

Cosmopolitics and Biopolitics

*Ethics and Aesthetics
in Contemporary Art*

Edited by Modesta Di Paola

CONTENTS

Modesta Di Paola

Acknowledgments 9

Modesta Di Paola

Introduction: Cosmopolitical aesthetics 11

Anna Maria Guasch

Cosmopolitanism and global contemporary art 25

Alpesh Kantilal Patel

"Affect: Belonging" 37

Emma Brasó

The three Janez Janšas 61

Renate Dohmen

The global, the post-abyssal and the cosmopolitical:

Casting a creative post-underdeveloped, post-peripheral, tropical eye 77

Modesta Di Paola

(In)hospitable art. Artistic narratives in cosmopolitical aesthetics 95

Christian Alonso

Placing life at the centre: towards a more-than-human cosmopolitics 111

Lecturers' biographies 131

Acknowledgments

The seed of inspiration for this book was planted during the international conference *Art and Speculative Futures* organized by the research groups AGI (Art, Globalization, Interculturality) and AASD (Art, Architecture and Digital Society) from the University of Barcelona (UB) and Mediaccions from the Open University of Catalonia (UOC), which took place at the Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB) and at the Arts Santa Mònica from 27 to 29 October, 2016. “Session A: Cosmopolitanism” was focused on the cosmopolitical approaches from the arts aiming to describe the possibilities of mutual co-existence and living with difference, and understanding of the creation of any political horizon that is based on the creation of sustainable relationships with otherness. So first and foremost, we thank colleagues who participated in the congress. This book is important because of people who have contributed to it, sharing with us their theoretical approaches and ideas about issues recently born around the cosmopolitical in art. Therefore, we would like to wholeheartedly thank our contributing authors: Renate Dohem, lecturer at the The Open University of London; Emma Brasó, art historian and curator of the Royal College Art of London, and Christian Alonso, a predoctoral researcher and teacher at the Department of Art History of the University of Barcelona. A special word of gratitude is for the keynotes of Session A: Alpesh Kantial Patel, director of the MFA Visual Arts programme and an Assistant Professor of Contemporary Art and Theory at Florida International University in Miami, Florida, and Ursula Biemann, artist, writer, and video essayist based in Zurich, Switzerland. They offered us interesting arguments about a new cosmopolitical aesthetic that, from within the real world, is always more closely structured in artistic practices that pursue ethical, political and biopolitical interests.

We extend a heartfelt thank you to the directors who organized the congress: Lourdes Cirlot (Department of Art History, University of Barcelona); Pau Alsina (Studies of Art and Humanities, Open University of Catalunya), and Anna Maria Guasch (Department of Art History, University of Barcelona), di-

rector of the research group AGI, whose lines of research propose to generate theoretical, historiographical and critical devices that allow contextualizing contemporary artistic practices in today's society, semantically structured around the values of identity, locality and interculturality in a global world.

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Introduction: Cosmopolitical aesthetics

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Cosmopolitical aesthetics should be understood as a specific conceptual subject matter that is directed towards two levels of interpretation. The first refers to transdisciplinary experimentation and the extension of the aesthetic into everyday life and politics, expressing itself towards a vast visual narrative that situates contemporary art in social, political, and general-public contexts as well as intimate ones. This new aesthetic orientation is the result of a natural process of sedimentation, of concepts used in an overlapping way with the aim of overcoming the impasse experienced by traditional aesthetics resulting from the impossibility of constructing a definition of art that can base itself in ideas of beauty, form, imitation, or imagination. Until recently, aesthetics has focused above all on the psychology of the user, generally revealing two types of aesthetic concentration – one “immediate”, which is generated through seeing and hearing (in the 1750s, Alexander Baumgarten derived the discipline’s name from the Greek *aisthanomai*, perception via senses), and the other “mediated”, which is to say filtered by thought and imagination. From this perspective, the interconnection between the terms “practical” and “aesthetics” could be presented as somewhat contradictory. However, the complex relationship that art weaves today with society and politics has made it indispensable to rethink the contemporary concept of aesthetics, so much so that in the last few years important contributions have brought this discipline to a more practical and specific application, rehabilitating it as a vital argument in the theory of contemporary art. Some recent theoretical contributions – such as those of Jacques Rancière (2004, 2009), Alain Badiou (2005), Gavin Grindon (2008), and Jill Bennett (2012) – position aesthetics to detect the social, political, and technological functions that provoke new ways of perceiving, feeling, creating, and imagining contemporary art. Thus understood, we use the term “aesthetics” to refer to a field of research that, following the arguments of Jill Bennett in her book *Practical Aesthetics: Events, Affects and Art After 9/11* (2012),¹

