

Despite Dispossession

An Activity Book



Front cover: Contributors	121	PAPERLANDS by Janine Jembere
3 <i>¡DESPÓJATE!</i> CLEANSE YOURSELF! GHOSTLY TOOLS FOR DISPOSSESSION Foreword by Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández	145	OPOSSUM RESILIENCE by Naomi Rincón Gallardo
7 Acknowledgments	169	CARE & BECOME by Berhanu Ashagrie Deribew
9 DISPOSSESSION MATTERS AN INVITATION by the Willful Weeds Research Group	193	A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON THE CONTEMPORARY MOMENT OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH Afterword by Elizabeth W. Giorgis
15 WILLFUL WEEDS STRIFE by the Willful Weeds Research Group	197	APPENDIX WILLFUL WEED PROTOCOL by the Willful Weeds Research Group
33 HEAVY BLOOD by Naomi Rincón Gallardo	205	DESPITE DISPOSSESSION Activity Cards
53 LUZ, CLARÃO, FULGOR/ LIGHT, BLAZE, FULGOR by Sílvia das Fadas	Back	cover: Project Bibliography
75 AROUND A RIVER by Rojda Tuğrul		
97 DESPINA by İpek Hamzaoğlu		

Despite Dispossession

DESPITE DISPOSSESSION

An Activity Book

K. Verlag
2021

CONTRIBUTORS



BERHANU ASHAGRIE DERIBEW is a visual artist and an assistant professor at the Addis Ababa University, Alle School of Fine Arts and Design. He has been critically engaged with various individual and collective artistic projects inside and outside studio environments. Multidisciplinary creative outcomes of his projects have been shown in different countries. Berhanu has actively been working on issues that come along with modernization of urban spaces and places and the human conditions in it. Berhnau is a candidate at the PhD in Practice program at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.



ANETTE BALDAUF is a social researcher and educator. Her work focuses on the intersection of art, pedagogy, and the politics of space addressing questions of dispossession, extractivism, and white privilege. She has long been working in collaborative arts-based research projects, including among others, the book *Spaces of Commoning: Artistic Practices and Visions of Change* (with Stefan Gruber, Annette Krauss, Hong-Kai Wang, Mara Verlic, Vladimir Miller, Julia Wieger, Moira Hille, 2016). She is Professor and Co-director of the PhD in Practice program at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.



SÍLVIA DAS FADAS is a filmmaker, researcher, and educator based in southern Portugal. She holds an MFA in Film and Video from CalArts, was a cooperation fellow at the Akademie Schloss Solitude in 2019, and a visiting fellow at the Center for Place, Culture and Politics, The Graduate Center, CUNY, in 2020. She is currently a PhD in Practice candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna supported by a FCT doctoral scholarship. Her filmography refuses the digitalization of the world and includes *Light, Blaze, Fulgor—Auguries for a Non-Hierarchical Framing and flourishing* (ongoing since 2017), *The House Is Yet to Be Built* (2015–18), *Square Dance, Los Angeles County, California* (2013), and *Apanhar Laranjas / Picking Oranges* (2012). She is interested in the politics intrinsic to cinematic practices and in cinema as a way of being together in restlessness and brokenness.



NAOMI RINCÓN GALLARDO is a visual artist, researcher, and cultural worker based in Mexico City. Her queer-decolonial worldmaking projects address the creation of counter-worlds in neo-colonial settings. In her work, she integrates her interests in speculative fiction and fantasy, music videos, theater games, DIY aesthetics, and vernacular crafts and festivities. She completed the PhD in Practice program at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. She is currently supported as a Miembro del Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte 2019–22 del Fondo Nacional para La Cultura y las Artes (from Mexico). *Heavy Blood* is based on her doctoral dissertation (2020) as well as previously produced artwork (2018).

RUBÉN GAZTAMBIDE-FERNÁNDEZ's research and scholarship are concerned with questions of symbolic boundaries and the dynamics of cultural production and processes of identification in educational contexts. He is co-editor (with Amy Kraehe and B. Stephen Carpenter, 2018) of *The Palgrave Handbook of Race and the Arts in Education*. His theoretical work focuses on the relationship between creativity, decolonization, and solidarity. He is Professor of Curriculum and Pedagogy at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Curriculum Inquiry*.

ELIZABETH W. GIORGIS is Associate Professor of Art History, Criticism and Theory at the College of Performing and Visual Art and the Center for African Studies at Addis Ababa University. She is also the Director of the Modern Art Museum: Gebre Kristos Desta Center at Addis Ababa University. She served as the Dean of the College of Performing and Visual Art and as Director of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies of Addis Ababa University. She has curated numerous exhibitions, served as the editor and author of several publications and is a recipient of several fellowships. She is also the author of the book *Modernist Art in Ethiopia* (Ohio University Press, 2019), the first comprehensive monographic study of Ethiopian visual modernism within a broader social and intellectual history.



İPEK HAMZAOĞLU is an artist, filmmaker, and researcher based in Vienna and Istanbul. Her work revolves around the representation of collective melancholy and the potential of post-apocalyptic future narratives, community knowledge, and gossip. She is also a member of numerous queer-feminist art collectives that focus on friendship, collective knowledge production, and herstories such as, "ff." Feministisches Fundbüro (2015), Hayırlı Evlat (2017), images of/off images (2018), and Hekate Film Collective (2020).



JANINE JEMBERE is an artist, filmmaker, and researcher based in Vienna and Berlin. She is working in different constellations on performances and educational, video and sound projects. Her works revolve around sensuality and the body, mainly questioning concepts of representation and translatability, ableism, race and gender. She is interested in the resonances of embodied knowledge, sensual hierarchies, and the concept of dissonance as a tool to think and live within difference.



ROJDA TUĞRUL is an interdisciplinary artist from Diyarbakır, primarily working through research-based practices concerning identity in relation to space. Her projects generally examine this binary relationship through photography and audiovisual installations. Following an MSc in Veterinary Science, she graduated from Mardin Artuklu University in 2016 with an MA in Fine Arts. Currently, she is undertaking a PhD in Practice at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Despite Dispossession

DESPITE DISPOSSESSION

An Activity Book

FOREWORD

¡DESPÓJATE! CLEANSE YOURSELF! Ghostly Tools for Dispossession

Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández

Cleansings, or *despojos*, were a common thing growing up in Puerto Rico. As a child, my *abuelita* would prescribe a *despojo* to anyone with the slightest affliction. If anyone complained of bad luck, they needed a *despojo* to remove it; if a couple had problems, a *despojo* was the solution; if the flu persisted, the perfect medicine was a *despojo*. These *despojos* were for my *abuelita* the way to eliminate the spiritual blocks and the negative energies that were causing every difficulty. *Despojarse* was to scare away negative spirits, evil eye, bad vibrations, and any curse or spell from the enemies of the beyond. *Despojarse* was to cleanse oneself; to free yourself from the forces of evil; to clear the way for healing. Yet, in Puerto Rico there were other kinds of *despojos*, or dispossessions. The United States army, for example, dispossessed more than three quarters of the island-town of Vieques in order to stage military exercises that had a devastating impact on the environment and on the lives of its Puerto Rican residents. In 1982, the colonial government of Puerto Rico dispossessed the residents of Villa Sin Miedo of their land and homes in the name of the state, murdering along the way the community leader and mother Adolfina Villanueva. Over the last three decades, large banks and investors have dispossessed the local economy and have left

the people in the ruins of bankruptcy and without the capacity to recover from the natural disasters that have hit the island in recent years. My *abuelita* would say that what Puerto Rico needs is a *despojo* (a cleansing); not the devastating *despojo* (dispossession) of coloniality, but the liberatory *despojo* of the ghosts and the saints; a cleansing of the spirit to return to life. For my *abuelita*'s *despojos*, you needed tools, and nothing was more important than healing herbs. These herbs with which my *abuelita* would prepare the cleansing baths for the *despojos* were all willful weeds: peppermint; rue; witch hazel; oregano; eucalyptus; and, siam weed. Likewise, the authors of the *Despite Dispossession: An Activity Book* propose a series of tools for the creation of different kinds of *despojos*. These tools of creation that the authors propose are tools for cleansing ourselves from the dispossessions of the coloniality of power; these are *despojos* against *despojos*. These are tools for opening the flow rather than blocking it; to question the crushing colonial forces, and, like the *ch'ixi* that thinker and activist Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui proposes, to "remove all the superfluous, the dead leaves that is blocking the crash and the almost electric energy, reverberant, that allows us to live together and to live with contradiction, to make of it a kind of radiographic vision

that allows us to discover the structures that undergird the surface.”¹

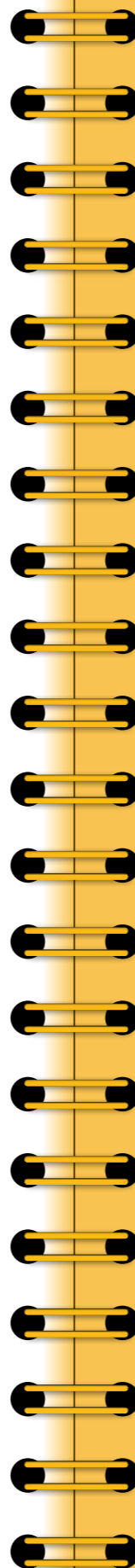
Over the seven days during which I had the privilege of sharing, conversing, and learning with this group of cultural workers gathered as the Willful Weeds Research Group in Vienna, we did a kind of collective *despojo*, a cleansing process through which we identified knowledges and frames of reference with which to construct a creative solidarity. To create, in the words of Rangoato Hlasane, “conditions for the accumulation of new narratives,”² narratives against dispossession, dis-possessed narratives. Likewise, this book is more than a toolbox; it is a box of surprises for facilitating the subjective movement of our own being; to re-tell who we are and how we mutually make each other; in short, it is a toolbox for a pedagogy of solidarity. These tools emerge from various emerging localities that have been activated by this group of *pedagogistas* with a commitment to move the hard and coagulated molasses of colonial processes, not to resolve but rather to live within the tensions that Cusicanqui names; to animate the energies and open the dam gates to new ghostly illusions of fantastic extra-human beings that invite the anti-colonial willfulness with which our peoples have survived dispossession.

This collective of creative guides invite us to confabulate and animate new myths, to navigate rivers with extraordinary beings, to search the crevices to feel the loss of what they have taken from us in colonial processes, and to reinvent the toxic remains of what they left us in the ruins. This is what the magical *despojo* is all about—the cleansing bath that this group of creators has made for us with their tools for cultural work; to work in a manner as if dispossessed of (not by) coloniality, not as an end to which we arrive—but as if we could be in the end dispossessed of the very coloniality of power that dispossesses us, as if we lived in the dispossession itself—in the in-between *ch’ixi* space that as Rivera Cusicanqui puts it, “poses resistance” and that has “produced a crash, a crisis, an emergency, but also the intelligent magma from which might sprout liberating energies.”³ These are tools for metamorphosis, but a creative metamorphosis that reframes previous forms: anarchist, feminist, confabulating, mythic, animal, monstrous. Tools for generating spontaneous cinematographies in unexpected places and spaces, for dis-possessing the lost and the forgotten in the cry and the mourning; but also returned in the remembrance of the gossip and the vulgar; to sow the new seed that grows, like willful weeds, against the sordid cement of coloniality; to cure and to care; to heal the wound even while it never closes; to live again, like the *tlacuache* [opossum], the life that even death never stopped.

¹ Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, *Un mundo ch’ixi es posible. Ensayos sobre un presente en crisis* (Buenos Aires: Tinta Limón, 2018), 152–53; translation by the author.

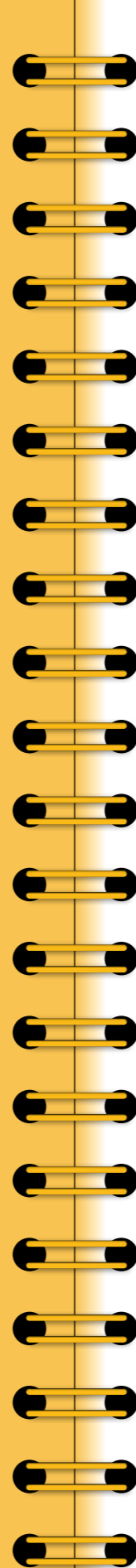
² Rangoato Hlasane in personal communication with the author, 26 February 2020.

³ Rivera Cusicanqui, *Un mundo ch’ixi es posible*, 44; translation by the author. For an English version of the text, see Project Bibliography in this volume.



The opposite of dispossession
is not possession.
It is not accumulation.
It is not forgetting.
It is mattering.

— Angie Morrill, Eve Tuck, and the Super Futures Haunt Collective,
“Before Dispossession, Or Surviving It”

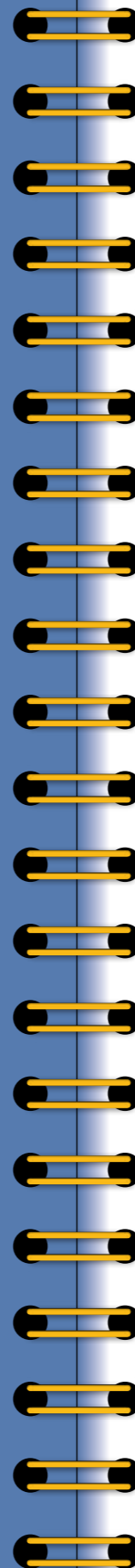


ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank each one and all of us for sharing, committing, and becoming with, especially when things got shaky. • We thank our friendly critics for their many generous offers: Epifania Amoo-Adare, Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández, Angela Melitopoulos, Margarita Palacios, and Eve Tuck, all of whom have walked with us along this journey. We thank Epifania for initiating us into the universe of spatial literacy, and for her warm goodbye as we took off in a different direction. We thank Rubén for drawing our attention to the conditions and parameters for solidary relations. We thank Angela for making us recognize the dynamic of multiple returns at the heart of our project’s movement; Margarita for always reminding us of the power of affect and desire; and, Eve for teaching us how to tie individual strings into a collective research basket. Thank you all, the project thrived under your guidance. • We thank the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) for the funding of the project, and we thank our supporters at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna: Andrea B. Braidt, Michaela Glanz, Annina Müller Strassnig, Dunja Reithner, Renate Lorenz, Moira Hille, and the candidates of the PhD in Practice program, especially those who joined us on our various walks. We thank Stefanie Sourial for supporting us in our effort to form a choir and perform together. We thank Naoko Kaltschmidt for the invitation to organize a screening at mumok kino in Vienna. We thank Rafal Morusiewicz for the first round of copy-editing and proof-reading the raw manuscript. We thank Pelin Tan for providing some feedback. And we thank K. Verlag, especially Anna-Sophie Springer, for making the publication happen. • We thank Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández and Elizabeth Giorgis for their enticing foreword and afterword. • Naomi thanks Rosalida Dionicio, Masha Godovannaya, Claudia López Terroso, Oliver Martínez Kandt, Jánea Estrada, and Instituto de Artes Gráficas de Oaxaca (IAGO). • Sílvia thanks all the generous and resilient people she encountered in Alentejo, especially Joëlle Ghazarian, and Júlio Henriques, and the friends and villagers of Troviscais and São Luís, Odemira. • Rojda thanks her partner Murdoch MacLeod for his invaluable advice and support, and her family, especially her father and mother, for their support, and encouragement throughout her study. • İpek thanks Cemil Hamzaoğlu, Laura Nitsch, Malu Blume, Melih Görgün, the Sinopale 7 team, and her parents. • Janine thanks Nicole Suzuki, Philipp Khabo Koepsell, Regina Sarreiter, eoto e.V., and Berlin Postkolonial. • Berhanu thanks his beloved and tender wife, Liya Girma, and his little princesses, Dina Berhanu and Maya Berhanu. • Anette thanks Eve Tuck and Silvia Federici for their lasting inspiration.

The exciting and challenging task ahead involves walking and talking the world into being as pluriversal. A world in which the multiplicity of living beings and objects are addressed as peers in constituting knowledges and worlds.

— Juanita Sundberg, “Decolonizing Posthumanist Geographies”



DISPOSSESSION MATTERS

An Invitation

Willful Weeds Research Group

Willful weeds are pervasive, resiliently growing from the cracks of colonial plunder and capitalist devastation. As different struggles around the world fight for the survival of the pluriverse, we join this gathering as we also extend an invitation to explore the potential of worldmaking in landscapes of dispossession.

Despite Dispossession: An Activity Book is the result of a place-based artistic research project; it traces the points of connection that we—a group of rearguard artists/ researchers from a number of sites directly affected by the politics of dispossession— have knitted and knotted along our path of walking together. The precarious, unstable, and heterogeneous “we” continues to be formed by a group linked to places as diverse as Sinop, Addis Ababa, Diyarbakır, Alentejo, Berlin, Oaxaca, Zacatecas, and Vienna— all of which, in some way, are connected to struggles of the Global South. We met and formed at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, invited by Anette Baldauf, a white Austrian professor, who received funding from the Austrian Science Fund for a project titled “DisPossession: Post-Participatory Art Practices and the Pedagogy of Land” (2018–20). Our understanding of “DisPossession” was initially inspired by the book, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political*, by Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou, who argue that the concept of dispossession carries a double meaning: there is dispossession as the state of violent appropriation of land, bodies, desires, rights, and social relations by force; and, there is also a form of dispossession that establishes us as relational and interdependent beings as the result of an always ambivalent and tenuous process of subjectation that constitutes subjectivity.¹

We started our discussions by sharing experiences from the sites that many call home. We talked about state-led politics of displacement, neoliberal forms of land grabbing, gentrification, and securitarian governmentality, as well as about how human and non-human bodies become materialized and dematerialized through new forms of enslavement and colonization, and how the systematic violence that we inherit today continues to organize our relations. We identified these struggles as different forms of dispossession, and we searched for alliances across the particularities of these conditions.

The second, and in many ways complementing, inspiration for this project came from recent work on epistemologies of the South: struggling to move away from (while residing in) a dominant form of Eurocentric knowledge production, we aimed for an engagement with Indigenous and local knowledges put forth by and among different worlds. We were looking for concepts responding to distinct realities in the Global South— concepts that we hoped to think and feel with. Boaventura de Sousa Santos’s book *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide* provided us with a horizon to reflect further on ideas of pluriversality and encouraged our longing to share in the radical co-presence of a multiplicity of epistemes, ontologies, and politics.²

¹ Judith Butler & Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013).

² Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2014).

In the wake of brutal violence and devastating plunder, we asked ourselves: what are the stories we want to tell and retell within life worlds under the threat of extinction? Which stories do we want to listen to, when transnational extractivism, state violence, new forms of war and neo-fascist politics expand dramatically around the globe? Can we facilitate a storytelling and worldmaking that envisions futurities not exclusively



defined by fear, pain, or despair? How can we support visions of a future that are propelled by forces of indignation, desire, and new kinds of relationality? We inaugurated our collective endeavor with an excursion to Alentejo, Portugal, hosted by Sílvia das Fadas. She shared with us her engaged astonishment with the ruins of an anarchist commune. During our excursion, we visited an old miners' town, where we stood silently at the edge of a dark lake, a former open pit, dead matter emptied of all life because of an insatiable greed for profit. That same evening we watched the miners choir perform traditional songs, and as the young and old men interlocked their arms and softly rocked their bodies back and forth, they reminded us that, despite this, there still was movement.

Back in Vienna, it was this search for the "in spite of" that sent us out for walks: we walked, conversed, stopped, took a breath, and continued walking. Our readings inspired us to walk with and in support of each other, and with our immediate and far removed companions. We took walks in the woods of Vienna and by the Danube river, and we invited others to walk with us. We walked, listened deeply to the soundscape, picked mushrooms, made picnics, read together, and shared experiences of *buen vivir* [good living] from different locations. One colleague offered to guide us through the woods and introduce us to *Sin'k*, a particular bread that, in his home country, travellers carry along to share with strangers. On the morning prior to the walk, this colleague was deported. When we went on the walk without him the following day, we took a break to read his letter on the history of *Sin'k* and the value of searching for encounters along one's paths; his absence reminded us of the uneven distribution of the possibilities of moving through space. For some of us, having such safe and easy access to walking was not an experience that we could take for granted. In any case, leaving the office behind helped us to reset our minds and bodies, and to think/feel differently.

We would regularly meet and discuss the development of everyone's projects in the rather bleak office space #A4239A at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. We spent hours sitting around the table, hunching our backs in front of our laptops, moving post-its, reading texts out loud, discussing artworks, and taking far too many notes. Slowly, we gathered

↑ Mushroom Picking, Vienna, 2019; photo by the Willful Weeds Research Group

What are the stories we want to tell and retell within life worlds under the threat of extinction? Which stories do we want to listen to, when transnational extractivism, state violence, new forms of war and neo-fascist politics expand dramatically around the globe? Can we facilitate a storytelling and worldmaking that envisions futurities not exclusively defined by fear, pain, or despair? How can we support visions of a future that are propelled by forces of indignation, desire, and new kinds of relationality?

We inaugurated our collective endeavor with an excursion to Alentejo, Portugal, hosted by Sílvia das Fadas. She shared with us her engaged astonishment with the ruins of an anarchist commune. During our excursion, we visited an old miners' town, where we stood silently at the edge of a dark

a common pool of concepts, including the abyssal line, the pluriverse, thinking/feeling, *buen vivir*, ruins, monsters, and ghosts. We called this common pool our "firmament." Composed of concepts from various readings, it provided orientation for both common and individual engagements. Though our sites varied greatly with regards to geopolitical conditions, scales of extraction, and strategies of resistance, a web of entanglement emerged while we wove these sites together—a precarious beginning for South-South bridgemaking. Looking at the Tigris River, it was almost impossible not to consider what happens at the Tagus River, or, not to think of the relationship between the toxic, crushed hills in Zacatecas, and the massive demolition and construction sites in Addis Ababa. They taught us in detail about the entanglements of matter, time, and space. In workshops with Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández, Angela Melitopoulos, Margarita Palacios, and Eve Tuck, we learned to deepen these connections and interweave what on first sight is often considered unique and unrelated.

While we worked in Vienna, we also knew that the heart, or the many hearts, of the project were actually elsewhere. The project allowed us to travel to the different sites of study. We continuously crossed from one place to another and back again, from the white European epicenter of knowledge production, which, despite our visas, never quite welcomed our colored, southern, and migrant bodies, to our contexts of longing and belonging. The abyssal line cut right through our group, organizing our sociality, ways of relating, and multiple intersections. Gloria Anzaldúa's concept of "crossing" helped us to make sense of the multiple back-and-forth movements between here and there—dividing and cutting across. Our awareness of the crossings was informed by the many returns, the places and landscapes we encountered, the people we met, and the friendships we cherished. We refused to settle on either side of the line and insisted instead on inhabiting multiple worlds and engaging with ambivalences, contradictions, and cross-pollinations.³

For a group of (temporarily) Vienna-based artists/researchers, the moments of deviation from the "we" were plentiful and transformative. They kept us moving and trying to make sense of our steps. Between one knot and the next, our work was nourished by the encounters on the sites that each of us engaged with. The encounters guided us to the power of indignation and desire; indignation and desire relate to distinct ethical positions and understandings of the world. Indignation is an affective response to injustice; it is connected with rage and the imperative to strive for dignity, with "the belief that one has been wronged."⁴ Desire entails, in the words of Eve Tuck, "accounts for the loss and despair, but also the hope, the visions, the wisdom of lived lives and communities. Desire is involved with the not yet and, at times, the not any more."⁵

In the course of our engagements, we participated in making meaningful bonds with activists, feminist groups, initiatives fighting dispossession, communities seeking autonomous ways of living, groups dedicated to reclaiming public space for collective mourning, and artists and activists engaged with speculative modes of storytelling that refuse victimization. It is to them that we offer this work. The book is an object of return, perhaps unrequited. Our engagements taught us that we are in need of tools to mourn the past and fabulate an alternative future, to spread gossip and metabolize toxicity. We need tools to walk with each other and to come together again, after having fallen apart. We recognized that we need tools to bring our stories together in a polyphonic choir of willful weeds.

³ Gloria E. Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2012).

⁴ de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South*.

⁵ Eve Tuck, "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities," *Harvard Educational Review* 79, no. 3 (Fall 2009): 417.

We crafted tools in the course of our individual art projects. We tried them out in a series of activities in workshops with artists, activists, and other community members. As tools can be given intentions by their users, we wanted to offer them to others as something to be used, revised, and appropriated for worldmaking processes in proximity with different struggles against dispossession. We also explored manuals and instructional formats on how to break patterns of habitual modes of perceiving and interacting, and we discovered a rich pluriverse of pedagogical devices, including games, scores, and activity books.

Despite Dispossession: An Activity Book

compiles the documentation of a series of engagements with different sites. In each chapter, introductory notes on the place-based study are followed by elaborations of the particular tools, relating to and deriving from the particular struggles at the individual sites and, finally, the description of a set of activities that have been tried at particular sites. The speculative tools and activities that we propose are inspired by our witnessing of

survival, resistance, resilience, dignity, and joy. They are offerings to the creativity of people, who care for the co-presence of different species, temporalities, and scales, people who relate to different modes of living, thinking, and feeling. We hope that in your hands, the tools and activities might fly like a kite guided by the wind of your aspirations.

The *Despite Dispossession* activity book provides insights into seven place-based studies, hoping to initiate resonances among multiple strategies and longings across borders. The next chapter, “Willful Weeds Strife,” collectively written by the Willful Weeds Research Group, reflects on whether it is possible for a project, situated in a European academic institution and marked deeply by its colonial legacy, to study in a dispossessed manner. In “Heavy Blood,” Naomi Rincón Gallardo learns from and with the spectral creatures gauging the extent of their revenge among the toxic ruins of Vetagrande, Zacatecas. Sílvia das Fadas, in the contribution “Luz, Clarão, Fulgor/Light, Blaze, Fulgor,” engages with the long history of an anarchist commune and follows its resonances in the autonomous ways of living currently rehearsed in Alentejo. “Around a River,” by Rojda Tuğrul, follows the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers through the perspective of a

turtle that is in danger of extinction from dam projects in upper Mesopotamia. In “Despina,” İpek Hamzaoglu meets with people and ghosts, speculating over what will be left after the destruction of the environment inflicted by a nuclear power plant in Sinop.



⁷ Walking together to a deserted open-pit mine in Mina de São Domingos, Corte do Pinto, Alentejo/Portugal, 2018; photo by the Willful Weeds Research Group

Janine Jembere’s “Paperlands” follows traces of objection to German colonial rule written by Africans between 1880 and 1914, amplifying the continuities of African anti-colonial struggle and their relations to Germany. In “Opossum Resilience,” Naomi Rincón Gallardo follows the local anti-extractivist activism to fabulate bastardized Mesoamerican myths in Oaxaca. Finally, Berhanu Ashagrie Deribew asks how mourning practices can become an aesthetic, pedagogical, and political device that might contribute to the process of collective healing in the city of Addis Ababa in his piece “Care & Become.”

Although we wrote this book in English, the research projects and workshops, in which we explored the tools and activities compiled here, took place in many different languages. None of us are native English speakers but, despite or because of its imperial foundation, English was the language we all shared. As we dreamed of turning the project into a book, the prospect of publishing it in English did not meet our longing for this to become an object of return. We have translated the manuscript into Amharic, Kurdish, Portuguese, Turkish, and Spanish and a small print-run of each translation will soon be available via our publisher’s website at k-verlag.org. But, we should emphasize: *Despite Dispossession: An Activity Book* is not a manual for a participatory art project. To call for participation would mean that we have defined the setting and know the plot. Instead, we hope for these reflections, as well as the tools and activities, to incite and initiate. Initiation



is a concept borrowed from dance and performance studies, it connects leading and following: to follow is to initiate.⁶ It is our hope that this book can provide a form of leading that, while it initiates an opening, as it enters a gap it will follow the response. And, in the spirit of Audre Lorde, we also hope that it will “literally incite, like a riot,” worldmaking that supports struggles for the defense of earth, water, air, millenary crops, and sacred ties between human life and nature.

This work is an invitation to

counter the hetero-patriarchal, racial, and capitalist logics of ownership of the planet, and their psycho-affective forms of domination.

We hope that the tools and activities proposed here will inspire you to join us in our effort to remember, reimagine, and rearticulate connections to the land in its manifold dimensions. We worked with the tools and activities encountered in different sites. Now we hope that you, dear reader, carry on the book’s journey and take it to unexpected places.

SPROUT!

⁵ Signs at the deserted open-pit mine in Mina de São Domingos, Corte do Pinto, Alentejo/Portugal, 2018; photo by the Willful Weeds Research Group

⁶ Lepecki, André. “From Partaking to Initiating: Leading Following as Dance’s (A-personal) Political Singularity.” In *Dance, Politics and Co-immunity*. Edited by Stefan Hölscher & Gerald Siegmund. Berlin and Zurich: Diaphanes, 2013. 21–38.

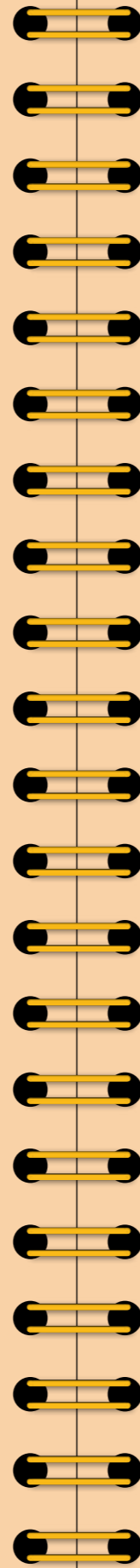
WILLFUL WEEDS STRIFE



In bleak office spaces
The silence speaks of tension
Then voices meet in a choir
And the noise catches fire

Willful Weeds Research Group

Vienna, Austria

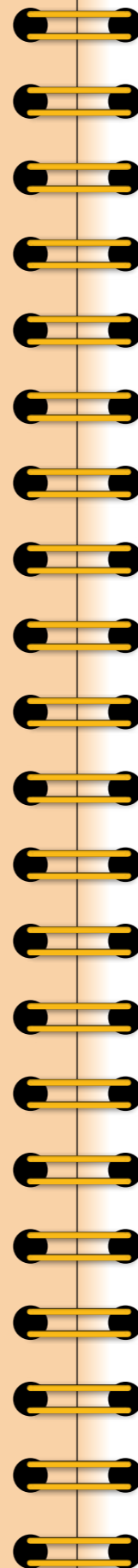


In urgent times, many of us are tempted to address trouble in terms of making an imagined future safe, of stopping something from happening that looms in the future, of clearing away the present and the past in order to make futures for coming generations. Staying with the trouble does not require such a relationship to times called the future. In fact, staying with the trouble requires learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as mortal critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, meanings.

— Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*

How you fight determines who you will become when the battle is over.

— Taiaiake Alfred, *Wasáse*



The following text is a collective writing exercise that reflects on different stages that we as individuals and as a group went through in the course of our winding and at times rocky research process. Instead of putting forth the fiction of a consistent, self-possessed “we,” our attempt in this section is to give voice to the fragmentary accounts of the fluctuating ways in which we negotiated the multiple crossings between different geopolitical and affective sites. In these crossings, we came to experience moments of transformative openness, where we were indeed dispossessed of our individuated selves by the many encounters with humans and non-humans, as well as by the others in the group, their enthusiasm and dedication as much as their grief and pain.

*

Let us recall the unforeseeable arrow of an invitation and proposal, which has projected us towards a common room and a speculative common ground: reading together, being inspired by Indigenous pedagogies of land, thinking how to make them resonate in our different contexts, writing collectively, singing, overlooking problems, imagining other places, and studying together. We remember leaving our room in Vienna to pick mushrooms in the woods while reading Anna Tsing out loud. And watching *Sanrizuka: Peasants*

of the *Second Fortress* by the Ogawa Pro Collective during a storm by the banks of the Danube. We even sang behind paper masks in a museum, brave and fragile.

We celebrated Ethiopian New Year in the dry lands of Alentejo in September. We cooked, danced, walked together. We witnessed our anxiety as city dwellers who worried about having no water left in the well. We shared maps, and drafts, and impossible schedules. We walked through the old ore mine, with its inebriating toxicity, such a contrast to the warmth of the villagers. We shared our time along the shores of a half-empty dam, lost in another extractivist site. We threw stones into the water, roamed, and wandered. What was it that we were doing together? Worldmaking—we said.

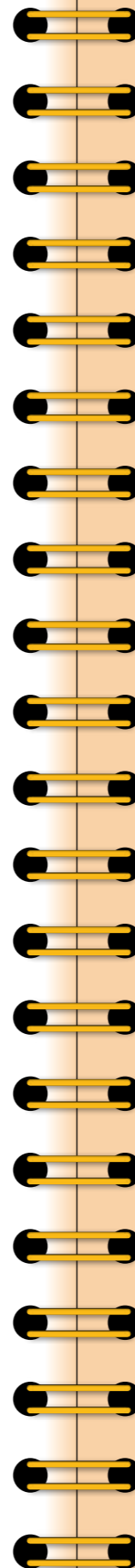
What have these constant crossings meant for us? Each of us and all of us, together? Can we hold on to our theories of change, find the new ones, transform our lives, make our offerings? To be in awe and, at the same time, dispossessed by one another's being and practice, by the lives of others and their others. In restlessness.

How many times did we fall apart as a group? How did we come together again? How did we deal (or not) with the unspoken, the fear of the imposture, the undesired hierarchies, our unmet expectations, and, despite the trouble, chose to share and care? In doing so, we found the burgeoning joy in entangled meanings that we forged among us. The stubborn desire of the collective, of working together instead of on one's own, and how counterfeit it felt to do so within the walls of an institution ... to be in-difference, remember, to be *in* but not *of* it. Could we really be like weeds?

*

How is it possible to bring the *there* that I am engaged with to a *here* that we are trying to create? How do we make the *there* matter? And, how to begin to describe this process? Do we start with the description of the smell of the fog over the sea or by presenting the cruel facts of what will happen to that sea? Do we talk about the joy of swimming in that sea, or about how its temperature will be affected once the nuclear power plants are built? We thought about how to bring a sociality, a community, a land, an ecosystem of the *there* toward a "we"—at first, an office in Vienna where we tried to matter. What language do we use, and how do we talk about dispossession, especially when we know from Donna Haraway that "it matters what matters we use to think other matters with"?¹ How to matter together? How do we learn to learn from each other? How can we bring back this care that we have created in the "we" to the "I" again, that is, to share it with those others still *there*?

¹ Donna J. Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016), 12.



Where are we? Where? There is a where, because we are, stubbornly, and have been, and who are we, if you and not me?

— Etel Adnan, *There*

It is a practice of care, care for each other, care for each other's practices. A practice of learning from the sites we are engaged with, and of returning to those places with a voice of nominal authority—that is, in the role of an artist/researcher with the support of a European institution that provides visas, money, and credibility to support our precarious cultural labor. We return with the desire to share our resources and to create other stories and other worlds. The responsibility of being in-between: returning to other realities that one easily forgets in the comfort of these privileges; re-learning again how to walk, talk, where to go, what to wear, what time to be home, what to say in public, and to whom.

*

Coming-together and working-together sometimes seems to require something else than what we already have and so finding this “something else” makes it a complex process. The fact that it is complex means that it is a learning encounter in a continuous modality. Yet, how do we develop productive ways of acting and reacting as we work as a collective? Tensions might make it impossible to come and work together, but there is also a danger in thinking about it that way. Through coming/working-together, there is always a moment when productive energy is initiated and emerges from the collective entanglement. In that case, even tensions and misunderstandings start to feel like an important part of the encounter. It is a privilege to be a part of such a collective struggle and to be able to witness how rich this process can be.

*

“We” is a precarious, unstable constellation, shaped by the temporary alliances of contingent forces. We recognized the im/possibilities, the fleeting appearance and disappearance of that “we” differently, as something that we at times longed for and also despised. Witnessing the deportation of one colleague at the beginning of the project and the continuous harassment of others by immigration officers, as well as the daily stares and glares on the street, we had no fantasy about a “common space,” where we would all be welcomed. The glimpses of a “we” sparked, for some of us, when playing together, when walking together, or trying to learn Ethiopian dance moves. There was a momentary “we” when we put on masks cut out of paper print-outs and, while wearing them courageously performed a collective choir with voices conventionally not considered fit for a public performance. It was embarrassing: “we” were definitely embarrassed. For a brief moment, we had allowed ourselves to be dispossessed by others.

*

Back in the office, the detailed accounts of the sites were at times followed by a weighty silence, loaded with our shared ignorance about each other's contexts of research, creating an alienating togetherness and a different form of dispossession through the alienating presence of others. The epistemological center of colonial violence in action gave rise to the irrelevant accumulation of accounts and knowledges by the subjects of the Global South; insights fell into a vacuum because of the difficulty we had in identifying points of connection and deviation that could have allowed them to resonate and amplify. We would be invited to speak, but who would listen? How to speak and to what end remained unclear throughout the process. If the goal was to be dispossessed, there we were: dispossessed of and among the practices that supported our multiple crossings. (These crossings that sometimes felt more like bleeding out: as if, after crossing so many times, there was no place to return to, as if we could only arrive permanently into the realm of longing.) In our effort to arrive at a common ground, we sometimes opted for a rather shallow common denominator.

*

As for the money: the project was funded by Austrian tax money, including taxes from companies such as Andritz AG, an Austrian plant engineering group with headquarters in Graz, which provides the infrastructure for the security dam projects in Kurdistan—which one of the artists identified as “weaponized nature” as it floods Kurdish villages, destroys family homes, and exterminates ecosystems. And, to mention another example, OMV, an Austrian integrated oil and gas company with headquarters in Vienna, which drills oil and gas on one of the few remaining Maori territories on the coast of New Zealand. We lacked the skill and vision to confront these complexities beyond acknowledging that we were, indeed, entangled in this confounding global injustice.

*

There was also laughter and lightness as we got to know each other. We surprised each other again and again with unexpected knowledge. Who would have thought that one among us knew what a hummingbird can and cannot see (e.g. refined colors), or what it takes to make us sing from the top of our lungs in public (e.g. make us stomp and scream beforehand), or how to prevent a dog attack while walking (e.g. carry a stone in one's right hand)? We learned that some among us were pop-star singers, and others had a talent for dancing; one was a dreamer who had her

UFO parked behind the nearby cork tree. We tried to learn from each other, we tried to appreciate our differences and fathom our idiosyncrasies.

*

At times, in the group meetings it felt like our deep commitments within the communities and sites of research that later materialized in our individual artistic work were dismissed or overlooked, as if they were exclusively the carriers of an individualistic, possessive artistic ego. It remained difficult to address the works as complex contributions that could open up discussions about aesthetics and art practice as multi-layered processes of relationality and worldmaking.

*

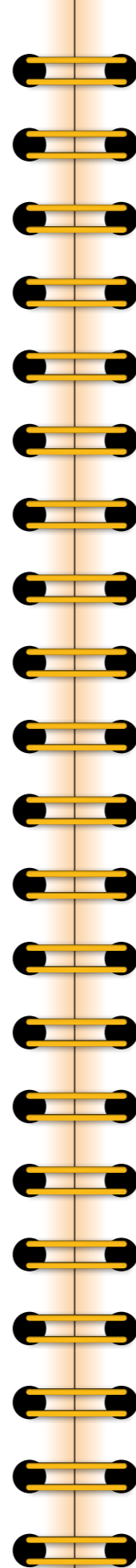
So, we struggled. We struggled with finding a common language—some of us were trained in (academic) English, others were not. Some had no difficulty speaking in public, but others found it hard (at least and especially at the beginning). We struggled with internal hierarchies and what sometimes seemed like a solidified center, with margins, and a gap in between. We felt unseen and underappreciated. We made plans but did not meet deadlines. We felt stuck. Many of us had worked in group initiatives, but, as artists or theorists, we were also trained to assert our own grammar and vocabulary. Now, we were locked around a table in uncomfortable wooden chairs, with only a laptop in front of us, providing an occasional escape into the virtual world. The antagonisms we targeted in our respective fields—North and South, institutional center and its margins, citizenship versus residency, etcetera—were now right in front of us.

*

Sitting around the table in Room #A4239A, we glimpsed the potential of making Global-South to Global-South bridges and became enthusiastic about the possibility of trafficking knowledges and strategies from one context to another, imagining worldmakings that would be relevant across borders.

*

What does it mean to be “Project Leader” for a group project on dispossession, especially when the so-called leader is a professor, born in the Global North, and the majority of the “team members” come from the South? What does it mean for a group to be assembled around a proposal written by this white professor, who, having received project funding, invites six artists to join the project? What does it mean for the supposed generosity of this invitation to be charged with



the expansive violence of dispossession, which radiates from North to the South? With Northern corporations extracting resources in the South, while instilling systems of cooptation and corruption? With Northern universities mining “other” knowledges while refusing to allow these knowledges to truly challenge the institution?

Is it possible to lead a group through the ups-and-downs of a research process, and, at the same time, do the work of questioning one’s own epistemic ignorance, which comes along with being educated in Europe and the US? Is it possible to direct the group’s course, and, at the same time, counter one’s infection by what Gloria Wekker calls “white innocence”—that is, a refusal to acknowledge privilege and entitlement?² No, it is seemingly not, but it is indispensable. So, the purpose of this work might not be to prepare for a test, but rather to learn to fail in less painful ways. To learn how to be accountable. To learn to know when it is time to listen and when to speak. To learn to facilitate care for each other, when waves of pain in the face of powerlessness sweep the group off its feet, and when anger floats freely searching for a place to momentarily settle. To learn to care for oneself, when anxiety spreads like a contagious virus. To learn to navigate closeness and distance. To hold tension. To learn to say I am sorry when you get it wrong. And, to continue working towards a university where the composition of the faculty genuinely reflects that of the students.

*

Visiting the sites of study would make the administrative challenges vanish under the first touch of the sun. Sites that are both lush and miserable, beautiful and scary, both conservative and, at the same time, fully open to new possibilities, places where friendly warmth and violence sprout in every corner, where Indigenous resistances offer an ethical compass in a territory full of clandestine graves, where numerous ecstatic forms of celebration radiate side by side with military and paramilitary occupations, where dignified rage strives to defeat the unleashed horror provoked by the new forms of war for the ownership and control over territories. Crossing from North to South requires a radical untraining. One gets spoiled after living, even for a while, in the affluent North; or, more precisely, one gets accustomed to taking for granted certain forms and functions. What remains an open wound though, is the everyday experience of inferiorization. When traveling in the South, one has to relearn how to be alert, to be open to the risky unpredictabilities of daily life, to avoid carrying laptops and bank cards,

² Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence: Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 1–29.

to disinfecting vegetables and buying drinkable water, to being stuck in traffic, to acknowledging that self-preservation is not a given but something to be achieved, to catching up with the increasing vulnerability that the people whom one loves experience every day. The crossings between such contrasted realities require shifts into different sets of contradictions. One, where self-position and perception also enter an uncanny terrain: one seems to have been bathed in European academic privilege, which is read as if one has already become a bit of a prestigious person, even something of a betrayer.

*

It is a mad world about which we still know so little. Up in the Kurdish Mountains, looking at the recent “photo” of a black hole blew my tiny mind; this also happened when I first heard about nuclear blackmail. This planet is a surfeit of surprises; it is mesmerizing, enraging, inspiring, and we, seven willful minds, were sitting around a table tracing some of the changes that the world is passing through. We confronted mass displacements and political struggles, ecological disasters, and the autonomy of nature; while discussing these processes in different languages and with different understandings, we underwent our own transformation.

*

How could gossip be put to work in Sinop, Addis, Diyarbakır, Alentejo, Berlin, Oaxaca, or Vienna?





↑ The Willful Weeds researchers' choir performance at mumok kino in Vienna, 2019; photos by Pat Blashill; courtesy of the photographer

Tool

CHOIR

A choir allows people to come together, amplify, articulate, and resonate concerns, narratives, emotions, and desires. In a choir, everyone tunes into each other, at the same time making space for a multitude of (sometimes conflicting) expressions. This allows for a collective articulation of many different voices. In a choir, the possessive individual gets lost—dis/possessed in the sense that Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou give to the term—as they are moved by and through others.(1)

A choir lives off both: the many and their differences. The choir also stands for the position of “the extras,” the unnamed many that, despite their minor roles and assumed disposability, are indisposible, as Saidiya Hartman reminds us in her theory of the chorus.(2) In opposition to the figure of the singular hero, the chorus consists of myriad figures whose stories are unsung and often forgotten, whose lives are assumed to be common and ordinary.

In addition, the choir is a collective body of commentary, as in classic Greek tragedy. Masked, faceless individuals are not a part of the action but draw attention to things unnoticed—being a vessel for emotions, such as rage and sorrow—in response to the unfolding drama. What connects various choirs born out of struggles, like the miner choirs, prison bands, and more recently, the numerous complaint choirs, are texts and melodies that speak of longing, rage, and hardship, as well as the desire to narrate them collectively. Sung together, struggles and longing are shared, amplified, and transformed by the resonance among each other's

bodies. The melodies are often repetitive and trance-inducing, acting like a drug that keeps the spirits alive and safe from harm.

Paulo Freire taught us that acknowledging self-ignorance is the first step in mutual learning: if you are going to teach something, you also should learn something new, that is, learning by doing. The research group formed a *Choir for Willful Weeds*. It was born out of the admiration for the performance of a miners choir we saw in Alentejo, and inspired by their display of fragility, braveness, and collectivity. For us, the choir is a means to further explore how to come together—to amplify, resonate, and articulate our voices collectively, while cherishing our multiplicity and differences. We worked together with a teacher and performer, Stefanie Sourial, who guided and encouraged our first steps. We collectively wrote our lyrics and agreed on wearing masks, not for the purpose of dispossessing our identities in public, but in order to bring the singularity of each of our research sites into the choir and support our coming together by taking a step back. We held our first public performance at mumok kino, preceding a film program under the title: “Dispossession, Willful Weeds, and WorldMaking from the Ruins.”

- (1) Judith Butler & Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), 1–10.
- (2) Saidiya Hartman, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2019), 475–80.

Activity

FORMING A
CHOIR

Forming a choir includes the danger of making uniform what is not, of glossing over differences in favor of harmony. If you decide to work with a choir leader/conductor, their role of directing is one of great responsibility, as it entails being attuned to both the individual and the collective. For this role not to become authoritative, it requires an attitude of informed serving. If you decide to form a choir without a conductor, the challenges are similar, but not carried by an individual person. This requires everyone to be attentive and to figure out ways (repetition, for example) to sing together.

FINDING PEOPLE

- To form a choir you need to find people to sing with.

WARMING UP

- Warm up your body, walk around in space, stretch, move your jaw, do some lip-rolling.
- Explore the bodily relations in space, relations of proximity, and distance of the bodies present.
- Engage in breathing exercises: move from short to deep breathing, and back.
- Play with the range of voices.



Activity

FINDING YOUR SONG

- Decide if you want to sing pre-existing material (e.g., the Hildegard von Bingen choir movement, where hundreds of people come together) or create new material by choosing a song to serve as a model for your own song-writing.
- Identify the rhythmic structure that will guide you or, as an alternative, cut and paste words produced through improvisation or by (collective) free-writing exercises and arrange them rhythmically on paper.
- Connect the text to a melody, either using pre-existing melodies or, if possible, coming up with a new one.

PREPARING TO PERFORM

- Rehearse meaningfully, as opposed to being only concerned with the outcome.
- Decide carefully where you want to locate your presentation.
- Design DIY costumes and masks; make space for differences.
- Develop a dramaturgy for the event.
- Celebrate your courage.
- Perform!



Choir masks by the Willful Weeds Research Group; reproduced with permission of the artists

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- Adnan, Etel. *There: In the Light and the Darkness of the Self and the Other*. Sausalito: Post-Apollo Press, 1997.
- Alfred, Taiaiake G. *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.
- Haraway, Donna J. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.
- Morrill, Angie, Eve Tuck, and the Super Futures Haunt Collective. "Before Dispossession, Or Surviving It." *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies* 12, no.1 (2016): 1–20. Online at: liminalities.net/12-1/dispossession.pdf.
- Sundberg, Juanita. "Decolonizing Posthumanist Geographies." *Cultural Geographies* 21, no.1 (2014): 33–47. Doi: 10.1177/1474474013486067.

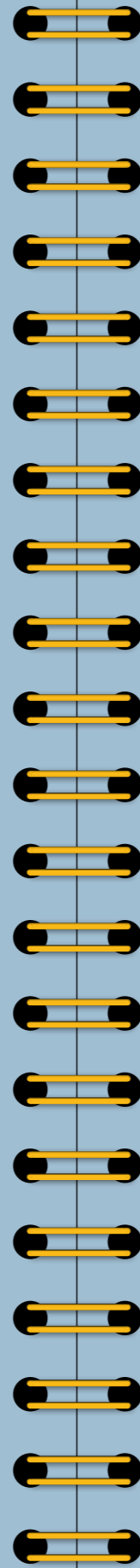
HEAVY BLOOD



Naomi Rincón Gallardo

Zacatecas, Mexico

Among the ruins
 We lie in wait
 Because of the devastation
 We are carriers of waste



One of today's central modes of perpetuating racial capitalism in the Global South, in addition to expanding prisons and security regimes, is in fact mega-extractive projects, such as large dams and mines, which require huge technological and resource feats as well as what Enrique Dussel refers to as the "developmentalist fallacy," or the imposition of modernity as a universalized mode of governance. State and corporate-designed mega-development projects operate through an economic rationale without calibrating for the life forms that exist beneath the gaze of such grand schemes. Extractivism functions within what Anibal Quijano first coined as the colonial matrix of power, where corporate entities and states are indistinguishable in their economic interests and activities; states act on behalf of corporations, and corporate entities hire security forces to control and suppress anti-extractivist organizing.

— Macarena Gómez-Barris, *The Extractive Zone*

The racialized politics of dispossession, displacement, and discrimination; the fabrication of disposable peoples and forgotten territories; the exploitation of resources, of female reproductive labor; masculinity itself: all constitute the nexus through which "southification" is produced. During colonial times, mountains were displaced, rivers rerouted, forests destroyed, and plants, animals, and humans moved around. Postcolonial ideology of development followed the same logic: nothing would stop human desire to shape its environment and remake it in its own image.

— Françoise Vergès, "Like a Riot"



↑ Vetagrande in the Mexican state of Zacatecas; photo by Naomi Rincón Gallardo, 2018

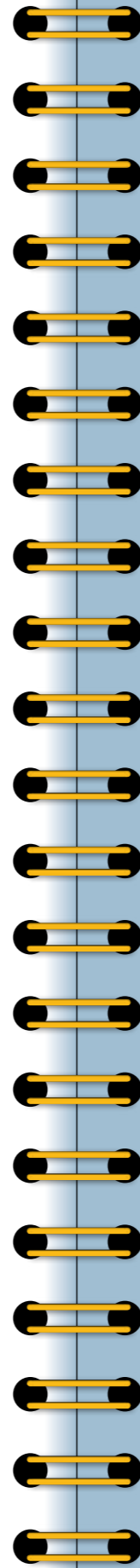
I walk around a crushed hill in Vetagrande, Zacatecas. I shudder at the thought of previous detonations in this semi-desertic landscape: how, on earth, can a hill be split this way? I am dry to the bone. There is a massive pile of triturated grey stones that become a growing toxic cemetery. The dusty particles enter my lungs. My sneakers and jeans catch all thorns and splinters. Some sun-burned cacti here and there. Glittering shredded minerals can't help being enticing. I walk further up and find a lookout: the ghostly colonial town to the left, a huge crater surrounded by a prefabricated housing complex for the newcomer miners to the right.

Vetagrande literally means “big vein.” It is located a few kilometers away from the capital of the State of Zacatecas. Also called Zacatecas, it was founded in the sixteenth century as a mining town under the Spanish colonial regime. Since then, the so-called “Curse of Minerals” has spread throughout the region. The local people refer to this curse because the territory has been plundered for five centuries due to its rich deposits of silver, copper, zinc, and other minerals. A more recent extractivist wave—led primarily by Canadian and American companies—has followed in the twenty-first century, further dispossessing the local communities with regards to their usufruct rights over their natural environment.

Extractivism comprises a dramatic intervention into the social and ecological life under the arrangements of racial capitalism.¹ The profit goes to the Global North. Local governments justify their legal contortions and corrupted arrangements with transnational capital under the banner of development. The Global South keeps the toxicity, enforced displacement, militarization and paramilitarization, disappearances, natural devastation, and a premature exposure to death for entire populations. The big vein is an open, bloodless wound.

The history of colonial violence and dispossession, together with the mass extinction of myriad life forms, raises human and non-human ghosts that populate the extractivist zones. “Heavy Blood” is a storytelling project that plots spectral creatures mumbling and gobbling among the toxic ruins of Vetagrande, Zacatecas. I picked the ghosts for the narrative on my walks along the crushed hills, on my visits to the local archive of photography and the historical archive, from newspapers and journal articles, among interviews and conversations with journalists and activists, and, finally, in a local community mining museum where I interviewed the widow of a deceased miner who was also the founder of the museum. The non-linear narrative of the video is divided into six parts: Lungs; Prophecy; Hummingbird; The Lady of the Copper Teeth; The Curse of Minerals; and, Heavy Blood.

¹ Macarena Gómez-Barris, *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), xvii.



What is a monster? (A monster is one who has been wronged and seeks justice.) Why do monsters interrupt? (Monsters interrupt when the injustice is nearly forgotten. Monsters show up when they are denied; yet there is no understanding the monster.) How does one get rid of a monster? (There is no permanent vanquishing of a monster; monsters can only be deferred, disseminated; the door to their threshold can only be shut on them for so long).

— Eve Tuck & C. Ree, "A Glossary of Haunting"

LUNGS

A performer plays two different characters: a miner and a phone sex worker. Each of the characters appears on parallel screens. They are both in a community museum of mining, surrounded by moldy walls and rusty objects. The miner performs mechanical movements while he breathes heavily; the phone sex worker performs different prosodies, from moans of pleasure to choking. The class, racial, and gender subordination gets into their proletarian lungs. The two characters accelerate the rhythm of their breathing, almost to the point of suffocation. When they can no longer stand it, they spit out a black substance. A double-figure wrapped in black mesh plays muffled saxophone sounds.



↑ Video stills, *Heavy Blood* (HD video, 18'46"), by Naomi Rincón Gallardo, 2018



PROPHECY

The character now appears in the desert, holding a tape recorder. A voice-over tells of a prophecy:

You know what our grandparents used to say: in the final reckoning, darkness will fall, and bloodthirsty maidens will come down and devour us. And then the world will be transformed.²

Masked figures with cacti-fiber wigs come out from the bushes and cacti in the desert. They resemble a Mesoamerican deity, Tzitzimime (toothed vaginas), whose voracious energies come to announce the renewal of the cycles. The character puts a mask on, becoming one of them. She smiles and shows her copper teeth.

↑ Bárbara Lázara in *Heavy Blood* (HD video, 18'46"), by Naomi Rincón Gallardo, 2018

² This passage is adapted from *Annals of Juan Bautista*, a compilation of texts written in náhuatl (the language of the Nahua people in Mesoamerica) from the sixteenth century.



↑ Video still, *Heavy Blood* (HD video, 18'46"), by Naomi Rincón Gallardo, 2018

HUMMINGBIRD

A hummingbird dwells among the ruins of a mining landscape in Vetagrande. According to the Mesoamerican cosmologies, a hummingbird is a warrior fallen in combat, a symbol of sexuality, and a sacred creature who connects the sky with the land. The crafty, artificial hummingbird in "Heavy Blood" seeks flower nectar and shelter in the desert, but her native landscape has been blown up. Disoriented, s/he holds her flight in a vanishing landscape projected on the green screen. S/he finds and enters a cave where s/he meets the Lady of the Copper Teeth, with whom s/he has an intimate interspecies encounter.

Flecha
Espina sangre
Borracha de miel
Inmóvil en el aire
Zumbando sortilegios

Arrow
Blood thorn
Drunk on honey
Motionless in the air
Humming incantations

Nómada
Vuelo vibrador
Libando el nectar
En intercambio mutuo
Para una muerte pasajera

Nomad
Vibrating flight
Sipping the nectar
In a mutual exchange
For a fleeting death

Picaflor
Caldera interior
Guerrero caído en combate
Alas batientes que guían
A los que desaparecieron como por magia

Hummingbird
Inner boiler
Warrior fallen in action
Wings flapping and guiding
Those who disappeared as if by magic

Zurda
Piedra tornasol
Dardo que se desplaza
A sus paisajes natales
Ruinas tóxicas y cerros triturados

Lefty
Iridescent stone
Dart moving back
To its native landscapes
Toxic ruins and crushed hills

Vuelan
Larga ruta
Los resucitados
Que mueren en la sequía
Y reviven con las lluvias

Flying
A long way
The resurrected
That die off in the drought
And come back to life with the rains

Desierto
Vine a buscar
A la mujer que se quema
La de los dientes de cobre
La destructora telúrica. Monstruo

Desert
I came to look
For the burning woman
The one with copper teeth
The world destroyer. Monster

THE LADY OF THE COPPER TEETH



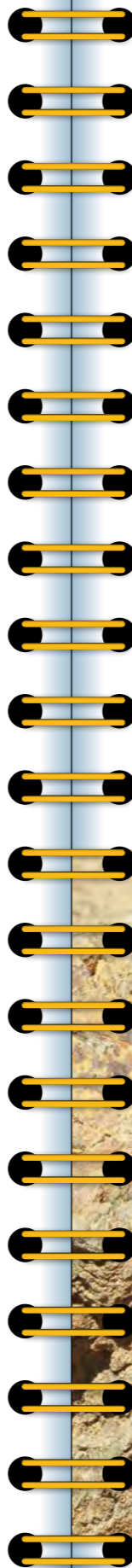
The Lady of the Copper Teeth explores the resonance of her visceral voice within her body and within the cave's rocky walls. She records herself on a tape recorder. She resembles a Mesoamerican female figure, Tlantepuzilama, an old fearsome lady who lives in a cave and goes out only to please her appetite with the blood of children and human hearts. She is a part of a legion of Mesoamerican female earthly creatures whose destructive forces help the renewal of the cycles of life and death. The Lady of the Copper Teeth howls and hums earthly sounds of a hurt land.

↑ Bárbara Lázara in *Heavy Blood* (HD video, 18'46"), by Naomi Rincón Gallardo, 2018

THE CURSE OF MINERALS



Among the gray crushed stones of the open-pit mine, the Lady of the Copper Teeth has a strange picnic. Sitting on a blanket, she intoxicates herself with a red drink while smoking water pipe. She sucks the red liquid from a plastic bottle through a hose. She smokes and coughs. Devoted to her oral toxic cravings, she enjoys herself in the ruined landscape. She plays a tape recorder, and the gang of Tzitzimime accompany her and join her in her vices. They get ready to satisfy their hunger for revenge.



↑ Video still, *Heavy Blood* (HD video, 18'46"), by Naomi Rincón Gallardo, 2018

↖ Bárbara Lázara in *Heavy Blood* (HD video, 18'46"), by Naomi Rincón Gallardo, 2018

HEAVY BLOOD

The gang of Tzitzimime play saxophones and drums in the desert. The Lady of the Copper Teeth dances along in choreography of self-defense while she yells this song:

Desde las ruinas
Nuestras vidas al acecho
Por el expolio
Portadoras del desecho
Desde las ruinas
Aguantando la rapiña
Desde las ruinas
En defensa expulsiva

Sangre pesada
Resiste, persiste
Sangre pesada
Necea, perrea
Sangre pesada
Más deseante que deseable
Sangre pesada
Durable e indomable.

Inhala
Exhala
Liba!
Escupe!
Deglute!
Muerde!
Arranca!

Blue grabbing!
Land grabbing!
Pussy grabbing!

Aunque sedientas seguimos escupiendo
Aunque chimuelas vorazmente mordemos
Aunque explotadas viviendo en exceso
Agazapadas lamiéndonos los dedos
Muertas fallidas comiéndonos las uñas
Intoxicadas con hambre de venganza

Among the ruins
We lie in wait
Because of the devastation
We are carriers of waste
Among the ruins
Enduring the ransacking
Among the ruins
We defend and drive out

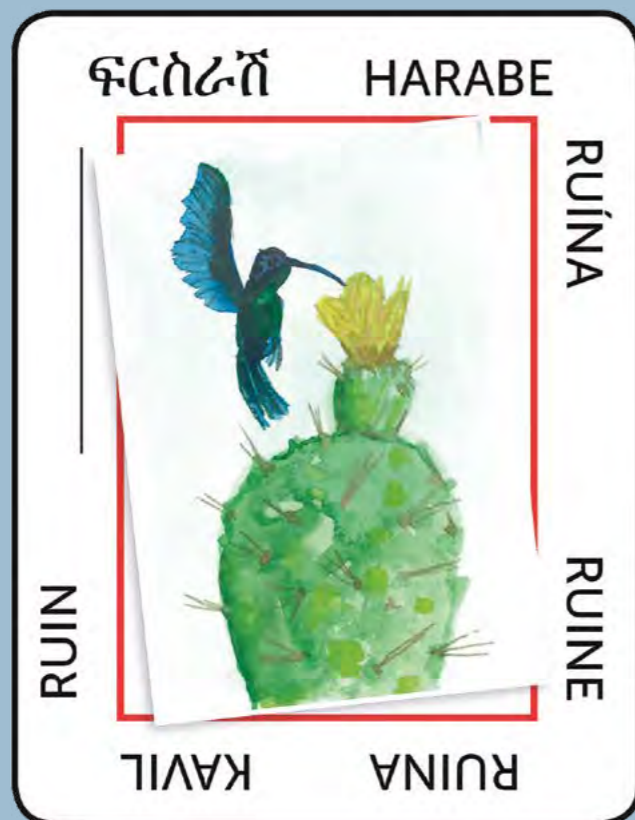
Heavy blood
Resisting, persisting
Heavy blood
Hanging tough, twerking
Heavy blood
More desiring than desirable
Heavy blood
Enduring and indomitable

Breathe in
Breathe out
Sip!
Spit!
Swallow!
Bite!
Destroy!

