

SKY attempts to find ways to address totality. Cosmology is a term normally associated with a mythological worldview. It is also a term used to describe the specific beliefs of non-modern or non-Western knowledge-systems perceived as not applying “scientific methods” and therefore unqualifiable as true knowledge. This volume reverses this relationship, positing cosmology as an urgent knowledge-form for addressing contemporary complexities. Cosmology is a method for asking questions around the human, world-making practices, the imagination, and ways of thinking through the concept of “world.” The interconnected networks and operations that spread out globally, fueled by capitalism and its accelerated flows, are increasingly leveling any distinction between large and small, local and international, native and foreign. This requires a science of addressing complex entanglements – an art of the “world-picture.” How can thinking cosmologically help us to re-enchant knowledge? What poetics are needed to navigate the shape-shifting quality of reality?

Cosmological thought tends to collapse “logical” categories, something immediately apparent in **Kapwani Kiwanga’s** visual essay *Asterisms*. Here, the visual superposition of different temporalities occurs, folding historical continuities into an unexpected shape of cross-sectional association. Time appears as a single, dense layer, a single surface on the flat page along which the formal and spatial imaginaries of the sky and the stars co-exist beyond historical specificity: contemporary space-age imagery encounters the history of “Western” scientific techniques, while ancient African astronomical knowledge is connected to “futuristic” architectural projects such as the modern convention center. This piece expresses an alternative “cosmic” aesthetic, one in which ancient societies could very well have been alien cosmonauts who may yet again return from the future to

share their much needed wisdom. In his essay *The Mandala and The Model*, **Adrian Lahoud** tackles the artificial separation between theological “wisdom” and scientific “knowledge” as an historical process of epistemological translation and conceptual collaboration. How does Western thought, firmly rooted in traditions of monotheism that include the Abrahamic religions as well as the “secular” spirituality of the Greeks, account for change? An active agent, whether God or Form or Nature or Laws, is needed and this figure has always been framed as external to the world, a theo-philosophical tradition traceable from Aristotle through Ibn Sina and Al-Ghazali down to the Enlightenment. The “monotheistic” cosmology that has given rise to Empire, financialization, and climate change is firmly based on distinguishing causality: things happen and there is an explanation for them. What happens when change fluctuates beyond measurement, when the multiplicity of bonds – whether religious commandments, philosophical theories, or scientific laws – that tied bodies to the movement of the stars dissolve, when the way of the world can no longer be explained? What happens when markets crash, states dissolve, the weather is irreversibly damaged, and former citizens disenfranchised? **Pelin Tan** picks up on the ramifications of uncertainty by asking how political cosmologies imagine the agency of particular subjects, in this case the refugee. Her set of ten propositions, *The Elementary Particularities: Camps as Cosmograms*, draws on years of researching space, territory, and infrastructure in Southeastern Anatolia. Here, the geopolitical convergence of Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Kurdistan has resulted in the establishment of many formal and informal refugee settlements. The piece presents visual material Tan gathered from these sites – maps, diagrams, photographs – while attempting to develop theoretical tools to re-conceptualize the “refugee camp” beyond political conventions of exclusion, exception, and victimhood.

Camps are proposed as modalities where concrete improvisations are being made and living strategies deployed by its inhabitants. Experiments in being-in-common, social choreography, and alternative economies all demonstrate the world-making practices proposed within camps. These tentative propositions facilitate methods for working with camps – whether as an activist, social worker, architect, or engineer – that seek to draw out the potential for re-organizing political space and the “commons.” Perhaps the challenge in articulating a contemporary project of being-in-common can be traced back to the rise of early capitalism and its traumatic enclosure and expropriation of common lands, thus starting a historical process of alienation and separation that continues into our present times. **Pedro Neves Marques** addresses this in his essay *How Many Natures Can Nature Nurture? The Human, Multinaturalism, and Variation*, where he revisits the world-view of the “moderns,” a distinct category that was self-articulated in opposition to the “primitive” Other upon the encounter of settler colonialism with the Americas. It was exactly at this time that the “human” is invented and “Nature” is externalized. Those who were deemed “wild,” or of “Nature” – women, children, indigenous peoples, non-Europeans, animals, extra-human creatures, the Earth itself – became territories of primitive accumulation, to be incorporated into a regime of productivity and exploited as cheap, disposable resources. This epistemic violence, fueled by imperial greed, must be understood as “humanist capitalism,” that is, maintaining the “human” as an unmarked category (white, male, modern) is crucial to the unfolding of capital’s cosmological re-ordering of the planet. Elaborating on the work of anthropologists Philippe Descola and Edouardo Viveiro de Castro, both of whom have extensively studied Amerindian cosmologies in Amazonia, this essay proposes indigenous “perspectivism” as a real

challenge to the world-order of the moderns. Here, “humanity” is relative, a matter of the particular perspective a being takes in relation to agency – the human is an operation, not a state; a practice of actively constructing a “common viewpoint.” The challenge today is to move beyond the exclusionary, self-centered world of the moderns and actively construct a way of being in between multiple worlds, wherein the “human” is always in transition. Of course, the important role of language in creating and destroying worlds cannot be underestimated, a point of departure for **Omar Berrada** and **Sarah Rigg**’s contribution *Little Luminous Objects that Fall from Heaven – of Language and the Sky*. A lucid *dérive* through modern Arabic and Latin American poetry, Amerindian cosmology, Sufi tradition, and contemporary geopolitics, this essay and its accompanying poetic and visual arguments reflects on the colonization of thought and the enslavement of the imagination. Indeed, if colonial domination means access to resources, such as land or water, then the sky is the final frontier, as a physical and mental horizon. Climate change, satellites, drones, the Cloud, surveillance, virtual reality, these are all means through which the sky is de-/re-territorialized by the annihilating power of Modernity. If the sky is dominated, then so is language, an argument made on the premise of numerous indigenous and folkloric imaginaries that connect words to stars, the heavens to a text. The sky is full of faces, the sky is full of messages, the sky must be read, the sky is the source of images, the sky will guide us, the sky will betray us. Words never go away, they only accumulate, to the point of confusion. The growing distance between earth and sky, the abstraction of ground and air, is not only a loss of intimacy, it is a final, apocalyptic violence against a cosmos of inter-relationality and the co-existence of differences.

Ashkan Sepahvand