

Macrocosm-opolitanism? Gilroy, Appiah, and Bhabha: The Unsettling Generality of Cosmopolitan Ideas

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Cosmopolitanism may [. . .] be a project whose conceptual content and pragmatic character are not only as yet unspecified but also must always escape positive and definite specification, precisely because specifying cosmopolitanism positively and definitely is an unc cosmopolitan thing to do.

—Pollock, Bhabha, Breckenridge, and Chakrabarty 577

Generalisations make assessment difficult. Complexities are further increased when an argument employs the clause: “But we can circumvent that problem by asserting its integrality to the nature of our subject.” Such strategies are, to a certain extent, structures to hide behind in ignorance: short cuts through insufficiently well-argued terrain. They are, however, central to many debates over terms in what is generally labelled the “postcolonial” field. I would argue, for example, that “diaspora” accepts a proliferation of definitions because of a multiply-located plurality in subject matter. In the same way, “nationalism” fails to question the violence inherent in an assertion of cultural identity. In employing these tactics, critics tend to gloss over the fact that there is something at the centre of many of these concepts that is just not understood.

“Cosmopolitanism” is just such an ambivalent idea within “the postcolonial”: it is a term whose very generality has enabled numerous critics to expound at length on its features without realising any particularly concrete definitions, and thus without reaching any kind of consensus on what the term means. A quick survey of various “cosmopolitanisms” yields Paul Rabinow’s “ethos of macro-interdependencies” (258); Mamadou Diouf’s need to “fully account for the overlapping of local systems of mercantile, cultural, and religious values” (680); Arjun Appadurai’s assertion of the necessity of avoiding “presupposing either the authority of the Western experience or the models derived from that experience” (192); Tim Brennan’s references to a concept involving “spokespersons for a kind of perennial immigration [. . .] rife with allusions to the all-seeing eye of the nomadic sensibility” (2); and Benita Parry’s description of ““global flows”” leading to an “emergent *postcolonial* cosmopolitanism” (41, original emphasis). Attempts to pin down the term further include Scott Malcomson’s “actually existing” (238), Homi Bhabha’s “vernacular,” and Kwame Anthony Appiah’s and Mitchell Cohen’s

“rooted” cosmopolitanisms (the last three appear in the titles of articles).¹

Does anyone know what “cosmopolitanism” signifies? On a separate—but related—topic, has the idea of “cosmopolitanism” become detached from the figure of the “cosmopolitan”? The “cosmopolitan,” I would assert, is an individual occupying the margins of society, embracing ideas of travel, of crossing borders: the modern-day equivalent of Homer’s Odysseus, of Swift’s Gulliver, of Baudelaire’s and Benjamin’s *flâneur*. “Cosmopolitanism,” meanwhile, has become associated with such a proliferation of meanings that it can be anything to anyone, a vehicle for articulating the individualities of the critics who profess to its espousal.

The somewhat contrived neologism of my title is, firstly, a response to the overwhelming number of uses to which the word “cosmopolitanism” is put—a plurality of application going beyond the extent of what, in being yoked to the idea of the “polis,” city, has become a rigidly defined “cosmos,” universe. The compound “macrocosm-opolitanism” is an attempt to highlight the pre-existing limitations in what, it will become evident, is much-contested terrain. As has been suggested, the different usefulnesses of two ideas is also one of my concerns; this new term is an attempt to reclaim for the concept, “cosmopolitanism,” a specificity of meaning that has not been lost in the figure itself, the “cosmopolitan.” The third and final intention of this piece of linguistic manipulation—a purpose that is, to a certain extent, implied in my primary and secondary aims—is to address the idea of shifting implications within individual analyses of the subject. When it is possible for a concept—“cosmopolitanism”—to be loaded epistemologically in so many different ways, it can assume protean qualities that turn the word itself into a plurality. Hence “macrocosm-opolitanism,” to emphasise the proliferation of meanings made to circulate around the original word. In setting up this construction, I am aware that ambitious neologizing has left my argument cornered from the start: a truly “macrocosmic” analysis of the many “cosmopolitanisms” would be unfeasibly weighty, would indeed cease to form a coherent argument, and is in any case beyond the scope of this essay; the manageable study that is the alternative, however, will inevitably seem inadequate. It is the analytical purpose behind coining the word “macrocosm-opolitanism” that interests me most, however, rather than any particular claims to be definitive, conclusive, or all-encompassing.