Blue grabbing!
Land grabbing!
Pussy grabbing!

Though parched, we keep spitting
Though toothless, we bite ravenously
Though exploited, living in excess
Hunkering down, licking our fingers
Failed corpses, chewing our fingernails
Drunk on our hunger of revenge





 Tool

GHOSTS & MONSTERS IN LANDSCAPES OF DISPOSSESSION

How is it, Lady of the Copper Teeth, to be a monster?

The Lady of the Copper Teeth describes it this way: in my organs, I feel the beating bodies that have disappeared, the goats that no longer come to graze, the crops that are gone—the alfalfa, the beans, the oats, the corn, and the prickly pear used as fodder. My hills are gone. My skin is all flayed. Nothing is left of the plants that used to cover the ground. My teeth and my rocks have gotten loose. Even my deepest wells are poisoned. I am dry to the bone. I am soaked in cyanide and mercury. My blood is clotted with lead. They call my open veins strategic resources. In exchange, they give me bottled water. But I am not here to talk about my pain. I came here to recruit others like myself. Because we are legion. In spite of all this cruelty, we keep designing obstacles to progress. In spite of all this cruelty, we hunker down in the wasteland and gauge the extent of our revenge.

*

Ghosts and monsters appear when unresolved social violence makes itself known.(1) Animals, life forms, and

peoples who have been made killable, disappeared, or made extinct find ways to make themselves known and felt. In the landscapes of dispossession, death is not something that will happen at the end of life, but instead is intimately imbricated within life itself. How can we make space for ghosts and monsters? How can we facilitate their appearance?

The ghostly realm is not exclusively a human matter. Human destruction and the compulsive extractive powers that attack the planet produces non-human ghosts. The mass extinction of life forms on earth comes along with an overpopulation of multispecies ghosts. They re-appear within extractive zones and abandoned industries; they grow like stubborn, unwanted weeds. Among the haunted ruined landscapes, traces of disappeared ways of life radiate a ghostly light that resonates with the uncanny atmosphere.

(1) Avery F. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

Activity

The following activities are suggested for groups or individuals who live in haunted places among haunted societies and want to invite ghosts and monsters into their worldmaking.(2)

RECOGNIZING THE GHOSTS & MONSTERS

- Walk the streets and landscapes of a place that is important to you, where you base your research, work, or life. Consider the possible risks of your presence, and take precautions against possible harm.
- Find out what and who was suppressed in the making of this place. Talk to people who know its stories, visit archives, do some reading. Take notes.
- Identify the marks, sensations, apparitions, and past histories of violence, which still linger in the present. How have forms of dispossession, exploitation, and repression impacted life in these places? Try to recognize what is not or no longer said, but remains felt. Describe—with as much detail as possible—what it feels like and how you recognize these marks of the past. Keep taking notes.
- Identify the human and non-human ghosts in this place. How do they demand their recognition? Which affective register do they occupy? Are they melancholic, furious, longing, or plotting their revenge? Keep taking notes.

FACILITATE THEIR APPEARANCE

- Now, drawing from your notes, cook up a séance. Compose a speech or a spell to welcome the ghosts and monsters. Gather objects that can attract them. Make a guest list and welcome who shows up. Create the right atmosphere (think of sounds, smells, projections, and lights).
- Visualize them. Make collages and sketches by collecting different images from various sources. Consider texture, smell, size, scale, density.
- Try out different camera movements as if following these ghosts. Record different sounds, and create a sonic atmosphere emulating the sounds they make. Also, write down their demands and amplify them.
- Bring together these elements into an exercise of apparition, divination, or telepathic communication.

(2) See also, Janine Jembere's chapter "Paperlands" in this volume, 121–43.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- Galeano, Eduardo. *The Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent*. Translated by Cedric Belfrage. London: Monthly Review Press, 1997.
- Tuck, Eve & C. Ree. "A Glossary of Haunting." In *Handbook of Autoethnography*. Edited by Stacy H. Jones, Tony E. Adams, and Carolyn Ellis. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2013. 639–56.
- Vergès, Françoise. "Like a Riot: The Politics of Forgetfulness, Relearning the South, and the Island of Dr. Moreau." *South Magazine* 9 (documenta 14 #4). Online at: documenta14.de/en/south/25_like_a_riot_the_politics_of_forgetfulness_relearning_the_south_and_the_island_of_dr_moreau.

CREDITS

Heavy Blood, by Naomi Rincón Gallardo. HD video, 18'46", 2018. Shot in Vetagrande, Zacatecas, Mexico. Performers: Lady of the Copper Teeth – Bárbara Lázara; Toothed Vaginas Ensemble – Karina Rivera, Azalia Morales, and Rosalba Lira; Hummingbird – Naomi Rincón Gallardo. Lyrics and Texts: Naomi Rincón Gallardo. Musical Composition: Federico Schmucler. Cinematography: Dalia Huerta. Drone: David del Hoyo. Direct Sound: Elda Ortiz y Servando López. Photo documentation: Angélica Canales. Choreography: Marta Sponzilli. Production assistants: Fernando Salcedo and Eric Nava. Masks: Jorge Luis Guerrero and Abelardo Piña. Seamstress: Emilia Robles. Special thanks to the research group FWF/PEEK "DisPossession: Post-Participatory Aesthetics and the Pedagogy of Land." *Heavy Blood* was commissioned by XIII FEMSA Biennial "We Have Never Been Contemporary." Zacatecas, 2019. All film stills and photographs in this chapter: reproduced courtesy of Naomi Rincón Gallardo, the artist.

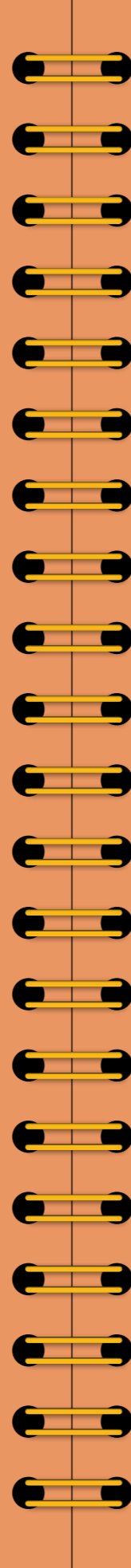
Luz, Clarão, Fulgor / LIGHT, BLAZE, FULGOR



Growing organs for the alternative
In a geography of rebels
Metamorphosing communities
Summoned for autonomy

Sílvia das Fadas

Alentejo, Portugal

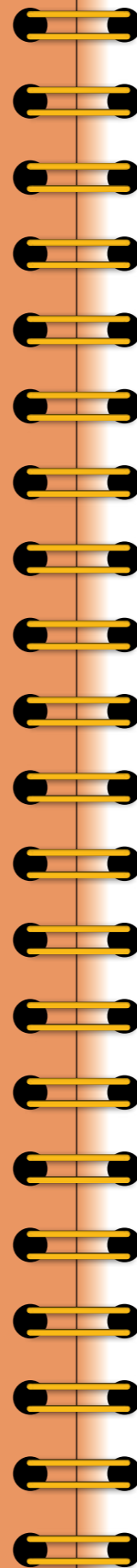


There, nothing belongs to the same context of the old days any longer. We are the fruit of an experience of exile, and we have our own language and freedom. We practiced it during endless years in an open and closed house. We moved with all the spirits. In that country I glimpse an absence of vague borders and terrain.

— Maria Gabriela Llansol, *The Geography of Rebels Trilogy*

We are not nor have we ever been fully assimilated subjects of the world capitalist system. To refuse to live as if there is no other choice shifts the terrain of struggle to the more difficult and delicate work of living autonomously. Whether it is imposed on you by the impossibility of being assimilated and rewarded by the dominant order or chosen by you against all the odds, this life requires an embodied in-difference Herbert Marcuse called “organs for the alternative.”

— Avery F. Gordon, *The Hawthorn Archive*

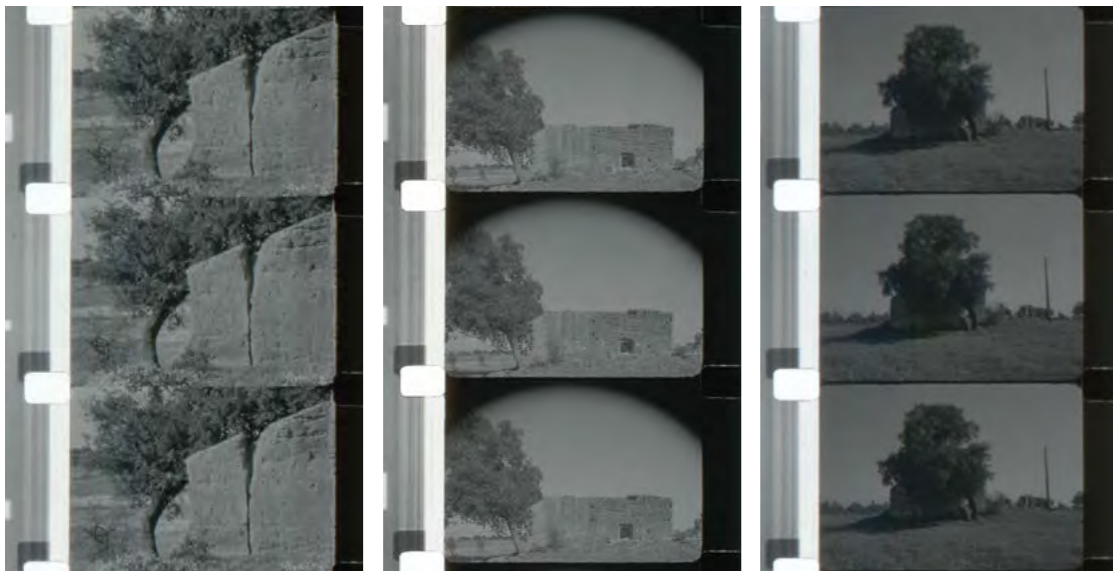


Alentejo is a region named after a river, beyond a river, previously known as *Entre-Tejo-e-Guadiana*, the lands between the Tagus and the Guadiana Rivers. It is a geo-political region of Southern Portugal, delimited by the Tagus River to the north, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, the Spanish Earth to the east, as well as the Guadiana River and the region of Algarve to the south. In these lands, sparked by the collective experiment of a commune in Vale de Santiago—Comuna da Luz [Commune of Light]—founded by the anarchist António Gonçalves Correia in 1917–18, I started filming and daydreaming with a different kind of commune—one both in the present and in the making. I call it Comuna Fulgor, the Commune of Fulgor. And, to call into action what I have said elsewhere, “Fulgor is a dazzling brightness, a rupture in time and historicity that harbors the possibility of unexpected encounters from the margins.”¹

My first encounter with the Commune of Light took place in the winter of 2017, when I visited its ruins with the artist Sara Chang Yan. We stopped at a local café in Fornalhas Velhas and asked the villagers about the commune; they shared what they knew and pointed us towards its location. We opened the fences, spent time looking and listening, and filmed a roll of black-and-white 16mm film. Later that summer, I went back to the ruins with artist and filmmaker Lisa Truttmann only to find out that the terrain was currently divided by eight landowners not related to the historical commune. One of these owners did not allow us to pass. We left disillusioned, but soon found ourselves at small roads, large fields, and unexpected encounters.

↑ Frame enlargement from Sílvia das Fadas, *Light, Blaze, Fulgor* (2019) showing a tree shadow at the Commune of Light, Vale de Santiago

¹ Sílvia das Fadas, *Auguries for a Non-Hierarchical Framing and Flourishing*; volume in the series “Die Frau mit 50 Füßen,” eds. Cristina Gómez Barrio & Wolfgang Mayer (Stuttgart: Akademie der Bildenden Künste, 2019), 33.



I returned to the Commune of Light in the summer of 2018 with the Willful Weeds Research Group. Together we walked for several hours from Vale de Santiago, the closest town, towards the place of the commune. Finding no opposition, we entered and sat down on its grounds to rest and talk until the sun set.

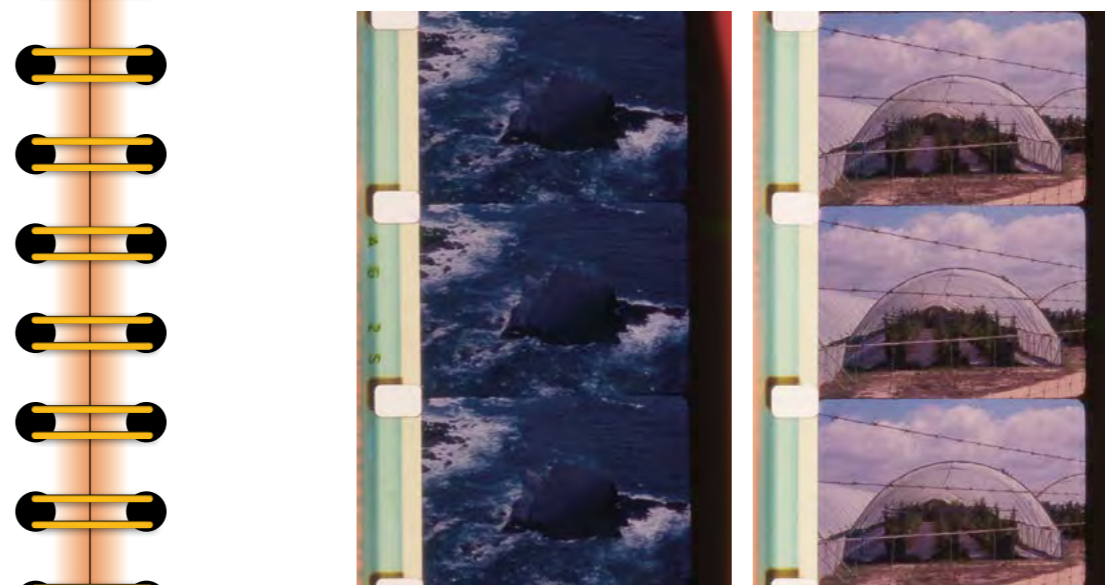
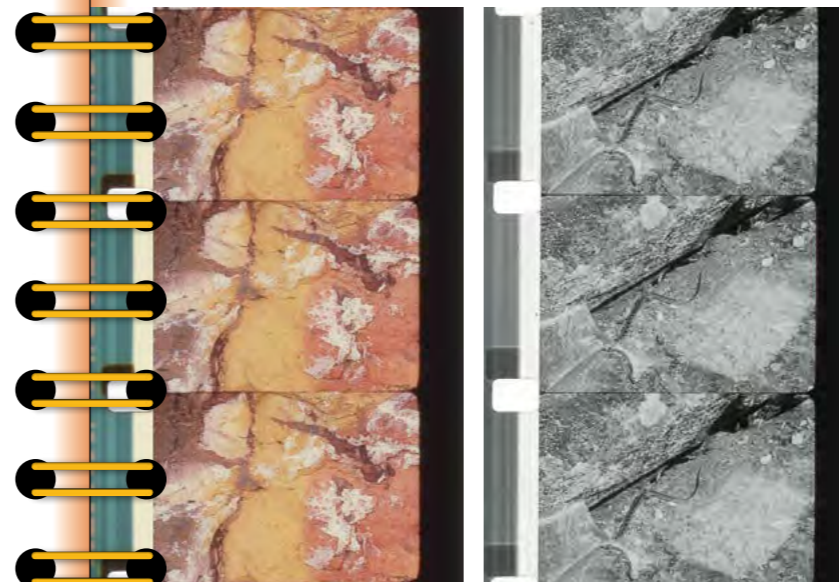
Stubbornly looking for auguries, in the summer of 2019, I trespassed the fences of the commune again, this time in the company of sound artist and composer Robert Blatt. While he recorded the sounds of the ruins, I filmed two rolls of film, one in color, the other in black and white. We read letters out loud to each other and our surroundings written by Gonçalves Correia and recently re-published by the anarchist newspaper *A Batalha*. Every time I go there, I tell the commune's history, at least the little that I know of it. If we keep trespassing, it is to celebrate the spirit of an idea, of the beloved anarchist, the unknown woman, and the people who lived together in a commune that fell apart too quickly.

From the commune's ruins, I have walked through the bio-region, following the way of the rivers, the way of the trees, the way of the stones, the way of the living, and, predictably, I have been disrupted by the wretched way of extraction. In the company of friends and unknown wanderers, we have been building a temporary commune in a shared house that we don't own, in a village that we found resilient and hospitable. Since then, filming has become closer to life.

The "I" of the filmmaker is being transmuted into a promising, emergent "we"; and we don't know what this film is, nor what it may do. This is the first metamorphosis; there are more to come.

Luz, Clarão, Fulgor/Light, Blaze, Fulgor is a kind of experiment: a practice of mutants in search of a metamorphic

↑ Frame enlargements from *Light, Blaze, Fulgor* (2017) showing the Commune of Light in half-moon and a crack in the ruin's walls



↑ Frame enlargements from *Light, Blaze, Fulgor* (2019): Way of the trees in Arraiolos; Way of the river in Troviscais; Way of the stones in Cromeleque dos Almendres; Stone's Drawing in Mina de São Domingos; Way of the serpent in Pego Ferreiro; Way of the sea; Fishermen's Trail; and, The no way of extraction in Zambujeira do Mar



shift. It is driven by desire, both experiential and performative. It is an attempt at de-hierarchizing the world from within a region, a documentary practice horizontally composed of fragments, beings, and environments. Some of us do not come from this region but still feel drawn to its complex and unruly ecologies. It is within this force field that the Commune of Fulgor comes into being: in spontaneous and re-enacted situations, out of indignation, in a struggle against the ongoing processes of impoverishment, extraction, and exploitation. In this region we see ineradicable violence: fences, private property, mining projects, poisoned rivers, rows of undergrown olive and almond trees polluting the soil, water, and air, and saturating the horizon—cemetaries to our eyes. Towards the sea, greenhouses run by transnational

↑ Frame enlargements from *Light, Blaze, Fulgor* (2018 and 2019): Sever River and Flauta de Luz, both in Pego Ferreiro; Cork Trees in Arraiolos; and, Girl with Mask at the Fair of Joy in São Luís

corporations are spreading, exploring migrant and undocumented workers, promoting racism and provoking the erosion of the land and of social bonds. Alongside a regime of dispossession, a kindred struggle for a livable life is taking place: bodies in the process of resisting and reinventing themselves, claiming the margins, re-activating the ties to the land, opposing extraction, degrowing, building communities and autonomous zones, disseminating Indigenous seeds and critical information, translating poetry, practicing hospitality, and staying with the trouble while also becoming unavailable. To quote Avery F. Gordon, “Freedom is the process by which you develop a practice for being unavailable for servitude.”² Indeed.

We follow, weave, and get entangled within worldmaking threads by “looking at geographies of direct action, mutual aid, and prefigurative politics.”³ We are critically informed and inspired by *Jornal Mapa*, *Flauta de Luz*, and *A Ideia*—three publications currently produced in the spatial constellation of Alentejo—spreading the rebellious and internationalist seeds that, we believe, increase one’s consciousness for action and engender practices of autonomy and disobedience. In co-presence with all creatures, it is our aim to become allies while keeping our in-difference. Our collaborations are defined by association and affinity: one encounter leads to the next and enables conviviality; hospitality is received and reciprocated. In awe and recognition, the film follows its thread.

We get ready. As Fred Moten suggests, “We want to keep seeing what we come to in the making. It’s not that matters of skill or craft have been suspended. They have just been socialized, deindividuated, shared.”⁴ Choral and in the making, the film is a tool for conviviality; it folds and unfolds in bewilderment, guided by the fulgor, or the potential for flourishing in non-hierarchical frames.

Autonomous modes of production and distribution are rehearsed and put into practice. We film and edit in a discontinuous manner, without any scripts or treatments, but being engaged in relations of care and mattering, in an intense state of ignorance and curiosity, and anticipating the unforeseen, as Bresson taught us.⁵ *Luz, Clarão, Fulgor/Light, Blaze, Fulgor* is shared in different iterations, in and out of movie theaters and gallery spaces; in fields, grottos, and abandoned buildings; in a plurality of intimate and public sites. In darkness. Outside the capitalist logic of premieres and competitions. This cine-morphosis has the potential of creating a resonance chamber, a fulgurous and provisional assembly.

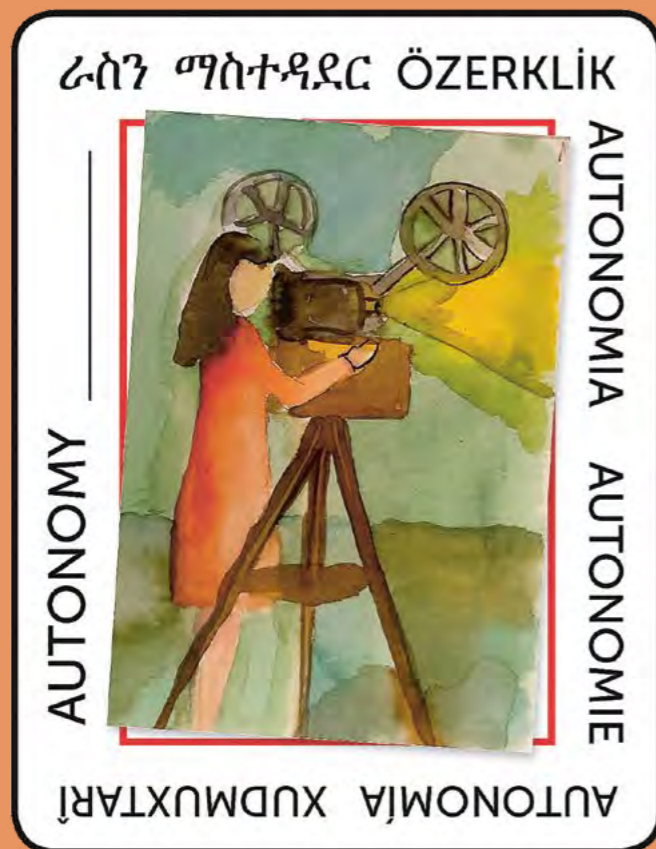
We are no longer waiting. We started living in flourishing ways, and this is the second metamorphosis. Still, there are more to come.

² Avery F. Gordon, *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2018), 49.

³ Simon Springer, *The Anarchist Roots of Geography: Towards Spatial Emancipation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 94.

⁴ Fred Moten, “Come On, Get It!,” *The New Inquiry* (19 February 2018); online at: thenewinquiry.com/come_on_get_it.

⁵ Robert Bresson, *Notes on Cinematography* (New York: Urizen Books, 1977).



Tool

WALKING AS A MEANS OF PREPARATION

I was often told I should not walk. It was too far, or unsafe, or that, as a woman, I would be looking for trouble. Only through the dramatic change of location, from Lisbon to Los Angeles, did I realize that walking is a public form of expression, a way of recognizing and claiming one's specific location within the pluriverse. While working in Alentejo, Southern Portugal, yet not being from here, I chose walking as an affective and bodily methodology that allows me to engage with the land and learn from and with it, to develop focused attention, to bear witness to its bursts of life and its occupation under extractivist projects. I started walking alone, with a camera and a sound recorder, and soon the "I" became a "we", in an assemblage of matter, people, critters, and ghosts.

Walking can be used as an embodied tool in all sorts of landscapes and cityscapes, albeit differently. If walking in one part of the world might be considered an emancipatory practice, it could be charged with a high degree of danger and risk in other locations, requiring innumerable precautions. Walking is an everyday activity which, if intentionally embodied, may become a political tool, enacting collective action. One can walk alone or with one another, supported by other bodies. One can walk

in alliance and co-presence with a land, a person, a community, a people, a cause, or as a form of civil disobedience. As Juanita Sundberg suggests, walking-with is "a form of solidarity built on reciprocity and mutuality, walking and listening, talking and doing. Walking with entails engagement with Indigenous communities and individuals as intellectual and political subjects, colleagues in the practices of producing worlds. How one engages will take a variety of forms and will be different for everyone."⁽¹⁾

As a research practice, walking is inspired by the poets, daydreamers, insurrectionists, and activists who walk and wander, by the runaways who escaped by foot, by the vagabonds and the maroon communities; by the Surrealists and the Situationists, with their practices of psychogeography and *dérives* (drifts); by the group "Stalker: Observatoire Nomade," collectively walking in the interstices of the city; by projects such as the "Walk Exchange," a walking cooperative that produces free pedagogical and creative walks aiming to build a community of critical walkers through Walk Study Training Courses (WSTCS); or, the long-term research project on non-normative walking methodologies of the WalkingLab, drawing on feminist new materialisms, critical race theories, and queer theories to reflect on the significance of walking.

Tool

Finally, walking is inspired by all the marches and demonstrations and riots started by people gathering to walk together. Walking as a form of resistance and apprehension of the world is notably embodied in women's struggles around the world, a praxis that filmmaker and scholar Trinh T. Minh-ha has called "Walking with the Disappeared," a creative gesture of walking into existence enacted by the Algerian Mothers of the Disappeared and Las Madres de Plaza de Mayo who dared to speak truth to power, or by African American women who planned and carried out the Montgomery Bus Boycott, refusing to ride the buses in order to fight segregation.(2)

Walking is an embodied and situated knowledge. It engenders speculative thought, conversations, and encounters. It is a relational sensory experience.

If you know and feel connected to the land you walk in, you are more likely to care for it, coexist, and protect it. That's the potential of walking in a more-than-human world. Walking is a forceful means of preparation. In a future close to a collapse, it will be vital.

- (1) Juanita Sundberg, "Decolonizing Posthumanist Geographies," *Cultural Geographies* 21, no. 1 (2014): 33-47; doi: 10.1177/1474474013486067.
- (2) Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Lovicidal: Walking with the Disappeared* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016).



Frame enlargements from *Light, Blaze, Fulgor* (2019): A walk with the Willful Weeds Research Group in the almost empty dam of Monte da Rocha (left page) and evidence of a severe drought in Alentejo (right page)

Activity

WALK ANEW

Those who walk and those who are walked: go on a walk. Let the spirit of the walk lead you where you may, with active curiosity, but be attentive to the nature of the landscape, the dangers and power relations at work. What you need for the walk will differ across social and cultural contexts, so take the following guidelines into account and add your own to the list:

- Decide on a starting point, but not necessarily on a final or known destination.
- Carry as few things as possible so that you can walk freely and run away hastily, if needed.
- Amplify the senses: deep walking entails focused attention and deep listening.
- Allow yourself to daydream, and lose the sense of chronological time, with the condition that you feel safe.
- Pay attention to matter, such as soil, seeds, stone, trees, sand, cobble stones, asphalt.
- Take into consideration your own body and corporeality.
- Bring a notebook and a pencil, take notes, make drawings.



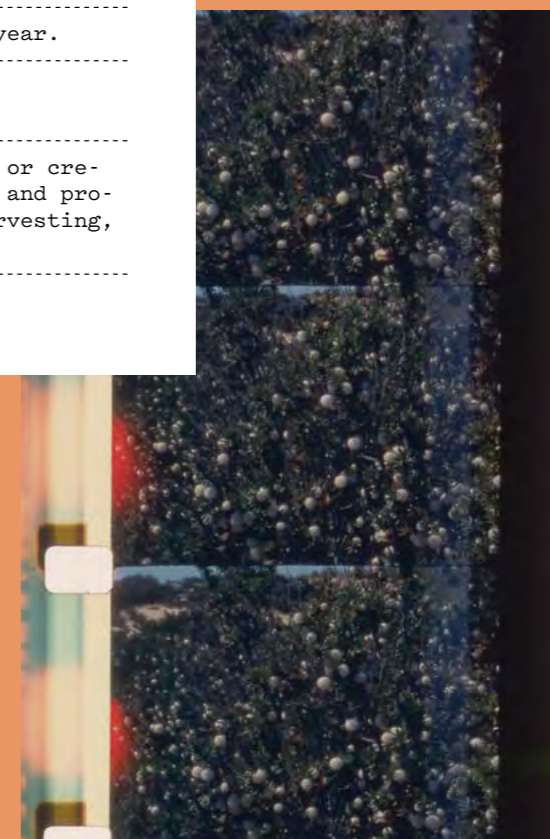
With each step forward, the world comes to us.
 With each step forward, a flower blooms under our feet.
 With each step forward, one receives wide open and deep into
 oneself, the gifts of the universe.
 Learning how to walk anew.

— Trinh T. Minh-Ha & Jean-Paul Bourdier, “L’autre marche / The Other Walk”

Activity

WALKING FOR AUTONOMY

- Go on a walk with the purpose of learning to know and identify the plants and herbs that grow wild in the fields.
- Do it with someone in the community who is knowledgeable about the plants, or search for a good book on the subject.
- Trespass fences, boundaries, and private properties, wherever shielded from danger.
- Pick some edible plants, prepare a collective meal with what you have gathered.
- Do it again in a different season of the year.
- Take into consideration your own body and corporeality.
- Some possible next steps: start a garden, or create a circle of seeds; learn to recognize and protect local seeds by gathering, sowing, harvesting, cleaning, storing, and sharing seeds.