¹ https://www.academia.edu/19902278/Practical_Aesthetics_Events_Affects_and_Art_After_9_11_chapter_1.

is as vital to social and political theory as it is to artistic practices. This new orientation challenges the notion of an art opposed to and separated from “real life”, and instead supports the idea of a new way of reading contemporary artworks, understood as part of the perceptive processes, through “practical, real world encounters” (BENNETT, 2012: 2; see also ALPESH in this book).

The second level of interpretation is directed towards “cosmopolitical” thinking, understood as a “seismograph” (see GUASCH in this book) that detects the ethical and political content of contemporary artistic practices, offering the opportunity to extend the conceptual basis of art history towards a more global and intercultural dimension. We refer in particular to the abundant production of discourses that during these last decades have placed cosmopolitanism on the centre of the stage, highlighting the importance of an ethics of responsibility and of hospitality as a law written into human culture.² Recent analysis of cosmopolitanism has been emphasising not only the importance of the notion of cultural pluralism at a theoretical level but also the need to contextualise it in contemporary social, ethical, and political realities. The question of a new cosmopolitanism is much more evident in the book *Cosmopolitanism*, in which Chakrabarty, Bhabha, Breckenridge, and Pollock highlight how cosmopolitanism cannot be understood as an objective phenomenon but rather as a kind of work in progress.³ Cosmopolitanism has to be an open concept, which explores more than it defines discourses and practices about society and culture. When Bhabha speaks of vernacular cosmopolitanism, he refers to the mobility of this concept and the possibility of constituting a cosmopolitanism whose aim is the analysis of processes of transculturation and hybridisation and, thus, the defence of plural realities, post universalist and post-human.

From the field of history of art and visual studies we have focused especially on the fundamental contributions of Marsha Meskimmon and Nikos Papastergiadis, whose concepts about the “cosmopolitical imagination” (2011) and “aesthetic cosmopolitanism” (2012) recognise in contemporary art the interconnections between the real world of the public domain and the imagination at a more ethical and social level. These tendencies can be traced back to

² There is a vast production of texts and essays written from very varied disciplinary approaches. It is seen above all in Jacques Derrida with his essays *Cosmopolites de tous les pays, encore un effort!* (1996) and *De l'hospitalité* (1997), in the post-colonial thinking of Homi Bhabha (1994) and Kwame A. Appiah (2006), and in the transnational anthropology and sociology of James Clifford (1997), Ulrich Beck (1998) and Jürgen Habermas (1998).

³ BRECKENRIDGE, C. A.; POLLOCK, S.; BHABHA, H. K.; CHAKRABARTY, D. (eds.) (2002). *Cosmopolitanism*. Durham, NC.: Duke University Press.

biographical experiences of migrating artists, and also theorists, and to their habitual daily encounters with “newness” (BHABHA, 1994) in the “real-world” (BENNETT, 2012).

