits every gaze and separates it from itself to constitute it as a point of view.

This is a gripping way to show us that we, we Earthlings, we humans, we see (ourselves) only under the condition of the other’s gaze; we have a point of view only if we allow it to be haunted by the wholly other. Which is faraway, at an infinite distance in the light-years that distance it from us, and yet so close, stuck to our point of view to the point that it redoubles it.

This wholly other is thus the gap of seeing within seeing that alone allows for something like a point of view. It’s the intergalactic distance that is lodged in the most intimate or minute angle, between eye and eye.

This is why, when we open our eye, notably and significantly at the movies, our point of view is structurally besieged by those extraterrestrials that make it possible, before they even appear on the screen or in real life.

They are already there; they besiege our point of view so that it might be ours. They keep the siege that a point of view sustains and thanks to which it holds.

So much so that the war of the worlds has already taken place, every time we look.
Postface: What’s Left of Cosmopolitanism?

Where have we received the figure of cosmopolitanism from? And what is happening to it? As for the figure of the citizen of the world, we do not know if it has a future in store for it.

—Jacques Derrida, On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness

These are the first words of a pamphlet whose original French title can be translated as “Cosmopolitans of All Lands, Yet Another Effort!” For this certainly is a pamphlet, yes, at least in the somewhat archaic sense the term currently has in French, in other words, quite simply a piece of writing consisting of a very small number of pages. And this very little book—maybe the shortest of all those Derrida published—ends by citing “a certain idea of cosmopolitanism, an other, [that] has not yet arrived, perhaps,” or that “has perhaps not yet been recognized” (Derrida, On Cosmopolitanism, 23).

I am constantly reciting and repeating the abrupt juxtaposition of that beginning and this end. On the one hand, this thing or this cause named cosmopolitanism has perhaps not yet arrived or has perhaps gone unnoticed. But on the other hand, one does not know or no longer knows if it still has a future.

What then might be left of cosmopolitanism? Perhaps nothing more, if it had to be left as the history of its devaluation has given it over to us.
Yet perhaps it is entirely left to come, like that other cosmopolitanism for which Derrida, more than anyone else, will have advocated.

Let us start then by lending an ear to the injunction of the title, with the imperative that attends its exclamation point: “Cosmopolitans of All Lands, Yet Another Effort!”

The title is something of a monstrous hybrid that plays at deforming the overly famous concluding sentence of Marx’s *Communist Manifesto* (“Workers of all lands, unite!”) by coupling it with the title of the “brochure” inserted into the fifth dialogue of *Philosophy in the Bedroom* by the marquis de Sade (“Yet Another Effort, Frenchmen, If You Would Become Republicans”).

Such a rewriting is no small matter. Especially when one considers that Marx’s quip (*Proletarier aller Länder*) is replaced with the name of those cosmopolitans that the author of the *Communist Manifesto* had a tendency to see as the instruments of globalized capitalist domination. One need only be reminded, for example, that in *The Civil War in France* (1871), Marx speaks of the “cosmopolitan orgies” of “financial speculation” (*der Finanzschwindel feierte kosmopolitische Orgien*) or else of “capital’s cosmopolitan conspiracy” (*weltbürgerliche Verschwörung des Kapitals*).²

In short, the title of Derrida’s pamphlet reverses, and not without a certain sweet violence, the devaluation of cosmopolitanism that is already widely under way in the work of Marx. Because its value is apparently devalued according to an inexorable process that, from the celestial heights it reached in Kant’s work, led the word into the hell of the “cosmopolitan Jew” (as *Weltjude* was translated) mentioned in *Mein Kampf* or the “rootless cosmopolitan” (*bezrodnie kosmopoliti*) targeted by Stalin’s anti-Semitic campaigns starting in 1948.

Of course, Derrida knows all this all too well; elsewhere, he recalls the “ideological connotations with which modern anti-Semitism
saddled the great tradition of a cosmopolitanism passed down from Stoicism or Pauline Christianity to the Enlightenment and to Kant. What Derrida states less explicitly, though he is of course not ignorant of it either, is that cosmopolitanism, after its Kantian moment, also becomes synonymous with powerlessness or indifference, with political disengagement. This is something we can hear in the writings of the Italian patriot Giuseppe Mazzini, for example, when he opposes nationalism with cosmopolitanism in the following terms:

