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Domestic cosmopolitanism and structures of feeling: the specificity of London

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Introduction

A good deal of postcolonial work on migration, national belonging and difference has, for very good historical and political reasons, focused on the complex injuries, provenance and practices of racism and xenophobia. In contrast, this article¹ explores a dialogically related yet more benevolent history of hospitality, sympathy and desire for cultural and racial 'others', which together form a cluster of contextually specific attributes that I am here calling 'domestic cosmopolitanism'. So in part the article will engage with debates on cosmopolitanism. The emotions and imaginaries associated with cosmopolitanism as a structure of *feeling* have largely been neglected by cultural and social theorists concerned with the topic, who have tended to concentrate on cognitive and aesthetic reflexivity and the maintenance of psychic detachment, or alternatively on human rights discourse (Hannerz, 1990; Urry 1995; see also Vertovec and Cohen 2002 and Skrbis *et al.*, 2004). The specificity of *gendered* relations to elsewhere and otherness, whether racist or anti-racist, has likewise been paid little attention (Nava 2002, 2007); whilst the idea of a cosmopolitanism rooted in the host

¹ An earlier version of this article was published in Yuval-Davis *et al* (2006).

country, and played out locally through imaginaries of identification and desire, rather than associated with travel and migration to foreign territories, has barely been explored at all (though see Derrida, 2001).

By expanding these three neglected conceptual zones and drawing on a number of specific historical episodes, this article will make the case, in broad outline, for a viscerally experienced, domestically located and gendered cosmopolitanism in the imagined and geopolitical spaces of contemporary metropolitan England, particularly London. This is intended to expand existing debates, not replace them. A central assertion will be that cosmopolitanism of this kind has a well-established albeit uneven material history which has shifted over the course of the twentieth century from an oppositional culture of modernity to a mainstream aspect of contemporary everyday life and a core element in the identity of London as a (post)modern city, in which national and 'racial' differences have become ordinary.

Cosmopolitanism viewed through this kind of lens must then always be understood as a historically contingent, geopolitically specific formation, as well as one which is to be distinguished conceptually from others with which it overlaps in some respects. These include, for instance, current political economy concerns with global citizenship or patterns of tourism and migration (e.g. Mouffe, 2004). Perhaps more significant politically, and more difficult to unravel conceptually and empirically, is the distinction between 'cosmopolitanism' and twenty-first century urban 'multiculturalism', or co-existence with diversity of all kinds, including religion, in a sometimes diminishing public sphere. In this kind of multiculturalism, unlike cosmopolitanism, the 'other' is held at arm's length and differences often consolidated rather than diffused (Hall, 2002; Hesse, 2002).² Finally, it is also important to stress that the kind of cosmopolitanism posited here does not exist to the exclusion of a more traditional British xenophobia. On the contrary, the two moods, or discursive regimes, often co-exist in paradoxical and antagonistic tension with each other.

Histories

When C.L.R James, the respected Trinidadian intellectual, first came to London in 1932, he wrote a series of letters home about his experiences and impressions which were published as articles in the *Port of Spain Gazette*. In one of them he describes the hospitality and warmth extended to him by the women he has met:

The average English girl in London has little colour prejudice, and in fact, were it not for English men I doubt if she would have any at all... The girls, far from being prejudiced, are very much interested... But judging from the way they look and look and look, and from what many other coloured students have told me, it is the [English] men who are responsible for a great deal of the trouble. ... I have met many instances of English women... of decent upbringing and education who have gone

² See for instance in separate 'faith schools' which are a growing but contested phenomenon in the UK.

out of their way to help in every way they could young men of colour in London (James, 2003, pp.102–103).