With this in mind, I take for my subjects in this study the recent work of three critics whose focus on the cultural implications of the term “cosmopolitanism” links them, as surely as they are significantly divided by their differing theoretical approaches and standpoints. Paul Gilroy’s firmly anti-racist rooting of the contested word “cosmopolitanism” in a “postimperial melancholia” differs considerably from Kwame Anthony Appiah’s humanist ideas about

¹ For a comprehensive summary of the various types of cosmopolitanisms, see Robbins, “Introduction: Part I”, especially 1-2.

“citizens of the world” (213), and yet Appiah picks up on the same “toxic[ity]” (220) that Gilroy sees as a residue of “the triumphalism and complacency of ever-expanding imperial universals” (xi). Homi Bhabha focuses his critical lens in a similar way to Appiah, though his analysis is more of a celebration of the multi-ethnic ethics of the “vernacular cosmopolitan” (139). Yet, as I have suggested, referring to “cosmopolitanism” through the idea of the “cosmopolitan” is a risky conflation of terms: Bhabha thus shares with Gilroy and Appiah certain confusions of usage that leave a final analysis wanting. I see my consideration of the relative flaws in these three theorists as paving the way for a more wide-ranging understanding—an understanding I see “macrocosmopolitanism” as providing.

Born in the United Kingdom to British and British Guianese parents, Paul Gilroy has always been deeply invested in exposing the damaging racial implications of certain widely used generalities. From the start of his latest study, *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?*, Gilroy makes clear his resolution to replace the existing, accepted terms “multiculturalism” and “globalization.” The former, which he sees as having “broke[n] down” through its utopian, naive insistence on “the absence of racism [and] the triumph of tolerance,” is instead to be viewed through the lens of “conviviality,” referring to “processes of cohabitation and interaction that have made multiculture an ordinary feature of social life in Britain’s urban areas and in postcolonial cities elsewhere” (Gilroy xi). “Global,” a term “transmit[ting] all the triumphalism and complacency of ever-expanding imperial universals,” is to be replaced by “planetary” (Gilroy xii). Within this climate of epistemological revision, “cosmopolitanism” is another word that is apparently to be jettisoned, for it, too, retains imperialist traces: it was “entangled with and tested by the expansion of Europeans into new territories and compromised, if not wholly discredited, by the consolidation and management of the resulting imperial orders” (Gilroy 4).

While I applaud the anti-generalizing, revisionist impulse that drives Gilroy to bring down these monoliths of the postmodern, “postcolonial” vocabulary, I am troubled by his outright dismissal of cosmopolitanism. “Cosmopolitanism,” for Gilroy, is always already tainted by implicit involvement with “the bloodstained workings of racism—and [...] the distinctive achievements of the colonial government it inspired and legitimated” (Gilroy 4). And whereas in the case of the discredited “multiculturalism” or “globalization,” revised concepts are proposed in their places, here his critical approach seems self-defeating: rejecting the term “cosmopolitanism,” without replacing its interpretative framework, is a destructive process. Gilroy thus problematizes the existence of inter-cultural relationships, which are left without definition. The interpretative gap becomes apparent as the author proceeds with his argument: left without an alternative structure with which to strengthen his replacement for “multiculturalism,” he is forced to employ the previously-criticised term in entirely un-critical reference to “cosmopolitan conviviality” (Gilroy 9), in addressing “provocative cosmopolitan questions” (Gilroy 18). In spite of his

rejection of cosmopolitanism as “simply one more imperialistic particularism dressed up in seductive universal garb” (Gilroy 4), then, Gilroy is drawn into using the term as a simply defined—and therefore strictly limited—marker.

As Gilroy’s argument progresses, readers are left increasingly unsure of his attitude towards “cosmopolitanism.” Especially since we must note that he uses the term “cosmopolitan” to mean “pertaining to cosmopolitan ideals,” devaluing the figure of the “cosmopolitan” through semantic conflation with the concept “cosmopolitanism.” Both terms, however, are subject to varying interpretations: a stance that discredits his professed aversion to “ever-expanding [. . .] universals.” After his neutral reference to “cosmopolitan questions,” he shifts towards an assertion that “cosmopolitanism” is a contested term:

We should doubtless be wary of [“cosmopolitanism”] because [it] resonate[s] most strongly with the liberal political thought that has descended from European enlightenment writings. (Gilroy 62)

