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Cosmic Sensibility for Cosmopolitics: Making Sense in the Anthropocene

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Abstract. In response to Philippe Descola's call for a cosmopolitics adequate to the crisis of the multiscalar Anthropocene, this paper interrogates the problem of entangled coexistence by shifting the analytical register to sensibility. The paper therefore proposes the speculative concept of *cosmic sensibility*, which mobilizes sense as constitutive of cosmopolitics and names a relational openness through which distinct entities become mutually sense-able without necessarily presupposing their commensurability. The concept synthesizes insights from the ontological turn (Descola, Viveiros de Castro, Hui), process-relational cosmology (Whitehead) and cosmopolitics (Stengers), as well as feminist STS (Barad, Haraway), in order to sketch its provisional contours across three interconnected registers: onto-epistemological, cosmopolitical, and ethical. Reading in parallel a line of authors who rethink the anthropocentric assumptions of the cosmos in relational terms, the paper contends that ontological plurality becomes cosmopolitically consequential only insofar as agents inhabiting heterogeneous worlds can enter into relations of mutual sense-ability. Cosmic sensibility thus reframes entangled coexistence as a practice of dwelling halfway, sustaining difference while remaining response-able to the worldings produced through the encounter.
Keywords: anthropocene, cosmos, cosmopolitics, cosmic sensibility, sense, response-ability.

Kosminis juslumas kosmopolitikoje: kuriant prasmę antropocene

Santrauka. Šis straipsnis yra atsakas į Philippe'o Descola raginimą formuluoti kosmopolitikos sampratą, adekvačią daugiamasčio (*multiscalar*) antropoceno krizėms. Tai daroma permąstant susipynusio (*entangled*) sambūvio problemą iš juslumo perspektyvos. Straipsnyje pasiūloma spekuliatyvi kosminio juslumo samprata, mobilizuojanti juslumą kaip pamatinį kosmopolitikos dėmenį ir suprantama kaip reliacinis atvirumas, kurio pagrindu skirtingos esybės tampa juntamos ir suvokiamos viena kitai nepaisant jų nebendramatiškumo. Ši sąvoka plėtojama sintetinant ontologinio posūkio antropoceno studijose (Descola, de Castro, Hui), procesinės-reliacinės kosmologijos (Whitehead) ir kosmopolitikos (Stengers) bei feministinių mokslo ir technologijų studijų (Barad, Haraway) įžvalgas ir brėžiant preliminarius konceptualius kontūrus trijuose tarpusavyje susijusiuose registruose – ontoepistemologiniame, kosmopolitiniame ir etiniame. Gretinant autorius (-es), permąstančius (-ias) antropocentrines kosmoso prielaidas per santykį, kosminis juslumas leidžia konceptualizuoti susipynusį bendrabūvį kaip buvimo pusiaukelėje praktiką, reikalaujančią išlaikyti skirtumą, praktikuojant atsako-gali-mybę (*response-ability*) besiformuojantiems iš santykio pasauliams.
Pagrindiniai žodžiai: antropocenas; kosmosas; kosmopolitika; kosminis juslumas; atsako-gali-mybė (*response-ability*)

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Introduction: Sensibility as a Cosmopolitical Problem

In a recent lecture titled "*Cosmopolitics of the Anthropocene*" at Columbia Maison Française, the distinguished French anthropologist Philippe Descola outlined his vision of a new science that, according to him, would be capable of addressing the multiplicity of challenges presented by the Anthropocene. He envisions this emerging field as "a general science of relations and ecology in the broad sense, a science yet to come <…> to which all disciplines concerned with the interaction between human and non-human agents[1] – entities possessing different qualities yet capable of affecting one another – would contribute"[2] (Descola 2025: 14:35–15:10). Crucially, Descola presents this not merely as a methodological or conceptual challenge (which it indisputably is), but as an essentially *cosmopolitical* one: a project concerned with "a joint accommodation between beings and things that attempts to escape the Eurocentrism of the categories through which we conceive of relations to land, physical objects, and non-human organisms" (ibid.: 18:47–18:55).