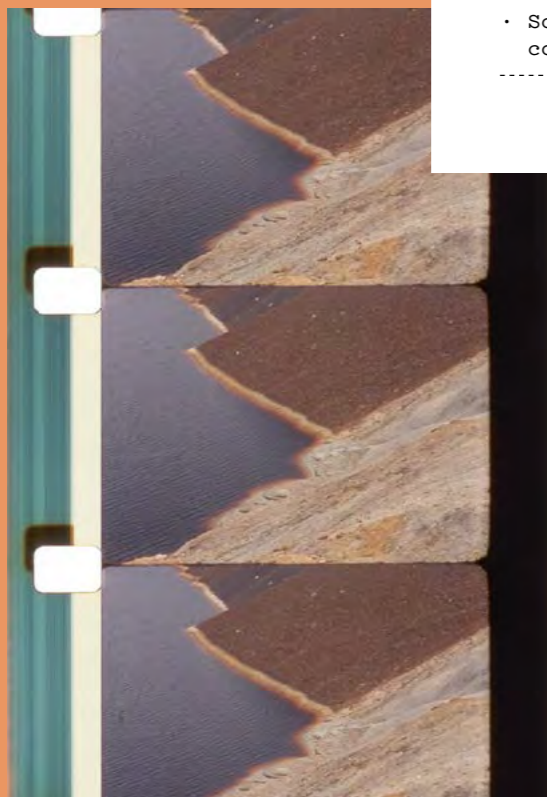




Activity

WALKING FOR REPAIR

- Locate sites of dispossession near you, be it a gentrified neighborhood, a polluted river, an oil drilling rig, a mining site, or a monoculture field.
- Invite people with different knowledges about the chosen site to walk together.
- Stop at significant points and observe. Trespass, if needed, or keep a safe distance lest you put yourself and others at risk.
- Imagine and discuss what could be done (individually and collectively) to protect the endangered ecosystems of this place.
- In spite of the damage, search for signs of resistance, resilience, disavowed and counter-histories. Spread those histories.
- Some possible next steps: take collective action; consider both healing and sabotage.



Global landscapes today are strewn with this kind of ruin. Still, these places can be lively despite announcements of their death; abandoned asset fields sometimes yield new multispecies and multicultural life. In a global state of precarity, we don't have choices other than looking for life in this ruin. Our first step is to bring back curiosity. Unencumbered by the simplifications of progress narratives, the knots and pulses of patchiness are there to explore.

— Anna Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*

Tool

TRAVELING
CINEMA

The desire for a traveling cinema has sprouted out of the wish and responsibility to share the film-in-metamorphosis (and, eventually, its future final iteration), titled *Luz, Clarão, Fulgor/Light, Blaze, Fulgor*, with people and communities in the region of Alentejo, whom I have encountered and filmed. It has also taken root in the concern that cinema is becoming absent from people's lives, especially from those who live in forgotten spaces, be it in the outskirts of the cities, inland, or in rural areas.

It was a common practice among the Third Cinema (and liberation movements) to travel with a film projector in order to take cinema into places where it did not usually happen. Film collectives and militant groups alike, especially in the 1960s and 70s, used this medium to distribute their films, initiate conversations, and contribute to radical change—groups such as the London Women's Film Group in the 1970s, the Ogawa Shinsuke and Ogawa Pro Collective (Japan, 1967–86), and Grupo Zero (during the Portuguese Ongoing Revolutionary Process). Like sprouting weeds, a mobile cinema can potentially germinate anywhere: in

cities, squares, gardens, fields, clubs and associations, mines, grottos, barns, under bridges, in common spaces or abandoned buildings. Against the grain, it can be argued that the digital cinema experience at home (on a computer screen, mobile phone, or television) is one form of alienation and dispossession as opposed to the communal and potentially political experience of a shared cinema.

A mobile cinema can be a tool to initiate a collective dialogue, be it a wider or more intimate conversation, because it provides a collective mode of presentation and transmission, allowing people to articulate their views and thoughts on what they have seen and experienced, or to express dissent. The choice of the films could relate to a pressing issue that matters directly to the community at a given moment: water, land grabs, discrimination, and so on. We (the Willful Weeds Research Group) believe that a traveling cinema can help recreate cinema viewers and their habits, producing an enduring cinematic imagination and allowing for a horizontal gathering of people in a shared world, even if such worlds are only temporary.

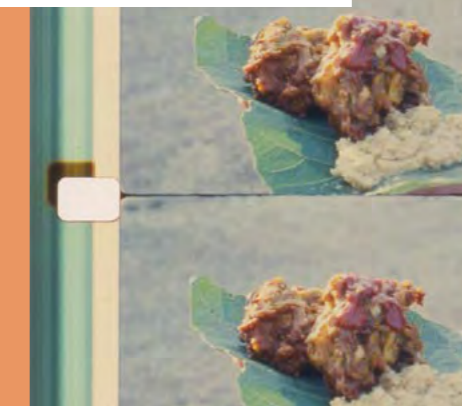
Activity

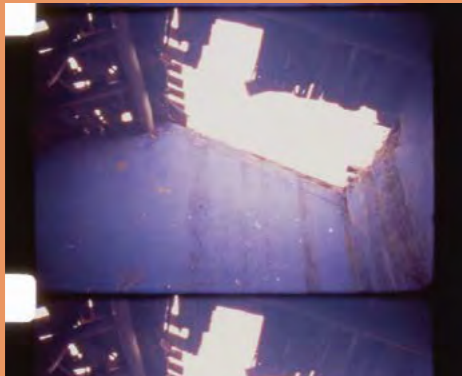
FERAL
SCREENING

A mobile cinema can be spontaneous in its happenings, forging direct alliances with people and places. Some things to prepare: a portable film projector or a digital projector with a player; a projector stand or something equivalent such as a stack of books on top of a chair; speakers to amplify the sound; a portable screen, a white wall, or a sheet; seats (chairs, pillows, bean bags); films

- Find a site for the feral screening. You could use a car, a van, or a more sustainable structure on wheels connected to a bicycle or a motorcycle to transport equipment and materials.
- Find local allies. Choose a film relevant to the community or affinity group. Announce the screening through word-of-mouth and, if time allows, craft a poster to hang in public spaces. Screen one or several films. Initiate a conversation. Discuss and embrace dissent. If possible, share drinks and food.
- Do it again in another place. Return to the same places regularly.

Some other considerations: there's a choice to be made between setting up an institutional traveling cinema, which requires complex steps such as securing a license from the local government, contracts with distributors, and following bureaucratic rules, or going for a pirate or self-managed cinema, spontaneous in its happenings and engaged in forging other kinds of alliances to people and places.





Tool

ANTICIPATION

Anticipating a worldly and flourishing life, in the present and in the making, is the purpose of this tool: allowing us to recognize what is already here and isn't always visible, but may suddenly irrupt and thus transfigure the way we perceive the real, as the fulgor has the potency of doing. There is a lot of improvisation and tentative gestures in social learning, and anticipation is the work of preparation for ----- . Anticipation is what Avery F. Gordon (via Herbert Marcuse) calls "growing organs for the alternative," and what J.K. Gibson-Graham refers to as "imagining and enacting."⁽³⁾ I like to call the process "searching for auguries."

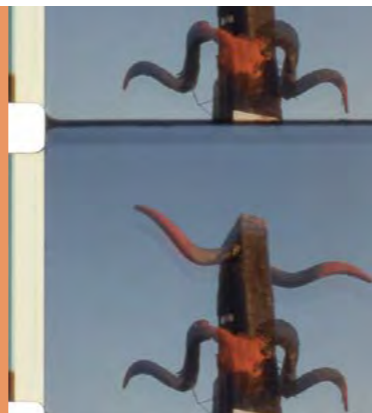
Auguries are omens or secret signs that you identify in the landscape as you engage with a specific place, or the ones that you can draw, produce, appropriate, or invent as a secret

language that someone else might also recognize and make sense of. Auguries can be associated with alternative economies and practices of autonomy. For instance, vagabonds and nomads would leave signs as messages to others, such as: "one can drink this water"; "the police officer is brutal"; or, "here one may find shelter." There is an element of secrecy in some of these signs, but they are not private or exclusive. It is a worldmaking practice, a hidden script, a potential history from below.

- (3) Avery F. Gordon, *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2018), 375; J.K. Gibson-Graham, "Imagining and Enacting a Postcapitalist Feminist Economic Politics," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 34, no. 1/2 (2006): 72-8.

Divination. Inhuman fears of the people
This distance, an arrangement of songs
scattered on the capital, a set of laws
to kill the living. Rhymes, this distance.
Ruins are barricades. Songs are bones.

— Sean Bonney, *Our Death*



↑ Frame enlargements from *Light, Blaze, Fulgor* (2018): Auguries I, Vale de Santiago; Auguries II, Arneiro; Auguries III, Panóias; Auguries IV, Arneiro; Auguries V, Ourique



↑ Frame enlargements from *Light, Blaze, Fulgor* (2019): A sound letter from Commune of the Fulgor in Troviscais; A griffon vulture's flight in Portas do Rodão

Activity

LETTERS AS ARROWS

A letter is an arrow, a gift, a time capsule. It carries agency, a strong desire of reaching someone or something. This letter-writing activity asks you to anticipate the world one wants to be in or be a part of, and the ways in which one wants to live, to describe such worlds as vividly as possible, with anticipatory consciousness. Letters can be addressed to daydreamers, down-to-earth people, and everyone else who can receive them. To prepare, remember that letters can be created with different media: writing, drawing, sound recording, moving image. According to the medium you choose, you may need paper and a pen, a sound recorder, a camera, a mobile phone, a computer, or other materials. Then, get to it:

- Decide what kind of arrow your letter is and prepare your preferred medium/media.
- Choose an addressee.
- Write your letter. Anticipate. Imagine.
- Deliver your letter to your addressee.
- After reading your letter, ask the addressee to describe your desired world out loud to you.
- How does it sound? Zoom in and zoom out. Think how different the world you have described is from the world you live in. What could be done to bridge the gap?

A few other considerations: this activity can be done within a couple of hours inside a room. It can also take longer and be divided into the following moments: of writing the letter, of sending/sharing the letter, of reading/receiving the letter, of returning the letter by other means.

ARTWORKS & FILMS

- Akerman, Chantal, director. 1977. *News from Home*. Carlotta Films.
- Aurand, Ute, director. 2004. *Half Moon for Margaret*. Ute Aurand Filmproduktion.
- Baudelaire, Eric, artist. 2014. *Letters to Max*. Poulet-Malassis, La Région Île-de-France; LUX Artist's Moving Image.
- Carasco, Raymonde, director. 1979. *Tarahumaras 78*. Raymonde Carasco.
- Costa, Pedro, director. 2006. *Colossal Youth*. Momento Films.
- Diop Mambéty, Djibril, director. 1999. *La Petite Vendeuse de Soleil*. California Newsreel Productions.
- Fisinger, Oskar, director. 1927. *Walking from Munich to Berlin*.
- Mackenzi Kent, director. 1961. *The Exiles*.
- Mateus, Marta, director. 2018. *Farpões Baldios/Barbs, Wastelands*. C.R.I.M. Produções, Sociedade Óptica Técnica.
- Muñoz, Jeannette, director. Since 2005. *Envíos*.
- Ogawa Productions, director. 1986. *The Sundial Carved with a Thousand Years of Notches—A Magino Village Tale*. Ogawa Productions.
- Rey, Nicolas, director. 2012. *Molussy, Differently*.
- Rivette, Jacques, director. 1974. *Céline et Julie Vont en Bateau*. Films du Losange.
- Rousseau, Jean-Claude, director. 1983. *Jeune femme à sa fenêtre en lisant une lettre*. Rousseau Film Production.
- Vaz, Ana, artist. 2016. *Há Terra!*.
- Zero, Grupo, director. 1977. *A Lei da Terra*. Alberto Seixas Santos, Grupo Zero.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- Bonney, Sean. *Our Death*. Oakland: Commune Editions, 2019.
- Boudry, Pauline & Renate Lorenz. *Moving Backwards*. Geneva: Skira, 2019.
- Brenez, Nicole & Isabelle Marinone. *Cinemas libertaires: Au service des forces de transgression et de révolte*. Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2015.
- Debuysere, Stoffel. *Figures of Dissent: Cinema of Politics/Politics of Cinema*. Ghent: Mer. Paper Kunsthalle, 2016.
- Llansol, Maria Gabriela. *The Geography of Rebels Trilogy*. Dallas: Deep Vellum, 2018.
- Minh-Ha, Trinh T. & Jean-Paul Bourdier. "L'autre marche/The Other Walk." In Trinh T. Minh-Ha, *D-Passage: The Digital Way*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013. Doi: 10.1215/9780822377320-007.
- Smithson, Robert & Nancy Holt. *The Writings of Robert Smithson: Essays with Illustrations*. New York: New York University Press, 1979.
- Tsing, Anna. *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015.

CREDITS

Luz, Clarão, Fulgor: Augúrios para um Enquadramento Não Hierárquico e Venturoso [Light, Blaze, Fulgor: Auguries for a Non-hierarchical Framing and Flourishing], by Sílvia das Fadas. 16mm dual-projection film, ca. 85', color and b/w, sound, and live reading, ongoing since 2017. Shot in Alentejo, Portugal. Sound compositions: Pã (Part I), João Farelo (Part II). Soundscapes by Nora Sweeney, Robert Blatt, and Sílvia das Fadas. Masks: Joaquim Cerdeira. *Light, Blaze, Fulgor: Auguries for a Non-hierarchical Framing and Flourishing* was produced with the support of a doctoral fellowship by the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT), Portugal as well as funding from FWF PEEK: "DisPossession: Post-Participatory Aesthetics and the Pedagogies of Land," and the Akademie Schloss Solitude. All frame enlargements and film stills in this chapter: reproduced courtesy of Sílvia das Fadas, the artist.

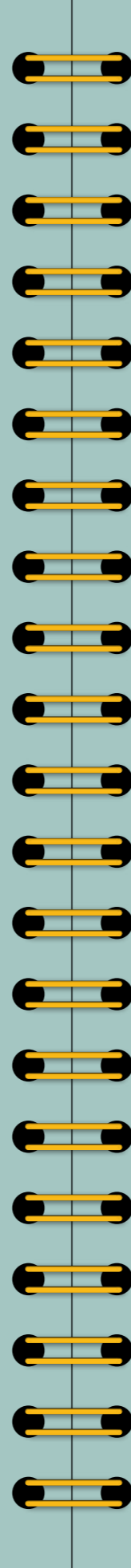
AROUND A RIVER



Rojda Tuğrul

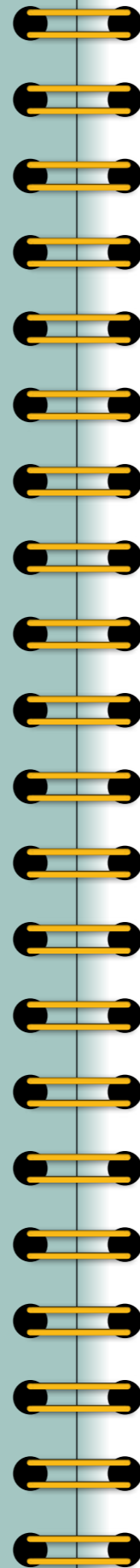
Tigris and Euphrates Rivers,
Upper Mesopotamia

Feeling the heart beating slow
Time for space, space for time
Falling down in water
Knowing nothing but eternity



The trace of all measurements remains even when information is erased; it takes work to make the ghostly entanglements visible. The past is not closed (it never was), but erasure (of all traces) is not what is at issue. The past is not present. “Past” and “future” are iteratively reconfigured and enfolded through the world’s ongoing intra-activity. There is no inherently determinate relationship between past and future. Phenomena are not located in space and time; rather, phenomena are material entanglements enfolded and threaded through the spacetime mattering of the universe. Even the “re-turn” of a diffraction pattern does not signal a going back, an erasure of memory, a restoration of a present past. Memory—the pattern of sedimented enfoldings of iterative intra-activity—is written into the fabric of the world. The world “holds” the memory of all traces; or rather, the world is its memory (enfolded materialization).

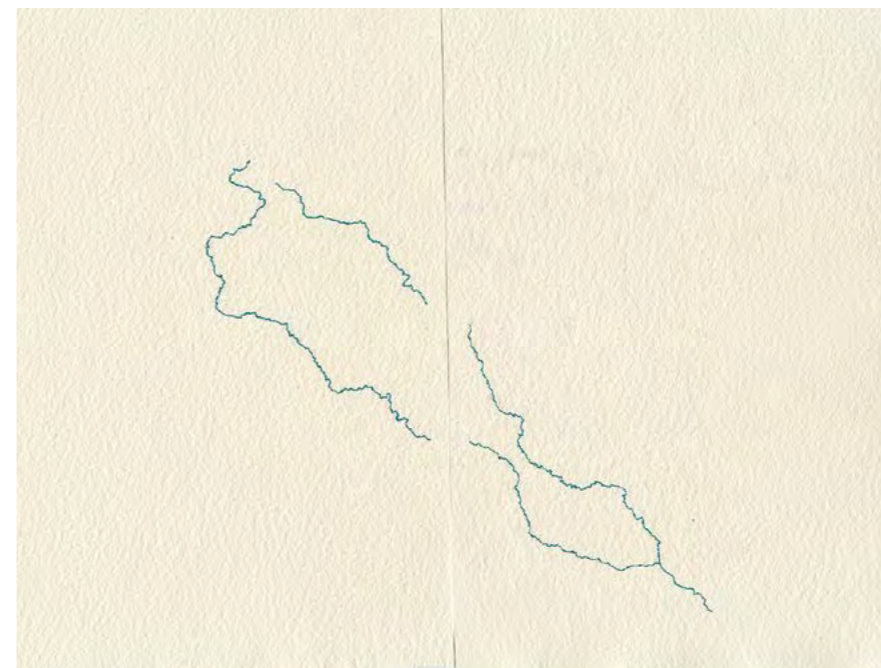
— Karen Barad, “Nature’s Queer Performativity”



I was trying to find a route from Tigris to the Persian Gulf. I was swimming and kept getting lost. I was convinced there was a secret passageway so I kept flowing into little coves and inlets, searching for a way from Mesopotamia to the Gulf.

Within the frames of war, geography can be viewed as a target to be destroyed or rendered uninhabitable while concurrently serving as a weapon in itself, that is, as an apparatus of power to threaten and control citizens within a particular landscape. Since the early 1990s, the war in Southeastern Turkey has witnessed a shift in violent territorial governance from the rural to the urban, veraciously tracing its own fallout. Since the environment is affected physically by war, history can act as a guide to examine the change and effect on the habitat.

In 2008, the Turkish government announced dozens of “Security Dams Projects.” The dams are to be built on the Turkish–Iraqi border, as well as in a few valleys in the central region of Northern Kurdistan.¹ This intervention was the second largest in the rural area of Southeastern Turkey after the 1990s, when the villages were forcibly evacuated as a part of a government counterinsurgency campaign intended to deprive the Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê [Kurdistan Workers’ Party, henceforth PKK] of logistical support. This resulted in the abandonment of three thousand villages and the displacement of approximately three million people. The construction of these dams is supposed to block PKK militants’ entry paths, hinder and restrict their movements, and disrupt the logistical support they receive from locals.

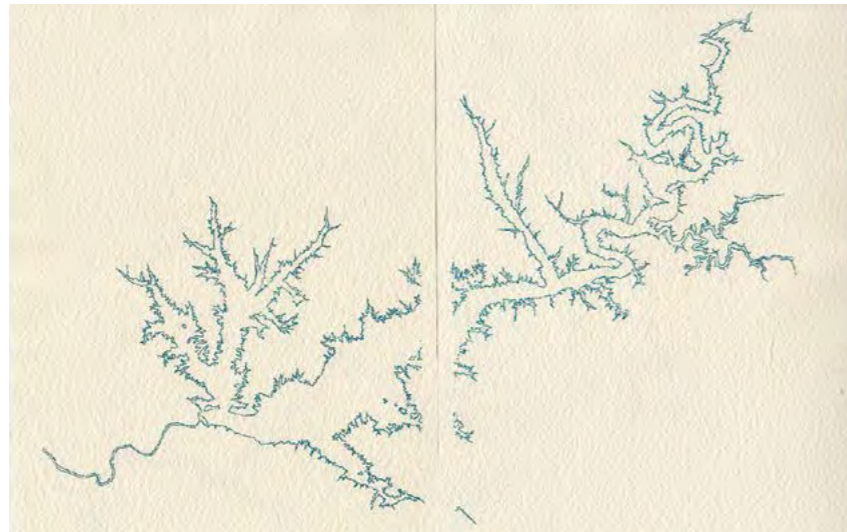


← Rojda Tuğrul, *Tigris and Euphrates*, 2019

¹ Zeynep S. Akinci & Pelin Tan, “Waterdams as Dispossession: Ecology, Security, Colonisation,” in *Climates: Architecture and the Planetary Imaginary*, ed. J. Graham (New York: Columbia Books on Architecture and the City; Zurich: Lars Muller Publishers, 2016), 142–49.

The concept of the “Security Dams Project” comes from the “South-Eastern Anatolian Project” [Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi, henceforth GAP]. The GAP proposal dates back to the 1930s, but the project as it is structured today comes from fresh initiatives in the 1970s that saw a more acute desire to harness, on a massive scale, irrigation and hydraulic energy production from the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. As the geography scholar Zeynep S. Akinci has argued,

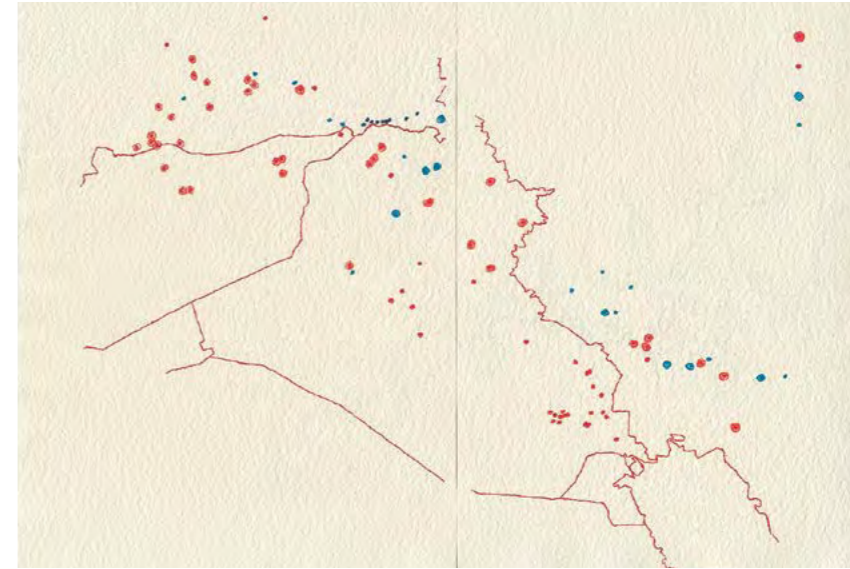
Since the 1920s, systematic settlement policies have aimed to eradicate the historical existence of the Kurdish population and to suppress their cultural memory. These settlement policies aimed also to diminish the Kurdish population to the east of the Euphrates River. Some Kurds were exiled west of the Euphrates while Turks were placed east of the Euphrates to increase the population of Turks in the east. The plan suggested settling five hundred thousand people from west to east in a ten-year period.²



The GAP area covers the cities that are located in the basins of the Euphrates and Tigris in Upper Mesopotamia. With this project, it is believed that there will be an additional twenty-two new dams and nineteen power plants.

The ramifications of the GAP go beyond Turkey's border as the Tigris and Euphrates flow south, through Syria and Iraq, and damming them would ultimately deny those countries access to the water. The tensions and disputes over this control of the water flow hindered the GAP; over time, the project ground to a halt. However, the struggle with the PKK became imperative to the Turkish state's interests and superseded the need to resolve the GAP dispute with neighboring countries. The government proceeded to

² The politics of assimilation are referenced in Akinci & Tan's article (p. 143): "In 1924 with the establishment of the Sark Islahat Planı or Orient Reform Plan, assimilation or Turkification of Kurds found legal grounding. The assimilation policies were applied via three main tools: settlement, education, and policies to culturally 'Turkify' the region." See note 1 for full reference.

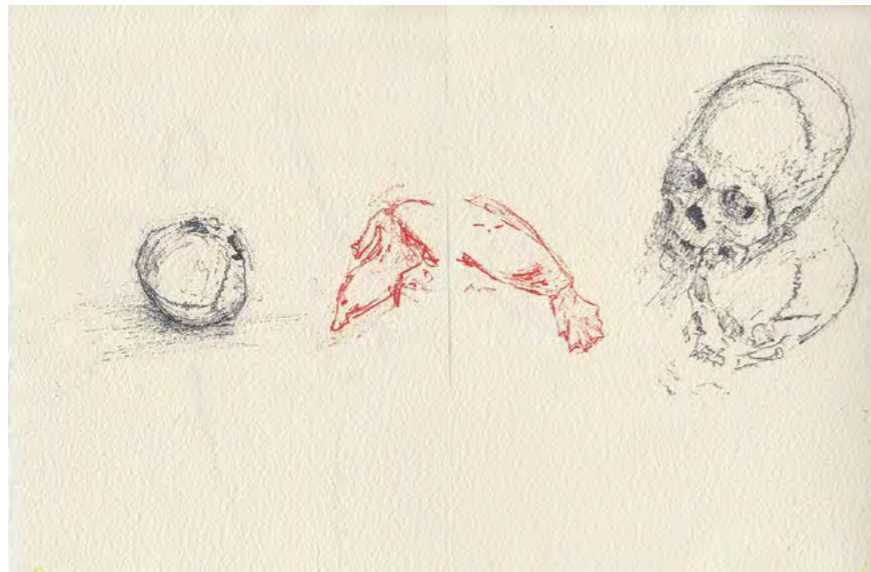


introduce the “Security Dams Project” within Kurdish inhabited territories as a strategy of war. In response, the PKK continually threatened to attack the dams, which resulted in every project also requiring a military base and watchtower. They are now known as military dams and have become a part of the battlefield. In 2012, project construction was suspended due to armed clashes.

What concerns me, in particular, is how the political interventions redefine—and sometimes even destroy—both the ecology and society in the region. Almost no area in Turkey, Iraq, or Syria goes unaffected. Animals, birds, and a variety of plants are disappearing as a consequence. Historical sites are damaged and destroyed, and historical knowledge is vanishing as a result. The flooding of the antique city of Belkis in Gaziantep, and the imminent destruction of Hasankeyf (a 12,000 year-old historical site in the Tigris basin), are especially heart-breaking examples. Many ancient villages are already lost under water after becoming submerged by the dams.

In 2008, on the southern bank of the Tigris River, a significant archeological excavation of a village took place in the district of Diyarbakır. The mysterious burial site revealed two human remains: a woman aged forty-five to fifty-five, and a child aged six to seven, both buried in a tomb. The skeletons are believed to date back more than 2,500 years. Apart from the human remains, the grave also contained twenty-one turtles; seventeen of these were Mesopotamian soft-shelled turtles. Also known as Euphrates soft-shelled Turtle, they are an endemic species that live alongside the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and through the Persian Gulf. The research suggested that those turtles—which surrounded the human remains—were butchered and then sacrificed in order to keep away evil forces and carry

the souls of these two lifeless bodies to another world.³ Although the site is believed to be a multi-period mound site, the excavations were undertaken to study the archaeological materials that will soon be underwater because of the imminent dam project.



The Mesopotamian soft-shelled Turtle is an endangered species because of the dam projects in the region. Today, the turtles can still be found on the Tigris River, however, there is a real risk that as a species they will be irreversibly lost, due to the devastating effects of the dams on their natural habitats. Significantly, the possibility of this loss is mirrored by a loss of knowledge. Along with various animals and plants, mythological and anthropological histories will inevitably be submerged.

³ Rémi, Berthon, Yilmaz Erdal, Mashkour S, Mashkour, and Gülriz Kozbe, "Buried with Turtles: The Symbolic Role of the Euphrates soft-shelled Turtle (*Rafetus euphraticus*) in Mesopotamia," *Antiquity* 90, no. 349 (2016): 111–25; doi: 10.15184/aqy.2015.196.



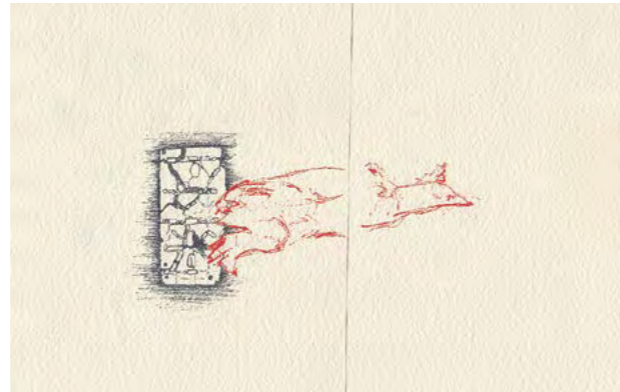
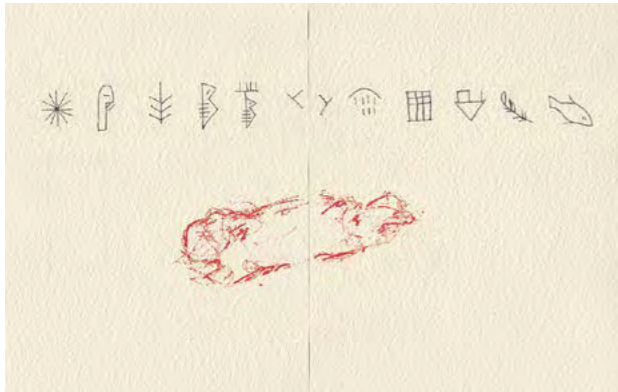
Witnessing the affiliation between a biological entity and a mythological figure prompts us to re-think the relationality of different phenomena within this geography, that is, to look into the symbiotic relationships between seemingly disparate entities: the interdependence of a river and a bee, or, the connection between a mountain and a human vocal cord. My project focused on the entanglement of various entities in a habitat that is in the process of breaking down as a result of long-term armed conflict.

The geographical destruction is a reflection of cultural and historical damage. The physical scars on the landscape are also etched within the collective psyche of the society. The uprooted, displaced earth is a symbol of Kurds' political struggle, as well as of migration and dislocation. There is also the issue of those who remain within this broken landscape—in fact, they are the majority: those who live through and bear constant witness to a permanently changed environment.