Then, however, in immediately moving onto a discussion of “armoured cosmopolitanism” (Gilroy 66, 70), his stance on the idea alters to one of obvious disapproval. This latest position is not occupied for long, though, as he continues with an insight that reaches towards an understanding of “cosmopolitanism” as a shifting term, employed for differing purposes:

Today, the point of view that makes the improvement of a resentful and unappreciative world by imperial powers into a matter of morals *can call itself* cosmopolitan. (Gilroy 69; emphasis added)

Gilroy’s Proteus refuses to be held down. Subsequent references to “cosmopolitan solidarity from below and afar” responding to the Al-Aqsa intifada in Palestine (Gilroy 89), to “our righteous and cosmopolitan government” (Gilroy 136), and to “the warm glow of cosmopolitan imperialism” (Gilroy 156) are loaded with varying degrees of a mocking irony that sees a return to categorical disapproval. He concludes his argument, though, by presenting “cosmopolitanism” in an altogether better light: he sees “cosmopolitan, creolized history” as something that it would be a shame to lose (Gilroy 161), and refers to “the cosmopolitan histories of hierarchy and inequality we all need” (Gilroy 167).

It is evident, from Gilroy’s depiction of “cosmopolitanism” throughout the book, that it is a shifting and uncertain term. However, in neglecting to provide a consistent viewpoint from which to focus his gaze, and a sustained critical attitude towards the term, his analysis itself is undermined. “Cosmopolitanism” is not just a multivalent concept, in terms of the cultural systems it encompasses; it is an unfixed one. For Gilroy, it becomes a transformable cipher, a usefully ambivalent signifier, the cultural load of which can be transferred from opprobrium to approval, depending on the direction of his argument. The limitations of such a transferable concept are brought into focus, if not actually caused, by the unifying grip in which Gilroy holds racism and imperialism. His conclusion that the modern world—and Britain in

particular—exists within a climate of the “residual traces of imperial racism” (Gilroy 158) is a powerful one. Yet, without a replacement for “cosmopolitanism,” such as those provided for “multiculturalism” and “globalization,” there is no solution offered for the West’s “postimperial melancholia” (Gilroy 98), and he is stuck in an analytical loop, re-re-using a term that has been leached of meaning.

Although also born in the United Kingdom, and of mixed parentage, Kwame Anthony Appiah, unlike Paul Gilroy, is inclined to accept the idea of “cosmopolitanism.” Appiah’s approach is to attempt a revision of modes of thought circulating round the term, rather than the complete dismissal of “cosmopolitanism” that Gilroy proposes. In his essay “Rooted Cosmopolitanism,” it does not take long for Appiah to define the second word of his title. He quotes his father’s final message to his children, in which he exhorts them to “[r]emember that [they] are citizens of the world,” and connects this to his titular term: “a citizen of the world [is] ‘cosmopolitan’, in the word’s root sense” (Appiah 213-14). Appiah then quotes Tennyson, whose “Locksley Hall” provides references to a “Vision of the world” in which the poet “dip[s] into the future,” seeing “the heavens fill with commerce” (Tennyson 94): a utopian society that Appiah presents as a common view of “cosmopolitanism.”

These last quotation marks are Appiah’s, and are typical of his cautious attitude towards definition. He recognises that there is a fundamental difference between the “citizen of the world” of his father’s ideal, an idea of responsibility “evidenced by his [father’s] long-term practical commitment to the United Nations” (Appiah 213), and the poetic “aery nothing” (Appiah 214) of Tennyson’s “[p]ilots of the purple twilight” (Tennyson 94). The catch-all term “cosmopolitanism,” according to Appiah, is applied too loosely, to both concepts, and in the process the humanitarian-ness of his father’s “citizen of the world” is undermined: his father’s “cosmopolitanism” is damaged by its association with the “‘Locksley Hall’ rhetoric” of an alternative “cosmopolitanism,” the values of which “are really imperial ones” (Appiah 214). Appiah’s mission here is to retrieve those “forms of cosmopolitanism worth defending—forms that survive theoretical and practical scrutiny,” and re-invest said “forms of cosmopolitanism” with meaning (Appiah 214). This approach is instantly less antagonistic than Gilroy’s outright rejection, as Appiah sees that a complete rejection of the term “cosmopolitanism” entails a complete rejection of all “citizen[s] of the world.” The author prefers to maintain the word as a viable marker, and in so doing preserves valuable implications that would be lost in a dismissal of the “cosmopolitan” as merely a “liberal on safari” (Appiah 214).