I have heard many honorable men, animated by the best intentions, declare this standard of *Nationality* that we cherish to be dangerous and retrograde. They told me: “We are more advanced than you,” and they continued: “We no longer believe in the nation, we believe in humanity: we are *Cosmopolitans*.” . . . We are all Cosmopolitans, if by Cosmopolitanism we understand the love and brotherhood of all, and the destruction of all barriers that separate the Peoples and provide them with opposite interests. But can that be all? . . . Our work aims at transforming ideas into reality; we have to *organize*, if I may say so, not thought, but *action*. Now every organization that is to concretely affect reality requires a starting point and a goal. . . . For us, the end is humanity; the pivot, or point of support is man, the isolated *individual*. Therein lies almost all the difference between us and the Cosmopolitans, but it is a major difference.4

The cosmopolitan, Mazzini says in sum, jumps all alone beyond the nation, directly to the scale of humanity. And this is why he cannot give himself the means to intervene concretely; he does not act and is only able to speak in isolation and in the name of great principles, whereas the Mazzinian nationalist on the contrary seeks out the point of support for alliances *between nations*, as can be seen in his 1863 call to Serbian and Hungarian patriots to fight together against Austrian oppression. What
Mazzini’s nationalism places up against cosmopolitanism is thus ultimately what Marcel Mauss called an *inter-nation*.5

So true is this that there will also be convinced internationalists who will, almost everywhere, turn their backs on cosmopolitanism in a gesture whose logic was, at bottom, already sketched out in section 209 of Hegel’s *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. There, one could read that, on the one hand, “A human being counts as such because he is a human being, not because he is a Jew, Catholic, Protestant, German, Italian, etc.” And on the other, a warning that reminds us that “this consciousness” of humanity in each human, while of “infinite importance,” can nonetheless also be frozen “in opposition to the concrete life of the state—for example, as cosmopolitanism.”6

What good does it do to recall all these discourses, some very well known and others less so? Why mention them here? Simply to provide the measure for Derrida’s singular gesture when he prints the mark of this title: “Cosmopolitans of All Lands, Yet Another Effort!”

If he no doubt does not hold a monopoly on the word in contemporary philosophy, to my knowledge, Derrida is the only person to have made cosmopolitanism into such an imperative and direct watchword through the interpellation of his exclamation point: “Cosmopolitans of All Lands, Yet Another Effort!” is an injunction for which, even in Derrida’s work, one could find very few equivalents.

“The Cosmopolitan,” continues Mazzini a few lines after the ones I just cited, “stands alone at the center of an immense circle that extends itself around him, and whose limits are beyond his grasp” (“Nationality and Cosmopolitanism,” 58). This image that once again attempts to state the cosmopolitan’s political powerlessness, his or her lack of a point of support for action can, as long as we hear it differently, also gesture toward the horizon.
from whose perspective cosmopolitanism demands to be rethought today. For the circle Mazzini speaks of is not without recalling the figure of the globe in its global or globalized form, or else of what was once called the ecumene, in other words the inhabited space of the Earth’s surface (the word comes from the Greek oikein: to inhabit, in the expression oikoumenê gé).

In a 1920 text called The Nation, Marcel Mauss was able to write: “Now that the ecumene forms a world, . . . there is no people that is not in direct or indirect relations with the others.” Yet faced with this confident affirmation of the unity of the inhabited earthly world, faced with this faith in the being-world and the being-one of this world that is ours, Mazzini’s image insists and interrogates: “Alone at the center of an immense circle . . . whose limits are beyond his grasp,” the cosmopolitan may indeed have something to do precisely with the inaccessible, with the infinitely other that, under each step in this world, digs out the abyss of what we indeed must call an unworld.

But let’s not go too quickly.

It is slowly, patiently, and with precaution that we must let the other figure of cosmopolitanism come—the one that has not yet arrived or that we have perhaps not yet perceived.

As an attempt to grope closer to it, one can already try to return to Kant, as Derrida did in such a striking way, after two centuries of constant devaluation of cosmopolitan discourse. It would then be a matter of rereading Kant’s cosmopolitical writings, of soliciting them once again, as Derrida had begun to do by interrogating the limitations that, in Perpetual Peace, oversee the Kantian idea of a hospitality that is nonetheless qualified as universal. But, in order to begin to listen for a cosmopolitanism to come, we must no doubt reopen its stakes to even vaster expanses without restricting it, as a certain reception of Derrida has done, to the theme of hospitality.