From this double perspective, by cosmopolitical aesthetics we refer to critical theories whose principles achieve a hospitable and responsible behaviour towards the world in its totality, social and natural (cosmo-political). It is here where art – detecting complexities and conflicts – reveals a specific interest in the ethical and political dialogue that is established between individuals and social groups, in many cases denouncing the utopia of the modern project of establishing universally a pacific solution between human beings and non-human life forms. Artists of various tendencies reflect on the degree of conflict provoked by the state of emergency of the social world (referring above all to weak human groups such as exiles and immigrants) and the natural world. This attitude is evident in artistic projects that offer a theoretical basis for debates about globalisation, the ethic of hospitality, and the culture of inclusion. This is to say that cosmopolitical aesthetics move between concepts such as identity of relationship, conflict, hospitality, and migration, revealing the relationship that humankind establishes with its bio-geo-political environment.

In this context, the terms and concepts used to represent hospitality, welcoming, and inclusion become inadequate and insufficient because they, in turn, represent systems and attitudes that are equally inadequate in terms of the complexity of the contemporary human and natural condition. The subjects covered in this book question, beyond real or imaginary borders, the constant mobility of bodies, artefacts, and other cultural and natural products. In a political landscape in constant expansion, one sees flows that lead people, goods, and processes into situations of conflict and upheaval. Composed as an exhibition of arguments in articles, this book seeks to outline from contemporary social and cultural theories the advances of an artistic narrative that reveals the historical, political, and ecological dimensions of the interaction between human beings and ecosystems, tracing the commitments and implications between the ethical, political, and epistemic putting into play that these can cause to arise.

Ideas and concepts about cosmopolitanism

“Cosmopolitismo” (from the Greek κόσμος (kosmos), “cosmo” and πολίτης (polítēs), “citizen”) is a word first used by Diogenes of Sinope (c. 412-323 BCE). This expression was based on the marginality of the human being regarding

the life of the citizen integrated into the *polis*. The Cynical philosopher presented himself as the “citizen of the whole world”,⁴ an itinerant being at the margin of conventions or the roles imposed by society, living according to his most intimate and genuine nature and in accordance with it. The idea of human virtue that is identified with the “state of nature” is strengthened in the classical era with the Sophists and, above all, with the Stoics, who promoted an ideal of “culture of humanity” that could be reached by freeing oneself of individual needs (autarky) in favour of a wider perspective of the human universe. This is the cosmopolitanism referred to by Fathers of the Church, who identified the world as “the only home for everyone” (Tertullian in *De pudicitia*, c. 217-222 CE). Classical cosmopolitanism loses almost all its ethical connotation and its relationship with nature in the eighteenth century, since it began to be associated with subjects involving anti-nationalist ideas and to be configured by means of the norms of political rather than ethical behaviour. The plan for perpetual peace that could be achieved thanks to a political league of nations became, with the Abbé de Saint-Pierre⁵ and above all with Immanuel Kant (1795), the focus of the political and philosophical ideals of the European Enlightenment.

In his essay *To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*,⁶ Kant tries to construct politically an international peace capable of guaranteeing a legal security for all citizens. The need to leave the state of nature – which is to say, the state of war – leads Kant to formulate his idea of peace: this cannot be based on the disastrous consequences of war, or its economic, social, and moral mechanisms. On the contrary, Kant’s peace is of a legal variety, regarding law as the means for a real change at the institutional level. From this perspective, Kant suggests an idea of international public law that is based on specific and rational articles. One of these, the third article of the *Peace*, is based on cosmopolitical law, the condition of universal hospitality. Hence the formation of a “cosmopolitical constitution” would correspond to the building of a universal State able to guarantee the rights of all men and women, given that all are citizens of the world to the same degree. The citizen would thus be an inhabitant of the world more than a foreigner, a person who moves physically from

⁴ Diogene Laërtius in *Vite dei filosofi* dedicates a substantial section to Diogenes the Cynic and the fame built around his enigmatic figure.

⁵ Abbé de Saint-Pierre (1713 [t. I and II], 1717 [t. III]). *Projet pour rendre la paix perpétuelle en Europe*. Utrecht: Antoine Schouten; re-edit. Paris: Garnier, 1981; Fayard, 1986.