Appiah proceeds to place the different ideas of “cosmopolitanism” in an historical context, beginning with the fact that the diasporic element of his own family’s development is not a new idea. “Far from being especially modern,” he asserts, it “actually belongs to one of the oldest patterns of the species” (Appiah 215). In this, he is in agreement with Ali Behdad’s deconstruction of a similarly monolithic term, “globalization”: “in spite of cultural and postcolonial critics’ emphasis

on the newness of today's global flow, the condition we call globalization is not new if viewed historically" (Behdad 63). Like Behdad, Appiah uses grounded historical reality to demonstrate the longevity of the term in question. In so doing, he unseats the view of "cosmopolitanism" as a late-twentieth-century construction, precipitated by the leaps and bounds of internet communication, and presents it as a description of the global migrations and interactions that have been going on for centuries. This revisionist approach is summed up in the title of the first subsection of his essay, "A Worldwide Web" (Appiah 213).

What about the reverse side of this peaceful account of the empire of Alexander the Great that "molded the politics but also the sculpture of Egypt and Northern India" (Appiah 215), however? What of the "bloodstained workings of racism" (Gilroy 4)? Though Gilroy's gruesome formulation may come across as overly dramatic, Appiah's yoking of sculpture and politics within a single metaphor of "molding" is a remarkably rose-tinted way of presenting the various subjugations of the native "other" on which have been based the imperial workings of governments from Ancient Greece to nineteenth-century Ghana. If Gilroy is too anxious to emphasise the racialized imperialism latent in visions of global unity, it is possible that Appiah, in his haste to reclaim a version of "cosmopolitanism" that acknowledges the political efforts of people such as his father, glosses over the issue of race almost entirely.

In spite of his questionable treatment of race, Appiah does what Gilroy fails to do, and acknowledges the existence of several "candidates for the title" of "cosmopolitanism," both positive and negative (Appiah 220). Interrogating the "toxic cosmopolitanisms" that are seen as damaging, Appiah is led to question why people value their fellow humans—friends and enemies, for instance—differently. He is then able to move to a position where he can analyse the circulating "identities [and] identifications [that] make some ties matter to us, and give rise to ethical communities" (Appiah 237). This would be one answer to the charge of forgetting racial issues: rather than getting caught up in etymological difficulties surrounding the history of the word "cosmopolitanism," Appiah builds an analysis that circumvents the question of race. In doing so, he focuses on the "ethical obligations" inherent in constructing a personal view of oneself as a social human individual (Appiah 235). This focus on the importance of social existence is central to his conclusion: the "cosmopolitanism" that Appiah is so concerned to defend from sceptics like Gilroy is one that, regardless of its connection to the "warm glow of [. . .] imperialism," "sees a world of cultural and social variety as a precondition for the self-creation that is at the heart of a meaningful human life" (Appiah 268). Amongst the proliferation of cosmopolitanisms Appiah acknowledges, he sees human identity as central to the sense of belonging coupled with cultural integration described in the essay's title.

While I see Gilroy as overly proscriptive in his treatment of "cosmopolitanism," removing it from his vocabulary without filling

the epistemological hole it leaves, Appiah's humanist approach strikes me as too permissive. While he bases his approach to "cosmopolitanism" on his own experiences of diasporic, transnational living, his "world of cultural and social variety" runs the risk of itself descending to a "'Locksley Hall' rhetoric" of "imperial [. . .] values." "Cosmopolitanism" is insufficient in the case of both critics: for Appiah, because it tries to do too much work; for Gilroy, because it is not made to do any work at all. "Macrocosmopolitanism" is offered to fill the void that Gilroy leaves in his argument, and also to acknowledge a debt to "macrocosmic" generality that Appiah avoids.

Homi Bhabha is another critic whose use of the term "cosmopolitanism" is one that requires revision, for two reasons. Firstly, Bhabha conflates the ideas of "the cosmopolitan" and "cosmopolitanism," which, as I have asserted, certainly benefit from a degree of critical separation. Secondly, while he asserts his affinity with the class of "cosmopolitan" that he describes, his own position—as a well-travelled, well-funded, well-fed academic—belies this implied shared experience. His self-conferred status of spokesperson for a community of which he is not a part places him as the type of "cosmopolitan" who is no more than—I return to the words of Appiah—a "liberal on safari."