This is why, in the preceding pages, I attempted to lend an attentive ear to what might be announced in another site of the Kantian cosmopolitical corpus, namely the end of the Anthropology.
Kant is about to characterize the human race as a “multitude of persons” who are “destined by nature to develop . . . into a cosmopolitan society (cosmopolitismus).” Yet before getting to this cosmopolitical characterization of humanity, and speaking of the human being as a “terrestrial rational being,” Kant writes (as we read earlier):

We shall not be able to name its character because we have no knowledge of the non-terrestrial beings that would enable us to indicate their characteristic property and so to characterize this terrestrial being among rational beings in general. It seems, therefore, that the problem of indicating the character of the human species is absolutely insoluble, because the solution would have to be made through experience by means of the comparison of two species of rational being, but experience does not offer us this possibility. (Anthropology, 225)

Here, I am once again insisting, there is a gesture with a triple consequence: (1) Humanity is structurally projected toward an extra-earthly space from which it is called to be characterized; but (2) it can define itself there only by undefining itself in a movement of comparison without a comparative term; and (3) this movement is horizontal rather than vertical, in the sense that it seems a priori to imply none of the hierarchies that traditionally situate the human as a mortal and a rational animal, between the beast and the god, above the one and below the other.

In the triple reach of this gripping gesture of the last pages of the Kantian Anthropology, a possible figure for another cosmopolitanism might be sketched out. It might be, I say in the conditional, for what seems thus to be announced as this triple opening cracks ajar closes right back up again, already in the next paragraph: (1) We immediately return (226) to the ground of the terrestrial ecumene so that the human being can be differentiated “among the living inhabitants of this earth”; (2) the human is then very classically characterized in comparison with
the animal (the human is a *rational animal*, says Kant); and (3) the human being is thus understood as being raised *above* animality following a *vertical* ascension for which the almost comical question of his standing posture is in a way the metaphor (“is the human being originally destined to walk on four feet . . . or on two feet?” asks Kant, and one can imagine the answer).

These contrary or contradictory movements provide the background against which, at the end of the *Anthropology*, the cosmopolitical question emerges as Kant takes it up from the Stoics and sends it our way. But why insist, as I have done, on the reach of this comparative indefiniteness of humanity? Why is it important to recall that in the Kantian text it provides a *precondition* for the formulation of cosmopolitical stakes, a kind of premise to which we can then return as a way to give ourselves the chance to reinvent or rethink an idea whose devaluation threatens it with liquidation?

It is because at stake is no more and no less than the concept of the world, of this *kosmos* of which cosmopolitanism should perhaps be above all the questioning auscultation, even before being a determined way of inhabiting, exploiting, or sharing it.

Over the course of the long history of cosmopolitanism, starting with its Stoic sources through today and perhaps into tomorrow, the proposition of a world inhabited in common by all members of the human species has always been very closely accompanied and even explicitly sustained by the thetic and stubborn affirmation of the distinction between animality and humanity, as if it were a question of reassuring ourselves of the impermeability of the border separating them. In just a moment, we’ll be reading this in Cicero and Augustine: The comparative gesture that defines the animal and the human in relation to one another—this hierarchizing movement that Kant’s *Anthropology*, as we saw, seems for an instant to want to topple over into horizontality—this
gesture may well be constitutive of every cosmopolitical horizon. As we will verify, it may well provide its necessary premise.

Now this border between humanity and animality is one whose cracks and fissures Derrida constantly probed. He constantly explored its porosities so as to make his meditation on the animal a privileged mode of access to the question of the world as such. The task that thus befalls us in order to bring about or allow for an other cosmopolitanism to come is perhaps to open up the concept and expose it (given that it shelters the word kosmos within it) to this deconstructing questioning bearing on the worldliness of the world as it is constituted on the basis of the comparison between the human and the animal. I will be getting to this in just a moment, but it is important beforehand to probe the constancy and recurrence of the comparative gesture starting with the most ancient cosmopolitical tradition.

As we know, the cynic Diogenes of Sinope is traditionally attributed with the paternity of the word kosmopolitês, which then becomes a major signifier all the way through late Stoicism. Yet the Stoic concept of the citizen of the world, especially as it is outlined in Cicero’s writing, appears as explicitly carried by and propped up on a comparative definition of humanity. This definition seems to serve to support cosmopolitical horizontality on the most solid of vertical hierarchies between human being and animal, as can be seen in a page from De finibus bonorum et malorum (3.64–67):