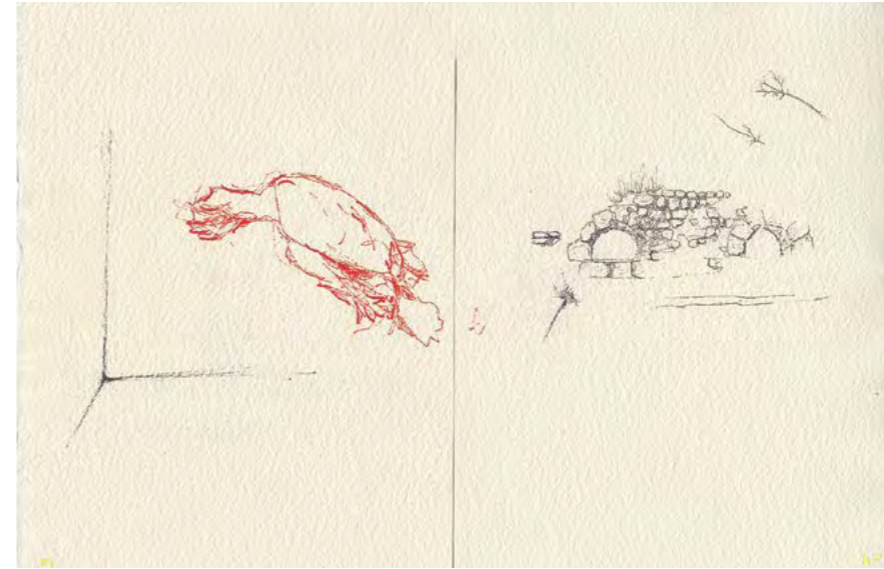


Rojda Tuğrul, Buried with Turtle; Buried with Turtle (both on left page) & Turtle and Hyena; Turtle and Boncuklu Tarla (Beaded Field), (both on right page; all from 2019)

In my study, I experiment with the integration of media. My handbook of drawings aims to capture different relationalities and temporalities of space. While the reader visually observes these different relationalities, the infant Mesopotamian soft-shelled turtle—placed at the center of the disrupted pages—moves for ten seconds, upside-down, in a moment of a water turbulence. The still images of this animation cover hundreds of pages; they follow the desire to dilate timeframes while conceptualizing an endangered species' lifetime. The book envisions both submerged and emerged elements in relation to the dam projects of upper Mesopotamia. A very fine visual dissecting process of the soft-shelled turtle captures the political and social entanglement of this particular land, which is agonized from the effects of an ongoing war.

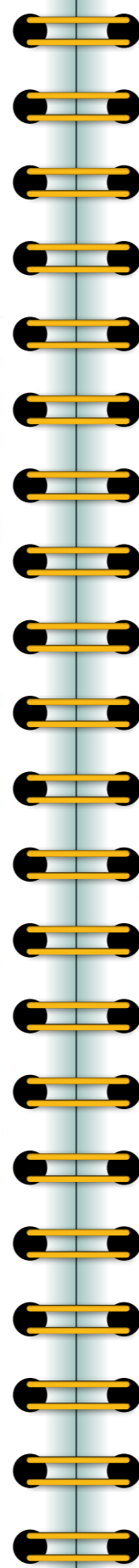
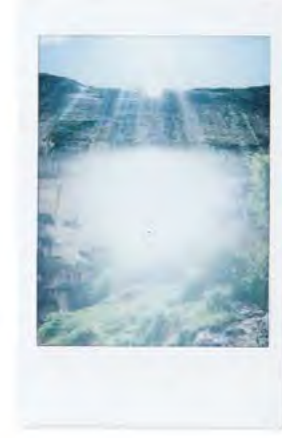


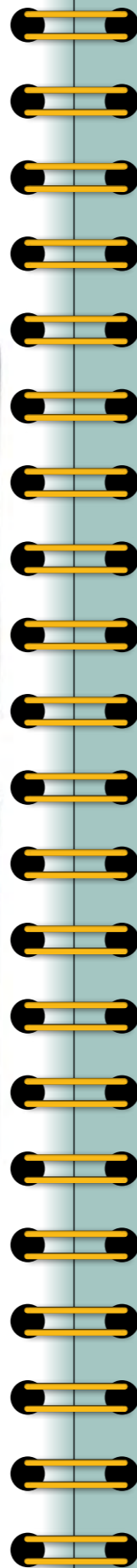
↑ Rojda Tuğrul, Turtle and Boat; Turtle and Hieroglif; Turtle and Boncuklu Tarla (Beaded Field); and, Turtle and Crane, all from 2019



In addition, instant photography provides another conceptual visualization process in this study. In May 2019, the district of Hasankeyf was forcibly evacuated due to the Ilisu dam project. Just a few weeks before its evacuation, I photographed the site (approximately 200 meters in diameter) by walking around and taking pictures with an instant camera. During this walking process, I captured some of the ancient canyons, the numerous caves, the remains of the historical bridge, a street dog, and endemic plants. The photographs emphasize the variation of the place and the flow of the Tigris just before the river was *monsterized*. The intention behind this visualization was not only to document the place before the catastrophe, but also to experience the appearing process of things, contrary to the submerging process of places. It is an attempt to attend to the tension between absence and presence, appearing and disappearing.

↑ Rojda Tuğrul, Turtle and Ruin; Turtle and Woman Fighter, both from 2019





Ordinary identities emerge and are rightly cherished, but they remain always a relational web opening to non-Euclidean pasts, presents, and futures. The ordinary is a multipartner mud dance issuing from and in entangled species. It is turtles all the way down; the partners do not preexist their constitutive intra-action at every folded layer of time and space.

— Donna J. Haraway, *When Species Meet*



Tool

RE - ANIMATING

In a war zone, systematic interventions on bodies cause dramatic transformations and devastation. The density of those interventions might not allow one to understand exactly or immediately what happens, as many significant events are occurring simultaneously. The violence on and through the land in the Kurdish territories illustrates the massive complexity of war. This makes it evident that the conflict itself has much larger and far-reaching effects on seemingly disparate bodies within a defined realm. After a terrestrial intervention, such as the construction of dams, species may become extinct, which in turn may be incompatible with certain oral histories and, in specific instances, lead to a loss of mythological culture. Understanding these relationalities requires a pluriversal perspective in order to comprehend the bigger picture.

Re-animating is an intervention in space and time, aiming at revealing processes in the context of a landscape's disruption. Through the action of layering, or enclosing, re-animating is an approach that analyzes the situation of "things" within the context of war. This approach leads to stabilize the place and travel in time; or on the contrary, stabilize time and travel in place. The method of re-animating proposes tracing spatial and temporal entanglements among phenomena and forces. By doing so, re-animating also highlights the plight or situation of the "things" within the moment of a catastrophe, picturing changes on their bodies and environments.

Re-animating is not a process of documenting time or place; it is a drastic approach that extends time and varies place itself. It extends time, creates a halt, and lends a pause and an opportunity for an experience of altered perception. This alteration is crucial for human beings as we are rarely patient enough to perceive what our eyes can see; even when we are, sometimes things are beyond our capacity for sense.

Re-animating is also a practice of dissection. It generates images of things to heighten the human understanding of place and time. This conceptualization is an act that can shift a body from an assigned place or changes the place's destination. In this case a turtle is not only an icon of biological entity that exists in a river, but also a mythological figure that symbolizes eternity and memory. Through visual representations, re-animating generates new scenes and sequences and suggests ways of thinking time and space otherwise.

Re-animating is a journey between the past and the present, which can allow one to trace the relationalities and temporalities of things by traveling back and forth. As a concrete example, ruins which embody the exposure of time can be layered in terms of a transformation. This process of tracking transformations exposes the non-linearity and complexity of time and place.

Drawings, photos, texts, as well as oral histories, videos and audio recordings—and any archival materials—can contribute to the re-animating process.

 Tool

In the context of war, re-animating is an unfolding process that works against constructed and manipulated situations or images. Because of the different kinds of restrictions imposed in a war zone, any visual representation comes with its own power dynamic, whether a random drawing, or a pixelated photo, or low-quality video shot.(1) The action of re-animating—in this case, it is the artist who is tasked with the representation—produces a space to battle with these operative images and manipulated pictures. Therefore, re-animating draws attention to social and political consequences of war in a given place, at a particular time.

Re-animating tools are formed by the activities of “Re-Animating Place” and “Re-Animating Time”. Re-animating place and re-animating time aim to generate a process of re-connecting individuals to their land. Therefore, activities are imagined to be experienced both individually and within a group. The participants are expected to be related directly or indirectly to this particular land. The tool speaks to dispossessed people, people with experience of dispossession, and people carrying the memories of dispossessed ancestors.

(1) Hito Steyerl, “In Defense of the Poor Image,” *e-flux journal* 10 (2009); online at: e-flux.com/journal/10/61362/in-defense-of-the-poor-image.

“History” is both a human storytelling practice and that set of remainders from the past that we turn into stories. Conventionally, historians look only at human remainders, such as archives and diaries, but there is no reason not to spread our attention to the tracks and traces of nonhumans, as these contribute to our common landscapes. Such tracks and traces speak to cross-species entanglements in contingency and conjuncture, the components of “historical” time. To participate in such entanglement, one does not have to make history in just one way. Whether or not other organisms “tell stories,” they contribute to the overlapping tracks and traces that we grasp as history. History, then, is the record of many trajectories of world making, human and not human.

— Anna Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World*

Activity

RE - ANIMATING PLACE

This activity requires that the participants discuss a site that represents an example of a catastrophe: a river, a valley, a street, a village, or a mountain, etc. The participants will need different materials for the visualization process of things (pens, pencils, notebooks, fabric, cameras, tablets, recorders, etc.). The consideration of seasons and outdoor conditions will be important, and participants may need suitable clothing depending on when they begin their work. The participants can look into the additional references listed below (see p. 95) before they undertake the activity.

ARRIVING

- Move to the site (if possible, by walking or riding a bike).
- Take some time to observe the landscape.
- Focus on your feelings and then find a starting point for your walk.

WALKING

- Start walking with the aim of developing some connection with the land.
- Open yourself to the possible signals you might notice from this site. Consider what the land might tell you, and how you could receive it.
- Pay attention to the ruins and remains at the site. A feather, an abandoned house, a piece of bone, a cemetery, a ruin, a snake skin, or a sheep skull, etc. Watch for these remains.
- Do not hesitate to imagine things outside of your field of vision (this is a journey from presence to absence).

Activity

DRAWING & PHOTOGRAPHING

This session does not require any talent or any particular aesthetic approach. The aim is to generate time to rethink different relations of a phenomenon within its habitat. If you face any obstacles when drawing the subject, consider photographing it.

- Give yourself time to observe the things you encounter in the site while you walk.
- Start to draw these things (you can also write about the things you observe during this drawing session).
- Draw at least one absent subject which you consider related to the present one (if you feel troubled by drawing of absent subjects, use images or verbal expressions instead).
- Consider your walking path and its relation with these things you encountered.
- Acknowledge your walk and the change of entities in relation to the space.

LISTENING & IMITATING

- Listen to the environment and analyze the sounds you hear.
- Imitate the sounds that make you feel inspired within this land. If you feel encouraged enough, try to speak with one of the entities.
- Record the sounds if you can.

RETURNING

- Get back to your starting point after your walking, drawing & photographing, and listening & imitating activities.
- Bring together the images, sound recordings, and words you captured.
- Read the entanglements and stories among these things.
- Share your inspirations, disappointments, and excitements with the group.

Activity

RE-ANIMATING TIME

This activity attempts to generate an ontological relation with the previous activity (“Re-Animating Place”). The primary aim is to understand, empathize, or experience the time of others. Participants are asked to pick one of the non-human entities from the exercise “Re-Animating Place” and focus on it. It is something that reminds us of the past and the passage of time. For this, participants are expected to provide a medium for themselves to represent this entity’s journey in time, drawing, moving image, printed image, etc. Prepare your tools!

PAST

- Discuss the lifecycle of the thing. How does it come into the world? Trace the change of this thing, its transformation during its lifespan. Consider its death. What kind of death process happens to its life (natural/external reasons)?
- Trace its evolutionary paths in ecology to create contours of its lifespan. Imagine and discuss the transformative process of this thing, especially in the last couple of decades.
- Search for its mythological representations and other cultural metaphors.

PRESENT

- Find out this thing’s place in its environment today.
- What role does it carry in its setting and what kinds of species are related to it or endangered by it?
- Is there any mythological symbol or metaphor addressing the thing in your language today?

FUTURE

- Write a paragraph and identify how you envision the life of this thing in the future. What might happen to it in the future?
- Consider your affinity to the medium and explain how you would like to visualize/represent this process of time (orally, with text, drawing, photography, animation, or video, etc.).
- Imagine/discuss the transformative process of this thing in the last couple of decades.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- Barad, Karen. “Nature’s Queer Performativity.” *Kvinder, Køn & Forskning*, no. 1–2 (2012): 25–53. Doi: 10.7146/kkf.v0i1-2.28067.
- Haraway, Donna J. *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.
- Tsing, Anna. *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015.

ARTWORKS

- Forensic Architecture. 2019. *The Killing of Tahir Elçi*. HD video, 26’18”. Online at: forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-killing-of-tahir-elci.
- Idris Khan, artist. 2012. *Houses of Parliament, London*. Gelatin silver print.
- Rabih Mroué, artist. 2012. *Double Shooting*. Installation, 72 video frames.

CREDITS

Mesopotamian Turtle, by Rojda Tuğrul. Animation/drawings ink on paper (234 sheets), 148 × 210 mm, 2019.

Knowing Tomorrow, by Rojda Tuğrul. Instant still images (40 pieces), 85.6 × 53.98 mm, 2019. Made in Hasankeyf, Turkey.

Both work cycles were produced with the support of FWF PEEK: “DisPossession: Post-Participatory Aesthetics and the Pedagogies of Land.” All images in this chapter: reproduced courtesy of Rojda Tuğrul, the artist.

DESPINA



İpek Hamzaoğlu

Sinop, Turkey

In my dreams she was young
 With the same black eyes unsung
 She held my hand to run
 To the hill where we waited for the sun

It's been a very long time since I last saw her. Since the first days of the chaos, she hasn't appeared much in my dreams, only as a figure that would watch me and what happens around me. But yesterday she came to my dreams again. She told me to go to the prison. She said that many years ago a man who was imprisoned there had written a story about her, fictionalized her, made her immortal. It was through this immortality that she could communicate with me. She was a tall, beautiful woman with long brown-ginger hair. She told me we shared the same name, Despina. She held my hand, brought me to the prison, showed me the rooms that were once used for torture. This is where we were supposed to hide ... at least for a while.



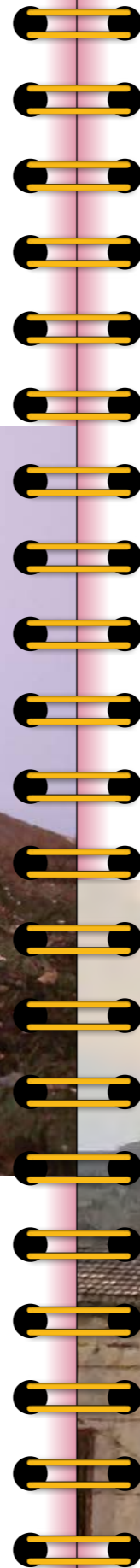
Sinop is the northernmost city of Turkey, in the middle of the Black Sea coast. Sixty thousand people inhabit the city center. The number increases by five times in the summer when people return from other cities to visit their families. It is supposedly Turkey's happiest city, at least according to the National Statistical Institute, in the years of 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2020. The city is, of course, advertised as such a happy place, although the people of Sinop told me that no one had ever heard of the poll. It has a beautiful landscape—all green and blue—that is threatened by a severe trash problem. One of its main economies continues to be fishing.

↑ Video still, *Despina*, by İpek Hamzaoğlu, 2021

→ Sinop Fortress Prison Museum; photo by İpek Hamzaoğlu, 2019

The government has wanted to build a nuclear power plant since at least the 1950s. In 2013, a deal was signed between the Turkish and Japanese governments for its construction. However, Sinop is a city with an acute awareness of ecology and land, where women and men of all ages have resisted both private and state-led hydroelectric, thermal, and nuclear power plant projects. It is an ancient city with many myths and legends that cross its history; people are proud of these traditions, which they share joyously. At the same time, it is a city with a violent history toward the Greeks and the Armenians, where their stories are often forced into silence and forgotten.

Various stories are laced with mythological accounts regarding the namesake of the city. One of the most widespread legends suggests that the city was founded by the Amazons and named after a warrior queen called Sinope. According to Greek mythology, Asopos, the Goddess of Rivers, has a daughter who is a water fairy—Sinope. To protect the city, the Greeks built a fortress in the seventh century BCE; many different civilizations, including the Persians, Kingdom of Pontus, Romans, Byzantines, Seljuks, and Beylik of Candar, subsequently colonized Sinop and used its harbor as a military base, extending and repairing the fortress. It was during the Ottoman regime, in 1887, that some parts of the fortress were converted into a prison for exiled writers, thinkers, and politicians—their so-called “thought crimes” meant they



had to be taken away and segregated from larger cities, such as Istanbul and Ankara.

Over the past ten years, my relationship to Sinop has changed: from visiting my grandma and extended family to regularly visiting the site-specific art biennial Sinopale as an art worker, and then as an artist/researcher for this project. One of the exhibition spaces in the biennial's early years was the juvenile section of the Sinop prison that was added in 1939; it then served as a prison museum after 1999. The first thing that people in Turkey would associate this city with is its notorious prison, where the living conditions were said to be so horrible that even lighting a match was difficult because of the dampness. The notoriety of the prison's rough conditions has not only circulated through the numerous stories told about it, but it also spread widely and swiftly through the work of Sabahattin Ali—a famous poet and writer who was exiled from Istanbul and imprisoned there in 1933 for his political views—after his imprisonment, the prison appeared in his well-known poem “Maphushane Türküsü” [Prison Ballad]. In the 1970s, this poem was also adapted into a song; entitled “Aldırma Gönül” [Heart, Nevermind], this song (composed by Kerem Güney) became the backdrop to a decade of intensifying conflicts among political groups and which eventually resulted in a coup d'état in 1980. Since its original release, the song has been performed by different artists, many of whom have been subjected to various political charges for their adaptations.



In the summer of 2017, I was invited to Sinop as an artist to produce a work for the biennial. While I was trying to film small scenes of melodrama in the style of soap operas, I became obsessed with the recent news of the trees being axed down for the construction of the nuclear power plant. I would read all the news available, but there was not much



information apart from the deal that was signed a few years before, which would be carried out by a private joint venture consortium of Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, France's Avera, and the village where the construction was supposed to take place. Historically, the Turkish government had expressed the urge to build a nuclear power plant since the 1950s. The notion of nuclear technology, both as an energy and a military defense source, became more widespread and strangely familiar in Turkey in the context of the rising political tension between the US and the USSR. Sinop, due to Turkey's status as a NATO member, served as an American base during the Cold War, hosting the American army. At the top of the Sinop peninsula, positioned beside the two large radar systems on the hill that would become a symbol of the city (but which have more recently been taken down), the American army would spy across the Black Sea into the USSR. During my stay that summer, I asked around to get more information. Everyone had heard that the power plant was going to be built in the Abali village, but no clear information was provided by the state. So I asked a dear auntie of mine to drive me around to locate the exact spot. Following the crumbles of disconnected information, we checked the aerial satellite maps to search for the deforestation of more than 650,000 trees, which was supposed to be the land that the plant was going to be erected on, to speculate on the location of the site. We then drove out of the city center away from the peninsula. We got lost on the roads that had been newly opened, cutting through a forest that had been taken down by big machines. We drove in and around the trees until we arrived at a barren and deserted spot. It was as if a natural

Haunting raises specters, and it alters the experience of being in linear time, alters the way we normally separate and sequence the past, the present and the future. These specters or ghosts appear when the trouble they represent and symptomize is no longer being contained or repressed or blocked from view.

— Avery F. Gordon, “Some Thoughts on Haunting and Futurity”

catastrophe had just happened there: no trees, no habitat left, just a huge crack on the land that harbored nothing but an eerie feeling.

On the coast of the Black Sea, more than 400 different power plants (hydroelectric power plants, thermal power plants, and one nuclear power plant) are planned and currently being built. The number of hydroelectric power plants built in the last ten years alone is 203, with 143 more to come. But there has also been resistance. In Gerze, a small town near Sinop, the resistance against the parties involved in the planning and construction of a thermal power plant started in 2009 and was one of the successful struggles that ended with the halt of the construction in 2016. Not only did the people manage to protect their land and water against the dispossessive forces of corporate and state structures, but they also served as a powerful model for the Gezi protests in 2013 and other struggles in the region and the country.



My project *Despina* arose from the complex relationship of the local community with the prison, its social impact as a historical landmark (despite the brutality it represents), as well as the environmentally conscious reaction to the power plant development that remains vastly ambiguous. It is a film that speculates over what will be left after the destruction of the environment as a result of human action—just what environmentalists predict will happen as a result of the nuclear power

We're haunted by the historic alternatives that could have been and by the peculiar temporality of the shadowing of lost and better futures that insinuates itself in the something to be done, sometimes as nostalgia, sometimes as regret, sometimes as a kind of urgency. When the something to be done becomes urgent, it feels as if it has already been needed or wanted before, perhaps forever, certainly for a long time. When the something to be done becomes urgent, we feel as if we can't wait any longer for things to change, the fierce now, but of course one does wait, sometimes patiently, sometimes not.

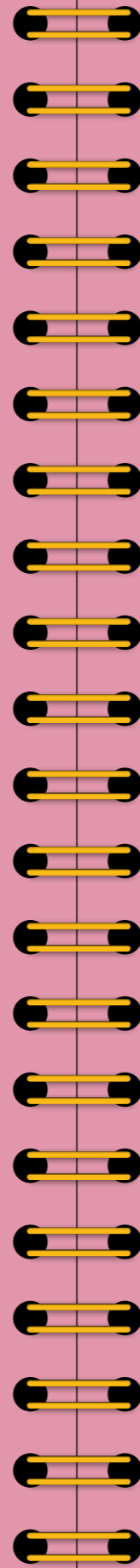
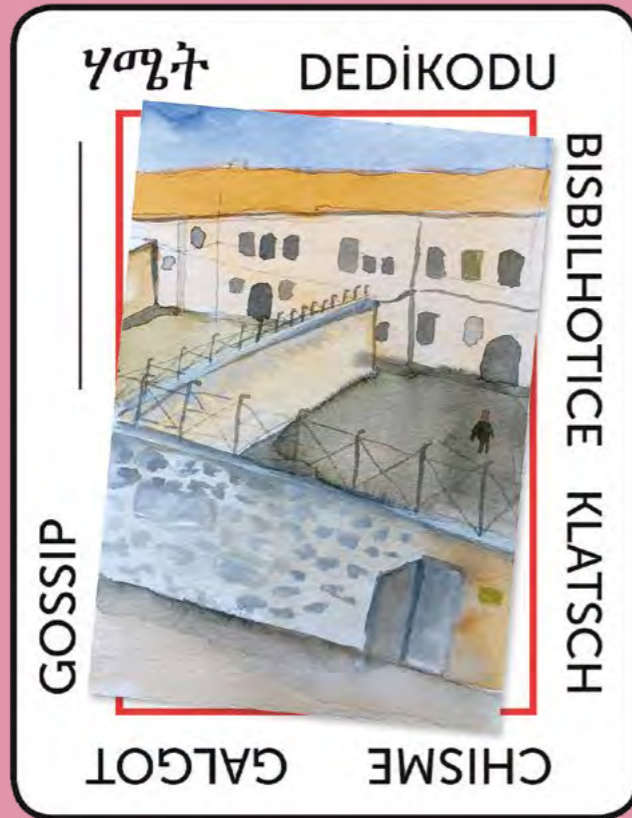
— Avery F. Gordon, *The Hawthorn Archive*

There is no question that when a ghost haunts, that haunting is real. The ghost has an agency desire, motivation, or standpoint. And so its desires must be broached and we have to talk to it.

— Avery F. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters*



plant in Sinop. Employing post-apocalyptic elements, the protagonist of the film is a young girl named Despina who fights the zombie apocalypse that comes to life when the somatic wounds of a violated landscape—the loss of biodiversity, air and water pollution, genetic and soil contamination, waste overflow, deforestation, loss of vegetation, loss of traditional knowledge practices and cultures, and land dispossession—are infused in the society's collective subconscious. The girl finds guidance in memory-dreams that are communicated to her by various figures and characters carrying knowledge across different struggles, from Gerze to Gezi, providing orientation for herself and her community not only in the remains of a damaged land, its ruins, and ghosts, but also in the memory and melancholy embedded in the society and, therefore, in the present. We follow the protagonist's journey as she tries to find and understand the pieces of what has happened to the landscape and people, and to make sense of the present by following the crumbs of information from the past.



An image is a bridge between evoked emotion and conscious knowledge; words are the cables that hold up the bridge. Images are more direct, more immediate than words, and closer to the unconscious. Picture language precedes thinking in words; the metaphorical mind precedes analytical consciousness.

— Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands / La Frontera*

Tool

ASSOCIATION CARDS FOR LIVING IN RUINS

The “Association Cards for Living in Ruins” are tools to initiate storytelling. Composed of a set of cards with images and a set of cards with words, they invite those who hold them in their hands to create different narratives, descriptions, and stories. The research group selected words and painted images connected to the landscapes, ghosts, extractivist projects, ancestral worlds, animals, persons, institutions, and objects associated with this place-based research. The set of words are translated to the languages of the members of the group: Amharic, German, Kurdish, Portuguese, Spanish, Turkish, and English. The empty space on the cards remains to be filled by the user’s own language.

Words and images are polysemic: there is no fixed meaning attached to them. Images can spark a multiplicity of narrative associations. In combination

with a word, an image can create a third meaning or emotion that would not be held by the image and the word on their own. The “Association Cards for Living in Ruins” provide an invitation to open up unexpected storylines; they are to be held in hands, to be passed on, to be handed from one person to the next in order to entangle responses. They are inspired by the *OH Cards*, which were created by Canadian artist Ely Raman; the *OH Cards* that he designed contained eighty-eight image cards, supplemented by eighty-eight word cards. However, there are no fixed rules on how to play; their usage implicates the imagination and expression of the users. The cards do not lend themselves to games that are hierarchical or competitive: there are no winners or losers, but instead a group of people relating in the act of telling and listening to stories.



Activity

SPARKING STORIES

This activity set is proposed as a series of exercises to take place in a collective engagement or in the context of a workshop. Prior to these activities, a group of people who are affected by dispossession and want to come together first needs to be formed. For these activities, you also need a set of the “Association Cards for Living in Ruins,” as well as “Character Cards” and “Condition Cards”. (Please find the cards in the back of this book and prepare them by cutting them out.) The aim of these activities is to encourage players to interpret their own meaning, and speculate, stimulate, and anticipate different explorations of the juxtaposed images and words. They are designed to expand the users’ capacities to listen to and respond in sites of dispossession through fictionalizing variously desired worlds.

ASSOCIATING IMAGES

This activity is meant to bring the relationality of the body and the image and word cards to the sites of dispossession through free association. It is meant to last for approximately twenty minutes and to be played together in a group of two to ten people.

- Pair up with someone in the group. Each person takes one image card and one word card.
- Take a walk around your site of dispossession and think about the violence related to this place for several minutes. If the associated site is somewhere else, try to imagine it. Be attentive to what you hear and smell, not just what you see.
- Walk around the site, bearing in mind the restrictions of the place, and talk about your own cards to each person for several minutes.
- To continue, bring your cards, stories, and associations back to the group; combine and relate them to spark new narratives.



I had my recurring dream last night. I guess I should have expected it. It comes to me when I struggle—when I twist on my own personal hook and try to pretend that nothing unusual is happening. It comes to me when I try to be my father’s daughter. Today is our birthday—my fifteenth and my father’s fifty-fifth. Tomorrow, I’ll try to please him—him and the community and God. So last night, I dreamed a reminder that it’s all a lie. I think I need to write about the dream because this particular lie bothers me so much.

— Octavia E. Butler, *Parable of the Sower*

Activity

BRINGING TOGETHER INDIVIDUAL DREAMS

The activity aims to bring together the transformative potential of the collective dreaming of dystopian and utopian pasts and futures. It is meant to be played together in a group of two to ten people.

- Locate yourself with regards to the site of dispossession.
- Think about one fear that you have about this place.
- Draw one image card and one word card with this fear in mind.
- Read the opening passage from Octavia Butler’s *The Parable of the Sower*.⁽¹⁾
- Imagine the dream of the heroine from Butler’s story in relation to that fear and your card.
- Form a circle, and share your thoughts and associations in the form of a dream with the rest of the group.

(1) Octavia Butler, *Parable of the Sower* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2000.)

Activity

FREEWRTING

This activity doesn't require specific writing skills, but instead invites participants to engage in a free-flow writing exercise that opens communication between the conscious, the unconscious, and the intuitive mind. It is important to write with a pen and paper; however, if you prefer using a computer or keyboard, feel free to do so. Do not concern yourself with grammar, but try to complete your sentences.

It is important not to stop but keep on writing, to keep the pen in motion. The aim of this activity is to bring the freewriting exercise together with the "Association Cards" in order to imagine the futurities of different worlds coming together and to formulate social utopias.

- Locate yourself with respect to a particular site of dispossession.
- Think about a specific hope that you have for this site.
- Keeping that in mind, draw one image card and one word card.
- Read the opening passage from *The Fifth Season* by N.K. Jemisin.(2)
- Set a timer for fifteen minutes, then start free-writing while imagining a memory from the old world of *The Fifth Season*.
- Share what each participant wrote with the group by reading each text out loud.

(2) N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season: Every Age Must Come to an End* (London: Orbit, 2015).

This is what you must remember: the ending of one story is the beginning of another. This has happened before, after all. People die. Old orders pass. New societies are born. When we say "the world has ended," it's usually a lie, because the planet is just fine.

But this is the way the world ends.

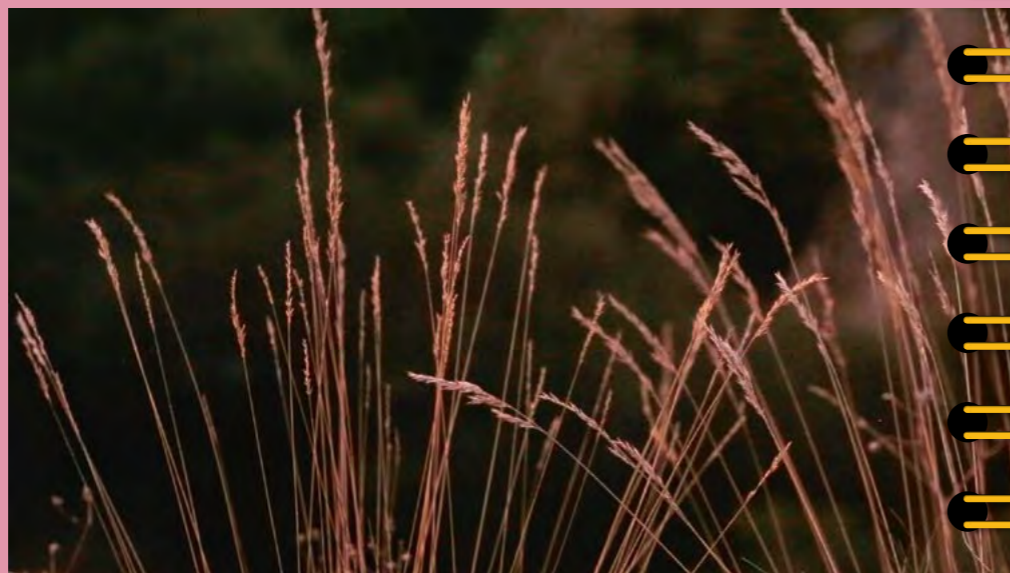
This is the way the world ends.