The question of cosmopolitics – of "a joint accommodation between beings and things" – acquires acute urgency in the Anthropocene, as Descola incisively insists. Beyond denoting an epoch in which collective human activity has itself become a geological force (Crutzen 2002), the Anthropocene is conceived here as an intrinsically multiscalar planetary condition and, consequently, a philosophical problem of cosmopolitical coexistence. The treatment of this condition is informed by what has been termed the ontological turn in Anthropocene studies (Lemmens 2020), which challenges the hegemonic Western nature/culture divide and its privileging of a singular, objective nature – hereinafter, following representative scholarship in this tradition (Descola, Viveiros de Castro, Hui), referred to as naturalism[3] – in favor of ontological multiplicity and the plural modes of existence, through which, human and non-human agents collectively compose reality[4]. Particularly significant here is Yuk Hui's contention that there is no single cosmos shared universally, but only cosmotechnical[5] articulations through which worlds are composed and inhabited. This claim problematizes the assumption that one universal conception of nature can provide a neutral cosmological horizon within which heterogeneous worlds are situated. On this basis, drawing on Descola and Hui, the paper reads the Anthropocene as a fundamentally cosmological crisis: a crisis symptomatic of a naturalist cosmo-ontolog-

[1] In this paper, non-human agency is understood relationally, in the Latourian sense: as the capacity of an entity to affect, redirect, or otherwise make a difference within an assemblage of relations (Latour 2005).

[2] This quotation has been abridged.

[3] Naturalism is used here in the specific sense developed within the literature associated with the ontological turn, rather than as a generic designation for the philosophical tradition of naturalism.

[4] Bruno Latour likewise criticizes naturalism in his account of cosmopolitics (Latour 2004).

[5] According to Hui, cosmotechnics designates "the unification of cosmic order and moral order through technical activities" (Hui 2017: 322) – an articulation that binds together multiple modes of knowing, making, and inhabiting the world. Conceptually, cosmotechnics captures an irreducibly plural field of relations through which different collectives have bound together cosmos, moral obligations, and technical practices into dynamic and oftentimes conflicting configurations. Methodologically, cosmotechnics enables such configurations to be approached as distinct, historically and epistemically situated.

ical configuration in which nature is treated as singular, objective, and universal, while non-human collectives are denied the status of bearers of genuinely different worlds.

Derek Woods (2014) captures the ontological complexity of the Anthropocene by describing it as a scene in which multiple processes unfold simultaneously across heterogeneous temporalities, positionalities, and spatial scales. What complicates matters further is that these levels do not remain discrete or isolated from one another – they are co-constitutive, co-implicated, *intra-active* (Barad 2007) – in short, entangled. And yet, as Hamilton observes, despite being irreducibly entangled with "a myriad of scales, spaces, being(s)", *Anthropos* continues to project and see only itself, "relating a calculating human subject to every single referent it can cognate" (Hamilton 2017). While the dominant naturalist cosmotechnical configuration has proved remarkably successful in registering and scientifically describing the multiscalarity of the Anthropocene, it remains insufficient at a deeper theoretical level – particularly in accounting for how these heterogeneous "scales, spaces, being(s)" relate to one another within a cosmological horizon that is shared without becoming singular. In response to this limitation, recent Anthropocene scholarship has increasingly turned toward speculative approaches oriented towards non-human ontologies and hybrid agencies/methodologies (Branco 2025). Such work often explicitly diagnoses the crisis as a problem of imagination (Sabolius 2019) and broadens the field of inquiry through narrative, alternative cosmologies, conceptual experimentation, and other practices of sense-making, on which this paper substantially draws.

Among the many speculative responses, Donna Haraway's synthetic concept of the Chthulucene stands out as one of the most productive attempts to reimagine the epoch by removing Anthropos from its ontological pedestal. Against the claustrophobic closure of the Anthropocene, she proposes a tentacular, sympoietic vision of multispecies becoming-with: one in which multiple worldings – ways of composing worlds – rather than a single catastrophe – constitute the horizon of thought (2016). It radically reimagines cosmos as storied (ibid.: 91), emergent, and entangled – and thus prompts us to think about the affects, agents, agendas, apparatuses, articulations, and attachments involved in the story we call our shared yet irreducibly plural world.

Bringing Descola's and Haraway's visions together raises a further question: what kind of cosmopolitics is possible after the collapse of the one 'common world'? While the problem of coexistence among different worlds is integral to the cosmopolitical agenda, it rests on a somewhat fragile assumption that the worlds in question can already recognize one another as worlds. Taken for granted, such recognition risks reproducing the very universalist tendencies that cosmopolitics seeks to unsettle. The inquiry into cosmopolitics must, therefore, begin from another, more cautious question: how do worlds become available to one another within a *cosmos* no longer organized around a singular order?

The paper responds to this question by shifting the emphasis of cosmopolitics from a problem of coexistence to what it provisionally terms *cosmic sensibility*. This speculative concept makes explicit an assumption otherwise left implicit in ontological treatments of the Anthropocene: that heterogeneous worlds must somehow become sense-able to one another. Since ontological plurality alone cannot ground cosmopolitics, cosmic sensibility

provisionally names the conditions under which sense-ability becomes possible within the relational and processual composition of the cosmos in the multiscalar Anthropocene. By synthesizing insights from the ontological turn (Hui, Descola, Viveiros de Castro), process-relational cosmology (Whitehead) and cosmopolitics (Stengers), as well as feminist STS (Haraway, Barad), the paper sketches the preliminary contours of cosmic sensibility across three interconnected registers: onto-epistemological, cosmopolitical, and ethical. In doing so, it argues for the centrality of sense in addressing the cosmopolitical problems posed by the Anthropocene.