The Stoics hold that the universe is ruled by divine will, and that it is virtually a single city and state shared by humans and gods [quasi communem urbem et civitatem hominum et deorum]. Each one of us is a part of this universe [mundi esse partem]. It follows naturally from this that we value the common good more than our own [communem utilisatem nostrae anteponamus]. . . . We use the parts of our body before we have learned the actual reasons why we have them. In the same way it is by nature that we have gathered together and
formed ourselves into civil societies [ad civilem communitatem coniuncti et consociati sumus]. . . . But though they hold that there is a code of law which binds humans together, the Stoics do not consider that any such code exists between humans and other animals. Chrysippus made the famous remark that all other things were created for the sake of humans and gods, but that humans and gods were created for the sake of their own community and society [cetera nata esse hominum causa et deorum, eos autem communitatis et societatis suae]; and so humans use animals for their own benefit with impunity. He added that human nature is such that a kind of civil code mediates the individual and the human race [ut ei cum genere humano quasi civile ius intercederet]: whoever abides by this code will be just, whoever breaches it unjust.13

One can see it: It is by constructing itself on the basis of the vertical comparison with animality that the cosmopolitical horizon opens up and its horizontal contract is constituted. And this is also the case if we turn to the other major source of modern cosmopolitanism, to the other tributary feeding its discourse, in Kant and beyond him, namely to its Christian moment as it is epitomized in an exemplary way in Saint Augustine’s Civitas Dei. Here again, it is on the basis of the clearly affirmed dominance over the animal realm that the earthly cosmopolis is constructed. In effect, it’s a citation from Genesis (1:26: “Let them [humans] have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle”) that first inspires the following commentary: “He did not intend that His rational creature, made in His own image, should have lordship over any but irrational creatures: not man over man, but man over the beasts.”14 This statement in turn prepares and undergirds the formulation of the idea of Christian cosmopolitics in these terms (19.17):

For as long as this Heavenly City is a pilgrim on earth, she summons citizens of all nations [ex omnibus gentibus cives
evocat], and in all languages brings together a society of pilgrims [in omnibus linguis peregrinam colligit societatem] in which no attention is paid to any differences in the customs, laws, and institutions by which earthly peace is achieved or maintained. She does not rescind or destroy these things, however. For whatever differences there are among the various nations, these all tend towards the same end of earthly peace [terrenae pacis].

Why then thus underline this architectonic solidarity—that might in many ways seem trivial—between, on the one hand, the affirmation of the border separating humanity from animality and, on the other hand, the opening of the cosmopolitical horizon? Quite simply to take the measure, once again, of what happens to cosmopolitanism with Derrida. For even as he revives this rallying cry in an unheard-of manner for a future we no longer foresaw for it, he nonetheless seems radically to undermine its strongest and most ancient supports.

What vacillates and trembles in Derrida is not only, as we know, the purity of the distinction between human being and animal (and even the very resource for the comparative gesture that distinguishes between them). But it is also and at the same time, according to a consequence whose necessity we now better understand, the possibility of a common world. Here is what can be read, in a particularly gripping formulation, at the beginning of the second volume of The Beast and the Sovereign:

Neither animals of different species, nor humans of different cultures, nor any animal or human individual inhabit the same world as another, however close and similar these living individuals may be (be they humans or animals), and the difference between one world and another will remain always unbridgeable,
because the community of the world is always constructed, simulated by a set of stabilizing apparatuses, more or less stable, then, and never neutral, language in the broad sense, codes of traces being designed, among all living beings, to construct a unity of the world that is always deconstructible, nowhere and never given in nature. Between my world . . . what I call “my world”—and there is no other for me, as any other world is part of it—between my world and any other world there is first the space and the time of an infinite difference, an interruption that is incommensurable with all attempts to make a passage, a bridge, an isthmus, all attempts at communication, translation, trope, and transfer that the desire for a world or the want of a world, the being wanted a world will try to pose, impose, propose, stabilize. There is no world, there are only islands.\footnote{16}

As striking as it may be, this formulation nonetheless does not give the full measure of what is at stake. For it is not only the naturalness of the common world that Derrida is contesting (a naturalness that, from the Stoics to Kant and perhaps beyond, founds the cosmopolitical project as the destiny of humanity). It is also and above all, as we can hear in “Rams,” the world’s preexistence, its antecedence over the address from an I to a you: “As soon as I speak to you and am responsible for you, or before you, there can no longer, essentially, be any world. No world can any longer support us, serve as mediation, as ground, as earth, as foundation or as alibi. Perhaps there is no longer anything but the abyssal altitude of a sky.”\footnote{17}

