



Nomadic Art: Decolonising the Human and the Posthuman

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Abstract

Under the reign of global capitalism, migration is becoming a shared condition for increasingly larger numbers of people across the world. At the same time, nomadic forms of living are often targeted by both left- and right-wing populisms, exacerbating issues around what has been called the “Fortress Europe Syndrome.” Inspired by the work of Rosi Braidotti, this paper examines the creation of new posthuman nomadic subjectivities as a possible solution to the deadlock of populism and neo-fascism. I engage with two Portuguese artists, Grada Kilomba and Welket Bungué, whose transdisciplinary work questions issues of racism and colonial violence by turning memory and the performing body into sites of political action. At the same time, in dialogue with Achille Mbembe’s work on decolonisation and Zahi Zalloua’s intervention on posthuman ontologies’ relation to race, I ask whether it is appropriate to theorise on the move beyond the human and into the posthuman, at a time when European colonial history and attitudes to race still need to be further deconstructed. I see Kilomba and Bungué’s work as prime examples of nomadic art, and advocate for more dialogue among academics, artists and local communities, as a way out of the current deadlock, and toward developing a new view of Europe that is free of intellectual, affective, and physical borders. At the same time, I emphasise the need for a critical, self-reflexive form of posthumanism, tackling not only issues of race and colonialism but also the Eurocentric foundations of Western philosophy.

Keywords: Posthumanism, Postcolonialism, Europe, Migration, Transdisciplinary Visual Art.

Introduction

“Migration is a one way trip. There is no ‘home’ to go back to. There never was.”
- Stuart Hall (1987, p. 44)

Living on the move: physically, emotionally, intellectually. It is both the beauty and the curse of our current condition under the reign of global capitalism. People leave their homes due to changing climate conditions, poverty, war, oppression, but also for lack of inspiration, family pressure, boredom, and high tax. Being an immigrant is becoming a shared condition for increasingly larger numbers of people across the world. Still, we tend to reserve the word “immigrant” only for those who come from non-western countries, and we associate the term with poverty and dispossession. Why are we so keen to erase our common humanity? When I think about immigration, I think about Stuart Hall’s mother. In a well-known account of a trip to his native Jamaica, she told him that she hoped people did not think he was “one of those immigrants over there!” and went on saying: “Well, I hope the people over there will shove all the immigrants off the long end of a short pier” (1987, p. 45). Hall has an incredible way of

transforming very personal accounts of immigration into something of a certain universality, something that relates to people regardless of their own specific life experiences.

I am myself an immigrant. I have lived most of my life away from the country where I was born, and each time I go back to visit family I feel a bit awkward for not being able to blend in. “There is no ‘home’ to go back to. There never was” (Stuart Hall, 1987, p. 44). This is why I became interested in the topic of nomadcity. And my interest grew even stronger when I recently became aware of the increasing number of scathing attacks on forms of nomadic living, coming from both left- and right-wing populist politicians across Europe. The fact that the current far-right government of Italy – my own native country – is constantly trying to turn away boats of immigrants arriving on our shores and sending them back into dangerous waters (Al Jazeera, 2023), is enormously unsettling. Portugal, my home at the time of writing, has its own fast-growing far-right party that loses no opportunity to blame all of the world’s ills on gipsy communities (Chega TV, 2022). And now, even radical left-wing parties have joined the bandwagon, starting to blame digital nomads and elderly foreign retirees for rising taxes and stagnating pensions (Bloco de Esquerda Oficial, 2022). It is sometimes really tough to make sense of all this.