This, James goes on to say, is fuelled by 'genuine good will, a desire to help the stranger in a foreign land'. But there is an erotic interest also, he says, and describes an incident in which a young woman sitting next to him in the cinema insisted on pressing her arm and thigh against his, despite the fact that her male escort was seated on her other side, and how therefore he felt obliged to make a hasty escape during 'God Save the King'. Paul Robeson's experience of London in the 1930s was not dissimilar. The celebrated American negro singer, movie star and actor who, at the end of the decade, was voted the most popular singer on British radio and ranked tenth on the *Motion Picture Herald* list of most popular film personalities by the British cinema-going public – which, significantly, was composed predominantly of women – also lived in London during the inter-war period because he found it consistently less racist than New York. According to his biographer, Robeson had several affairs with white English women (Duberman, 1989).

The warm welcome extended ten years after C.L.R James's arrival by many white English women to black US servicemen while they were stationed in Britain during World War Two again echoes this mood and will certainly have been influenced by the public profile of Robeson (Nava, 2007). Between 1942 and 1945 many thousands of English women and black GIs developed social and romantic relations with each other, to the consternation of the US army command which felt obliged to warn its own white troops, still deeply embedded in a segregationist US culture, about the different racial consciousness of the British, especially the women. As General Eisenhower put it, reflecting on his war-time experience in Europe: 'The British girl would go to a movie or a dance with a Negro quite as readily as she would go with anyone else' (Gardiner, 1992, p.155). Barbara Cartland, who was a moral welfare advisor to British women troops at the time, confirmed that it was 'the white women who ran after black troops, not vice versa' (Costello, 1985, p.319). These inter-race encounters were considered so subversive by the Americans that military censorship was imposed on all photos of black and white couples dancing and socialising. The relevant points here are first, that inter-race relations and the meaning of 'race' and epidermal difference were not the same in the UK as they were in the US; and second, that in this context, as before the war, it was women (though not all women) who were most demonstrative and welcoming towards these 'strangers'.

Moreover, as C.L.R James noted, this welcome to men categorised as 'other' was extended by women from across the class range. Jews in the 1930s, in a climate of increasingly menacing anti-Semitism, in Britain as well as more notoriously in central Europe, were also coded as others and likewise embraced by certain groups in an empathetic gesture of social inclusion. Labour MP Dick Crossman made the point that during this period he and many of his middle-class socialist friends were 'pro-Jew *emotionally*... as part of their "anti-Fascism"... instinctively

standing up for the Jews whenever there was a chance to do so' (Crossman, 1946, p.27).³ A number of them married Jews in part as an act of visceral political revolt against the racism and conservatism of the parental culture (among them Hugh Gaitskell, later leader of the Labour Party) (Nava, 2007). Virginia Woolf was an earlier example who, according to her biographer, married Leonard in 1911 partly because of his 'problematic Jewishness and the fact that this was the opposite of the sort of marriage which either of her parents could have countenanced' (Lee, 1996, p.308). Nancy Cunard, heiress, political activist and editor of the celebrated 800-page anthology *Negro*, had a long relationship in the 1930s with African-American Henry Crowder out of a similar political and familial defiance (Chisholm, 1981).

During the post World War Two period of austerity, with the advent of new, predominantly male, migrants from the Commonwealth, particularly the Caribbean, the response of the indigenous population to outsiders shifted.⁴ Bill Schwarz makes the argument that this period saw a re-racialisation in Britain because of fears of miscegenation (Schwarz, 1996). Yet although discrimination in housing and the workplace was pervasive, in the liminal spheres of social and sexual interaction, black migrants were often still made welcome. The *Windrush* film made by Mike and Trevor Phillips demonstrates this unintentionally.⁵ Interspersed among interviews with mostly male Caribbean migrants recalling their disappointment and humiliation at the exclusionary practices of the British in the early postwar years are archival clips of London clubs where, as young men, they danced and socialised with white women. Horace Ove, a Trinidadian film maker who came to Britain in the early 1950s, remembers that white women didn't only fancy the newcomers: 'They were curious, and despite pressure from their parents and friends they helped us by reaching out to us. They had understanding for us for some reason' (quoted in Pilkington, 1988, p.65; see also contemporary Caribbean fiction e.g. Salkey, 1960). Ras Makonnen (from Guyana), explains this empathy and some of its inherent contradictions by suggesting that the 'dedication of some of the [white] girls to our cause was an expression of equal rights for women. One way of rejecting the oppression of men was to associate with blacks' (quoted in Gilroy, 1987, p.163). 1960s white sociologist Sheila Patterson made a related point when she commented (in her case less approvingly) that some white women had relationships with 'coloured' men as a 'deliberate political gesture' or '*pour epater les bourgeois*' as she put it: to flout convention (Patterson, 1965, p.254).