⁶ Original title *Zum ewigen Frieden. Ein philosophischer Entwurf* (trans. 2003, *To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*. Hackett Publishing).

one side to another of the planet, an active subject who opens his interior and intersubjective vision to the public and political interest. With his vision, Kant has elaborated some conceptual positions of considerable contemporary relevance: in the first place, that cosmopolitanism is not a philanthropic concept but rather the right of a foreigner not to be treated with hostility; secondly, that the right to visit corresponds to any citizen according to the law of sharing *with-* the world; and thirdly, that public law needs a cosmopolitical thinking to oversee the rights of all men and women in general.

During Romanticism, in line with modernity, man was considered to be the centre of the world (anthropocosmism). In this atmosphere and thanks to the socialist movement and proletarian internationalism, the idea was developed that cosmopolitanism was an inherited attitude of the bourgeoisie and national nihilism. The twentieth century has tried to recover the Kantian vision of cosmopolitical law under democratic values. Ulrich Beck in his *The Cosmopolitan Manifesto* theorises that “without a cosmopolitan democracy we move towards a technocratic world society” (BECK, 1998: 30). According to him, transnational conflicts and dialogues have to be set out explicitly and organised. What is the objective of this global dialogue? The values and structures of a cosmopolitical democratic society:

In the age of globalisation, there is no easy escape from this democratic dilemma. It cannot be solved simply by moving towards “cosmopolitan democracy”. The central problem is that without a politically strong cosmopolitan consciousness and corresponding institutions of global civil society and public opinion, cosmopolitan democracy remains, for all the institutional fantasy, no more than a necessary utopia. The decisive question is whether and how a consciousness of cosmopolitan solidarity can develop. The Communist Manifesto was published 150 years ago. Today, at the beginning of a new millennium, it is time for a Cosmopolitan Manifesto (*ibidem*: 29).

The cosmopolitan, in other words, is a citizen of the world whose responsibilities are based on a post-national conception of the State, of justice, of science, and of art. The renovation of cosmopolitical ideas during the final decades of the twentieth century has been characterised by democratic ideas, driven by the constitutions of the League of Nations and then the United Nations.

Jürgen Habermas, returning to the question of Kantian cosmopolitanism in his text “The Constitutionalization of International Law and the Legitimacy Problems of a Constitution for a World Society”, has proposed a global political order as a form of democracy (HABERMAS, 1998, chap. 7). Globalisation and the formation of plural societies – characterised by conflicts and cultural ten-

sions – make necessary the reorganisation of relationships between states, so a more concrete form of a global democratic society can be achieved, beyond national boundaries. To this end, according to Habermas, politicians should opt for a cosmopolitan orientation and co-operate through a “common will”. A new definition of universalism, sensitive to differences, would be the key to reconsidering international law in which inclusion – a concept understood not so much as assimilation but rather as opening – has a fundamental role in imagining a global society constituted politically on different levels. In our contemporaneity, together with the idea of nation-states there are also global organisations such as the United Nations. However, between these two levels, there is an intermediary transnational level that has still to be developed. Habermas claims that if this level were realised, global players would lose the right to wage war that is today the monopoly of sovereign governments. An international community, at a supranational level, would take the form of a reformed United Nations, a society of “others” that would share differences.

From this perspective, Habermas seems to be the direct heir of Kant’s philosophy about cosmopolitan law (DELAHUNTY; YOO, 2010), certainly not thought of in the form of a world characterised by the League of Nations, but rather as a democracy marked by the functional and normative centrality of law as a legitimate medium for social integration. It is interesting to observe that although he advances a careful reading of Kant’s text, Habermas does not examine the third article in which the analysis of hospitality was treated rigorously.⁷ In his ideal cosmopolitan State, Habermas proposes law as the universal and global form of inclusion, for which it would not be possible to think of the assimilation of others within a communitarian politics. In this sense, Habermas’s omission in relation to the ethics of Kantian hospitality represents the idea of a cosmopolitan state that includes the right to diversity and where, as a result, hospitality no longer has any reason to exist.