Another interest of mine is posthumanism. I often feel that if we want anything to change at all, we need radical intellectual change. Posthumanism is not an intellectual movement as such, it is rather a “convergence” (Braidotti, 2019), meaning that within its scope a number of discourses connect and often collide with each other. To simplify things, I will borrow Francesca Ferrando’s description of philosophical posthumanism as a set of three analytical frames: post-humanism, post-anthropocentrism, and post-dualism (2019, p. 60). I see posthumanism as an opportunity for a paradigmatic shift, deconstructing a concept of “the human” which we all know is based on excluding anyone who is non-male, non-white, non-hetero, non-propertied, non-able, and the list goes on. At the same time, we need to accept that humans are not – and never were – at the centre of this world. We have to learn to integrate ourselves better with technology and our natural environment. Finally, as Ferrando points out, we need to embrace post-dualism as

a necessary step in the final deconstruction of the human. We, as a society, may eventually overcome racism, sexism, and even anthropocentrism, but if we do not address the rigid form of dualistic mindset that allows for hierarchical sociopolitical constructions, new forms of discrimination will emerge. (ibid.)

In this essay, inspired by what Rosi Braidotti calls new forms of “nomadic subjectivity” (Braidotti, 2011), I engage with two Portuguese artists who, having been born within the context of political decolonization and the African diasporas, work transversally across space, time, and disciplines to redefine what it means to be human. The first is Grada Kilomba, whose recent installation and performance project *O Barco* (The Boat) makes use of memory to inscribe new narratives of colonisation and the transatlantic slave trade into highly institutionalised public space. Secondly, I dive into the work of Luso-Guinean film director and actor Welket Bungué, whose 2020 short film *Mudança* (Upheaval) blurs the boundaries between cinema, poetry, and performance, placing the body at the intersection of nature and humanity, and making it the locus of political action. From my point of view, these works are outstanding examples of nomadic art. Through their lens, I work through questions of race and decolonization to better understand how posthumanism can be a vehicle for a real reinvention of the human. I propose that only by decolonizing the human and the posthuman can we ensure that new nomadic subjectivities make a real impact in counteracting incipient forms of populism and neo-fascism in Europe.

1. Nomadic subjectivities and the question of Europe

In her book *Nomadic Theory: The Portable Braidotti*, Rosi Braidotti tells us that nomadic thought is the expression of a nonunitary vision of the subject (2011, p. 3). Nomadic thought “invites us to rethink the structures and boundaries of the self by tackling the deeper conceptual roots of issues of identity” (ibid.). Warning about the importance of not confusing nomadic subjectivity with individualism or particularity, she points out that “(w)hereas identity is a bounded, ego-indexed habit of fixing and capitalizing on one’s selfhood, subjectivity is a socially mediated process of relations with multiple others and with multilayered social structures” (p. 4). Referring to the works of Jacques Derrida and Judith Butler, Braidotti describes how the mastergrid that forms the subject is dominated by the symbolic through a sort of “phallogocentric code” or “heterosexual matrix,” which produces melancholia at its core (p. 5). Nomadic thought, on the other hand, “rejects melancholia in favour of a politics of affirmation” (p. 6), whereby the subject engages with conceptual imagination and the production of sustainable alternatives (ibid.).

Braidotti goes on to explain that, in the current neoliberal context, the tendency to assess everything in narrowly economic terms has created “theory fatigue,” which “has merged into a contemporary social landscape that combines populist appeals to neorealism with traditional anti-intellectualism” (2011, p. 7). In the European context, this pervading sense of apathy has seen the rise of right-wing populism, promoting cultural essentialism, racism, and Islamophobia (ibid.). Fixed notions of cultural parameters and territory, and their deterministic ideas of “cultural difference,” have therefore powered the drive to deport and the rise of new walls around “Fortress Europe” (ibid.).

Indeed, as Achille Mbembe tells us in his book *Out of the Dark Night: Essays on Decolonization* (2021), we live in a “deeply heterogeneous world of flows, fractures and frictions, accidents and collisions” (2021, p. 12). While old boundaries are redrawn, new ones emerge, and the

paradoxes of mobility and closure, of entanglement and separation, of continuities and discontinuities between the inside and the outside, the local and the global, or of temporariness and permanence pose new challenges to critical thought and intellectual inquiry. (p. 13)

The redrawing of intellectual maps, therefore, is a complex task that requires us to examine Europe’s relation with its colonial history and the process of decolonization.