Today at the beginning of the twenty-first century, convention is no longer flouted by mixed relations. Miscegenation and domestic social interaction (to be distinguished from 'multiculturalism' or co-existence in the public sphere) are now normal, especially in London. In 1994, more than 50% of young British males of Afro-Caribbean origin and 35% of females were estimated to have white partners (Modood, 1997). The latest UK data (*Sunday Times*

³ Crossman was later to become an anti-Zionist and distanced himself from the Jewish architects of the state of Israel (1946).

⁴ The new migrants also included large numbers of Polish ex-servicemen and refugees from displaced people camps in continental Europe.

⁵ Made for BBC2 and broadcast in June 1998.

April 9 2000) suggest that an astonishing 90% of 'black' men aged twenty and in a relationship, are with partners who are not black (though how 'black' or 'relationship' are defined here is not clear) and that 40% of children with one 'black' (mixed?) parent also have a white parent. These changes are not confined to people of Afro-Caribbean origin: the Indian and Chinese populations in the UK are heading in the same direction albeit at a slower rate; (least likely to marry out are Muslims of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin) (Berthoud cited in Parker and Song, 2001, p.2). These high figures of black-white relations in the UK compare to the very low estimated percentage – 3.6% only – of African American males married to white partners in the US (Small, 2001). Interracial relationships in Britain are also estimated to be ten times higher than the European average (Parker and Song, 2001) (though it is not clear how Europe is defined here). All these figures are inevitably open to interpretation, but what is nevertheless clear is that 'mixed-raceness', which in the London context is an appellation more likely to indicate complex historical and geographical trajectories than essential racial origins, has become commonplace; it exists alongside and is fused with the plurality of contemporary British physiognomies. Moreover, this racial and cultural blurring operates across social class categories: Diana was not the only one in royal circles to choose a partner who was visibly from somewhere else; one of the Queen's cousins is married to a Nigerian and another has an Indian live-in boyfriend. Widespread miscegenation and domestic interaction of this kind are not the only signs of cosmopolitanism in contemporary London, nor, importantly, are they inevitably a sign, but they are all the same emblematic of a reconfigured modern metropolitan identity. Richard Sennett distinguishes between *alterity* in the city, which is about the provoking quality of the unknown, unclassifiable other, and mere difference (Sennett 2002). In contemporary London, difference – and in particular epidermal difference – has become 'mere difference', it has become ordinary. As one young man, a mixture of African, Portuguese, Jewish and Australian descent put it: 'I'm passionately a Londoner, this is where I belong. In my view being a Londoner means being half of this and half of that', or in his case, indeterminate quarters. This apparently unstoppable trend towards fusion exists at the same time as, and in contrast to, increasingly entrenched late-modern religious and cultural differentiation.

What needs to be explained therefore is why Londoners seem to be relatively unique in their propensity to merge. What is it that distinguishes London from other postcolonial or settler societies in the West? What are the historical, geopolitical and unconscious determinants of this kind of modern domestic and emotional cosmopolitanism? What is the conceptual specificity of this visceral, local and gendered cosmopolitanism?