Bhabha first refers to "cosmopolitanism," in his essay on "The Vernacular Cosmopolitan," in the context of British "migrants and minorities." Their survival as "part of a recognisable and shared sense of civic virtue" while preserving the "language, food, festivals, [and] religious customs" of their ancestors is celebrated:

It is this double life of British minorities that makes them "vernacular cosmopolitans," translating between cultures, renegotiating traditions from a position where "locality" insists on its own terms, while entering into larger national and societal conversations. (Bhabha 139)

This description, however, follows accounts of Bhabha's own privileged cultural experiences as a member of "the Parsi middle classes" (Bhabha 135), tales from his "college bedroom, at Oxford" (Bhabha 136), and critical analyses on subjects ranging from John Stuart Mill to E.M. Forster. His use of working-class "migrants and minorities" as a means of introducing the "larger national and societal" implications of the article's central concept thus seems disingenuous. An author runs the risk of being doubted, if not entirely discredited, if he begins by describing how he "set out from Bombay [. . .] to study English at Oxford" (Bhabha 135) and goes on to assert that his essay's titular idea is "*not* a cosmopolitanism of the élite variety" (Bhabha 139, emphasis added).

Bhabha develops his thesis away from the suspect territory of his "vernacular cosmopolitan," moving onto an analysis of those who "occupy marginal or minority positions within cultures and societies" (Bhabha 139). Yet he becomes immediately re-entangled in the élitism seen in his scholarly approach to modern British minorities, and in so doing loses his grasp on the ideas behind his "'vernacular cosmopolitans,' translating between cultures." His assertion that the

“specific and local histories [of minorities], often threatened and repressed, are inserted ‘between the lines’ of dominant cultural practices” is an interesting reapplication of ideas of boundaries and liminality that have become critically exhausted in recent postcolonial analyses. It is rapidly apparent, though, that the real subject of his critical narrative, existing in “cramped conditions of cultural creativity,” is the author himself (Bhabha 139). The concept of cultural translation, posited as the “renegotia[tion of] traditions,” is an academic one, to be accomplished by critics such as Bhabha himself, and his “vernacular” cosmopolitan is far from un-élite, as much as he might like to think of the two conditions as similar:

Aesthetic and cultural values are derived from those boundaries *between* languages, territories and communities that belong, strictly speaking, to no one culture; these are values produced in the on-going practices and performances of “crossing over,” and become meaningful as cultures to the extent to which they are intricately and intimately interleaved with one another.

My own working life as a literary critic has entailed a similar process of finding my voice in-between the lines of other people’s texts, in a form of translation analogous to the process I have just described. (Bhabha 139-40; original emphasis)

The position of cultural translator can only be occupied, in Bhabha’s particular frame of reference, by the privileged author, critic, or text.

It is unsurprising, given this caveat, that the central figure in his delineation of the translator—the “vernacular cosmopolitan” par excellence—is the isolationist cultural commentator V.S. Naipaul. Bhabha confesses that his “detour through Naipaul’s *milieu* [. . .] brought back the world of post-colonial India” to him “[f]or reasons still obscure” (Bhabha 140). Yet it is less than obscure if we consider that Naipaul’s confessed view of “the ‘wretched’ condition of the Caribbean, and his unrelenting irony and despair about the islands” (Bhabha 140), places him at just the “interstitial [. . .] cultural” remove that Bhabha’s cosmopolitanism requires (Bhabha 139). When Bhabha turns from Naipaul to Naipaul’s characters, the gap between different strata of cultural translation—and hence the social divide across which Bhabha attempts to make the term “vernacular cosmopolitan” work—is apparent. The critic’s assertion about Naipaul’s characters sounds little short of plaintive, even before its subversion by the parenthesis that follows:

They too [the characters] are vernacular cosmopolitans—although often obsessed by their provinciality—moving in-between cultural traditions and revealing hybrid forms of life and art. (Bhabha 141)

This celebration of “hybrid forms of life and art” paints a significantly more colourful, “cosmopolitan” picture than the community depicted within the text itself: the “doomed [. . .] intermediate race” of *The Mimic Men* (Naipaul 68). In spite of his attachment to the concept, Bhabha’s “cosmopolitanism” is never quite as “cosmopolitan” as he would like it to be.