Mbembe emphasises that decolonization can be understood as a will to community and a will to life (2021, pp. 2-3). He acknowledges Frantz Fanon as one of the very few thinkers who attempted to outline a theory of decolonization, describing it as both a hermeneutics and a pedagogy where “struggles for ownership are first and foremost about self-ownership” (pp. 52-53). With Fanon, we understand that in anticolonial thinking, humanity is not a given, it is “*made to rise*” through an awakening of self-consciousness that allows the subject to speak in the first person (p. 62). In this sense, decolonization is an “*ascent into humanity*” (ibid.).

Such understanding of humanity as not existing a priori, and of decolonization as a process through which the colonial subject “becomes human”, poses the question of whether it is appropriate to theorise about a paradigmatic shift toward the posthuman, without taking a deep, reflexive look at posthumanism itself. Are we Europeans ready to go beyond the human and embrace a nomadic, posthuman-inspired vision of the European project? Or would we just be bypassing the problem of race and whitewashing our own colonial history? I will now

attempt to answer these questions through the works of Grada Kilomba and Welket Bungué.

2. Grada Kilomba's *O Barco*: interfacing colonial glorification with a reading from memory

Grada Kilomba is a Portuguese interdisciplinary artist, academic and writer whose work focuses on trauma, gender, racism and postcolonialism. Coming from a family with origins in São Tomé and Príncipe and Angola, part of her artistic output is concerned with the history of Portuguese colonialism and the decolonization of its discourse. In connection to Lisbon's 2021 Biennale of Contemporary Art, Kilomba presented a project called *O Barco* (The Boat) at the city's riverside, next to the MAAT Museum and only a few minutes walking from the city's Monument to the Discoveries.

O Barco is Kilomba's first large-scale performative installation. It measures 32 meters in length and is composed of 140 blocks of burnt wood with poems carved on them, forming the silhouette of a boat. Vítor Belanciano, a journalist from the Portuguese newspaper *Público*, writes that, while in the Western imaginary a boat is easily associated with ideas of glory, freedom or maritime expansion, Kilomba's installation is a way to give visibility and pay tribute to millions of Africans who were enslaved and transported across the ocean in the hold of boats. It is both a "garden of memory" and "the possibility for a contemplation of the future" (2021, para. 1).

As Kilomba explains in Belanciano's article,

it is only when we tell history with rigor, attentive to all different elements, layers and points of view, that we can interrupt the normality of violence. On the contrary, barbarity repeats itself. The boats are there, represented in the public space, glorifying a certain history, but what were they carrying? Who was in their holds? (2021, para. 11)

Indeed, retelling history from the point of view of those who were oppressed has the function of interrupting the cycle of violence in public discourse. On the other hand, public art can be seen as a form of violence in itself. According to WJT Mitchel, "art that enters the public sphere is liable to be received as a provocation to or an act of violence" (1990, p. 881), and in this case, with both Kilomba's installation and the Monument to the Discoveries offering opposing interpretations of Portuguese colonial history, what we see is a deep and fraught dialogue taking place, a dialogue that can hopefully be a step in healing the traumas of Portuguese colonialism. The Monument to the Discoveries was built during the Estado Novo, the military dictatorship that ruled the country between 1933 and 1974, and it is seen as a glorification of what in the official narrative is called "the age of discoveries". In Portugal, colonialism and slavery are often romanticized as a cultural encounter through what is known as Lusotropicalism, a narrative capitalizing on the image of the Portuguese "discoveries" as a relatively "kinder" form of colonialism. As Kilomba tells *Público*: "We have an extremely childish vocabulary that believes in and also exalts colonial history. We utilize terms such as 'discoveries' and really believe that 'we discovered' a continent with millions of people! We don't interrogate a political system that enslaves people, through a logic which is meticulously thought-through, with rules and laws that guarantee that these people stay outside the human condition" (2021, para. 12).