Theories

A decade ago there was almost no theoretical literature on cosmopolitanism. In recent years it has been taken up across a range of disciplines and has come to refer to a disparate cluster of

philosophies, subjectivities, aspirations and practices: from global citizenship and the transnational identifications of migrants to embedded US journalists in the Iraq war.⁶ So care is needed with its use. I came across some unexpected references to the term by chance while working in the Selfridges archive: Gordon Selfridge, founder of the department store, was an enthusiastic advocate of cosmopolitanism (as he also was of feminism) and wrote about it frequently in his daily press column during the first decades of the twentieth century, at the height of the Empire. He was so pleased, he often stated, that London was losing her insularity and becoming really cosmopolitan (e.g. Selfridge, 1911). These optimistic aspirations prompted my subsequent research on the history of cosmopolitanism in commercial and entertainment cultures and, because women were so significant in these spheres as consumers, on the specificity of women's fascination with abroad and otherness. One of the concerns in that work on the early twentieth century was to unravel the distinctions between aspirant cosmopolitanism as part of an engagement with the new – as a feature of modernity – and Edward Said's 'orientalism' (Said, 1978; Nava 1998, 2007).

The purpose of this piece, in an intellectual climate in which the deployment of 'cosmopolitanism' has now become commonplace, is to sharpen and clarify some of the neglected theoretical possibilities of the concept and to highlight absences in current debates. The historical narratives and texts I have already referred to suggest three interlinked analytical zones which have been excluded or narrowly interpreted in the literature. These are disposition, gender and the domestic. Discussions of disposition have tended to exclude feeling. Gender has been excluded from all aspects of the debate. Cosmopolitanism at home rather than abroad – local cosmopolitanism – has also barely been addressed. Gender, although foregrounded in one of these zones, is in fact an element that traverses all three. Indeed this common presence may well be the factor which has led to their relative marginalisation across the board. Yet, as I hope to demonstrate, the conceptual relevance of all three zones to the broader discursive regime of cosmopolitanism is compelling.

Disposition

Disposition, which refers to an attitude or mode of engaging with the world, is the least neglected of the three. It is one of the 'perspectives' identified by Vertovec and Cohen (2002) and is discussed at some length and perceptively by Tomlinson (1999) and also by Urry (1995).⁷ All build on the work of Hannerz who, in his seminal essay, describes cosmopolitanism as 'an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness towards divergent cultural experiences' (1990, p.239). The cosmopolitan in this framework (whom Hannerz implies is normally a western male) has reflexive and cognitive competencies which enable him

⁶ It was used in this way at the 2003 Cultural Studies Association (US) annual conference in Pittsburgh. See Vertovec and Cohen (2002) for a helpful discussion of the range of existing approaches.

⁷ John Tomlinson is the most interesting of these (1999). See also Nava (2007).

to travel around the world while remaining culturally and emotionally detached. Although useful in opening up the debate, the various accounts about the cognitive skills of travellers and migrants fail to take into account the *non-rational*, visceral, reactive and unconscious elements that are complexly at play in the production of the cosmopolitan imagination; that are manifested in feelings of empathy, attraction and hospitality towards others and the foreign and that emerge so strikingly in the episodes I described earlier. These more complexly charged *emotions* and *imaginaries*, which I insist should be considered as an additional integral feature of cosmopolitanism, are also connected to what Stanley Cohen (in an attempt to explain why some people *did* help Jews in occupied Europe, despite the risk to themselves) has called 'instinctive extensivity': this is a kind of intuitive and spontaneous 'sense of self as part of a common humanity,' a semi-conscious not-easily-explained disregard for borders demarcating family, 'race' and nation (Cohen 2001: 265). The origins of these feelings of inclusivity and of a sense of an imagined community which extends beyond the boundaries of the local are not easily explained and have been neglected even within the field of psychoanalysis whose remit precisely is to make sense of the genesis of such recurring, semi-conscious yet idiosyncratic responses. The main point to emphasise here is that the most common ways of understanding cosmopolitan disposition do not include the non-rational often-passionate commitment to a more inclusive community of strangers (though see Kristeva 1993; this is also discussed at greater length in Nava 1992 and 2007). Nor do they attempt to trace its genealogy.