In other words, before you and me, there is nothing, nothing that precedes us, nothing between us that allows us to say “we.” This is what, taking up Hegel’s quip about Spinoza, we might describe as the fundamentally acosmic nature of address or response in Derrida—on the condition that we immediately specify that the aforementioned acosmism is in no way opposed to cosmopolitanism, but rather its condition of possibility yet to come.\footnote{18}
However unheard of it may be, however unthinkable and unthought, this idea of cosmopolitanism would share at least one characteristic with the habitual sense of the word that Mazzini was able to presuppose in his critique: the absence of mediation. “The Cosmopolitan,” wrote Mazzini, “stands alone at the center of an immense circle that extends itself around him, and whose limits are beyond his grasp.” All alone is what the I from the poem by Celan also is, the poem of which “Rams” is the patient and minute meditation. Still commenting on its last line (die Welt ist fort, ich muss dich tragen), Derrida in effect continues:

Perhaps there is no longer anything but the abyssal altitude of a sky. I am alone in the world right where there is no longer any world. Or again: I am alone in the world as soon as I owe myself to you, as soon as you depend on me, as soon as I bear, and must assume, head to head or face to face, without third, mediator, or go-between, without earthly or worldly ground, the responsibility for which I must respond in front of you for you. (“Rams,” 158)

One should thus say in all rigorousness that it is the I-you—the I to you or the you to me—that, without mediation, in the epochal suspension of the world, finds itself immediately projected to a planetary scale. On the condition of understanding this word, as Derrida does, from the perspective of its ancient history, of what still resonates within it of an old, immemorial errancy.

The Greek noun leaves its trace there. Errancy is bound to be planetary. Planètes means “wandering,” “nomadic,” and it is sometimes said of errant animals. . . . Planètikos means unstable, turbulent, agitated, unpredictable, irregular; planos is used to describe an errant course but also a digression, for example, in the articulation of a discourse, of a written text. (Derrida, “Rams,” 153)
Derrida mentions this planetary or planetic destinerrancy in the context of a reading of Celan over the course of which he refers several times to the Heideggerian meditation on the concept of world. And this is why it is impossible not to hear an echo here of one of Heidegger’s formulations describing the Earth under the grasp of modern technology, not only as the unworld of error or errancy (Unwelt der Irrnis), but also and most importantly as an erring orb or crazed star (Irrstern). As if our planet, from the point of view of the history of being (seyngeschichtlich), did not have or no longer had a determined place in the universe.19 This formulation concludes a passage that, without taking recourse to the word cosmopolitanism (Heidegger hardly ever uses it), nonetheless mentions the major motifs that are generally associated with it.

Just as the distinction between war and peace has become untenable, the distinction between “national” and “international” has also collapsed. Whoever thinks in “a European way” today, no longer allows himself to be exposed to the reproach of being an “internationalist.” But he is also no longer a nationalist, since he thinks no less about the well-being of the other nations than about his own.20

It is thus as if, for better or for worse, cosmopolitanism was also in solidarity with the unfurling of technology that transforms the world into an unworld (Unwelt). In other words into an a-cosmic space like the one where the Sputnik traveled, that first artificial satellite that Heidegger, in his series of three lectures called On the Way to Language,21 mentions several times. In effect, this flying object thrown out into the cosmos emerges four times in Heidegger’s lectures, thus provoking an interruption, something one would almost like to call a stunning and sidereal [sidérale et sidérante] collision with his meditation on a poem by Stefan George: “Countless people look upon this ‘thing’ Sputnik . . . as a wonder, this ‘thing’ that races around in a worldless ‘world’-space [das in einem weltlosen “Welt”-Raum umherrast]” (62).
The repeated quotation marks—kind of intermittent beeps like those the first *Sputnik* emitted—signal that the concepts of thing and world have, to Heidegger’s eyes, been emptied of their meaning, that they, too, are traveling in the void. In this void on the basis of which the division of our world is nonetheless organized, for Heidegger writes further on, as if he were imagining the screenplay for a science fiction episode: “The battle for the dominion of the earth has entered its decisive phase. The all-out challenge to secure dominion over the earth [*die vollständige Herausforderung der Erde in die Sicherung der Herrschaft über sie*] can be met only by occupying an ultimate position beyond the earth from which to establish control over the earth” (*On the Way to Language*, 105).

If we follow Heidegger, it is thus from the point of view of this acosmic unworld that is the cosmos, it’s from the point of view of the battle raging there, from the point of view of this cosmic politics or this cosmopolitics of a new type that *access* to our world is being configured and distributed. Starting with the sensible, perceptual access to it, in other words, what we can see or hear of it right here, down here, since we look increasingly with satellite eyes, just as we listen with ears in orbit. One could speak here, as I have suggested, of a “geopolitics of the sensible.” Or else of *cosmetopolitics*, allowing yet another significance of the word *kosmos* to resonate, namely cosmetics as a touch-up of the sensible.