The renewal of cosmopolitical ideals is on the rise at the start of the twenty-first century. As it is easy to imagine, some of the discourses about cosmopolitanism today – especially those related to the phenomenon of the globalisation of the economy and of information, but also to terrorist attacks after 9/11, the humanitarian crises caused by armed conflicts, and mass migration – have been fed both by the Kantian principles of a universal vision of hospitality (BROCK and BRIGHOUSE, 2005; BENHABIB, 2006) and by the foun-

⁷ See note 16 of the chapter “Ospitalità impossibile. L’integrazione nell’ordine dell’ospitalità” by Tito Marci, in COTTA, Gabriella (ed.), *Concordia discors. La convivenza politica e i suoi problema*, op. cit., p. 187.

dation of a single world government capable of proposing specific solutions to the crisis of the nation-states (HEATER, 1996, 2006; SKOLIMOWSKI, 2003). *After Cosmopolitanism* (2013), the book edited by Rosi Braidotti, Patrick Hanafin, and Bolette Blaagaard, should be read from this latter perspective. In this work, they put forward the idea that our globalised condition forms the central bond of contemporary cosmopolitan claims and that a radical transformation of cosmopolitanism is needed as a possible solution. Cosmopolitanism does not have to refer to a transcendental ideal but rather to the material and real condition of global interdependencies. To do this, what is called for is a cosmopolitanism that is also a cosmopolitics, in the sense of a more attentive interest in the material reality of our social and political situation and an interest less focused on its metaphorical implications. In her article “Becoming-world”, Braidotti argues that cosmopolitanism as an economic and social concept can be considered an affirmative and useful response for interpreting current practices. However, cosmopolitanism should perform a mutation that starts with understanding the importance of the structural immanence in the model of ethical-political relations in the double philosophical concept “becoming-world” (BRAIDOTTI, 2013: 8-27).

From cosmopolitanism to the cosmopolitical aesthetics

In recent years, new theories associated with neomaterialism and geo-eco-philosophical thinking – above all from Gregory Bateson, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Donna Haraway, Rosi Braidotti, Deane Curtin, Karen J. Warren, and John Protevi – have enriched the possibilities of reconsidering the epistemology and ethics of human relationships in their reconfiguration in the extended field of the sciences and ecology, including in the cosmopolitical the natural element connected to the social and the cultural. The loss of the natural element, of the vision of the vegetable and animal world, in favour of a politics of relationships that are established between countries has coincided with the absolute annulment of the balance between *cosmo* and humanity, drawn in terms of power and dominance. In the colonial vision, just like other ethnic groups – historically characterised by relations of tension between dominator and dominated – nature too must be domesticated and controlled.

From these premises, it seems impossible to find assonance between the concept of cosmopolitanism and ecology, a field of study that is mainly concerned with the environment. Seemingly different from each other, cosmopolitanism describes the relationship that is established between human beings,

ethics, and the politics that regulate the living together of people of different nationalities, while ecology is related to vital processes, to interactions and adaptations, to the movement of matter and energy through communities of life, and the development of ecosystems. Social ecologies today demonstrate the interdependence between the humanitarian and ecological crises provoked by a modern system of a central and centralising character. Thus, the distance of disciplinary interests has recently become a topic of discussion in academic fields and in artistic praxis that, overcoming the modern acceptance of cosmopolitanism, try to develop the idea of cosmopolitical, understood more as an ethical and political tendency born from the willingness to find positive and responsible solutions to create a radical change in relationships between people and between people and other, non-human, forms of life.

One more direct relationship between the cosmopolitical and ecology is offered to us by the Swiss artist Ursula Biemann who, moving in a hybrid disciplinary field, has recently carried out a major artistic project entitled *Forest Law* (2014), in collaboration with the Brazilian architect Paulo Tavares. The project consists of a synchronised video projection and a bilingual artist's book, *Forest Law | Selva Jurídica. On the Cosmopolitics of Amazonia*, which shows the influence of Michel Serres's book *The Natural Contract* (1992 [1995]) and the legal action taken by several international lawyers to protect the ecosystem, *in primis*, of the Amazon forest.