But genealogies – of historical and geopolitical formations as well as disposition – cannot be neglected if current political–ethical differences in intellectual thought are to be understood. Too often it is assumed that there are no salient differences between racial signifiers in the west, that US codifications and theories apply also in the UK. But this is not the case. Imaginative disregard for borders and feelings of inclusivity – here referred to as the cosmopolitan disposition – are differently interpreted and valued in different contexts, as a recent piece by Kimberly Chabot Davis reveals. In it she reviews some of the scathing moral criticisms levelled by white American anti-racists against other whites and what they perceive as 'sentimental', 'self-serving' and 'facile sympathy' for racial others which is 'inherently colonising' and a 'substitute for political action' rather than a political unsettling of the status quo. These observations are made in the context of an analysis of white women readers' empathetic responses to fiction by black women on Oprah Winfrey's talk show in the US (Chabot Davis 2003; 2004). Although Chabot Davis concludes against the grain of these other US critics by arguing that affective reading experiences can disrupt ideologies of racial hierarchy and could galvanise support for anti-racist public policy in America, and therefore offers a more nuanced analysis, it is interesting to note that she does not address what might be specific about the responses she describes in either national or gender terms.

Gender

In contrast, I make the claim that there are a number of reasons – social and psychodynamic – why gender is significant and why women in Britain have figured more prominently than men in the history of twentieth-century cosmopolitanism as recounted here. These include historical and geopolitical factors, among them the demographic consequences of two world wars, which seriously reduced the numbers of available men; and also the gendered patterns of migration to Britain over the course of the twentieth century which meant that indigenous women were the first to have intimate relations with the predominantly male visitors and travellers from elsewhere. Women were also distinctively located in relation to the new social formations of popular modernity. In their capacity as the main shoppers, readers and cinema goers, they were more likely to encounter the proliferating cultural and commercial narratives about the allure of abroad and difference, (see for example Selfridges' promotion of the tango in the years before World War One; desert romance movies like *The Sheik* in the 1920s; US dance and movie cultures in the 1930s; and more recently, television; Nava 1998, 2007). Also to be taken into account was the precariousness of English masculinity, which, particularly during the early part of the twentieth century, was often described in literary and biographical accounts, by men as well as women, as uncommunicative and sexually repressed – in sum as disappointing. In this context, women's fantasies of 'other' lovers flourished.

But there are other factors as well, as the stories recounted earlier indicate: some English women also *identified* with 'others', who like themselves, were marginalised and contingently denied power in the unstable and overlapping regimes of white and male superiority. So their alliances with racial others and the socially repudiated can be understood, as Makonnen recognised, as a form of proto-feminism: these acts constituted a revolt against the constraints of family and 'femininity' as well as Englishness. Finally (and contentiously) there may well be embedded unconscious factors as well which make women (not all women) more inclined to feel empathy for strangers, to be inclusive and politically, to be pacifists (as they certainly were in the inter-war and again have been since 9/11). Freud, in his *Civilization and its Discontents*, used the phrase 'the narcissism of minor differences' to describe the enduring hostility between ethnic and racial neighbours, predominantly men, which he argued was rooted in the son's rivalry with the father, and therefore inherently masculine (Freud, 1930). Conversely, Bracha Ettinger, a Lacanian theorist and artist, has argued in a complex recent piece that women's greater empathy for others can be linked to what she has called the 'matrixial'. This is the symbolic effect in the imaginary of having a womb which produces a feminine subjectivity more about conjoining than difference, one in which borders between people are less sharply defined and in which the other may be valued more highly than the self (Boyne, 2004; Ettinger, 2004). The possibility of women's distinctive mode of intersubjective relations and unconscious identification with difference is advanced by others also, though there is no space for the debate to be developed here (Benjamin, 1998; Wyatt, 2004).