But what Derrida’s acosmic cosmopolitanism demands that we think is that the unworld of planetary or planetizing destinerancy is not only the Archimedean point from the perspective of which dominion over the earth is established. It is not only there where, for Heidegger, modern technology has caused the desert and power to increase. It is also, *in an indissociable way*, there where the other, with every step and at every instant, reserves and holds itself [*se reserve, se tient*] as utterly other.

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150 }} POSTFACE
No one, no philosopher, after Kant, has seriously imagined other faraway worlds populated by inhabitants that would be so many nonearthly reasonable beings, unknowable comparatives for humanity. But, although not supposing it inhabited, there is at least one thinker who, unlike Heidegger, and as an answer explicitly addressed to him, considered that the cosmos, the cosmos of modern technoscience, was partly inhabitable. A little bit inhabitable, for a lapse of time perhaps destined to grow in length.

In a short text called “Heidegger, Gagarin, and Us,” written just after the first manned space flight, which, on April 12, 1961, carried the Soviet astronaut Yuri Gagarin into orbit, Emmanuel Levinas writes:

Technology wrenches us out of the Heideggerian world and the superstitions surrounding Place. From this point on, an opportunity appears to us: to perceive men outside the situation in which they are placed, and let the human face shine in all its nudity. . . . What is admirable about Gagarin’s feat is certainly not his magnificent performance at Luna Park which impresses the crowds; it is not the sporting achievement of having gone further than the others and broken the world records for height and speed. . . . What perhaps counts most of all is that he left the Place. For one hour, man existed beyond any horizon—everything around him was sky.

One might think one hears some distant echo of Mazzini while reading the description of this man, who, “alone at the center of an immense circle . . . whose limits are beyond his grasp,” is surrounded by nothing but sky. This man whose territory has become ultraplanetary and who thus seems to incarnate in an exemplary way the figure of an acosmism for which, as Derrida writes in “Rams,” “perhaps there is no longer anything but the abyssal altitude of a sky.”

It is, however, in an entirely different way that Derrida, for his part, calls up the image of the cosmonaut in a peculiar sequence
in *Circumfession*: “I have neither up nor down, like the squirrel climbing up and down horizontally, the form of my world, a literature that is apparently, like the very look of my writing, cosmonautical, floating in weightlessness.”

24 Here, the cosmonautical is slanted to the animal side; it, too, is bent toward animality. Or at least it cannot be reduced to the “human face in all its nudity” as Levinas describes it, for it is as if, with Derrida, the comparative indefiniteness of humanity that we saw peep through at the end of Kant’s *Anthropology* were becoming general and structural, constitutive of an acosmic I-you from the perspective of which is announced a cosmopolitanism to come.25

Of this other idea of cosmopolitanism—which has no doubt not yet arrived or that we have perhaps not yet recognized—the possibility would be inscribed neither in a human nature nor in a destiny of humanity, nor in the stable and reassuring concept of some *zoon politikon* or *animal rationale*. To the contrary, it is barely cracked open each time that, in an I-to-you or a you-to-me, in an addressed gaze or listening (are there any that are not addressed?), the world, like humanity, steals away and ends.
In *Men in Black II*, the sequel directed by Barry Sonnenfeld in 2002, there is a giant neurolyzer on the Statue of Liberty that erases the memories of all New Yorkers.


25. In *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason* (trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005]), Jacques Derrida, while wondering about reason yet to come (142), concedes to a kind of Copernican trembling of deconstruction; commenting on Husserl’s *Crisis of European Sciences*, he wonders: “Can one really replace the sun? Can one think an original technical prosthesis of the sun?” (140). Right before affirming that deconstruction is “an unconditional rationalism” (142), Derrida will thus—and at a particular, perhaps unique moment of his oeuvre—have opened this cosmotheoretical horizon: changing suns, taking one solar system for another.