This is the way the world ends.

For the last time.

— N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*





Activity

IMAGINING OTHER WORLDS

The “Condition Cards” and “Character Cards” are designed for the participants to prompt the imagination of other worlds of utopian and dystopian scenarios, with different living and non-living characters.⁽³⁾ The intention of this activity is to think of sci-fi scenarios in the dialectic of dystopia and utopia in order to explore and practice our potential for creating counter-narratives of collective life and survival. It is meant to create stories different than those of dominant culture that focus exclusively on damage inflicted on human bodies or psyches, or on variously disturbed ecologies and landscapes.

- Think about a survival or resistance story that is related to the site of dispossession. It can be a story that has happened to you, that you have heard of, or that has been passed on to you through the generations.
- Pick one Condition and one Character Card.
- Set a timer to fifteen minutes and then, keeping your story in mind, begin freewriting by describing one day of the character according to the Condition Card you have picked.
- Review your text and pick three words from your writing intuitively.
- Set the timer for five more minutes and begin writing a poem using these three words.
- Share your story and your poem with the rest of the group by reading them out loud.

(3) The “Condition” and “Character Cards” were developed by İpek Hamzaoğlu & Malu Blume for their workshop “Storytelling for the Apocalypse” at the International Sinop Biennial (Sinopale 7) as part of the FWF PEEK: “DisPossession: Post-Participatory Aesthetics and the Pedagogies of Land.”

GOSSIP

When we gossip, we often share vital information. Gossip is a form of conversation and language that bonds individuals and communities; it can disguise the parties who spread the stories while maintaining what the community believes to be the crucial part of the story. Gossip also collectively and continuously re-defines communal ethics through its exercise (i.e. the listeners can identify how a story is seen by the community through narration and participation). Gossip is thus a means to fill the gaps and sometimes even to find the missing links in places where important information is continuously held back and where authorities withhold information about important decisions that are made regarding people's lives and their land. It is also a tool to challenge the power through communal bonding and the performance of disobedience, allowing its protagonists to remain under the radar. Gossip is anonymous; it never starts with one person but is retold by many; it does not come from one place, instead its etiology is anywhere. It circulates subversively around concentrations of power, providing a weapon or a shield for the dispossessed. It is a crucial way to share information, but also to admit different forms of knowledge as they disrupt mainstream narratives.

As Silvia Federici notes, the word "gossip" was used in England in the Middle Ages to describe friendship among women before it took on the similarly gendered meaning that it has today.(4) Federici argues that the establishment of a capitalist society necessitated "a derogatory connotation, a further sign of the degree to

which the power of women and communal ties were undermined."(5) It was in the sixteenth century that the meaning of the term gossip was reversed—from the solidarity that characterizes female friendship into backbiting, often idle talk. In contemporary cultures, women and their work are devalued and ridiculed by insinuating that women who gossip simply have nothing better or more productive to do. However, gossip is also a critical vernacular and gendered network of knowledge. As Hannah Black puts it: "Networks of gossip do their best to let each other know who cannot be trusted, where you should be careful, who has been lucky and who has not."(6) Gossip is a tool that has the potential to function as counter-narrative to histories that are products of oppressive power dynamics. It has the potential to crack open mainstream histories, exploit their liabilities, and shake their foundations. It spreads like a virus; it is juicy, catchy, and infectious. It is never a dry way of sharing information, and it is almost always performative. Its seductive use of language disseminates visions of alternative possibilities as it fills the void of the establishment with the stories told and untold by the dispossessed.

- (4) Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation* (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2004), 100.
 (5) Ibid., 186.
 (6) Hannah Black, "Witch-hunt," *TANK Magazine* 8, no. 11 (2017); online at: tankmagazine.com/issue-70/features/hannah-black.

I'VE HEARD GOSSIP

Many different languages and communities have a specific style of gossip. In the Turkish language, there is a form of past-tense narrative that is mainly used for gossip, fables, riddles, rumors, and stories. It is essentially used for actions that one has not personally witnessed but heard via someone else. The intention of this activity is to demonstrate the performative element of gossip and to explore how it can be a powerful tool to spread stories in the context of dominant state media. For this activity, refer to the "Condition Cards" attached to this book and prepare them by cutting them out. This activity is meant to be a collective engagement in a group of two to ten people and is meant to last for approximately ten minutes.

Below are examples from different languages and contexts for how they could be integrated into the exercise. Please read them before following the instructions.

- *Sana bir şey söyleyeceğim ama kimseye söylemeyeceğime yemin et...* (From Turkish: Promise not to tell anyone...)
- *Oh senti questa...* (From Italian: Hear this one...)
- *Valla ben söyleyenlerin yalancısıyım.* (From Turkish: Well, I am just saying what I heard.)
- *Ça reste entre nous.* (From French: This stays between you and me.)
- *Tu me promet tu garde ça pour toi.* (From French: Promise me to keep it to yourself.)
- *J'ai un dossier de ouf sur X.* (From French: There is crazy gossip about X.)
- *Ej, słuchaj... właśnie słyszałam, że...* (From Polish: Hey listen... I just heard that...)
- *Laf aramızda.* (From Turkish: Between you and me.)
- *Benden duymuş olma.* (From Turkish: Don't quote me on it.)
- *Ходят слухи, что...* (From Russian: Rumors walk that...)
- *Te tengo un chisme...* (From Spanish: I have a gossip...)
- *Doszły mnie słuchy, że...* (From Polish: Word has reached me that...)
- *Ay bu kulaklar neler duydu, neler işitti.* (From Turkish: The things these ears caught and heard.)





Activity

- Sit in a circle with all the participants.
- Draw one “Condition Card” as a group that shapes the world of the story.
- Draw one “Character Card” as a group that would be the ruler of this world.
- Think about what kind of a world these cards open up: who would be in charge, which lives would matter more, and what work would be most valuable?
- Start a story with only a few sentences, based on the following phrase: “I heard a rumor that...”. Try to insert the voices from those you want to matter.
- Add additional sentences to the story following the logic of gossip.
- Try to use the suggested examples from different contexts and languages when adding to the story and feel free to enrich the list by adding similar expressions from your own language.



↑ Video stills, *Despina*, by İpek Hamzaoğlu, 2021

ARTWORKS & FILMS

- Adanalı, Yaşar, Ayça Aldatmaz, Burak Arıkan, Elif İnce, Esra Gürakar, Zeyno Üstün, Özlem Zıngıl, and anonymous participants, artists. Since 2013. *Networks of Dispossession* (Graph Commons).
- Al-Maria, Sophia, artist. 2018. *Wayuu Creation Myth*. Single-channel video. Online at: vimeo.com/282312230.
- Al-Maria, Sophia & Victoria Sin, artists. 2019. *BCE*. Single-channel video. See: dazeddigital.com/art-photography/gallery/26163/7/sophia-al-maria-and-victoria-sin-bce.
- Blume, Malu, artist. 2020. *The Book of S of I*. Video, 28', color, English.
- Henriksson, Minna, artist. 2017. *Solidarity*. Linocuts.
- Karakaş, Gizem, artist. 2016. *The Ground Has Ears*. Performance.
- Lahire, Sandra, director. 1987. *Uranium Hex*. 16mm film, 11', color, Magnetic, 4:3. LUX. See: lux.org.uk/work/uranium-hex.
- Marker, Chris. 1962. *La Jetée*. 35mm film, 28', French/German. Argos Film.
- Treister, Suzanne, artist. 2009–11. *HEXEN 2.0: HISTORICAL DIAGRAMS: From Diogenes of Sinope to Anarcho-Primitivism and the Unabomber via Science-Fiction*. Diagram.
- Tsai, Charwei & Tsering Tashi Gyalhang, artists. 2012. *Lanyu: Three Stories*. Three-channel video installation.
- Utikal, Sofi, artist. 2016. *Reversal Tarot*. Performance.
- Weerasethakul, Apichatpong, director. 2009. *A Letter to Uncle Boonmee*. Shortfilm, 18', Thai. Animate Projects.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987.
- Gordon, Avery F. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997.
 - *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.
 - “Some Thoughts on Haunting and Futurity.” *borderlands* 10, no. 2 (2011): 1–21. Online at: averygordon.net/files/Gordon_HauntingFuturity.pdf.
- Scott, James C. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.

CREDITS

Despina, by İpek Hamzaoğlu. HD video, 2021. Shot in Sinop, Turkey. Performers: Ezgi Eczacıbaşı and Sinem Hekim. Set assistant and additional camera: Malu Blume. Music: Alican Çamcı. Soundmix: Cemil Hamzaoğlu. Very special thanks to Erkan Aklıman, Malu Blume, T. Melih Görgün, İbrahim Hekim, Sinem Hekim, Mert Karaçıkay, Gülbahar Karaduman, Laura Nitsch, Selin Saraçoğlu, Büke Onur, and Osman Onur. Produced with the support of Sinope (International Sinop Biennial) and FWF PEEK: “DisPossession: Post-Participatory Aesthetics and the Pedagogies of Land.” All images in this chapter: reproduced courtesy of İpek Hamzaoğlu, the artist.

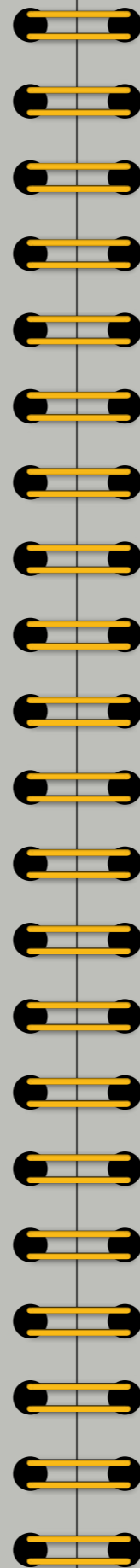
PAPERLANDS



barbed wire
 lines on paper
 amplified
 by stubborn ghosts

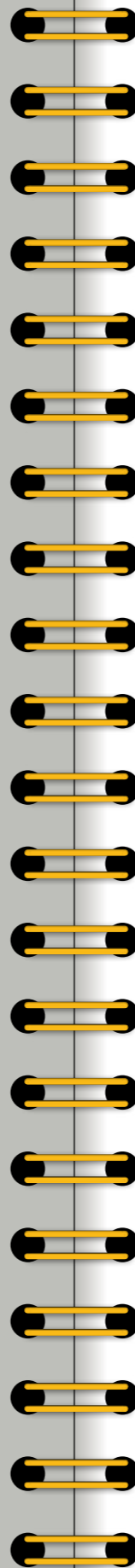
Janine Jembere

Berlin, Germany

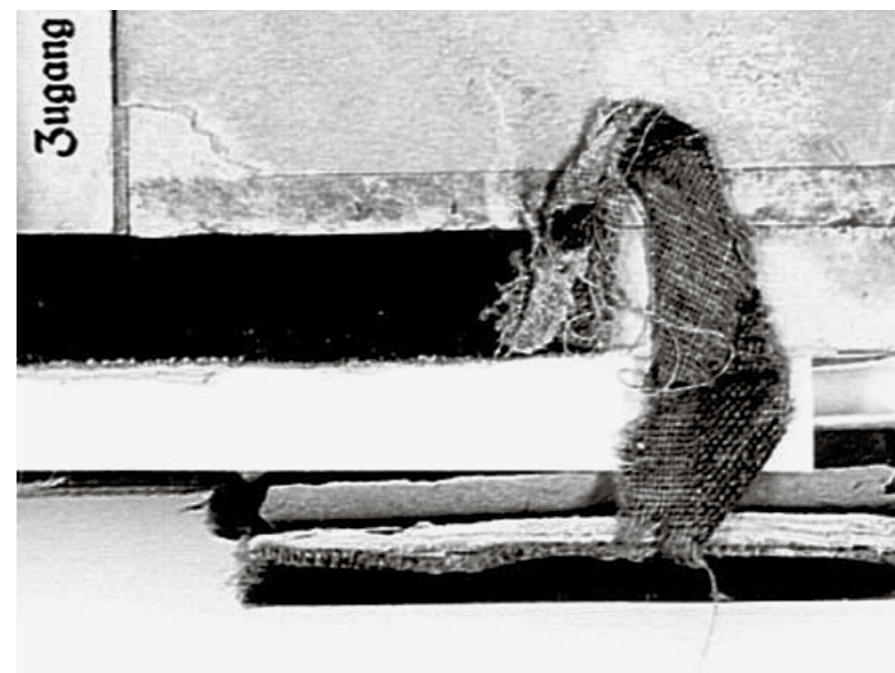
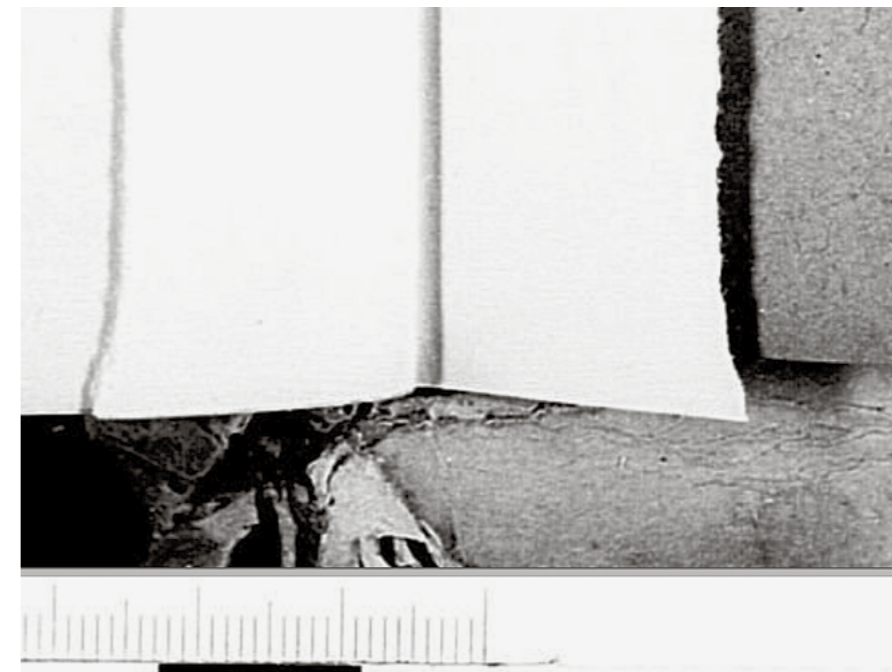


... my existence is not for your teaching
to dislocate my mother's throat six feet under
and compensate her grief with scholarships
and amended policies.
policies that have gathered dust before
they have even been drafted.
this country buries us before we are born.
calls us by our obituaries before it calls us
by our names.

— Koleka Putuma, "EVERY / THREE HOURS"

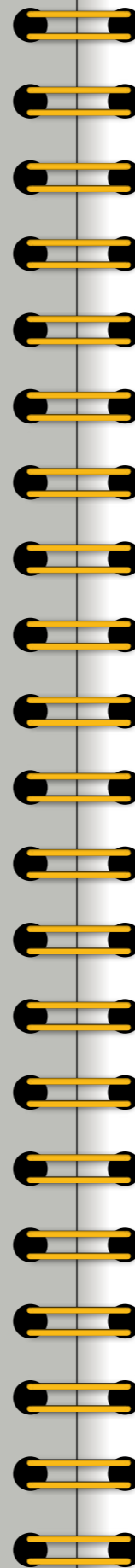


The place of my study is the German colonial archive. I am looking for the traces of objections to German colonial rule that were written by Africans between 1880 and 1914. I search for letters, petitions, newspaper articles. Like many others, I want to work against the European fiction of the colonial subject, who would just endure: voiceless, nameless, without agency or language. For many reasons, my initial study and, as a consequence, the account presented here, remain fragmentary. The text cannot—and does not want to—give up its status as a draft. It is a beginning: not an end.



Concerning the colonial world, its arrangement, its geographical layout, and the violence presiding at its constitution, Fanon mentions first the barracks and police stations. He surely does so because colonization is, above all, a labyrinth of forces at work. These forces are inscribed in the first place in a space they endeavor to map, cultivate, and order. Fanon surely begins as he does, too, because, ordeal for the colonized, the colony is primarily a place where an experience of violence and upheaval is lived, where violence is built into structures and institutions.

— Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*



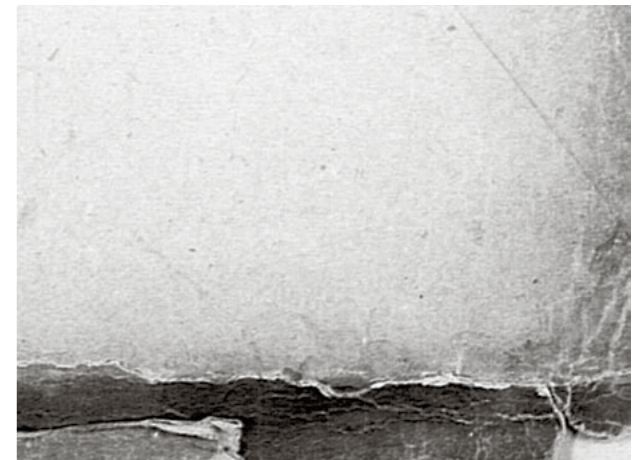
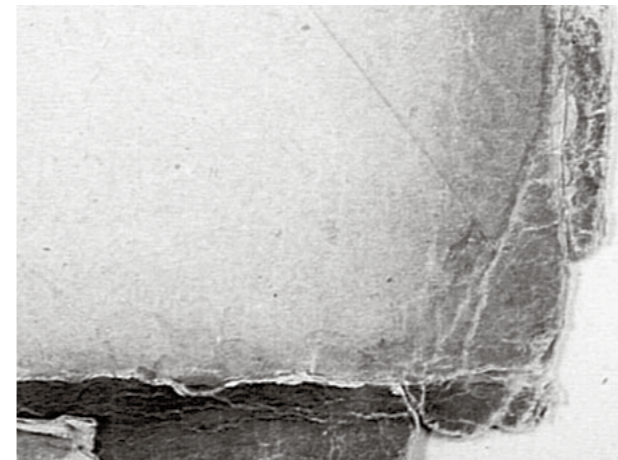
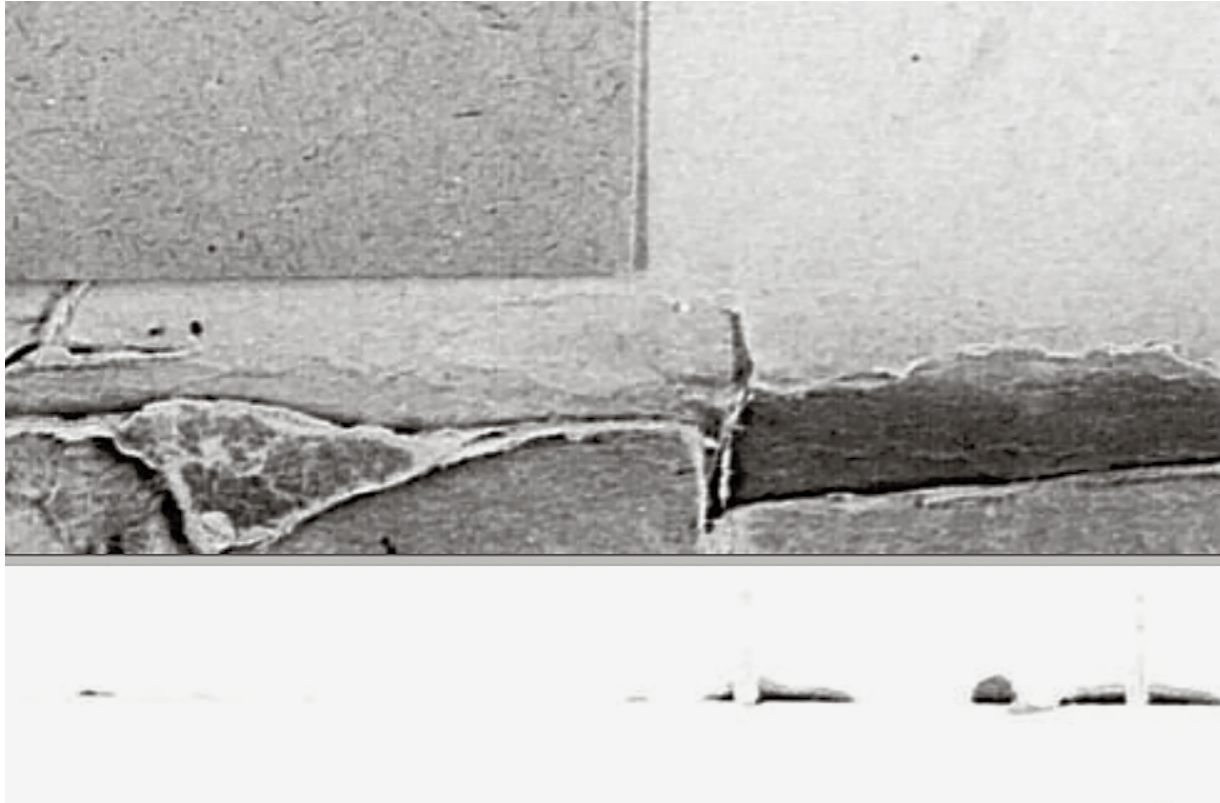
The Bundesarchiv at Berlin-Lichterfelde, a branch of the German federal archive, is the place that hosts the documents I am looking for. It is located in a former Prussian military cadet school, which after World War I was transformed into a public school and then, from 1933 on, hosted SS soldiers (a Nazi paramilitary elite), who performed executions on site.

As Achille Mbembe reminds us via his rereading of Frantz Fanon, colonial violence is built into structures and institutions.¹ With regards to the metropole of Berlin, one can add that this violence is often banalized. The buildings of the Bundesarchiv are surrounded by a big swimming pool and a lush, green lawn. The architecture and atmosphere are brutal and generic at the same time. The lawn is vast and dotted with big trees. The scene is almost serene; if it weren't for the buildings, this would be quite a calm place to come and relax. I cannot stop wondering about the choice of the place for the archive and why the buildings are still there in the first place. I have visited this place many times before but still my body refuses to get comfortable.

To work through the files, I spent a lot of time seated, deciphering and reading at a table, in my studio or in the office at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. Desks and chairs in Berlin and Vienna are where my body is mostly located. There is something jarring about this fact, as if I am not moved when I am.

The documents I work with come from and speak from different places: they were written in former German colonies on the African continent. The nation states that correspond to these places today are Cameroon, Togo, Namibia, Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda. They are places I have never visited. I try to avoid imagining these places as much as I can, because a lot of the violence I come across in the files has to do with imaginations and assumptions of an elsewhere, an entitlement to colonial fantasies, and a disregard of lived experiences. This violence comes in the guise of science, scholarship, and economic progress. As Aimé Césaire (among many others) has pointed out, these guises are ultimately pretexts for looting of all kinds. So instead, I try to focus my mind on the place where I am and that I know best: Berlin, the German capital, the location of the 1884–85 Berlin conference [also known at the time as the *Kongokonferenz* or the *Westafrika-Konferenz*], as well as many other crimes; and, also, for the longest time: my home.

¹ Achille Mbembe, *Necropolitics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019).

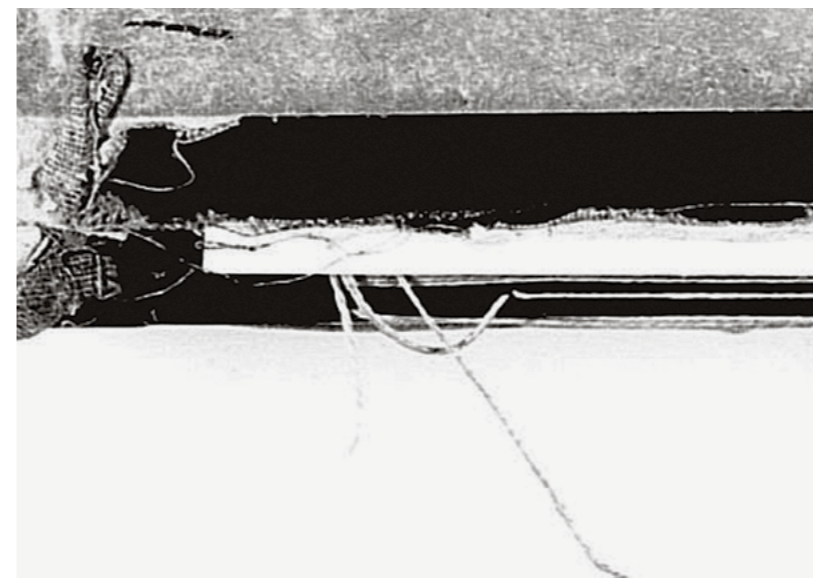
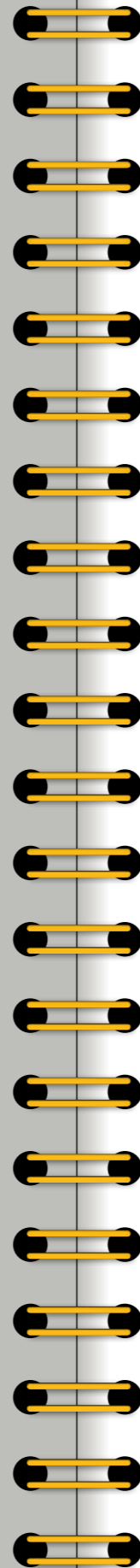


The documents I am looking for are expressions of the struggle for land and sovereignty; they bring forth objections to what Césaire called the smooth operation of business. Within the abstraction that is a file, letter, or article, land and place are very present. It seems like there are always at least two places present in the writing: first, the place that the writer is writing *from*, and second, the place where the writer is writing *with*. That is, a place on the African continent under colonial threat by Germany, and a place the letter is supposed to reach—another place, an institution, or a person, perhaps thousands of kilometers away.

I see clearly what colonization has destroyed ... and neither Deterding nor Royal Dutch nor Standard Oil will ever console me... I look around and wherever there are colonizers and colonized face to face, I see force, brutality, cruelty, sadism, conflict, and, in a parody of education, the hasty manufacture of a few thousand subordinate functionaries, "boys," artisans, office clerks, and interpreters necessary for the smooth operation of business [...].

My turn to state an equation: colonization = "thingification." I hear the storm. They talk to me about progress, about "achievements," diseases cured, improved standards of living. I am talking about societies drained of their essence, cultures trampled underfoot, institutions undermined, lands confiscated, religions smashed, magnificent artistic creations destroyed, extraordinary possibilities wiped out. They throw facts at my head, statistics, mileages of roads, canals, and railroad tracks. I am talking about thousands of men sacrificed to the Congo Ocean. I am talking about those who, as I write this, are digging the harbor of Abidjan by hand. I am talking about millions of men torn from their gods, their land, their habits, their life—from life, from the dance, from wisdom. [...] They dazzle me with the tonnage of cotton or cocoa that has been exported, the acreage that has been planted with olive trees or grapevines. I am talking about natural economies that have been disrupted, harmonious and viable economies adapted to the indigenous population—about food crops destroyed, malnutrition permanently introduced, agricultural development oriented solely toward the benefit of the metropolitan countries; about the looting of products, the looting of raw materials.

— Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*

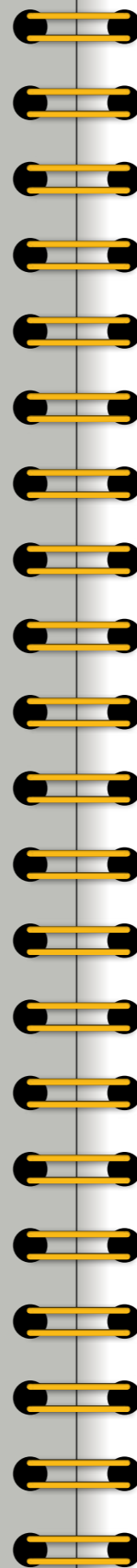


The German Secretary of State for the colonies has admitted the fact that from 1903 to 1913 105,000 natives have been killed in expeditions against them. This figure does not include numbers of natives killed by officials and merchants from the effect of the *Tropenkoller* from which all Germans suffer.²

— Gold Coast Leader, archived in BArch R 1001 (Reichskolonialamt)/4308

The new countries offer a vast field for individual, violent activities which, in the metropolitan countries, would run up against certain prejudices, against a sober and orderly conception of life, and which, in the colonies, have greater freedom to develop and, consequently, to affirm their worth. Thus to a certain extent the colonies can serve as a safety valve for modern society. Even if this were their only value, it would be immense.

— Carl Siger, quoted in Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism*



That violence can be contained is an illusion. Rather than being a safety valve for keeping life orderly and sober in the metropole, the German colonies became a testing ground for the large-scale staging of horrors and violence that had not yet come back to Europe. But, in the metropole too, not everyone is rendered killable in the same way. The abyssal line is not simply a geographic divide, but instead is foremost a conceptual one and, I would argue, one ultimately steeped in racist science and capitalist greed.³ I encounter the force of this line almost everywhere—as the distribution of violence, rights, risk, goods, labor, wealth, death, seats at the table, or in the library itself—as it continually reappears throughout this endeavor.