The spatial juxtaposition between Kilomba's installation and the Monument to the Discoveries, therefore, can be interpreted as a personal-yet-public dialogue between the violence and dispossessions of colonialism and a claim to humanity made through artistic

expression. I suggest that here, in order to gain a better understanding of the dynamics at play, we focus on the role of memory. According to Braidotti, memory plays a crucial role in the formation of politically active and ethically conscious subjects (2011, p. 232): “Remembering the wound, the pain, the injustice – bearing witness to the missing people – to those who never managed to gain powers of discursive representation is central to the radical ethics and politics of philosophical nomadism” (ibid.). Braidotti proposes “working from memory” – a reading that refuses close textuality based on the idea that “faithfulness” leads only to the repetition or replication of sameness (ibid.). She claims that the “truth” of a text is never really written, “it resides rather in the affects, i.e., the kind of outward-bound interconnections or relations that it enables, provokes, engenders and sustains” (2011, p. 233). In the context of social and cultural texts, this means starting to “work from oral traces and affective imprints, i.e., more viscerally” (ibid.). In my view, this is exactly what Kilomba does in *O Barco*, not only by physically occupying a highly institutionalized public site, basically facing the prime symbol of colonial glorification – the Monument to the Discoveries – but also through the performative dimension of her project.

In his article on *Público*, Belanciano points out that for Kilomba, “ceremony and ritual have the performative capacity to reconstruct the past with dignity” (2021, para. 8). Performance means being present, reproducing through gestures, movement and sound what was so many times negated or consigned to oblivion. As Kilomba explains:

I lived and grew up here. It was important to start this work here, close to the river, involving people from different communities. From this also comes the idea of *performance*, aside from sculpture, as a way for all these people to occupy the public space. (2021, para. 9)

If without ceremony there cannot be memory, then Kilomba is “working from memory” to performatively reconstruct the experience of colonialism and slavery, occupying public space, together with people who themselves share the experience of colonization and the African diasporas. In fact, Kilomba chose to work with performers from communities in the periphery of Lisbon, people whom she did not know or had not worked with before. Engagement among performers during the rehearsal process becomes an opportunity for exchanging personal stories and narratives, and this constitutes an affective reinterpretation, not only of their country’s colonial past, but most importantly of their experience of being human. When asked about the Monument to the Discoveries, Kilomba says:

what we do as artists is reinventing space and time. I am not interested in interrogating whether the Monument should be there or not, but in being conscious of the cartographic violence in the city where we live or of the violent vocabulary that we utilize. These are the questions that I am really interested in. (2021, para. 22)

Through my reading of Kilomba’s work *O Barco*, I have attempted to establish the importance of working from memory in creating alternative cartographies of knowledge which humanize those excluded by official narratives. I see *O Barco* as a work of nomadic art, where the artist engages with conceptual imagination and the production of new empowered forms of subjectivity. I now turn to the work of Welket Bungué, with the aim to shed further light on the role of the performing body as a site of political action, and start working through questions of its relation to humanity and posthumanity.

3. Welket Bungué’s *Mudança*: the peripheric body at the crossroad between politics and art

Welket Bungué is a transdisciplinary artist born in Guinea Bissau and raised in Portugal. He was trained as an actor and worked in Portugal and Brazil. He currently lives in Berlin.

Aside from playing roles in other directors' works, Bangué has focused a considerable part of his artistic efforts on producing, directing, and acting in his own films.

Mudança (Upheaval) is a multimedia project mixing film, dance, poetry, music and painting, which was born out of a collaboration with Teatro do Bairro Alto (TBA), a cultural venue in Lisbon, during the Covid-19 pandemic. The challenge proposed by TBA's curator was to produce a work that brought together culture professionals and essential workers, to be delivered on the venue's website at a time when gathering in theatres was not possible due to pandemic containment measures. Bangué, in response to this invitation, developed a short film concept starting from two poems written by his late father. The film brings together politically inspired themes such as freedom, democracy, racism and colonialism, and juxtaposes them with questions of ancestry and the relation between humans and nature, with references to the Bijagó people of Guinea Bissau. The result is an immersive narrative where viewers are not given any definitive answers but are rather encouraged to reach their own conclusions from their reading of the film.