What does seem to be the case however is that these socio-historical and psychodynamic factors have combined to produce some specific and unexpected cultural outcomes. As has

already been noted, relationships between white women and 'other' men in the historical context of colonial and postcolonial Britain have contributed to the destabilisation of both race and gender hierarchies, in contrast to those between white men and black women – the dominant pattern in the US historically – which have tended to confirm them. The consequences of this asymmetry have been far reaching and are relevant for the discussion here, but have not been much explored. The mixed children of indigenous white mothers in the UK context, even if still highly visible, are more likely to be absorbed, albeit unevenly, into the dominant white culture and hence to transform it into something more fluid – more cosmopolitan – and to make its national and epidermal borders more permeable. This is in contrast to the US pattern in which mixed children have historically been more likely to be categorised as 'black', leaving cultural boundaries and the racial 'purity' of whites intact.⁸ Cultural merger and mongrelisation therefore are more likely to be the outcomes (in the context of predominantly white societies) where white women are the point of social, emotional and sexual contact with 'elsewhere'.

The Domestic

Gender differences are also central to the third zone, the domestic. This topographical trope refers to both a territory of the imagination and, in the context of this chapter, to the more material historical transformations specific to London's geopolitics. Both contribute to the way domestic cosmopolitanism is being conceptualised here.

The domestic generates a range of discursive connotations. It evokes the spatial, the dualities of inside–outside, private–public, home and abroad, the domesticated and of course the feminine. In the context of this discussion it signals a cosmopolitanism that takes place *at home*, in the family, in our home town, in the interior territories of the mind and body. As such, it suggests a structure of feeling – a stance of openness to others and other cultural practices – that exists independently of travel to foreign countries or knowledge of foreign languages; this is a cosmopolitanism that emerges from engagement with otherness and elsewhere in the *local* zones – the micro publics – of the city: the street, the school, the baby clinic, the gym, the dance floor, the shopping centre and the cultural terrains of urban sounds and appearance (Amin, 2002; Sandercock, 2003). In the same way, the intimate albeit mediated form of TV must also be included here insofar as, cumulatively, it generates, in the familiar domesticscape of the living room, an increasing deterritorialisation of the globe by *normalising* difference in the spheres of music, fashion, even politics, although often against the message of individual programmes.

⁸ The legacy of slavery and particular way of conceptualising race – one-drop rule – persist. Interracial marriage was illegal in half the states of the US until the 1960s. Lynching was commonplace in the south until the 1930s (Allen *et al.* 2004). Even today, restrictions are imposed by US record companies, in contrast to those in Britain, on the representation of black and white couples in music videos, according to director Jake Nava.

But it would be a mistake to assume that these quotidian experiences of interaction are simple replays on home territory of the travels abroad undertaken by Hannerz's cosmopolitan, for whom the foreign tends to be made up of observed entities usually maintained at arm's length. The everyday domestic cultures that have developed in many of London's neighbourhoods over the last few decades are closer to the vernacular cosmopolitanism referred to (all too briefly) by postcolonial theorists like Hall and Bhabha in that they signal the increasingly undifferentiated, hybrid, post-multicultural, lived transformations which are the outcome of diasporic cultural mixing and indeterminacy rather than plurality and co-existence (Bhabha, 1996; Hall, 2000; Benedictus, 2005). So the continuity not only of co-residence but of *interaction*, of mutual acknowledgement and desire is what marks out domestic and vernacular cosmopolitanism, and, importantly, does so not only for the one-in-four Londoners born abroad (Kyambi, 2005) or for the many more whose parents were, but also for the several million native British subjects who inhabit the metropolis and take pleasure in its cultural mix. To point this out is not to deny the forcefulness of parallel and sometimes complexly interwoven xenophobia and anti-immigrant feeling which at opportune moments is ratcheted up and used for political purposes. The claim here is that alongside and imbricated with such exclusivity and pandering to popular (often rural) anxiety is a more generous hospitable engagement with people from elsewhere, a commitment to an imagined inclusive transnational community of disparate Londoners.