During the congress *Art and Speculative Futures* held in Barcelona in 2016, Biemann gave a lecture, *The Cosmopolitical Forest* (2014-2016), whose importance consists of laying the artistic and conceptual foundations of a cosmopolitical aesthetics understood as the discursive praxis between living human and non-human systems.⁸ *The Cosmopolitical Forest* is based on a global search concerning the territorial and climatic changes caused by large-scale extraction activities and the engineering of territorial systems. The artist thus focuses her attention on the social and biological micro-dynamics caused by the escalating competition between states and multinational corporations over the control of these strategic natural resources. The fieldwork brings the artist to confront realities and encounters that allow the development of a work which mixes the aesthetic of the documentary, vast cinematic landscapes, poetry, and academic results, narrating a planetary reality in rapid mutation. Ursula Biemann's theoretical intervention has naturally opened a big debate that has seen the outlining of the crucial difference between cosmopolitanism and *cosmopolitics*. This

8 <http://geobodies.org>.

difference lies in the fact that humanity is no longer the centre of the cosmos, but rather part of life itself in its most absolute vitalist configurations, in its cycles and readjustments, migrations, the movement and matter that is transformed by reconnecting to the “common” space of the Earth. Directed as it is towards future ways of being, the cosmopolitical system generally intersects the field of the core competences in aesthetics, imagining other possibilities of existence in which the relationship between an ethical and juridical dimension of human and non-human life should be balanced. More specifically, for Rick Dolphijn, the cosmopolitical is guided by two closely interrelated themes: (1) “being cosmopolitan”, as the modernist idea about cosmopolitanism in which modern philosophy sees the human being as the starting point and the centre of knowledge of the world; and (2) “being cosmopolitical”, as the post-human and non-human idea of the politics of everything. To be cosmopolitical is not so much about taking the human being as the centre of a global world (“cosmo-politic”) and much more about the politics of how everything works in relationship to many forms of knowledge that interact with each other. The goal of cosmopolitical projects is the way in which human knowledge is confronted with other ways of knowledge and how the human being opens himself or herself up to other forms of being, which is a very difficult and fragile process of what we identify as the post-human and non-human knowledge of the cosmos. Here, the *cosmo-political* must be understood as the common world that links human beings and non-human beings together.⁹

From this definition, cosmopolitical aesthetics combine ethics and politics not only between humans but also between humans and other non-human forms of life. Within the international debate about the human rights of having free access in the “world territory” (Kant), today there is a drive for a strong ethical and legal posture designed to protect the right of nature to a harmonious existence with the human being. In accordance with holistic thinking, in violating a person’s individual rights one also violates the rights of nature itself, for which reason nature itself must be defined as a legal entity. Like the life of human beings, nature possesses a set of inalienable rights, including the right to comprehensive respect for its existence and for the maintenance and regeneration of its life cycles, structures, functions, and evolutionary processes. The rights of nature are related to the modern cosmology that tends to proportion

9 See the recording of the debate about the difference between cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitics, available on the University of Barcelona website, in which various speakers at the congress, among which one can highlight Ursula Biemann herself and Rick Dolphijn, outline a post-human definition of the cosmopolitical: <http://www.ub.edu/ubtv/video/the-cosmopolitical-forest-round-table>.

to human beings and in general all living beings the same right to existence. Transdisciplinary artistic projects favour biodiversity and its development in communities, in accordance with the desire for conservation and restoration of the environment and providing a real critique regarding the relationship between humanitarian and natural crises, the movements of human masses, and migrations in the ecosystems. The understanding of the multiple implications that these conditions bring with them in the sphere of the relationships between human beings and non-human entities remains the fundamental problem of human and natural sciences, and offers possibilities for artistic production and contemporary culture.