For this project, Bangué collaborated with Joacine Katar Moreira, a Luso-Guinean public figure who at the time of production was an independent member of parliament. Being a politically engaged figure, Katar Moreira brings a contemporary context to Bangué's father's poems. As noted by Ana Júlia Silvino in her article for the Brazilian website *Revista Cinética*: "Joacine interprets herself, but the words are not hers alone, they are part of a symptom of historical displacement" (2021, para. 2), and this very displacement is guiding *Mudança* throughout its narrative.

In the early scenes of the film, we see Katar Moreira sitting backstage in the theatre having her make-up done. She interrogates the impact of the Portuguese colonial legacy and its relation to the current waves of racism, sexism and neo-fascism, and tells us that "in this equation, black women are the perfect victims of these various systems of violence." In the next scene, Katar Moreira stands up and enters the stage, and starts reciting one of Bangué's father's poems. The camera moves away from her. She is still reciting, but we now see a dancer performing on a darkened stage, awash with projections of scenes from a lush tropical forest. The poem refers to the time when Bangué's father was fighting in the colonial war on the side of the Portuguese, and, through Katar Moreira's voice, remembers how he sang their glories, but now struggles to understand the logic of change, the change in their behaviour. We then see Welket Bangué dancing on the stage with projections covering his body, and now hear excerpts from one of Katar Moreira's public speeches, until the camera switches back to her standing on stage, reciting a poem that ends with these words: "Our enthusiasm transformed into pain. Our hope into fear, and mourning. If for one to stay alive, a thousand must perish, then the revolution does not fulfil its right to rise. Deeds are worth more than words. Action is worth more than a promise." At this point, we hear Bangué's voice reciting another poem as his body dances immersed in stage projections: "Without hate, but with love. We will stand firm in a glorious struggle for peace, dignity, and bread. Head up and feet on the ground." Throughout the film, we find ourselves travelling between the past and the present. Poetry interacts with Katar Moreira's speeches and the performative elements of the film in a fluid manner, breaking with historical linearity, until themes of nature and ancestry, and references to the Bijagó people are brought into the narrative. As the film draws to an end, Katar Moreira tells us how for the Bijagó there is no separation between humans and other non-human types of being, and how the idea of the separation of the human from nature is a product of the industrial revolution, questioning one more time the value of revolution, when change means only loss and destruction.

It would appear that in *Mudança* the theme of colonial trauma is weaved from the past

into the present through dance. The body acts as a medium between nature and humanity, the human and the non-human, and becomes the locus of a dialogue with ancestry. But does this performing body represent the overcoming of humanity to embrace the posthuman through art? Let us take a deeper look into Bangué's concept of the "peripheric body."

Welket Bangué has recently released his first self-published book called *Corpo Periférico* (*The Peripheric Body*, 2022), where he shares a wealth of reflections on his life and works in what he calls "cinema of self-representation" (*cinema de auto-representação*). Bangué defines this as a "creative intervention with disruptive impact on current social and cultural normativity" (2022, p. 9) and "a deconstruction of paradigms through new subjective readings of facts, bringing new meaning to real social participation, politics, culture, and intellectual discourse in Art" (2022, p. 16). He distinguishes between two concepts of the body: the "peripherized body" (*corpo periferizado*) and the "peripheric body" (*corpo periférico*). The former represents a refusal to be seen as inherently marginal; it claims that the body is rather *marginalized* through the perpetration of slavery, colonization and discrimination. On the other hand, the latter concept represents the body of a person who has already taken conscience of their own marginalization, proclaiming him/herself as a peripheric body (2022, pp. 17-21). Bangué defines himself as a peripheric body and a citizen-artist, who is in transit between various places and concepts (2022, p. 22). Being in transit is inherent to the peripheric body, "in the geographic sense, but also politically and metaphysically" (2022, p. 23). The periphery is where insurrection takes place, and the concept of the peripheric body brings alive the possibility to be, to exist, to be empowered, and thus to eradicate the sub-humanization of those who are marginalized and have not yet defined themselves as peripheric (2022, pp. 28-29).