The argument unfolds in three interconnected steps. First, to revise the onto-epistemic grounds of the Anthropocene, structured by the naturalist divide between a universal, objective nature and plural subjective cultures (Hui 2017: 234), I turn to animism as an alternative cosmological imaginary in which multiple natures coexist. Animism, paired with multinaturalism, reanimates the cosmos as an ontological space in which non-human entities act alongside humans and compose their worlds.

Second, taking this ontological plurality as its point of departure, the argument draws on Whitehead's process-relational cosmology, which offers a model of an agential, sense-oriented cosmos in which cosmic becoming is constituted through relational affectivity. Whitehead's concept of prehension provides the ontological basis for mutual sense-ability between ontologically distinct worlds, thereby locating sense as a pivotal condition of a more-than-human cosmopolitics. At the cosmopolitical level, this affective-relational condition finds expression in Stengers' notion of diplomacy as a practice of sustaining coexistence among heterogeneous worlds without reducing them to a common order.

Ultimately, the third step examines the ethical conditions of mutual cosmic sense-ability and argues for the necessity of response-ability within the diplomatic framework of cosmopolitics. Beyond the gravitational pull of the single cosmos projected by the Anthropocene, it brings Haraway's sympoiesis together with Barad's mattering to sketch the provisional contours of *sensible* coexistence between human and non-human worlds within a revised account of an agential cosmos.

I. (Re)Animating the Cosmos

In a short text titled "Reclaiming Animism", Isabelle Stengers takes Science – singular and capitalized – as the object of her critique. Stengers describes Science as an exclusionary and hierarchical practice that is reserved solely for "true scientists". With a single, unified nature as its privileged object, Science as a practice persistently seeks to police, subordinate and exclude heterogeneous epistemic practices under the apparent authority of universal objectivity and rationality (Stengers 2012: 3–4). In a similar vein, Hui reinforces Stengers' call to abandon the fiction of a singular, objective and universal nature in his treatment of the Anthropocene. By explicitly framing the Anthropocene as a crisis of naturalism (Hui 2017: 324), he argues that, to transgress it, it must be addressed both from within and beyond the dominant cosmotechnics that produced it.

To render thinkable the coexistence of multiple irreducible worlds, both Stengers and Hui turn to the *cosmos* as the referent for this radical ontological multiplicity. However, each reads it differently: for Hui, cosmos designates a radical exteriority to any technological system, since the cosmos can only ever be articulated cosmotechnically (ibid.: 336), including within the Anthropocene; for Stengers, it names the "unknown constituted by multiple divergent worlds, and the articulation of which they could eventually be capable of" (Stengers 2005b: 995). Notwithstanding these differences in emphasis, both formulations move beyond the epistemically given and, by placing the cosmos at the heart of inquiry, seek to expand the ontological – and, with it, cosmopolitical – horizon of the Anthropocene. Their intervention comes into sharper focus against the Kantian legacy of cosmopolitanism.

In the Kantian articulation, the universal in cosmopolitanism – pertaining to the first root, *cosmos* – presupposes a particular *universe*: a community of rational, right-bearing subjects that transcends the boundaries of any particular state, and, for that reason, has largely come to be associated exclusively with humans. The cosmos is thus emptied of much of its cosmological content and becomes a placeholder for universal reason: a unified totality that remains consonant with the logic of Western naturalism insofar as both privilege a universal order articulated from an anthropocentric standpoint. It is precisely at this point that Stengers and Hui intervene, reactivating the cosmos as a potentially critical concept: as an unstable site where heterogeneous practices and technics come into contact. Such a cosmos demands an entirely different sensibility – not the transcendental *sensus communis* Kant presupposed, but a *relational*, truly cosmic sensibility.

As one articulation of such sensibility, Stengers turns to animism[6]. Whereas Science produces unified nature by a systematic exclusion of the complex relations between human and non-human entities, animism begins from the opposite premise: one is never the sole agent in an encounter – in this encounter, something else is also acting, also responding, also mattering. Stengers' insistence on reclaiming animism could therefore be read as a return to what Science had to exclude in order to secure nature as its singular object: the recognition that non-humans are active participants in the constitution of the world(s). Animism thus entails a different distribution of perception and attention, a sensibility attuned to relations, addresses, and agencies as they participate in the ongoing, processual constitution of the cosmos.