Bhabha’s social positioning renders him unable to present an adequate view of “cosmopolitanism,” just as Appiah is thwarted by his

lack of specificity, and Gilroy by his fierce engagement with racial issues. In presenting the concept of “macrocosmopolitanism” as a means of combating the difficulties inherent in the usages of “cosmopolitanism” seen here, I participate in a species of “anti-discourse” (Habermas’s *Sonderdiskurs*) by focusing on linguistic implication rather than theory. This approach is described by Linda Graham: “a perceived lack of precise methodological principles has lent weight to epistemological claims about the superior rigour of linguistically-based methodologies [. . .] over those informed by the work of Foucault and other *post*-theorists” (4, original emphasis). In advocating my particular “linguistically-based methodolog[y],” then, I reject Michel Foucault’s own “description [. . .] irreducible to epistemology” (42), and look to establish a term with a less problematic meaning than the “cosmopolitan”/“cosmopolitanism” offered by Bhabha, Appiah, and Gilroy.

In the work of Bruce Robbins, I see a similarly revisionist inclination. In his contribution to the anthology *Cosmopolitics*, Robbins provides an analysis that is incisive both in its appreciation of the niceties of the word “cosmopolitan” and in its understanding of the concept adumbrated:

Cosmos (world) in *cosmopolitan* originally meant simply “order” or “adornment”—as in cosmetics—and was only later extended metaphorically to refer to “the world.” Cosmetics preceded totality. (Robbins, “Comparative Cosmopolitanisms” 253)

Robbins advocates a re-thinking of the universalisms of the cosmopolitan: critics must undo the roots of the word in the universal, re-writing the “cosmic” part of the “cosmopolitan.” And yet he does not go far enough. In presenting the terms “order” and “adornment” as interchangeable, he ignores the fact that there is a fundamental difference between the structure of something—its “order”—and the surface details—or “adornment”—thereof; and yet that both these divergent meanings are present in the word “cosmopolitan.” This highlights a difference central to “cosmopolitanism”: it is not that, as Robbins puts it, “[c]osmetics preceded totality,” but rather that cosmetics and totality coexist, precisely because the term “cosmos” implies, in different ways, both “order” and “adornment.” A “cosmopolitan” is not merely a “citizen of the world,” but a “citizen of the [surface] world [order].” Located in a space and time—“surface”—of his/her own, a cosmopolitan is an individual; existing as a part of his/her society—“order”—s/he represents a universal. The neologism “macrocosmopolitanism” exists to take Robbins’s argument to its logical conclusion, and preserve these missing elements.

The epistemological fracturing in the concept results in the many problematic treatments of “cosmopolitanism”: Gilroy’s drive to take down an “imperialistic particularism [. . .] in universal garb” undermines the individual examples of “creolized history” he wants to preserve; Appiah glosses over the problems of a universal “cosmopolitanism” in striving to retain the idea of an individual “citizen of the world”; Bhabha’s attempted melding of a universal

“shared sense of civic virtue” with his own personal experience comes unstuck in the privileged individualism of his academic approach to “cultural translation.” There is much to be gained from all three, however: Gilroy’s incessant spirit of inquiry, Appiah’s understanding of the “ethical obligations” of society, and the openness with which Bhabha speaks about his position as a literary critic. All are necessary parts of appreciating a concept that has become more than any one analysis would suggest. Moreover, “macrocosm-opolitanism,” in asserting my intention to engage on a linguistic level, overcomes the obstacles of theoretical viewpoint shown in the work of these critics. In accepting both the “order” and “adornment” of Robbins’s analysis, I acknowledge the importance of debates on “cosmopolitanism” such as those advanced by the Western-educated Gilroy, Appiah, and Bhabha, while refusing to concur with their various restricted analyses of the term. The concept possesses an epistemological potency that was lost from “cosmopolitanism,” and only retained in the version of the “cosmopolitan” outlined at the start of this essay. “Macrocosm-opolitanism,” finally, enables a critical approach that resists being tied down: in including both “structure” and “surface,” it becomes a concept that is shaped by endless re-definition, rather than undone by a proliferation of meaning. Although I still refuse to accept the premise of my opening quotation, then, I would like to conclude with this re-working: cosmopolitanism, as “macrocosm-opolitanism,” recurs in countless positive and definite specifications; for specifying “macrocosm-opolitanism” positively, definitely, and repeatedly, is an entirely “macrocosm-opolitan” thing to do.

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