Seen in this light, the performing body can be understood as the locus of nomadic subjectivity. Braidotti tells us that "nomadic political subjectivity defines the political as the gesture that aims at transcending the present state of affairs and empowering creative 'counteractualizations' or transformative alternatives" (2011, p. 32). Meanwhile, in the context of decolonization, Mbembe highlights the complexities of what he calls "the difficult reconstitution of the subject, the disenclosure of the world, and humanity's ascent to a 'higher life'" (2021, p. 44). Decolonization should not be understood as simply a political task. It involves enormous epistemological, psychic, and even aesthetic work, including detaching oneself from the mental frames, aesthetic discourses, and representations imposed by the West to put a stranglehold on the idea of the future (*ibid.*). I believe Bangué's work *Mudança* is a prime example of a politically engaged, epistemological and aesthetic effort to decolonize the human. His presentation of his father's poems, and their interaction with Joacine Katar Moreira's current political discourse, point to a strong determination to reconstitute postcolonial subjectivities through art. The film's references to the Bijagó people of Guinea Bissau, on the other hand, seem to be a reference to ascent to a "higher life" – to borrow Mbembe's words – a life in which the human dismantles its barriers with nature, and nomadically enters into a symbiotic relationship with non-human forms of existence.

4. Decolonising the human and the posthuman

In the previous sections of this essay, I have discussed how Grada Kilomba and Welket Bangué work with concepts of memory and the body to produce new nomadic readings of the human. Now, I engage with posthumanism to further explore its relations to issues of race and postcolonialism.

Zahi Zalloua's book *Being Posthuman: Ontologies of the Future* (2021) problematizes posthumanism's discourse on race. According to the author, while going beyond the human may be understood as both an ethical choice and a survival necessity, racism and its

dehumanizations are too often elided in these arguments (2021, p. 144). As Zalloua points out, key posthuman authors such as Cary Wolfe argue that

without fully confronting the evils of speciesism (...), an anti-racist discourse that seeks the full inclusion of blacks under the umbrella of the human will continue to reproduce the humanist status quo to the detriment of the lives of both humans and nonhuman others. (p. 145)

The problem with this logic is that it fails to understand that “(g)lobal modernity – driven by Eurocentric humanism – is founded on racial inequality; its ontology of the human is predicated upon a matrix of racialization” (p. 147). Such an uncritical posthuman approach bears the risk of bypassing questions of race in favour of other issues such as environmentalism and animal rights. While these are indeed worthy causes, washing over the real ontological problems surrounding race and colonial violence will fail to produce a radical deconstruction of the human. Therefore, I argue that a deeply reflexive approach to posthumanism is needed for it to translate into meaningful conceptual and political alternatives.

According to Mbembe, colonial imperialism was just a moment in the long history of capitalism, which ended when the value of colonial holdings declined, making the costs of occupation prohibitive (2021, p. 47). Seen through this lens, decolonization was in fact a non-event opening the way to neocolonialism (ibid.). Braidotti, on the other hand, points out that capitalism in its current form is a “difference engine” and “the great nomad par excellence” (2011, p. 17). It would appear, then, that global capitalism’s constant reinventions capitalize on difference to sweep inequality under the carpet, and meanwhile continue with its dispossessions and the dehumanization of “others” – often non-white postcolonial subjects. While things change, nothing changes. From this follows the question: how can we break the deadlock of dehumanization? I propose that we start by looking into the concept of “whiteness.”