In this sense, animism reanimates the cosmos and brings life back to the world(s): beings are defined by their capacity to enter into relations, to affect and be affected – in short, to participate in what Stengers elsewhere calls an ecology of practices, which "aims at the construction of new 'practical identities' for practices, that is, new possibilities for them to be present, or in other words, to connect" (2005a: 186). Practice, on this account, is a mode of belonging: a situated, relational, and thus obligation-bearing engagement that co-produces the practitioners it gathers, while binding them to etho-ecological obligations, arising both from within the practice and through the encounter it enables.

[6] In a parallel move, Hui engages Descola's multinaturalism as another framework for thinking ontological multiplicity beyond the naturalist schema.

Stengers' "ecology of practices" can be productively read alongside Descola's "ecology of relations" (Descola 2013: 308). Like Stengers' emphasis on relational practices, Descola's ecological method challenges the Western naturalist assumption of a single nature populated by discrete, fixed entities: what entities are, he argues, depends on the relations that constitute them. Accordingly, he approaches relations, and not substances, as his primary analytical unit. Humans, animals, plants, spirits, objects – none of these have fixed, pre-relational identities; rather, each is defined through a specific distribution of relations within a particular cosmological configuration.

To map these configurations (of which, Descola outlines four[7]), he introduces two axes: interiority and physicality. Interiority refers to "the mind, the soul, or consciousness: intentionality, subjectivity, reflexivity, feelings and the ability to express oneself and to dream", while physicality designates "external form, substance, the physiological, perceptive and sensorimotor processes" (ibid.: 116). Different combinations of the two complementary terms – continuity and discontinuity – across these axes produce distinct cosmo-ontological configurations.

Naturalism, the configuration most characteristic of Western societies, posits continuity at the level of physicality: all entities are assumed to share a universal material substrate. This continuity is counterbalanced by discontinuity at the level of interiority: only humans are granted genuine subjectivity and intentionality, whereas non-human entities are largely stripped of agency – and, consequently, of any world that could be properly their own.

Animism flips this configuration upside down. Here, difference is located elsewhere: not in the soul, which unites all beings, but in the body. The uniqueness of each body – whether human or non-human – is determined by its sensory makeup: its particular physiology and sensory-perceptual apparatus, which constitutes its affective horizon and thus its nature – the mode in which it relates to its own world and other worlds. Nature, then, is not one. As Descola, following Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, explains, animism is multinaturalist (ibid.: 173): each being has its own nature, and, with it, its own world. Every world is disclosed from a particular situated and embodied position – what Viveiros de Castro calls perspectivism.

Viveiros de Castro derives his account of perspectivism from Indigenous cosmologies, where the world is not a single object viewed from multiple positions, but a plurality of ontologically heterogeneous perspectives that themselves constitute distinct worlds. This introduces a crucial element of ontological positionality: subjectivity – and thus the ontological horizon that unfolds before it – is a point of view. Here, perspectivism marks a decisive shift in cosmic sensibility: navigating different natures and different worlds requires, on the one hand, understanding the conditionality of sense from within one's own position, and, on the other, acknowledging that this position is never universal.

Perspective, however, does not amount to representation. As Viveiros de Castro explains, "representations are a property of the mind or spirit, whereas the point of view is located in the body" (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 478). Embodied situatedness deter-

[7] Naturalism, animism, totemism, and analogism (ibid.).

mines what a being can sense, encounter, and make meaning of. As Viveiros de Castro famously observed, every being inhabits its own world – like a human whose reality is shaped by culture, kinship, and intentional relations (2014: 57). However, the word 'human' here is used in a specific, peculiar sense that hinges on a decisive distinction between anthropocentrism and anthropomorphism: the Western naturalist paradigm is anthropocentric – the human is the sole bearer of subjectivity, intention, moral standing, and meaningful world-disclosure; but it is not particularly anthropomorphic: non-humans neither have cultures nor inhabit worlds. By contrast, Amerindian perspectivism is not anthropocentric – no single species occupies a privileged point – but is radically anthropomorphic: humanity here is understood as the universal form of agency, interiority and sense-making distributed across all beings that have a perspective (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 484).

The critique of the ontological limits of naturalism (Hui 2017), together with the consideration of its alternatives – animism and multinaturalism – effectively shatters the naturalist fantasy of "the god trick of seeing everything from nowhere" (Haraway 1988: 581). Through this account, the conceptual contours of a cosmos of many natures begin to emerge: a cosmos populated by other agencies that likewise sense, make sense, and implicate us in their worlds. Yet, the recognition of ontological plurality alone is not enough; it leaves open the question of mutual sense-ability of heterogeneous worlds and, consequently, of their cosmopolitical articulation. For this reason, the argument turns to Whitehead's process-relational cosmology, which provides an ontological framework for a sense-oriented cosmos, and to Stengers' cosmopolitics, developed in sustained dialogue with it (Stürmer 2022). Together, they offer productive conceptual resources for thinking sensibility as a pivotal condition of more-than-human coexistence.