Conclusions

The book *Cosmopolitics and Biopolitics: Ethics and Aesthetics in Contemporary Art* seeks to trace cosmopolitical aesthetics understood not only as the union of art, science, and the right to survive, but also as the prism through which artistic practices are developed around questions connected to transculturality, migration, nomadism, post-gender subjectivities, social and natural sustainability, and new digital technologies. This book's authors fashion a narrative that moves in the territory of "inbetweenness", between hospitality and hostility, between welcoming and conflict, between languages and intermediate languages, science, and survival in a world that is "common" more than global.

Marsha Meskimmon, in her book *Contemporary Art and The Cosmopolitan Imagination*, claims that the first step to becoming cosmopolitical is to imagine ourselves at home in the world, and where our home is not a fixed place but rather a process of mediation between materiality and spirituality, between ourselves, other men and women, and other places. To emphasise this process of moving between locational identity and the ethics of commitment, she proposes the concept of "cosmopolitical imagination", which is to say the interconnection between conversation, imagination, and art at an ethical more than political level. From these premises, the art historian Anna Maria Guasch in her article "Cosmopolitanism and global contemporary art" analyses the artistic practices of recent decades from the perspective of cosmopolitanism, showing the interconnections between transnational and translocal cultural phenomena. From the analysis of various exhibitions produced under the cosmopolitical perspectives of hospitality and responsibility, the writer detects various characteristics of contemporary art that incorporate above all the concept of "home" through the ethical processes of belonging.

In “Affect: Belonging”, Alpesh Kantilal Patel explores the effects of “affect” in the formation of a practical and social aesthetics, taking as specific references three historical events: the death of turban-wearing Sikhs misidentified as terrorists after the attacks of 11 September 2001 in the United States; the death of Brazilian Jean Charles de Menezes, misidentified by British police as a terrorist shortly after the terrorist attacks of 7 July 2005 in London, and the death of teenager Trayvon Martin, misidentified as a criminal by George Zimmerman in Sanford, Florida in 2012. Patel considers a public-art memorial designed by London-based Mary Edwards to commemorate the death of Menezes, artworks by Kehinde Wiley and Adrian Margaret Smith Piper, and a cartoon by Los Angeles-based Carter Goodrich that appeared on the cover of the *New Yorker* soon after 9/11. Through the theorisation of how, in our visual culture, these artworks are important to the reconstruction of the notion of “home”, he raises the question of how certain subjects are considered as “belonging” and others as not.

Renate Dohmen in her article “The global, the post-abyssal and the cosmopolitical: Casting a creative post-underdeveloped, post-peripheral, tropical eye”, offers – through de Sousa Santosian post-abyssal perspectives – one possible creative response to the absence of the indigenous voice in global contemporary art, which is central to creating a positive future from the current artistic moment. More specifically, her discussion is focused in terms of a reading of the work of the artist Rirkrit Tiravanija through the lens of Amazonian conceptions of the convivial and of Deleuze-Guattarian aesthetics through the traditional art of Tamil housewives.

“The three Janez Janšas” by Emma Brasó is a description of three Slovenian parafictional artists who in 2007 officially changed their names to that of the leader of the right-wing Slovenian Democratic Party, Janez Janša. Brasó argues that numerous artists from a broad geographical background are currently exploring their identity as authors through fiction. The officially-sanctioned name change was presented as a documentary film, *My Name is Janez Janša*, in which the central focus is the relationship between performative artistic action and everyday life. Through this fictional model, cosmopolitanism is characterised as an empirical material for reflecting on the formation of cultures, very similar to the process that Ulrich Beck describes as a polygamy of place that leads to the globalisation of biographies, a fundamental aspect for understanding the plural identities that are created in the contemporary global world (BECK, 2000 [1997]). From here we could pause in reading Brasó’s article, extending artistic practice towards the production of “polygamies of identities” by means of creative fiction.