4. Weightless: The Archimedean Point of the Sensible


3. It must be repeated: It is Jacques Rancière who, starting at least with *Disagreement*, has unfolded a strong political reading of Kantian aesthetics (which owes more than it might want to admit to Hannah Arendt, see above, chapter 1, note 9). With explicit reference to Kant’s *Critique of the Power of Judgment* and defining the aesthetic as the “distribution [partage] of the sensible,” Rancière writes, “That a palace may be the object of an evaluation that has no bearing on the convenience of a residence, the privileges of a role, or the emblems of a majesty, is what, for Kant, particularizes the aesthetic community and the requirement of universality proper to it. So the autonomization of aesthetics means . . . constituting a kind of community of sense experience that works on the assumption of the ‘as if’ that includes those who are not included by
revealing a mode of existence of sense experience that has eluded the allocation of parties and lots. There never has been any ‘aestheticization’ of politics in the modern age because politics is aesthetic in principle” (Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy, trans. Julie Rose [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999], 57–58). In The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (New York: Continuum, 2004), Rancière speaks of “politics as a form of experience”: “This aesthetics . . . can be understood in a Kantian sense—re-examined perhaps by Foucault—as the system of a priori forms determining what presents itself to sense experience. It is a delimitation of spaces and times, of the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise” (13). During a recent interview (“Les territoires de la pensée partagée,” 2007, reprinted in Et tant pis pour les gens fatigués: Entretiens (Paris: Editions Amsterdam, 2009), 582, 584), Rancière mobilizes the category of “anyone” in a way that immediately recalls the jedermann in Kant’s Third Critique.

4. Schmitt is perhaps closer to a certain aspect of Kant’s posterity than he thinks when, in “Appropriation/Distribution/Production,” he writes that “the meaning of nomos . . . is an Urteil [an original division] and its outcome” (Carl Schmitt, The Nomos of the Earth, trans. G. L. Ulmen (1950; New York: Telos, 2003), 326). In German, Urteil does in effect mean judgment; and Schmittean discourse on nomos could very well imply or initiate a “critique of the power of judgment” (Kritik der Urteilskraft) as, quite precisely, a division of the sensible. (On the false etymology—of which Fichte, Hegel, and Hölderlin take advantage—that holds that Urteil is a primary division, ursprünglich teilen, one can consult Manfred Frank’s remarks in The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 85, 103).

5. The second part of the title “Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature: The Originary Ark, the Earth, Does Not Move” (trans. Fred Kersten, rev. Leonard Lawlor in Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Husserl at the Limits of Phenomenology, edited by Leonard Lawlor with Bettina Bergo [Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2001], 117–31) is borrowed from the remarks on the cover of the manuscript: “Reversal of Copernican Doctrine (Umsturz der kopernikanischen Lehre) in the interpretation
of the habitual vision of the world. The originary ark, the Earth, does not move. Foundational investigations of the phenomenological origin of corporeity, the spatiality of nature in the primary sense of the natural sciences.” This remarkable cosmotheoretical meditation is in effect an exception among the passing mentions of a possible cosmic point of view in the work of other thinkers. I have in mind in particular Hannah Arendt and the “watcher from the universe” who suddenly pops up in the final pages of The Human Condition: “It at once becomes manifest that all [the] activities [of man], watched from a sufficiently removed vantage point in the universe, would appear not as activities of any kind but as processes, so that, as a scientist recently put it, modern motorization would appear like a process of biological mutation in which human bodies gradually begin to be covered by shells of steel. For the watcher from the universe, this mutation would be no more or less mysterious than the mutation which now goes on before our eyes in those small living organisms which we fought with antibiotics and which mysteriously have developed new strains to resist us” (322–23). Arendt also considers the hypothesis of “an emigration of men from the earth to some other planet” (10) but, in one incidental remark that seems to recognize the importance of science fiction, she quickly reduces its role to a simple literary expression of earthly desires and affects: “The highly non-respectable literature of science fiction (to which, unfortunately, nobody yet has paid the attention it deserves as a vehicle of mass sentiments and mass desires)” (2, emphasis mine). One might also mention the “apologue of the Martian” in book 2 of Lacan’s Seminar (trans. Sylvana Tomaselli [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988]), in which Lacan also mentions the topos of “the point of view of Sirius” to characterize “the manner in which man comes into [s’intéresse] . . . speech” (283).

6. Schmitt, as Günter Maschke indicates in a note in his monumental collection of Schmitt’s work in Frieden oder Pazifismus? Arbeiten zum Völkerrecht und zur internationalen Politik, 1924–1978 (Berlin: Duncker und Humbolt, 2005), read science fiction novels “in which inhabitants of faraway stars considered invading the Earth, so much so that the question was posed as to the unification of humanity faced with this kind of extrapoliitical enemy [gegen einen solchen aussenpolitischen Feind]” (232). Among others, Schmitt had
read John Wyndham’s *The Chrysalids* (1955), and one understands why since in its German translation, the novel had the inviting title of *Wem gehört die Erde?* “To whom does the Earth belong?”