II. Toward a Cosmopolitics of Many Senses

To acknowledge a plurality of worlds is already a political act, which unsettles the Western conception of politics and moves it into another domain: that of the cosmos as our shared and irreducibly plural condition of existence. Politics, then, is no longer confined to the competition of human interests; instead, it becomes a negotiation of what counts as a world and who is entitled to participate in that negotiation. Hence, technically, the cosmopolitical question, as formulated by Stengers, concerns "the coexistence of disparate technical practices corresponding to distinct forms of reciprocal capture, characterized by different logical constraints and different syntaxes" (Stengers 2011a: 359).

But following this cosmopolitical demand, what kind of cosmos would be capacious enough to hold these syntaxes together without resolving them into a unified, repressive grammar? If anything, such a cosmos needs to be a cosmos of sense: one where entities – however minute, however apparently insignificant – feel, respond to, and affect one another: where sensing is not the property of some beings rather than others, but the very fabric of cosmic relation.

Alfred North Whitehead's process cosmology offers a conceptual framework to think such a cosmos[8]. In particular, his notion of prehension, as will be elaborated below, displaces sense from the domain of conscious human perception and renders relational affectivity constitutive of cosmic becoming itself – or, as Sehgal puts it in her reading of Whitehead, "every actual entity is a process of feeling" (Sehgal 2014: 194). What exists, ultimately, are not substances but events and becomings – whose significance, as Stengers, one of Whitehead's most prominent contemporary interlocutors and an important inheritor of his process-relational thought in cosmopolitics, explains, "is to affirm the ultimate generality of creativity. Whatever exists is a creature of creativity, is something irreducibly new" (Stengers 2006).

However, creativity, in Whitehead, is not a force that acts upon entities from the outside. It is enacted in the very process – the very happening of the cosmos – by which each actual entity gathers it into itself. This gathering is what Whitehead terms prehension – a concept that preserves the semantic ambiguity between grasping and feeling. Prehension is an elementary, pre-reflective mode of sense-ability through which entities become available to one another, and, in this respect, can be understood as a proto-form of cosmic sensibility: not yet its cosmopolitical or ethical articulation, but its ontological condition. Prehension comprises three factors: the prehending subject, the prehended datum, and the subjective form – that is, the manner in which the subject prehends the datum (Whitehead 1978: 23) – a structure that resonates with the body that determines perspective in Indigenous cosmological thought.

And yet, prehension is not cognition. It does not require a mind, a brain, or, strictly speaking, any cognitive apparatus. It is something more fundamental, more universal – it is a form of relational sense-ability characteristic of actual entities, from the most rudimentary physical occasions to the most intricate forms of human experience[9]. It is important to understand, however, that what prehends and is prehended is never an isolated entity stripped of its relations. Since every actual entity is constituted relationally – through its prehensions of its actual world – its achieved actuality embodies a perspectival synthesis of that world. When actual entities prehend one another, each encounters the other as datum already shaped by the relational configuration from which it has emerged. Another world thus becomes sensible not as a totality grasped from the outside, but through the situated perspective actualized in the entity that bears it and carried forward into a mutual becoming.

This becoming – the creative advance of the cosmos from the disjunctive many to the conjunctive one – is embodied in the principle that Whitehead calls concrescence: the processual creative synthesis "whereby the many things of the universe become the one actual entity" (ibid.: 52). Creativity, according to Whitehead, is "the universal of univer-

[8] Whitehead's cosmology is not introduced here as a master ontological framework. Rather, Whitehead is mobilized as a situated process-relational resource for articulating elementary ontological conditions of cosmic sense-ability that render relational affectivity thinkable while preserving the plurality of ontological configurations in which such relations can be articulated. Accordingly, Whitehead's creative cosmos is treated as a process-relational framework for thinking the mutual implication of heterogeneous worlds.

[9] Stengers succinctly defines prehension as "taking into account" (2011b: 147).

sals characterizing the ultimate matter of fact" (ibid.: 21) – the ontological principle by which the multiplicity of what has been is gathered, transformed, and advanced through the introduction of novelty. "Each creative act is the universe incarnating itself as one, and there is nothing above it by way of final condition" (ibid.: 245), he incisively writes. Cosmic incarnations, in turn, can be approached through Whitehead's concept of the event: a "nexus of actual occasions" (1978: 73) constituted through prehensive relations.