When discussing the European Union as a nomadic project, Braidotti stresses the need for a situated and accountable perspective (2011, p. 249). In order to avoid what she calls the “Fortress Europe syndrome” – going beyond local nationalisms only to end up with the belief of an ethnically pure Europe – we need to single out the issue of whiteness (p. 250). “The source of representational power of white is its propensity to be everything and nothing, whereas black, of course, is always marked off as *a colour*” (p. 251). Whiteness, through its unmarked ontology, has the power to index and categorize others, granting access to privilege and participation in society. It is a slippery category, rather difficult to analyse critically, always needing an “other” to describe itself; black and other minorities, on the other hand, do not need this specular logic in order to have a location of their own (p. 252). Indeed, as Zahi Zalloua emphasizes, “(b)eing human is being white, and vice versa. Ontology (...) belongs to whites, and is a white privilege,” leaving blacks to occupy a “zone of nonbeing” (2021, p. 161). Thus, it would appear that we are trapped inside a dualist paradigm where whiteness is the universal “term one” of the dichotomy, and blackness is the de-ontologized “term two.” While whiteness is all-encompassing in its power, blackness has no proper existence and yet is indispensable, so that whiteness can define itself.

Acknowledging that the whiteness/blackness dichotomy is deeply entrenched in Western philosophy and the history of Europe, I suggest that a critical and reflexive approach to posthumanism emphasizing post-dualism, drawing from non-western and oral traditions, can be a way out of the deadlock. Francesca Ferrando tells us that,

the type of dualism deconstructed by Philosophical Posthumanism is a strict, rigid, and

absolute form of dualism, and not the liquid, shifting, and intra-changing form of duality as practiced, for example, in the Tao. (2019, p. 60)

In her example of Taoism, Ferrando explains how it emphasizes “an explicit duality expressing an implicit unity” (ibid.). This resonates with Bangué’s references to the worldviews of the Bijagó people of Guinea Bissau, where there are no explicit divisions between human and non-human forms of existence. Thus, it would appear that not only do we need to decolonize the human and the posthuman, but Western philosophy itself must also reflexively question its own Eurocentrism. I often feel that in Europe, non-western philosophical traditions are all too quickly categorized as “spirituality” or “anthropological knowledge.” Perhaps, we should take a more open approach to non-western forms of thought, allowing them to keep dripping in and fluidly contaminating the traditions and lineages of Western philosophy.

Migration and nomadic living are, in my view, productive forms of intellectual contamination. It is through nomadic works of art like those by Kilomba and Bangué that we can strengthen our conceptual imagination and produce sustainable alternatives to dominant concepts of the human. We can surely benefit from robust dialogue between academics, artists and local communities so that new forms of nomadic citizenship can be promoted. As Braidotti emphasizes, in a post-nationalist cosmopolitan European project that aims to dismantle the walls of Fortress Europe, we need to unlink notions of ethnic origin, national identity, and political agency (2011, p. 254). Mbembe reminds us that “Europe is no longer the centre of the world, if not in a fictive mode” (2021, p. 76). “A Europe that, while proclaiming its universal vocation *urbi et orbi*, reinvents itself under the sign of closure does not interest the world or matter to it (p. 77). Therefore, embracing nomadic art and transdisciplinary dialogue is, to me, an important way out of the deadlock of Europopulism and neo-fascism. Finally, I propose that we ask ourselves one last question: is human privilege a zero-sum game? I believe it is not. That is why a better sharing of that privilege is the unnegotiable condition to kickstart a truly collective effort toward the creation of new posthuman forms of existence.

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Bio-note

Andrea Barcaro is a freelance writer and communication professional with an interest in the intersection between culture, identity, and posthumanism. Having graduated from SOAS, University of London in 2005 with a Bachelor's in Japanese and Social Anthropology, he spent over a decade and a half working at NGOs and communication firms in Asia. In recent years, he has returned to the academic path, taking a Master's Degree in Culture and Communication at the School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Lisbon, and engaging with the academic community through public speaking and participation in academic conferences. Through his writing, Barcaro questions contemporary constructions of European identities vis-à-vis issues of gender and race, and processes of migration and decolonization, aiming at the creation of productive forms of subjectivity and identity. His work engages with transdisciplinarity and the connection between academic thinking, culture, media, and visual art.

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