These imaginative connections and cultural transformations arise in part from specific factors in London's geopolitical history: London is not only unlike New York or Chicago in respect of its cultural-racial mixing, but also unlike Paris, despite a similar history of postcolonial relations. Eric Hobsbawm makes the point that over the last thirty years or so, the centre of Paris has been transformed into a 'gigantic gentrified bourgeois ghetto' from which the poor and immigrants have been extruded to housing projects on the city's suburban periphery (Hobsbawm, 2002, p.332).⁹ Although London also has its gentrified areas, war-time bombing damage and the resultant almost random scattering of municipal housing across the city has meant that the middle and working classes, foreigners and natives, have lived and been schooled in much more intimate proximity to each other (although inequalities persist). So although some migrant groups settled close to people from their own background while others were dispersed across the city, most were schooled in a highly mixed environment, alongside both the 'gentrifying', professional, often left-wing, middle classes who had moved into some of the neglected sectors of the city, and a mobile, indigenous working class that was decreasingly cohesive as it in turn moved to the outer urban fringes because of postwar slum clearance or the desire to live in the more salubrious respectable suburbs.

⁹ See e.g. the film *La Haine*, directed by Mathieu Kassoitz (1995). The suburbs in US and UK mythology evoke security and respectability, whereas those of Paris suggest deprivation and menace. The condition and mood of the Paris suburbs were on display during the extended disturbances of October and November 2005.

Such familiarity between groups is one of the factors that have shifted the axis of belonging in much of contemporary London. Yet Ash Amin has stressed that residential proximity on its own is not enough to transform consciousness: what is required is interdependence and habitual participation in the everyday projects and spaces of the city (Amin, 2002). Modood points out that 'political mobilisation and participation, especially protest and contestation' are themselves a means of 'integrating', and that this is a factor which distinguishes British patterns of migration from those in other parts of Europe (Modood, 2005, p.69). Richard Sennett's related argument about mutual respect and the expressive work of acknowledging others – about the importance of *performing* 'mutuality' – although made about another context, is also useful in thinking through the conditions for the viable operation of cosmopolitanism (Sennett, 2004, p.59).

Conclusion

Domestic, local and political practices of this kind, boosted by the emotional and libidinal economies of identification and desire, are, I would argue, the foundational elements of twenty-first century urban cosmopolitan imaginaries and more inclusive experiences of belonging. So although the domestic cosmopolitanism of London may be confined predominantly to the geographical limits of the metropolis, imaginatively and visually, it has extended the borders of what it means to be a Londoner, and indeed British. It is increasingly clear moreover, that in relation to cosmopolitanism, as was also the case with second wave feminism, the domestic and the personal are not politically insignificant. On the contrary, affective cultures are deeply implicated in political resistance and transformation, in *anti-racism* as much as racism. Gender and structures of feeling – the micro-narratives and encounters of the emotional, gendered and domestic everyday – must be taken into account if we are to understand the specificity of the contemporary context. Theorists of cosmopolitanism, postcolonialism and racial difference who neglect these factors diminish the conceptual and political reach of their own argument.

The relevance, both conceptual and political, of the analysis of cosmopolitanism offered here is visible in the sequence of iconic events that so transformed the consciousness and global image of London in the first week of July 2005. The successful bid for the Olympics was in part a consequence of the deliberate promotion of London as a global city and Londoners as the most culturally diverse population in the world. The brief moment of euphoria and metropolitan pride generated by the award was followed only hours later by the darkness of the bombs of 7/7 which, in mutilating and killing people from a wide range of national origins, again transmitted to the world an image of London's cultural diversity, and at the same time was constitutive of a new awareness of commonality and interdependence among Londoners themselves. Ken Livingstone, mayor of London, when interviewed immediately after the event, put it (approximately) thus: 'among those who died were Muslims, Christians, Jews, Hindus,

young, old, black and white, people from all over the world who live here in harmony because of the freedoms of the city. This disaster will unite Londoners, not divide them'. Pessimists might say his words were an attempt to diffuse tension. They may in part have been. Nevertheless, the poignant and intimate sharing of fortune and misfortune by the residents of London over these few dramatic days is indicative of the extent of the mutuality of this quotidian, local, twenty-first century cosmopolitanism.

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