The relational structure of the event allows Whiteheadian cosmology to be read alongside Deleuze's sense and Stengers' cosmopolitics, both of which develop in sustained engagement with Whiteheadian thought. In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze explicitly brings event and sense into equivalence (Deleuze 1990: 95), insofar as both designate a transformation irreducible to the terms that enter into it. The encounter of two divergent worlds, however, is not merely transformative but schismatic: it opens what Deleuze calls "a crack": "the chance of flying over its incorporeal surface area, without stopping at the bursting within each body; it is, finally, to give us the chance to go farther than we would have believed possible" (Deleuze 1990: 161). The crack marks the emergence of novelty within the creative advance of the cosmos by reconfiguring the relations and carrying the newly emerged entities into a new, provisional composition. Or, as Deleuze evocatively puts it, "there is another breath in my breath, another thought in my thought, another possession in what I possess, a thousand things and a thousand beings implicated in my complications" (ibid.: 298).

The problem of the cosmos within politics (Stengers 2011a: 415) in the Anthropocene therefore co(i)mplicates us in what Stengers calls "the question of possible non-hierarchical modes of coexistence among the ensemble of inventions of nonequivalence, among the diverging values and obligations through which the entangled existences that compose it are affirmed" (ibid.: 355–356). Prehension as proto-sensibility, and the mutual sense-ability grounded in it, do not necessarily translate into harmonious cosmic sensibility. Quite the contrary: the cosmos, while sensible, is inescapably dissensual, composed through incommensurable and even incompatible modes of its multiple sensing and worlding. Prehensions do not always meet gracefully: they clash, resist, refuse incorporation and premature resolution. And yet, multiple worlds, however different their syntaxes and however incompatible their claims, remain implicated in one another through prehensive relations. Prehension, as the first articulation of cosmic sensibility, establishes the relational, entangled condition within which the problem of cosmopolitics emerges – the problem of how we participate in the collective composition of the cosmos' creative advance despite substantial differences.

Stengers' diplomacy names the practice adequate to the problem. Unlike traditional understandings in which diplomacy is derivative of politics, for Stengers, diplomacy precedes our humanist and instrumental conception of the political. Peace, the ostensible *telos* of politics, paradoxically appears instead as its possibility – its *eventuality* (Stengers 2011a: 387). The diplomatic encounter is eventful precisely because it does not simply occur at the threshold of two already constituted worlds but participates in the *happening*

through which they are transformed and recomposed in the moment of such a cosmic encounter. In a cosmos of co-constitutive becoming and collective creative composition, diplomacy – and, by extension, cosmopolitics – becomes the patient labor of holding open space in which ontological multiplicity can persist and, in persisting, carry forward the advance of the cosmos.

Peace, accordingly, reveals itself not as the cessation of difference but as its transmutation – a fragile achievement that arises not despite multiplicity but from within it, through it, and because of it. Diplomacy refuses the urge toward premature resolution. Rather, as Stengers reminds us, it requires a slowing down: a hesitation that keeps the space of negotiation open long enough for what has not yet been heard to make its claim. Here, cosmic sensibility moves beyond mutual sense-ability and acquires its distinctly cosmopolitical dimension: it designates a practice of remaining answer-able to the difference another world introduces into the collective composition of the cosmos. In other words, the diplomatic encounter as event requires dwelling halfway – in the intra-space where the terms of encounter are themselves redefined and opened onto further becoming. The last section dwells in this intra-space, this inevitable in-betweenness, and turns to the ethical problem of cosmopolitical agency: how relational encounter becomes a matter of response-ability within the sympoietic composition of the world.

III. From Cosmic Sense-ability to Sympoietic Response-ability

Weaving the theoretical threads together, we may discern a provisional pattern: a creative, agential cosmos confronts us with the long-neglected ethical problem of recognizing its essentially participatory character and, therefore, treating it as a space of negotiation and diplomacy with non-human dwellers rather than claiming it as our own. Such recognition requires rethinking the category of the agent, which, in cosmopolitical terms, appears as a node within cosmic entanglement.

In the lecture that opened this discussion, Descola names such a cosmopolitical figure the *interagent* – an entity defined not by what it is prior to relation, but by its capacity to enter into "joint accommodation" with beings and things whose qualities differ from its own. Though Descola does not engage with Barad directly[10], the resonance is difficult to overlook. Barad's notion of intra-action articulates precisely such relational emergence: "the neologism 'intra-action' signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies. That is, in contrast to the usual 'interaction', which assumes that there are separate individual agencies that precede their interaction, the notion of intra-action recognizes that distinct agencies do not precede, but rather emerge through their intra-action" (Barad 2007: 33). In other words, where interaction presupposes agents, intra-action produces them. As a consequence, intra-action reframes sensibility in participatory – and therefore cosmopolitical – terms: it emerges in the unstable moment of the passage between worlds

[10] The theoretical resonance lies not only in the similarity between two formulations, but, more importantly, in Descola's and Barad's shared commitment to relational ontology.

in becoming, in the mutual implication of agencies beyond their momentary perceptual horizon – the moment at which the interagent forms as an event of cosmic concrescence.