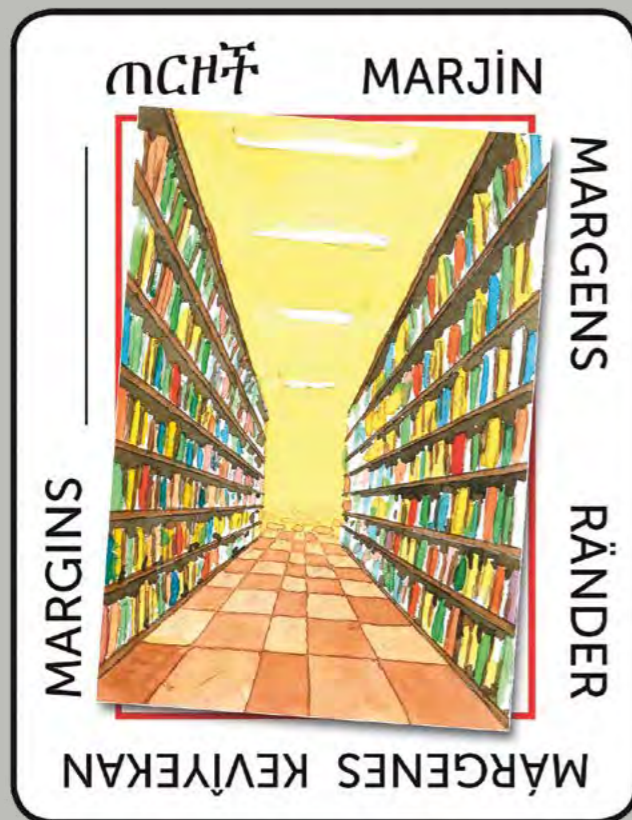
Since the documents I am working with are all over one hundred years old, I also wonder about time. Today, in 2019, I am in an archive, sitting at a desk and looking through files. When these letters were written, this place was used by Prussian soldiers; some of them were likely then sent to the colonies. Then, the paramilitary unit under Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party rehearsed their violence within and around the walls that now host me and the archive. With these thoughts, time starts to dissolve, places start shifting, and I realize again this irrefutable connection: this is not a coincidence. Violence is built into the structures and institutions; the Maji-Maji war and the Warsaw ghetto uprising were directed against the same ideas: deadly arrogance and nauseating violence made in Germany. The building is still intact, able to host the archive; and, just as the structures and institutions are still standing, the violence hasn't ended. This archive is about *today*.

The archive is a burial site as lives are buried here in the walls, under the floor, and in the ceiling. But lives, ideas, spirits, and possibilities are also buried in the archive's files, in the drawers and cabinets that track death and count corpses. If I take this seriously, my work with the files in the archive becomes a form of wake work. This wake work is not an end but a beginning.⁴

² *Tropenkoller* is an alleged medical condition; it was first reported in the 1890s in the context of court scandals around extreme violence in the German colonies, wherein *Tropenkoller* was said to affect mainly German men in hot tropical climates and was used to justify a loss of self-control and sexual and other excessive violence.

³ Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017).

⁴ Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).



In the ghostly paradigm, time is neither reversible or irreversible. There is only an unfolding of experience. Things and events roll out on top of each other. If stories and events have a beginning, they do not necessarily have a proper end. They can certainly be interrupted. But a story or an event might continue on in another story or event without there necessarily being a filiation between the two. Conflicts and struggles might be resumed from the points at which they stopped. But they can also be followed upstream, or begun again, without a sensed need for continuity, even if the shadow of the old stories and events always lurks behind the present. Indeed, the same event can have two distinct beginnings. In the process, the life of the subject can pass from phases of loss to phases of enrichment. Everything functions according to a principle of incompleteness. As a result, there is no ordered continuity between the present, the past, and the future. And there is no genealogy—only an unfurling of temporal series that are practically disjointed, linked by a multiplicity of slender threads.

— Achille Mbembe, *Critique of Black Reason*

Tool

ADDRESSING THE GHOSTS IN THE ARCHIVE

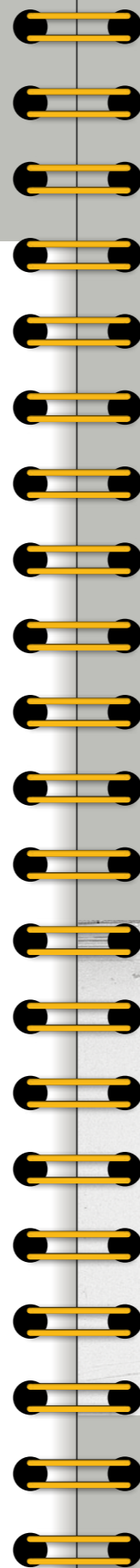
One form of attending to the documents in the German colonial archive is becoming conversant with the ghosts that linger there.(1) Ghosts are, and have been, people and other sentient beings, more concretely, those of us that “have been made killable, once and future ghosts—those that had been destroyed, but also those that are generated in every generation.”(2) Ghosts haunt and guide us at the same time; they make us remember and allow us to imagine. Scholars like Avery F. Gordon, Achille Mbembe, Judith Butler, Athena Athanasiou, Eve Tuck, C. Ree, and others have taught us to think about ghosts in connection with dispossession—dispossession understood here as people being made less than human, written out of history, disenfranchised, killed.(3)

In the archive, ghosts are at once the carriers of horror as well as hope. The ghost’s refusal to disappear—that is, to die—as well as its claim to a subjecthood with agency that is unkillable, troubles timelines. Refusing to die is to disobey and to take revenge on those that wanted to bury one forever. Following the ghosts’ unsettling rhythms might help us see the archive’s undercurrents, its strange links and disjointed time.

Conversations are far more than just speaking and listening or exchanging opinions. A conversation allows, to quote the activist Grace Lee Boggs, “to begin to create new ideas and new languages.”(4) Conversation is an action. It points to a specific doing and undoing. In a conversation with ghosts, one has to face the ethical problems that arise from refusing to let someone or something rest in peace. How do I ask a ghost for consent?

How do I enter a conversation with the ghosts in the archive? To enter a conversation with ghosts means to acknowledge that one is haunted. It also means, as Sharon Patricia Holland teaches us, to trouble the binaries of life and death and to take seriously all that the so-called dead make obvious about the premises of our lives—it is, then, to raise the dead.(5)

- (1) See also, Naomi Rincón Gallardo’s chapter “Heavy Blood,” in this volume, 33–51.
- (2) Eve Tuck & C. Ree, “A Glossary Of Haunting,” in *Handbook of Autoethnography*, eds. Stacey Holman Jones, Tony E. Adams, and Carolyn Ellis (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2013), 639–58.
- (3) Judith Butler & Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), 1–10; Avery F. Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011); Achille Mbembe, *Critique of Black Reason*, trans. Laurent Dubois (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017); and, Tuck & Ree, “A Glossary of Haunting.”
- (4) “On Revolution: A Conversation Between Grace Lee Boggs and Angela Davis,” (2 March 2012); online at: radioproject.org/2012/02/grace-lee-boggs-berkeley.
- (5) Sharon Patricia Holland, *Raising the Dead: Readings of Death and (Black) Subjectivity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).





Activity

CONVERSATION WITH GHOSTS

You can do this on your own or as a group:

- Decide on a topic that concerns and addresses you in particular. Identify as many ghosts that are involved as you possibly can.
- Write down or create a map of the ghosts you need to talk with and make clear why. Be ready for other ghosts that might interfere. Are you listening to them or do you try to shush them away? Why?
- Make ample time and choose a space for the conversations to take place (conversations can take place multiple times, but leave enough time in between to let everyone rest or come back if necessary).
- Prepare before but also for after the conversation (drink, food, spiritual cleansing, etc.).
- Have the conversation and, in line with Boggs's definition of a conversation, be truly open to letting yourself and your ideas be changed.
- Create a ritual to mark the end—for the ghosts to go where they need to go and for you to leave *without* them.



CREATING AN - ARCHIVES

The archive and the museum collection both point to dispossession, theft of context, spirits and objects, and the symbolic violence of colonial classifications and de-contextualization in the name of white European science. The archive is an apparatus that performs order, classification, and inclusions and exclusions; it must be challenged. After working with the files in the archive and seeing how dispersed they are among endless paper trails of cruelty, I want to take them out of there, copy and paste and multiply them, put them on posters, and make them circulate widely. But whom would this serve?

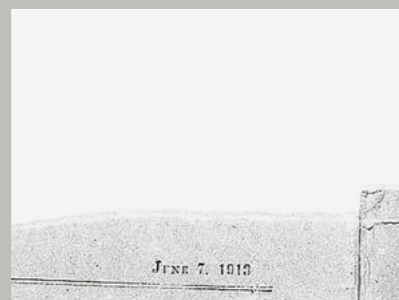
In a meeting with our research group, Dr. Eve Tuck reminded me of the pitfalls of “sharing” and the ethical questions that come with taking these writings out of context. This led me to think again about the intention of the writers—whom I cannot ask—and the addressees they had in mind. I study the documents and search for signs about the intended future usage of these documents. What do they ask to be done with them now? I make this decision document by document, taking them as a starting point for different forms of engagement with scholars and artists in the places where the letters were written. Are the letters relevant there in any way? I make compilations and hand them out to Black artists, activists, and scholars in German-speaking communities. I want to work through and around the logic of possession/ownership and search for narratives other than those of “universal history.”

Faced with archives based on colonial ideas of collecting and extracting, classifying and nullifying “the other,” how does “the other” join force and spirit with the fellow ghosts that lurk in the archive? How do they make narratives in the future past? What kind of relationship to cultural objects and documents is possible when they are held and possessed by colonial institutions (like contemporary European archives and museums)? For me, and privileged others living in the metropole, this work on archives that contain traces of others is not about an elsewhere or, if one is infected by white saviorism, to right a wrong. No. It is, instead, actually a means to make sense of our here and now. In the best scenario, it is a reason to meet and talk and get a step further away from our all-permeating Eurocentrism. An-archives are one way of decentering and dispersing the power that is the hold of the archive. How to create them while knowing that, as Sarr and Savoy put it, “destruction and collection are two sides of the same coin”? (6) Carefully, by aiming not for completion but for speculation, not for recording history but for challenging narratives, not to give overviews but to facilitate encounters.

(6) Felwine Sarr & Bénédicte Savoy, *The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage: Toward a New Relational Ethics* (November 2018); online at: restitutionreport2018.com.

To follow this logic of harvesting is precisely to deny the very principle of culture itself that—in Europe and elsewhere—is generated and regenerated throughout the centuries by way of the transmission, reproduction, adaptation, study and transformation of knowledge, of forms and objects at the heart of society. [...]
Destruction and collection are two sides of the same coin.

— Felwine Sarr & Bénédicte Savoy, *The Restitution of African Cultural Heritage*



 Activity

AN - ARCHIVES WORKSHOP

INTRODUCTION

- Layout of map/plan and schedule.
 - Introducing workshop facilitator and participants with a short statement about what interests them about collecting/archiving.
-

EXCHANGE

- Prior experiences with collecting/archiving and/or experiences with existing collections/archives.
-

MAPPING

- Common and uncommon interests including visual and virtual (an)archives, artistic practices, themes, etc.
 - Return to the map/plan and add connections throughout the day.
 - Trace and document (un)common topics/themes/ideas/references.
-

 Activity

INPUT

- What is an-archiving in comparison to archiving?
 - How do these differences manifest themselves in the ethics and aesthetics of an-archives?
 - Looking at examples of an-archiving (prepared in advance by facilitator).
-

DESCRIBING AN OBJECT

This exercise is borrowed from Eve Tuck. One object is passed along between participants; while holding and looking at it each person states one attribute about the object that is neither over-determining nor reducing it (no associations and judgments allowed).

FREEWRTING

If there weren't any constraints, what would your ideal an-archive look like? What does it do? What materials does it hold or let go? How, why, and for whom? Is it material or digital? How is sharing and new input organized? What is its aim?

Activity

DISCUSSION

Revisiting the examples and own (ideal) an-archives:

- Creating archives entails decisions not only about content/focus and the distinction between what is relevant (in the collection) and irrelevant (not in the collection) but also about structure and aesthetics. Further discussion points: How to present, share, and organize your an-archive? What kind of experiences and possibly violent attributions do you (re)produce? How to navigate categorization, appropriation, chronopolitics? How to create (volatile) spaces for content instead of burying it?

INPUT

- Organizing and referencing especially with regards to the ethics of classification.
- Practicing an-archiving: routines, collecting without aim, coming back to material, thinking with and through open collections.

WRAP-UP & FEEDBACK

- Sharing of questions, thoughts, and ideas that resonated.
- Preparing for next time: discussing paths, threads, and desires for a possible next meeting.

ARTWORKS & PROJECTS

Suggestions for the activity “Conversations with Ghosts”:

- Kazeem-Kamiński, Belinda, artist. 2017. *Unearthing: In Conversation*. HD video, 13”.
- Heinowsky, Walter and Gerhard Scheumann, directors. 1966. *Der Lachende Mann: Bekenntnisse eines Mörders* [The Laughing Man: Confessions of a Murderer]. Film, 66’, East Germany.
- Mabouna, Moise Merlin & Brigitta Kuster, artists. 2006. *2006–1892 = 114 Years* (DV video, 7’ loop).
- Savvy Contemporary, Berlin. Colonial Neighbours (participatory archive & research project). Online at: savvy-contemporary.com/en/pillars/colonial-neighbours.
- We Are Born Free. Empowerment Radio. Ongoing radio program. Online at: wer.oplatz.net.

Suggestions for the activity “An-Archives Workshop”:

- Kazeem-Kamiński, Belinda, artist. 2019. *The Letter*. Video.
- Each One Teach One (eoto) e.V.; initiative in Berlin. Online at: eoto-archiv.de.
- Hoffmann, Anette, Matei Bellu, and Regina Sarreiter, artists. 2012. *Unerhörter Bericht über die deutschen Verbrechen in den kolonisierten Gebieten und über das fortwährende Wirken der Gewalt bis in die Gegenwart*. Installation.
- Jafa, Arthur, artist. 2018. *Matrix 272*. Video installation.
- The Black Archives; initiative in Amsterdam. Online at: theblackarchives.nl.
- Gates, Theaster. *Black Archive*. Exhibition. Kunsthau Bregenz, 23 April – 26 June 2017.
- Vitjitua Ndjiharine, artist. 2018. *Ikonowall / Mirrored Reality*. Digital print and mirror film.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- Campt, Tina M. *Listening to Images*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.
- Césaire, Aimé. *Discourse on Colonialism* [1955]. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000.
- Mbembe, Achille. *On the Postcolony*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.
— *Critique of Black Reason*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

CREDITS

Paperlands, by Janine Jembere, 2020. All images in this chapter: reproduced courtesy Janine Jembere and Bundesarchiv Berlin. Produced with the support of FWF PEEK: “DisPossession: Post-Participatory Aesthetics and the Pedagogies of Land.”

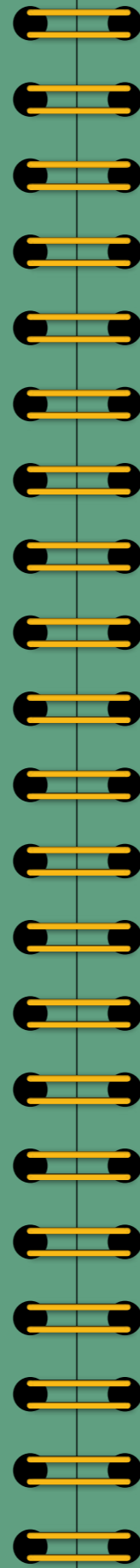
OPOSSUM RESILIENCE



I summon you, oh Protectress
 Come in the shape of a snake
 May your thunder break the sky
 With its revengeful force!

Naomi Rincón Gallardo

Oaxaca, Mexico



Elders and young activists in many territorial communities worldwide (including increasingly in urban areas) eloquently express why they defend their worlds even at the price of their lives. [...] Such resistance takes place within a long history of domination and resistance, and this is essential for understanding territorial and commons' defense as an ontological political practice. [...] Far from an intransigent attachment to the past, ancestrality stems from a living memory that orients itself to the ability to envision a different future—a sort of “futurity” that imagines, and struggles for, the conditions that will allow them to persevere as a distinct world.

— Arturo Escobar, *Thinking-Feeling with the Earth*

Every time I return to Oaxaca, I return to her. She cleanses me. She fills up her mouth with mezcal, without swallowing it. Instead, she blows it, splashing my semi-naked body. Mezcal moves energies around, she says. I feel the cold freshness on my skin, and its vapors make me dizzy. Then she rubs all my skin with a bundle of fresh rosemary, chamomile, and basil. She presses the bundle against my temples and my chest. Again, she bathes me in mezcal. My eyes are closed. She passes an egg throughout my whole body. She breaks it, puts it in a glass of water, and reads it. She puts me to rest after the cleansing. Then we converse again on her terrace, looking at the sunset.



Oaxaca is a state located in southern Mexico. Despite the logics of internal colonialism, a variety of Indigenous peoples have managed for centuries to operate within semi-autonomous modalities of Indigenous law. The municipalities are mostly governed by *usos y costumbres*, a set of customary laws that have contributed to maintaining Indigenous norms and practices relatively independent of the state.¹ The neo-liberal politics of the 1990s brought a change in the law that rendered *ejidos* [areas of communal land used for agriculture] available for privatization while also dismantling state-run agricultural institutions. The increasing dissonance resulting from recognizing the self-determination of Indigenous peoples, while at the same time alienating their lands through an increasingly extractivist agenda, has raised a great number of socio-environmental conflicts in Mexico, and specifically in Oaxaca.

For more than ten years, I have visited Oaxaca, either to work in context-based, non-institutional projects of art education or to visit dear friends. This time, it was our artistic research regarding storytelling in the context of dispossession

¹ On the set of *Opossum Resilience*, by Naomi Rincón Gallardo; photo by Claudia López Terroso, 2019

¹ Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez, “Indigenous Movements,” Wiley Online Library (2017); doi: 10.1002/9781118430873.est0675.

that took me back there. Over the summer of 2018, I met a Zapotec activist defending the land. In order to conceal her identity, I am referring to her here as Lady Reed; I am not giving any specific details of the actors involved in the socioterritorial conflict. Due to her alliances with organizations against extractivism and decolonial feminist groups, Lady Reed often goes from her town to the City of Oaxaca. During our first encounter, we met at the entrance of a museum. She was carrying maps of the mining projects in the region, printed by a critical cartography project in Oaxaca. She showed me the maps depicting the mining projects spread all over the Oaxacan territory.

When each of us said the word “land,” different universes unfolded. Lady Reed describes land in relation to community life within a supreme norm of reciprocity: life is organized around cycles of land and rains, and festivities mark and celebrate these circles. In sharp contrast, Mexico City, the land I grew up in, was founded upon the destruction of the Mexica civilization by Spanish colonizers—a process that suffocated a sophisticatedly planned agricultural system of floating islands in order to accomplish domination over the lives of the native population. The buried lake has become an asphalted, centralized, and overpopulated monster that assembles the most obscene socio-economic differences with a brutal negation of any possible relationality with nature. The violence of coloniality lingers everywhere. Yet, even in a megalopolis like Mexico City, traces of collectivity and community bonding that prioritize affective relations and corporality over the profit and individualism still survive.

Indigenous peoples, who have survived more than 500 years of atrocities, preserve a profound capacity to live a slow existence with a long-term gaze that is based on forms of reciprocity, where communitarian bonds are entangled with the cycles of nature. In Latin America, the option for a pluriversal understanding of life and relational worlds has become a matter of life or death in this epoch, characterized by a renewed wave of neo-conservative and heteropatriarchal racial capitalism, accompanied by violent processes of paramilitarization, a series of coups, the expansion of geographies of fear, and forms of neoliberal evangelism. The knowledges that come from the Mesoamerican cultures convey the potential to restore a deeply wounded society within an extremely painful moment—specifically, the informal war that Mexico has experienced over the last decade. For that reason, Indigenous resistance has become an ethical compass and a collective endeavor in the defense of a life with dignity and joy.

Something kept Lady Reed and I in proximity for a couple of encounters, running together to hide from the

torrential summer storms that would whimsically appear and then disappear. Sometimes we would meet completely soaked in sweat in temperatures of forty-something degrees, looking desperately for a bar to drink ice-cold beer. I only recorded our last conversation. Lady Reed agreed when I asked for her consent to dedicate a worldmaking project to her.

Lady Reed got involved in the defense of the land when a Canadian mining company opened a mine in her town without consulting the community. In collaboration with state authorities, the mine grabbed the land and water of the community, further polluting the environment. The community created a collective to defend the territory from dispossession—first of their voices, then of the territory. In collusion with corrupt local authorities, the mining company also deployed their divide-and-rule strategies: armed shock groups to break the resistance, bribery, surveillance, and so on. Violence escalated. One night, while they were driving back to their town, Lady Reed and her colleagues were ambushed. One of her colleagues died in the attack. Lady Reed was shot in the leg and the shoulder. The healing process has lasted for over six years. In one of our conversations, she told me that people in the region would call those who endure and recover from harm *tlacuachitos* [little opossums]. The Mesoamerican creation stories provide opossums with the status of immortality due to their capacity to play dead and revive.

“Opossum Resilience” is a fabulation of bastardized Mesoamerican myths, where four characters—a Hill, an Opossum, Lady Reed, and an Agave of Multiple Breasts—meet in temporalities that interweave stories of the world’s creation with the contemporary struggles against



In much of the Mesoamerican mythology, the earth appears as a sacred place. She is a bountiful deity. It is also a place where danger and evil could befall the humans who inhabit it. Earth is a slippery, perilous place. It is conceived within the classic duality of good and evil. As a supernatural being, she could harm or benefit, depending on your deeds. Marcos, the EZLN poetic subcommander, expresses it this way: *Y estos indígenas vienen a decir que la tierra es la madre, es la depositaria de la cultura, que ahí vive la historia y que ahí viven los muertos* (These indigenous peoples come to say that this earth is the mother, she is the cultural matrix, in her lives history and in her live the dead). [...]

In the words of Comandanta Esther, earth is life, is nature, and we are part of it. This simple phrase refers to the interconnectedness of all beings in the Mesoamerican Cosmos. Beings are not separable from each other. This basic principle has been found consistently within indigenous medical systems and also in the first historical primary sources. This principle creates a very particular form of human collectivity, with hardly any individuation. The world is not out there, established outside of, and apart from, people. It is within them and even “through” them. The “I” cannot be abstracted from its surroundings. The permeability of the entire “material” world defines an order of existence characterized by continuous transit between the material and the immaterial, the inside and the outside.

— Sylvia Marcos, *The Borders Within*

dispossession in the territory of Oaxaca. In spite of the violent processes of extractivism, the Hill, the Opossum, Lady Reed, and the Agave get together to rejoice in festivity and celebrate partial victories in a territory where mining is forbidden.

In the Mesoamerican cosmologies, hills are sacred places because they host sources of water and connect to subterranean rivers and caves that provide access to the realm of the dead. The opossum is known as a deity who steals fire, tobacco, and alcohol to offer them to people. The agave is associated with the Nahuatl goddess Mayahuel—typically represented as a woman who emerges from an agave. Mayahuel is a deity of fertility with 400 breasts. In the Mixtec tradition, Lady Nine Reed is a lady who wears snakes on her head, braided with her hair. She carries knives to cut the agave leaves. In “Opossum Resilience,” the Hill is a storyteller who witnesses and tells stories of these overlapping temporalities. The mythical plot opens with a nightmarish, flickering nocturnal scene that intercuts images of an altered landscape with the image of the hill under stroboscopic thunders.

Yo soñé con los nagueales
Porque ando eriza de ancestros
Ante los planes siniestros
De las zonas especiales:
Conflictos territoriales,
Extracción rapiñadora
¡Yo te invoco protectora,
Ven en forma de culebra,
Que tu trueno el cielo quiebra
Con su fuerza vengadora!

I dreamt about *nagueales*
Because I am craving ancestors
In the face of the sinister plans
Of the economic special zones:
Territorial conflicts,
Rapacious extraction
I summon you, oh Protectress,
Come in the shape of a snake,
May your thunder break the sky
With its revengeful force!



← On the set of *Opossum Resilience*, by Naomi Rincón Gallardo; photo by Claudia López Terroso, 2019

The Opossum is in search of the agave to get *pulque* (the alcoholic agave sap) with the help of Lady Reed. On her way, the Opossum steals everything she finds, while she carries her offspring on her back. Lady Reed helps with a machete to cut the agave leaves.



¿Cuál será aquel animal
Que en figurilla de barro
En el pecho lleva flores
Y en la trompa un torzal?

¿Qué criatura trepadora
Roba el fuego con su cola
Traza el curso de los ríos
Y aparece con la aurora?

Ponle un jarro de aguamiel
Pa que venga y se emborrache
En los tiempos de despojo
Que no haga falta el tepache
Aticen todos los fuegos
¡Y que regrese el tlacuache!

Who is that animal
Which, as a clay gure,
Wears flowers on its chest
And a rope on the snout?

Which climbing creature
Steals the fire with its tail
Traces the paths of the rivers
And emerges with sunrise?

Lay a jar of *aguamiel*
To make her come and get drunk
In the times of dispossession
May *tepache* not be scant
Stir up all the fires
So that the opossum comes back!

¿Cuál es la especie nativa
Dos úteros y vaginas
Cuya cola curativa
Cavidades desopila?

¿Cuál será el mítico ser
Que con sus crías al lomo
Se hace el muerto, aguanta golpes
Para después renacer?

¡Ponle un jarro de aguamiel!
Pa que venga y se emborrache
En los tiempos de despojo
Que no haga falta el tepache
Aticen todos los fuegos
¡Y que regrese el tlacuache!

¿Quién es ladrona mañosa
Con manitas de persona
Que deguella las gallinas
Por su sangre deliciosa?

¿Cuál es aquel marsupial
Dueño frío de la noche
Que en su panza de costal
Guarda tabaco y mezcal?

Who is the native species
With two uterus and vaginas
Whose healing tail
Opens cavities?

Who is the mythical being
Who carries her children on her back
Who plays dead, takes on kicks
To then be reborn?

Lay a jar of *aguamiel*
To make her come and get drunk
In the times of dispossession
May *tepache* not be scant
Stir up all the fires
So that the opossum comes back!

Who is the sneaky thief
With human hands
Who cuts the throat of chickens
For their delicious blood?

Who is the marsupial
The cold owner of the night
That in his bag-like belly
Keeps tobacco and *mezcal*?



The Agave of Multiple Breasts appears as the seducing figure who provides others with rejoicing, dancing, and access to a world of inebriation. The Agave is hyper-fertilized, adulterated, and enforced to monoculture.

Déjame ablandar tu cuerpo
 Yo te ayudaré a llorar
 Niño otra vez te volverás
 Ya no serás individuo
 Sacando eructos y pedos
 Irradiarás puro cariño
 Te acordarás de tus muertos
 Te despojarás de tí mismo
 Fermentos sacramentales
 Hígado luminiscente
 Te diluirás dulcemente
 Abriéndote a un caos profundo
 De intoxicantes rituales
 Cachondo mareo rotundo
 Fuerzas sobrenaturales
 Te harán viajar a otro mundo
 Mi tierra esta amenazada
 Forzada al monocultivo
 Por el empresario altivo
 Cuyo credo es el capital
 Mi sangre sobre-explotada
 Antes era medicinal
 Hoy hiper-fertilizada...
 ¡Han gentrificado el mezcal!

Let me soften your body
 I will help you cry
 You will become a child again
 You will no longer be an individual
 Farting and burping
 You will radiate pure affection
 You will remember your dead
 You will dispossess yourself of yourself
 Holy ferments
 Luminiscent liver
 You will sweetly dilute
 Opening yourself to a deep chaos
 Of intoxicating rituals
 Horny resounding dizziness
 Supernatural forces
 Will transport you to another world
 My land is threatened
 Enforced to monoculture
 By the lordly businessman
 Whose credo is the capital
 My over-exploited blood
 Was medicine before
 Today it is hyper-fertilized
 The mezcal has been gentrified!



The Hill gives an account of an ambush attempting to kill Lady Reed for her activism in the defense of the land:

They followed her and reached her, they ambushed her at the crossroads. They tried to turn off her fire. They tried to break her into bits and pieces. They thought that they did. She played dead, like the opossum. Once they left, she picked up her bits and pieces of skin, of hair, of heart, of everything, her sneakers, her jeans, her leg, everything. She put everything back again in place. Once she revived, she felt stronger.

The Opossum teaches Lady Reed how to revive. Lady Reed wears crutches and keeps dancing in the Cave.



Naciste bajo ciclos de lluvias constantes
 Temporadas de siembras y cosechas regulares
 Creciste bajo un manto de saberes ancestrales
 Un mundo ordenado por las fiestas patronales
 Aprendiste a usar la yunta y pastear al ganado
 Sembrando calabaza, maiz, frijol, garbanzo
 Te formaste rodeada de estructuras agrarias
 De ejidos y de tierras comunitarias
 Enmedio de asambleas, decisiones colectivas
 Organización apartidaria para gestionar la vida
 Tus padres te inculcaron el amor por la tierra
 ¡Por eso la defiendes en tiempos de guerra!

Tiempos de guerra llamada despojo
 Catástrofe ecológica en disfraz de desarrollo
 Empresas extractivas contratando sicarios
 Destrucción a sangre y fuego de mundos milenarios

You were born under constant cycles of rain
 Seasons of regular seeding and harvest
 You were brought up under a coat of the ancestral knowledge
 A world ordered by saint festivities
 You learnt to use a yoke and to feed cattle
 Sowing pumpkin, maize, beans, chickpeas
 You were surrounded by agrarian structures
Ejidos and the commons
 Among assemblies and collective decisions
 Organizations without political parties, to manage life
 Your parents taught you to love the land
 That's why, you defend it in the times of war!

Times of war called dispossession
 Ecological catastrophe disguised as development
 Extractive industries hire killers
 Destruction of blood and fire of millenary worlds



Los chismes se esparcieron creando confusión
 Visitas aisladas, fases de exploración
 Contubernios corruptos con las autoridades
 Concesiones sin consulta a las comunidades

Te uniste a la brigada para tomar la mina
 Llevaron tinaco, cobijas, cocina
 Como los compañeros se iban a trabajar
 Cerca de cien mujeres fueron a ocupar

Gossip spread, misleading people
 Isolated visits, exploration stages
 Corrupted arrangements with the authorities
 Concessions without consulting communities

You joined the brigade to occupy the mine
 You brought a water tank, blankets, a portable kitchen
 Due to the jobs of your male fellows
 Almost one hundred women occupied the mine

La policía estatal llegó a desalojarlos
 Helicópteros y perros, elementos armados
 Carros antimotines, detenciones arbitrarias
 Despliegue coercitivo para intimidar la banda
 Tiempos de guerra llamada despojo
 Fuerzas paramilitares forzando el desalojo
 Cinturones estratégicos, zonas especiales
 Depredación masiva de bienes naturales

Frente a las amenazas y represión abrumadora
 Se juntaron para formar la coordinadora
 Gestiones para el pueblo
 Brigades de información
 Animar con festejos el espíritu de organización
 Pusiste ahí tu tiempo, energía y pensamiento
 Tu presencia y voz encendieron el firmamento
 Joven mujer indígena defensora de la vida
 Constelación de fuerzas tejiendo alternativas
 Una noche de regreso en un cruce de caminos
 Rafaguearon su nave un grupo de asesinos
 Uno de tus compas cayó en el atentado
 El coche en el que iban terminó destrozado

En estos tiempos de guerra llamada despojo
 Tu sigues de pie resistiendo con arrojo
 La herida de tu pierna memoria del agravio
 Sigue irradiando rabia y deseo libertario

The state police came to evict you
 Helicopters, dogs, armed convoys
 Anti-riot cars, arbitrary detentions
 Launching coercion to intimidate the people
 Times of a war called dispossession
 Paramilitary forces enforcing evacuation
 Strategic lines, special zones
 Massive destruction of natural wealth

In the face of the threats and overwhelming repression
 You got together to create the collective
 Managing resources for the people
 Brigades of information
 Cheering up the collective spirit with parties
 You put in your time, energy, and thought
 Your presence and voice lit up the firmament
 Young Indigenous woman defending the land
 Constellation of forces weaving alternatives
 On a night when you were coming back home
 A group of hired killers ambushed your car
 One of your colleagues died on the attack
 The car was completely destroyed

In the times of war called dispossession
 You keep standing up bravely resisting
 The wound of your leg—a memory of the affront
 Keeps radiating rage and libertarian desire



Tool

BASTARDIZED MYTHS FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Mesoamerican worldviews understand time as overlapping spirals, ever-changing and cyclical. In the Mesoamerican poetry and oratory, every verse is repeated with slight changes, evoking the repetition of an idea or a feeling in different ways. The redundancy and repetition of metaphors allow a thought to be dynamic and complementary rather than oppositional—thought can be simultaneous, fluid, and in permanent mutation.⁽¹⁾ In Mesoamerican worldviews, every single being is animated; beings also mutate from one entity to another. Life takes on different “skins,” and beings are fluidly interconnected among the cosmos.