7. “There was once,” writes Nietzsche in “On the Pathos of Truth” (trans. Taylor Carman, in *On Truth and Untruth* [New York: Harper Collins, 2010], 13), “there was once a star on which some clever animals invented knowledge. It was the most arrogant, most mendacious minute in world history, but it was only a minute. After nature caught its breath a little, the star froze, and the clever animals had to die.” Husserl ups the stakes, as we just read, with the “entropy” of earth. This “fiction of the total annihilation of the world” may well be, as Derrida suggested in a previously cited interview (“Scènes des differences,” in *Littérature*, no. 142 [June 2006]) “the very element of philosophical discourse.”


10. I am of course alluding to the (overly) famous characterization of the aura given by Walter Benjamin in “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technical Reproducibility”: “the unique apparition of a distance, however near it may be” (third version, 1939, trans. Harry Zohn and Edmund Jephcott, in *Selected Writings*, vol. 4, ed. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003], 255). In the first published version of the same text (1935), Benjamin spoke of “a strange tissue of time and space” (*Selected Writings*, 3:104). Rather than interpreting the aura, as it has been too often, on the horizon of its loss (the claimed loss of uniqueness, attributable to mechanical, photographic, or filmic reproduction), it will be necessary to show just how much film, for Benjamin, opens the possibility of an auratic experience that he is not far from describing in cosmotheoretical, even cosmopolitical terms: “Our bars and city streets, our offices and furnished rooms, our railroad stations and our factories seemed to close relentlessly around us. Then came film and exploded this prison-world with the dynamite of the split second, so that now we can set off calmly on journeys of adventure among its far-flung debris. With the close-up,
space expands, with slow motion, movement is extended. And just as enlargement not merely clarifies what we see indistinctly ‘in any case,’ but brings to light entirely new structures of matter, slow motion not only reveals familiar aspects of movements, but discloses quite unknown aspects within them—aspects ‘which do not appear as the retarding of natural movements but have curious gliding, floating character of their own’” (Selected Writings, 4:265–66; Benjamin is citing Rudolf Arnheim, Film as Art [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957]). Rather than concluding, with Benjamin himself, that “it is another nature which speaks to the camera as compared to the eye” (Benjamin, Selected Writings, 4:266), here I have wanted to suggest, with Kant or beyond Kant, that the radical alterity that surfaces in the cinematographic gaze is at bottom the same one that already inhabits any point of view as such. But inscribing within this as such a philosophic as if.


12. As if here, in this clownish register of farce, there were a memory of the affinity between cosmologies and cosmetics.


Postface: What’s Left of Cosmopolitanism?


2. See http://www.mlwerke.de/me. If there are ultimately few occurrences of the signifier cosmopolitan under Marx’s plume, the ones there are speak for themselves. One could also cite The German Ideology: “Free competition and world trade gave birth to hypocritical, bourgeois cosmopolitanism and the notion of man” (den heuchlerischen, bürgerlichen Kosmopolitismus und den Begriff des Menschen).


5. See Marcel Mauss, “La nation et l’internationalisme” (1920), in *Oeuvres* (Paris: Minuit, 1969), 3:626–34. Mauss’s discourse is close to Mazzini’s: “Internationalism worthy of the name is the opposite of cosmopolitanism. It does not deny the nation. It situates it. Internation is the opposite of a-nation. It is also consequentl the opposite of nationalism, which isolates the nation” (translation mine).


15. Ibid., 945.
18. The cosmopolitanism to come can therefore not be described in Etienne Tassin’s terms when he translates the notion of “worldlessness” in Hannah Arendt as “acosmisme” (Tassin, *Un monde commun*, 17 and passim); “Cosmopolitics,” he writes, “is first of all resistance to acosmism” (translation mine). Hegel, particularly in the *Science of Logic* that composes the first part of his *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (§50 in the 1830 edition), speaks of Spinoza’s “acosmism” according to which “the world is determined . . . as a mere phenomenon without genuine reality. See G. W. F. Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, trans. Theodore F. Geraets, W. A. Suchting, and H. S. Harris (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991), 97.
23. Ibid., 232–33.

25. The you to whom the planetizing address is sent, we read in “Rams,” “can designate a living being, a human or non-human animal” and “can also be addressed to the dead, to the survivor or to the specter” (Derrida, “Rams,” 159).