Reopening the thread of animism, we find an associative figure for such an interagent in the shaman. Rather than a mere mediator, the shaman acts as a cosmopolitical practitioner (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 60), navigating between ontologically distinct worlds. By translating between their disparate syntaxes, they assume the obligations generated by such encounters. Like the shaman, the diplomat does not transcend the worlds they move between – they remain answerable to each of them. The cosmopolitical demand therefore is also an ethical one: to remain *response-able* – which, as Barad reminds us, is "not about the right response, but rather a matter of inviting, welcoming, and enabling the response of the Other" (Kleinman 2012: 81). Response-ability names the ethical articulation of cosmic sensibility: the practice of sustaining an openness to "the response of the other" within a cosmos that is never finished, peace that is never settled, and a multiplicity of worlds that never resolve into one.

Barad reads this encounter in sensory-tactile terms, treating intra-action as a form of touch, which, physically (scientifically and sensorily) speaking, is at once an interaction between disparate electromagnetic fields and a sensing others' boundaries (Barad 2007: 411). To touch is to approach, to enter into relation, to respond and assume responsibility – yet also to draw a line, to cut, to separate, to acknowledge the presence of the other. Haraway's string figures make this dynamic more tangible. As both connection and separation, the metaphor of the game of string figures captures an eventful moment in which a pattern exists only in the passing, only in the specificity of its configuration. As Haraway writes, "playing games of string figures is about giving and receiving patterns, dropping threads and failing but sometimes finding something that works, something consequential and maybe even beautiful, that wasn't there before, of relaying connections that matter, of telling stories in hand upon hand, digit upon digit, attachment site upon attachment site" (Haraway 2016: 10). What is made cannot be attributed to any single maker, nor can it be extracted from the process of making itself. Instead, it draws attention to the act of passing – making-with: a shared yet non-possessable form emerges from a relation; a fragile relation becomes a pattern, acquiring the provisional contours of a new world in the process of becoming.

String figures are just one of the many SFs Haraway introduces. SF is a deliberately promiscuous acronym – "science fiction, speculative fabulation, string figures, speculative feminism, science fact, so far" (ibid.: 2) – in which each term folds into the others, and none exhausts the method. Methodologically, SF is a practice of thinking, making, and becoming-with: a mode of staying with the trouble in the multispecies entanglements of the Chthulucene. What all SFs emphasize, essentially, is that the worlds we compose are *sympoietic*, woven, entangled together – a proposition that resonates across the theoretical voices gathered throughout the paper. Sympoiesis develops against the notion of autopoiesis: the idea of self-making, self-sufficient systems that produce themselves from within. Haraway reminds us that no such system exists. Sympoiesis – comprising multi-

ple processes of worlding, in Haraway's terms – echoes Whitehead's creative cosmos[11] whose advance unfolds in novelty-producing events. As a relational process generating outcomes that exceed its participants, the event reinforces the diplomatic demand articulated by Stengers.

It is an event precisely because it happens halfway: in the instance of genuine concrescence, in the moment of actual invention, in the crack that opens onto the inexhausted and inexhaustible possibilities of a collectively composed cosmos. To return to Deleuze, the event is inevitably bound up with sense – and, likewise, sense is itself a shared event. This shared in-betweenness opens potentialities that exceed what any single prehension can gather within the cosmic encounter while bringing into view a crucial question of collective response-ability for the worldings carried forward in the creative advance of the cosmos.

To dwell in this liminal space, however, requires a framework capable of bringing ontology, epistemology, and ethics together and situating us halfway: a conceptually intra-active S(a)F(e) space, irreducible to pure matter or meaning – or to any single sensibility. Barad's notion of *mattering* provides a conceptual resource for inhabiting such a space: it names a creative process that refuses the inherited opposition between the real and the discursive, ontology and epistemology, what exists and how it is known. Like Haraway's SF – where science facts coexist with speculative fabulation, and the empirical and the imaginary are strung together like figures passed between hands – mattering captures "the entanglement of matters of being, knowing, and doing of ontology, epistemology, and ethics, of fact and value" (Barad 2007: 3). Through mattering – through its "enfolded articulations" (ibid.: ix) – the universe invites us to meet it halfway: across multiple worlds and multiple scales where becoming-with converges with making-with. To *make sense of cosmic sense*, then, is to attend to how *matter comes to matter*: how other worldings take shape, acquire and lose force, and become im/perceptible within the inevitable in-betweenness of the entangled Anthropocene.

At the ethical register, cosmic sensibility is necessarily situated halfway – only there can we remain response-able to the agents that continuously address and implicate us. In the catastrophic times of the Anthropocene, such a re/orientation may sound like a disheartening quest, inevitably fraught with complications. Yet every complication also reveals a co-implication: staying with the trouble is not a matter of resolution, but of making palpable the dense web of relations through which our becoming is inescapably entangled with the becoming, re/composition, and destruction of other worlds.

This is why sense-oriented ethics can offer neither fixed procedures nor determinate normative codes; on the contrary, it is incomplete, messy, fragile, and contingent upon our co(i)mplications. And yet, if it were to make any provisional commitment, it would be to remain creative, imaginative, inventive, *(sym)poietic*. Such creative speculation – at least as a conceptual beginning – reorients the Anthropocene away from the narrative

[11] In a diffractive reading of Whitehead and Haraway, Sehgal explicitly characterizes Whitehead's cosmology as "metaphysics in the SF mode" (Sehgal 2014: 198).

of inevitable and irreversible collapse toward the gleam of another creative possibility: composing other worlds – or, at the very least, composing them otherwise.

Conclusion: Cosmic sensibility for the Cosmopolitics of the Anthropocene

The paper has sketched the conceptual contours of the speculative notion of cosmic sensibility as a theoretical response to Descola's call for a cosmopolitics adequate to the multiscalar challenges of the entangled Anthropocene, or, in Haraway's terms, the Chthulucene. My turn towards sensibility is motivated by an implicit gap within the tradition commonly associated with the ontological turn in Anthropocene studies: while it explicitly acknowledges ontological multiplicity, it does not sufficiently theorize the conditions under which entities inhabiting heterogeneous worlds can encounter and become sensible to one another.

The provisional concept of cosmic sensibility mobilizes sense as constitutive of cosmic becoming and names a relational openness through which distinct entities become mutually sense-able without necessarily presupposing their commensurability. Reading in parallel a line of authors connected by a shared commitment to rethink the anthropocentric assumptions of the cosmos in relational terms, the paper has outlined three interconnected registers of cosmic sensibility – onto-epistemological, cosmopolitical, and ethical.

Building on Hui's diagnosis of the Anthropocene as a crisis of naturalism, as well as broader attempts to rethink the Anthropocene beyond the Western naturalist paradigm of a singular, objective, and universal cosmos, animism and multinaturalism have been introduced as alternative cosmological configurations in which multiple natures – that is, multiple ontologies – coexist. Further engagement with Whitehead's cosmology offers a process-relational vocabulary for thinking such ontological plurality: cosmic becoming occurs in encounters that, in Deleuzian terms, establish sense as event. Whitehead's notion of prehension is particularly important here, as it provides a proto-form of cosmic sensibility across scales: entities carry into encounter the worlds constituted through their prior relations, while concrescence gathers these relational histories into a novel composition, advancing cosmic becoming.

In a cosmos in constant flux, where different sensibilities clash and encounters do not occur on equal terms, negotiation among different ontologies becomes critical. Here, following Stengers, cosmopolitics is understood as a practice of diplomacy: the patient labor of sustaining difference without forcing it into premature resolution. What this practice demands, in turn, is a radical reconception of agency, shifting from self-sufficient entities to relational interagents – beings that do not simply interact, but intra-act, becoming agential through the very relations and encounters in which they participate. Ethically, such agents must remain response-able – not only capable of sensing the other and responding, but, essentially, enabling the response of the other.

This foregrounds the sympoietic character of the entangled Anthropocene and the crises associated with it, in which agents are co-implicated in one another's complications, while

worldings proceed through invariably asymmetrical relations of becoming-with, making-with, and acting-with – in short, being-with. Hence the importance of *poiesis* within such sympoietic entanglements – creative, inventive, and speculative – because every act of worlding participates not in an already constituted cosmos, but in its ongoing composition.

For this reason, to move beyond the catastrophic and claustrophobic "anthropocentric sensorium" (Leddy 2025), it is imperative to redefine sense not as a substantial attribute or property, but as an eventful in-betweenness of worlds that may prove either creative or destructive, depending on how difference is negotiated, whose worlds are allowed to matter, and what forms of composition the encounter makes possible. Cosmic sensibility always finds itself halfway, at the intersection of multiple scales, agencies, and sensibilities. In the end, the urgency of *sensible* cosmopolitics in the Anthropocene lies in recognizing that we cannot make sense alone. For every act of making – and making sense is no exception – is a cosmic sympoietic act of *making-with*.

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