Myths and creation stories in the Global South are rich and complex testimonies relaying the ancient organization of thoughts and symbols. Non-human characters with full agency populate pluriversal ancient worlds, where the outpouring imaginaries of co-presence depict the mutual dependence of different beings and events in the macro- and micro-cosmos. In spite of colonial epistemicide, these worldviews are kept alive within Indigenous communities in forms of orality, ritual, healing practices, music, dances, visual symbols, celebrations, and other ways of storying.

However, as myths can also contribute to solidifying the processes of exclusion and domination, a process of *bastardizing* them can help to shake off oppressive contents and traditional values that may foreclose worldmaking possibilities for certain non-normative bodies, genders, and sexualities. Bastardized myths are proposed as tools serving decolonial and queer purposes that can support the right not to belong.

From the mountains of southeast Mexico, Zapatistas have been building the pluriversal politics of resistance that involves gender balance, corporeal perceptions connected to nature, and an alternative justice system. As a political-poetic strategy, they refer to the Maya myths of creation in order to envision a renewal of the cycles, fueled by the necessity to overcome the dark times. In his written stories, Subcomandante Marcos [known more recently as “Subcomandante Galeano”] talks with ancestral beings in order to illuminate political resistance; with a smoking beetle named Durito, he discusses neoliberalism and its strategy of domination for Latin America.

The Indigenous past that has not been suffocated by internal colonialism lies in waiting within the hearts of the colonized peoples in the Global South. Searching for it and poking its fire into the future is a resolution to be undertaken by mestizx peoples in order to demand and build an alternative modernity that requires decolonial worldmaking. The use of Indigenous myths is proposed here as a tool for worldmakings as affective insurrections against this epoch of fascist revival around the globe.

(1) Sylvia Marcos, “The Borders Within: The Indigenous Women’s Movement and Feminism in Mexico,” in eds. Marguerite Waller & Sylvia Marcos, *Dialogue and Difference: Feminisms Challenge Globalization* (London: Palgrave Mcmillan, 2005), 81–112.

Activity

RELATIONALITY & BASTARDIZED MYTHS

This activity aims to create place-based narratives that engage and play with myths as storytelling tools to address contemporary forms of dispossession and resistance without reproducing damaging narratives.

Opossums have a dubious reputation in Mesoamerica. They are nocturnal thieves and drunkards. But they are also the ones who provide joy and fire to people: fire that is needed to cook food, warm up the body, and cheer up celebrations. They steal fire with their tails and carry tobacco and alcohol in their belly sacks. In the Mesoamerican myths, opossums are considered to be immortal due to their capacity to play dead and revive. In some villages in Oaxaca, sturdy and resilient people would be called *tlacua-chitos* [little opossums] for their capacity to endure hardships and recover from damage. Opossums can put together their bits and pieces after being beaten up. They resurrect and run. What do opossums teach about survival, tenacity, and resilience? How can these capacities serve in a struggle against dispossession?

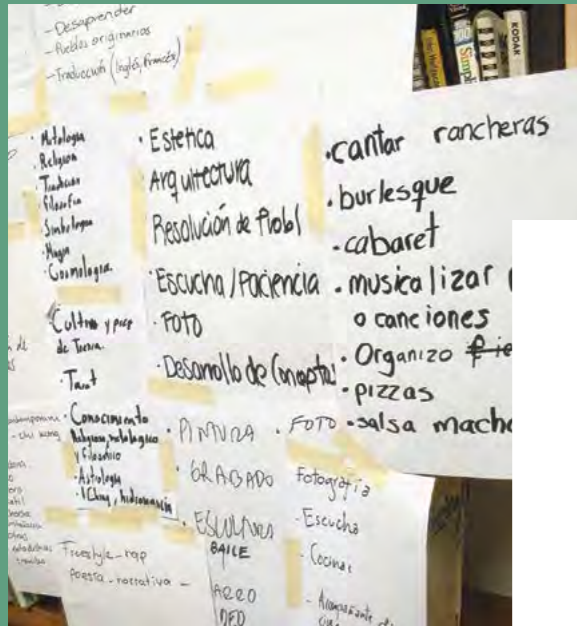
Addressees. Art students, artists of various disciplines (performance, music, visual arts, video and film, poetry, etc.), cultural workers in the Global South, activists, and people involved in initiatives for the defense of land and/or initiatives against various forms of dispossession.

Preparations. The exercises can be done within the context of a workshop (either intensive or spread over time according to the availability of peoples and space). Some of them can serve as tools for eliciting narratives in solitude. A selection of readings translated into the local language has to be prepared in advance by the facilitator; recommended texts addressing extractivist projects are included in the additional references below.

Location. A well-lit room. Tables, large paper, markers, tape. Projector (optional, if the context allows it). Speakers (optional, if the context allows it). Laptop and internet access (optional, if the context allows it), and an adaptor. Water, snacks, fruits, coffee, tea, or other hot local drinks.

Who are we? We are the Global South, that large set of creations and creatures that has been sacrificed to the infinite voracity of capitalism, colonialism, patriarchy, and all their satellite-oppressions. We are present at every cardinal point because our geography is the geography of injustice and oppression. We are not everyone; we are those who do not resign themselves to sacrifice and therefore resist. We have dignity.

— Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South*



Activity

ARRIVING

- Sit around a table, share beverages and snacks.
- Introduce yourself to others by introducing a place that is important for your work/life. Share with others what is the relation between this place and Indigenous peoples. What stories of the place about collective resistance, celebration, healing, and transformation do you know? Take a break.

MAPPING KNOWLEDGES & POSSIBLE COLLABORATIONS

- Set a large paper sheet, markers, and pencils on the table. Share with the group: What are you good at? What knowledges and skills can you offer to a group? What are your interests and passions?
- Write them down and map the constellations of knowledges, interests, and passions of the group. Look at possible connections.
- Put up the paper on a wall in the room, and keep it there for the duration of the workshop.

Activity

READING TOGETHER

- Read aloud texts from the “Additional References” (below, p. 167).
- Discuss them in small groups and come up with terms that you find relevant to your practice and interests.

TRACES & CRACKS OF EXTRACTIVISM

Write down your individual responses to the following questions: What do you know about the extractivist projects and processes of dispossession in this place? Beyond the human, which forms of life and matter are threatened by these processes?

- What do people do to resist and refuse them? Where are they?
- Discuss the answers collectively. Write this down on a large piece of paper.
- Collectively list the initiatives and organizations that are involved in resistances against dispossession. How do people organize? Which forms does the resistance take?
- Discuss whom you can invite or visit to get to hold a conversation about these matters. Make a list, and try to reach her/him/them. Designate someone who takes on the task of organizing the invitation.





Activity

THE MYTHICAL PLOT

There was a time, another time: the myth.

- Pick characters from the mythical stories you have heard in the place you are involved in. You may find them in oral practices (songs, conversations, healing chants), written sources (collections of Indigenous myths, tales for children), image and material sources (vernacular culture, clay figurines, codex, etc.) and in social practices (rituals and festivities). Talk to people who know myths from the region. Gather different materials for your mythical plot, and keep them together (in a notebook, a log book, a computer folder, or a box, on a table, etc.).
- Individually, write down or make a conceptual map addressing the following questions: What are their stories? Who are these mythical beings? What are their capacities and agencies? What are their roles in the environment? With whom do/es she/he/they relate, and in which ways? What happens to them within a site of dispossession? What are their conflicts and desires? How do they cope? How do you envision their life in a remote future?
- Can you identify the myth's aspects that are oppressive? How can you bastardize the myth in a way that opens up, instead of closing down, the emancipatory potentialities?
- Overlap the temporalities of the myth, the present, and the future.
- Map the group's mythical plots seeking for connections.
- Look for resonances, and team up.
- Write down a narrative synopsis; the narrative has to be grounded in a place in which the group is implicated.

Activity

VISUALIZATION

- Bring different images from various sources (codices, figurines, vernacular cultures, etc.), and sketch out your characters.
- In groups: use your bodies to create three different still images of the character in action. Take a picture of each. Use the three images to elicit a story. You can write dialogues between the characters, think of a "voice over" that tells the story, create a soundscape for it, etc.

MATERIALIZATION

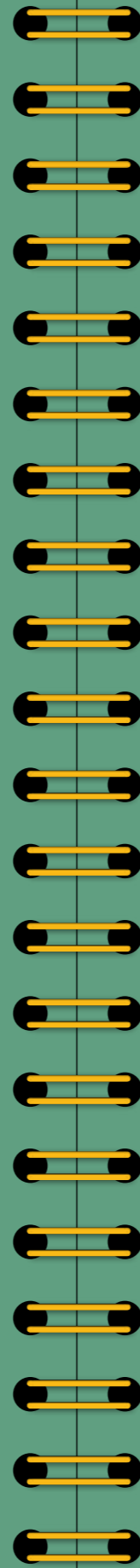
- Think of the ways in which you can tell this story (e.g. a comic, a photo-novel, a performance, a puppet theater, a video, a sound piece, a song, or a combination of these formats).
- Look at the map of knowledges and skills that the group made the first day. Identify with whom you can collaborate in order to materialize your story.
- Plan the production.
- Get your production done according to your plan.

GRAFTING BASTARDIZED MYTHS

Consider the ways in which and with whom your work can act as a rearguard micro-political intervention. How can your work reach the people to whom it is dedicated and by whom it is nourished?

- Identify the existing living social forms, events, and organizations where your storytelling can resonate. Contact them. Imagine together ways in which your storytelling can sprout.





↑ Sketches for *Opossum Resilience*, by Naomi Rincón Gallardo, 2019

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- Gil, Yásnaya Elena A. *¿Nunca más un México sin nosotrxs?*. Oaxaca: Fusilemos la Noche, 2018.
- Rivera Cusicanqui, Silvia. *Ch'ixinakax utxiwa: Una reflexión sobre prácticas y discursos descolonizadores*. Buenos Aires: Tinta Limón, 2010.

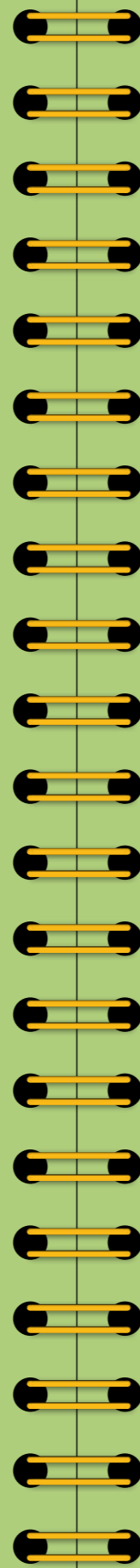
ARTWORKS

- A Tribe Called Red, artist. 2016. *We are the Hal-luci Nation*. Studio Album. Radicalized Records.
- Caycedo, Carolina, artist. 2014. *Land of Friends: Descolonizando la Jagua*. Video, 38'10".
- Huichaqueo, Francisco, director. 2011. *MENCER Ni Pewma*. Video, 32'34". Online at: vimeo.com/284993347.
- The Karrabing Film Collective, director. 2018. *The Mermaids, or, Aiden in Wonderland*. Video, 26'29". Karrabing Indigenous Corporation.

CREDITS

Opossum Resilience, by Naomi Rincón Gallardo. HD video, 16'00", 2019. Shot in Oaxaca, Mexico. Performers: Hill – Luis Enrique García; Agave – Chichis Glam; Opossum – Naomi Rincón Gallardo; Lady Reed – Diana Gómez Córdoba. Cinematography: Masha Godovannaya. Photo documentation: Claudia López Terroso. Electronic sound effects: Enrique Arriaga. Direct sound: Konk Balam Díaz. Voice-over for Hill: Claudia López Terroso. Voice-over for "I dreamt about the *naguales*": Naomi Rincón Gallardo. Lyrics of "Opossum": Naomi Rincón Gallardo. Music: Fernando Guadarrama. Voice: Paulina Jiménez. Jaranas (small guitars): Oliver Martínez Kandt and Fernando Guadarrama. Lyrics of "Fermented, adulterated, hyper-fertilized": Naomi Rincón Gallardo. Music and vocals: Chichis Glam. Lyrics of "Rosy": Naomi Rincón Gallardo. Rappers: Yadhí Boz ft. Doma. Props: Naomi Rincón Gallardo. Opossum's Mask: Ezequiel Marín "Máscaras". Seamstress: Mayra Angélica Cernas. Lighting: Jakob Aguilar. Thanks to: Tepelmeme Community Organization, Pollos Bar, Pablo Arellanes, Lorena Ancona, and Moisés García. Produced with the support of FWF PEEK: "DisPossession: Post-Participatory Aesthetics and the Pedagogies of Land" and Parallel Oaxaca.

You mourn, ... because you care
 You care, ... because you dare
 You make yourself able
 To be affected here an' elsewhere



CARE & BECOME

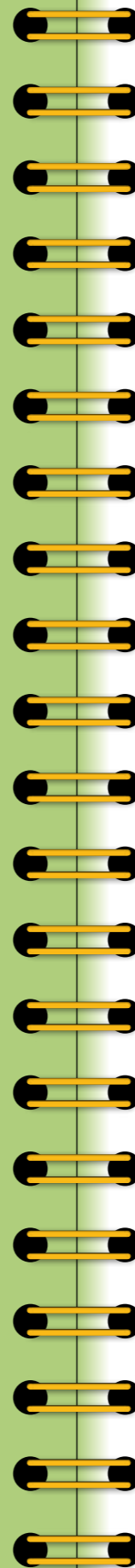


Berhanu Ashagrie Deribew

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

What we (societies in the Global South) have in common is that we all have to fight against many obstacles in order to live with dignity—that is to say, to live well. [...] We fight against the obstacles under the conviction that they can be eliminated. But our struggle depends less on our objectives than on the quality of our actions and emotions in striving to attain them.

— Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South*



Addis Ababa is one of the most rapidly growing cities in Africa. The city is the political center of Ethiopia, and since the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity in 1963 (later rebranded as the African Union), Addis has also functioned as the headquarter for the continent. My strong relationship with the city of Addis Ababa began over two decades ago. Prior to that, I had spent a few summers there, but it seemed to me at that time a big city, where things appeared to be possible and impossible at the same time. After I moved to Addis Ababa with the intention of becoming a permanent resident, it became the city I could best relate to. As the concept of home is dynamic and always has the potential to shift, Addis became my home, rather than the place where I was born and grew up. Here, I celebrate the privileges that its urban setting can offer, and, at the same time, I share in the suffering from the consequences of this urbanism. I try to adapt to situations and move on with a sense of belonging; Addis is my home that is neither empty nor full, but always lively.

In 1886, after understanding the potential resources the landscape could offer, Emperor Menilek II moved from Mount Entoto to a location now called Arat Killo, which later became the heart of the city.¹ Then the army, the nobility, the officials, and their servants all started to settle around the Emperor's new palace as the area slowly transformed into a village, then a town, and finally a city. Since its early expansion, the city has been a melting pot for people from all corners of the country, as all walks of life move in and settle there. The migration to the city continues to be a reality, which makes the already densely populated area expand even further. Addis is still a young city, with only a 130-year history, having hosted just over four generations of inhabitants.

The name “Addis Ababa,” which means “New Flower” in the Amharic language, was given by Empress Taytu, the wife of Emperor Menilek II, at the very beginning of the settlement.² The city was formed without the intention to develop as a major urban platform. The absence of grid-like roadways gives Addis a unique character; the apparent informality of the city structure positively shaped the social fabric, allowing for various intimate relationships to be maintained. This urban reality started to become collective history approximately a decade ago, when the state first initiated major, large-scale modernization projects. Since then, massive waves of urban displacement have taken hold of the city and innumerable families and neighborhoods have been forcefully displaced to the city outskirts, where they would encounter a radically different environment. Passing by demolition and construction sites has become a regular part of everyday urbanism. Even

¹ Emperor Menilek II was King of Showa during the establishment of Addis Ababa; he became an Emperor of Ethiopia in 1889.

² Empress Taytu was highly involved in many political, diplomatic, and leadership matters, which made her one of the most powerful women in Africa during her time. See Chris Prouty, *Empress Taytu and Menilek II: Ethiopia 1883–1910* (Trenton: The Red Sea Press, 1986).

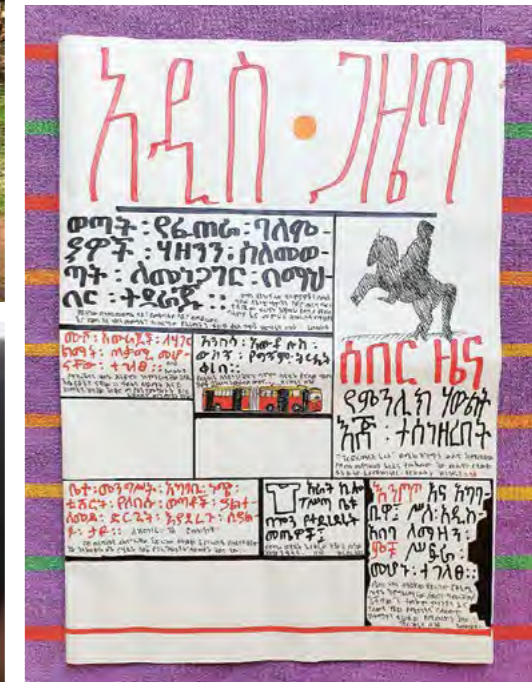
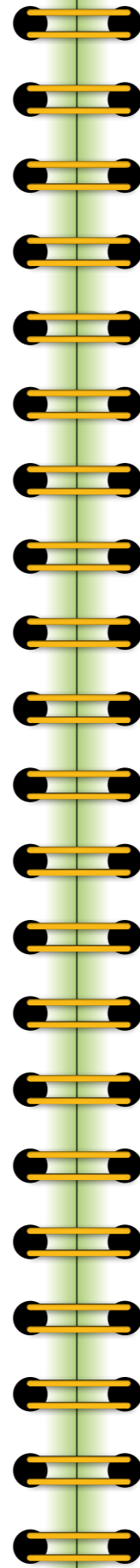
in important older neighborhoods, historical architecture, public spaces, and memorials were displaced to make way for the so-called developmental projects orchestrated by the state; these unique urban features are increasingly vanishing from the collective memory.

The fact that the entire city is rapidly becoming a construction site has led to numerous questions, which have so far not been met with satisfying answers. The imbalance between what the residents need and what has been delivered by the state has become an irritating and ongoing tension to live with. As an artist trying to engage critically with different urban realities, I have initiated multiple artistic projects in response to the rapidly changing urban environment and the human conditions it sustains (or undermines). My focus has mainly been on urban displacement, land grabbing, and transitions of spaces and places. In that sense, I have mainly focused on the here-and-now moments of the present that distort possibilities for collective becoming.

The city of Addis Ababa is located in a region called Oromia, which includes the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia. As a result of the extensive horizontal expansion of the city, people living on the city's peripheries have been forcibly pushed out and deprived of land. These rapid urbanization projects occurred until the city ran out of space to accommodate more expansion; following a complete saturation, in 2014, the city administration announced a new integrated master plan, which would incorporate surrounding lands of the region, well beyond the city limits.

This act is an expression of the arrogance of the development logic of an authoritarian state and the distorted understanding of land as something that the state can take entirely into possession, for its own purposes. Ethiopia is mainly an agrarian society in which land has multiple meanings. Land is not only perceived as property; it is also a birthright, an understanding, and a knowledge woven over time. This aggressive act of the state sparked indignation among youth in the region and was followed by massive protests throughout the country. The uprising of the youth in the region lasted for over three years and eventually became the main force leading to a major reform of the political structure that had brutally oppressed the nation for twenty-seven years.

I closely witnessed the indignation expressed throughout the struggle of the youth in the Oromia region. I learned that the proposed master plan was indeed a cause, but not the only one, sustaining the continuous protests. The indignation was mainly a product of deferred rage and grief, latent since the establishment and early expansion of the city—its



↑ Berhanu Ashagrie, *Care & Become*: Walking together to Mount Entoto; handwritten newspaper for *Care & Mourning*; "Maintaining" (sharing meals with collaborators); poem-reading performance inside a moving public bus; poetry-reading performance; all in Addis Ababa, 2019



foundation built on violence, land grabbing, displacement, resource manipulation, and cultural domination. Until recently, this history of violence could not be discussed openly, neither by the state nor the various ethnic groups. For the majority of communities, the pre-urban space was not even accessible through any narrative recounting; the conditions of the land before the establishment of the city have mainly been recognized and sustained orally, among one specific ethnic group. This acute oral history includes descriptions of violence and victimization during the city's establishment—a history of suffering and loss that has never been fully recognized or properly addressed. The different perspectives among various social groups are due, in part, to the fact that claims regarding dispossession contradict the grand, dominant political narrative about the role (and importance) of the Emperor with regards to the formation and development of the nation.

Following the recent political reformation, historians, activists, and politicians, as well as youth from the region, have started to openly discuss the violent history of urbanism and related conflicts and, going even further, to reclaim ownership over the city. Their primordial demands produced multiple counter-narratives from different ethnic groups, many of which injected even more anger, rage, and divisive arguments into an already agonistic debate. The absence of careful listening slowly affected the ability of societies to co-exist with their differences. Regional borders have become bolder than they used to be, and in the different regions ethnic “Others” become complete strangers, as if they never had a shared collective past. Individuals and families who for a long time have lived among other ethnic groups have forcefully and violently been pushed out from the different regions. Zygmunt Bauman told us that “a meeting of strangers is an event without a past. More often than not, it is also an event without a future.”³ The fact that ethnic “Others” have suddenly become unknown and unwanted in the different regions is an act of making strangers, which not only denies societies’ shared past, but also rejects the possible collective futures. In 2018, this disturbing reality made the country rank first in internal displacement, with some lands considered seizable and some lives considered disposable.⁴ This sad fact obviously affects the collective hope for *buen vivir* [good living].⁵ Now, the different ethnic groups seem to be involved in a battle, in which the only possibility is to loose in a collective manner.

Our societies are haunted by the ghosts of violence; especially as a culture of fear and brutality is actively cultivated in and beyond the city center. In the face of this ongoing conflict, individuals and collectives respond with expressions of grief as well as those of rage. Whereas the latter implies

← Berhanu Ashagrie, *Care & Become: Ritual-making performance at Mount Entoto*; “Maintaining” (Nifro, one of the common snacks for periods of mourning); discussing mourning rituals; mourning performance in public space (on Menilek Square); mourning performance in public space (on Arat Killo); all in Addis Ababa, 2019

³ Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000), 95.

⁴ The internal displacement ranking is taken from the global 2018 midterm report of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center; online at: internal-displacement.org.

⁵ The concept of *buen vivir* [good living] derives from the Quechua word “sumak kawsay.” I use it here in the way that it has been adapted by Boaventura de Sousa Santos.

the danger of destruction and irreversible damage, the former searches for the potentialities of a coming-together despite and because of difference. Such coming-together cannot begin with an intention to forget or overcome history, but instead must seek to generate affective encounters, wherein participants listen carefully and allow themselves to be affected by one another. The coming-together that can facilitate a process of collective healing starts from an active and infectious wound, but not from scars.

My project, “Care & Become,” has the fragile intention of navigating possibilities for coming-together in precarious moments. The project recognizes that such a process cannot be initiated or maintained through a mainstream language of politics; rather, this occurs through embodied knowledge and experiences shared within societies. Our political lives have been constantly exposed to violence, and oppressed societies experience multiple forms of loss that require mourning. In places where difference is made to define societal relationships, grief might be a confined experience among specific communities; in such precarious moments, people should take on the responsibility to openly and collectively grieve and lament victimization.

The project investigates how the notion and practice of mourning can be translated into aesthetic, pedagogical, and political devices to contribute to the process of collective healing. Engaging with mourning means embodying precarious times in order to allow oneself to care, transform, affect, and be affected by the conditions of the other. Therefore, the work of mourning is also, on a broader scale, an attempt to understand its own socio-political power and become an active agent and witness of it. In many different cultures, there is an understanding that no one is meant to grieve alone; in Ethiopia, there are even traditional mutual-aid associations for funerals and bereavements in both rural and urban areas. Such traditional models of community formations, often based on vulnerability and loss, have guided a variety of community and political struggles, including “Madres de la Plaza de Mayo” in Argentina, “Saturday Mothers” in Turkey, “Women in Black” in Israel, Serbia, and internationally, and “Black Lives Matter” in the US and internationally.

In my project, the concept of embodiment provides the starting point for a theory of change. Embodiment has a potential to initiate an ethics, aesthetics, and politics in which life, vulnerability, and the search for collaboration are constantly negotiated.⁶ By developing practices of embodiment, multiple creative, pedagogical, and political engagements have been performed in a collective manner; for instance, I organized a six-day workshop in Addis,

involving individuals from various creative disciplines, and different social and cultural backgrounds. The workshop’s general framework was organized around the notion of care and mourning, and engaged with different methods of creating affective encounters: card exercises for storytelling, meaning-making exercises about violence and dispossession, elegy writing to convey mourning as a critical act that requires care, walking together to sites of dispossession, as well as vocal and gesture exercises in public spaces as forms of protest, and language exercises to experience misunderstanding and misinterpretation, among other activities. As a major artistic and political outcome of the project, actions of collective mourning were performed at three urban sites of dispossession in Addis Ababa City: elegy reading on a public bus; a decoded or systemic protest at Meskel Square, one of the most important public spaces in the city; and, a mourning ritual on Mount Entoto.⁷



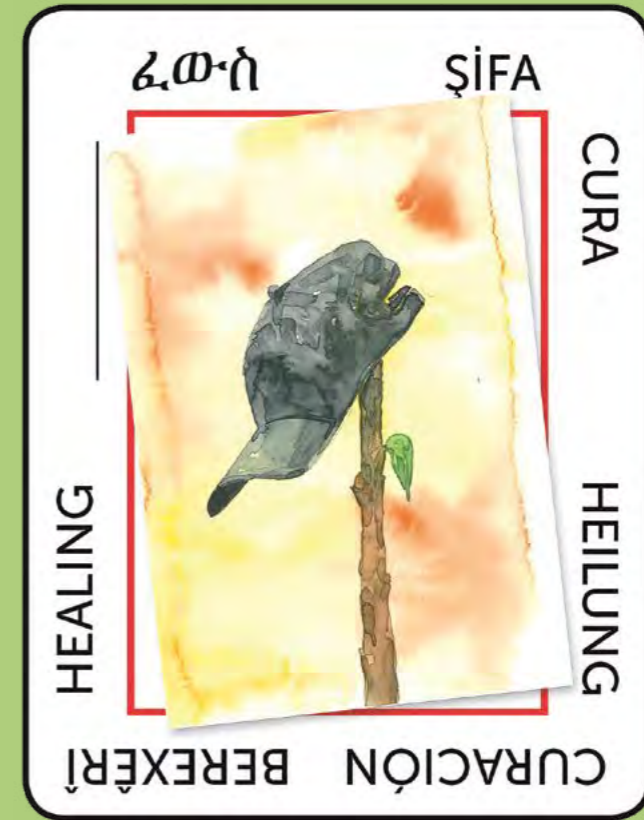
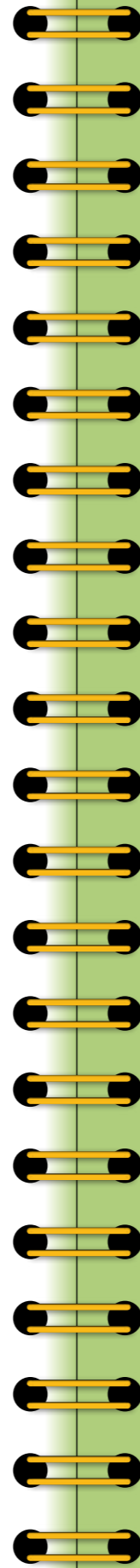
⁵ Berhanu Ashagrie, *Care & Become*: Mourning performance in public space (at National Palace); gesture exercise in pair (problematizing gestures); both in Addis Ababa, 2019

⁶ Ben Spatz, “Notes for Decolonizing Embodiment,” *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* 33, no. 2 (2019): 9–22; doi: 10.1353/dtc.2019.0001.

⁷ Meskel Square is the major public square in Addis Ababa; it is a very important space in the everyday urban life and the socio-political history of the city, as well as a renown site across the country.



↑ Berhanu Ashagrie, *Care & Become*: Discussing scores for mourning gestures; rehearsal for mourning performances; vocal exercise (systemic protest) at Meskel Square; all in Addis Ababa, 2019



There is no change without self-change, for the obstacles to life with dignity, or to living well ...

— Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South*

The notions of embodiment and embodied arts offer something specific to decolonization efforts, which cannot be subsumed under the concept of performance. Unlike performance, which carries connotations of measurable efficacy and immediately evident force, embodiment has the potential to initiate or reinvent an ethics and politics in which life, survival, vulnerability, and ecology would be key terms.

— Ben Spatz, “Notes for Decolonizing Embodiment”

Tool

GESTURES FOR MOURNING

We move—we make gestures, we talk—we make gestures, we desire—we make gestures, we care—we make gestures, we share—we make gestures, we lose—we make gestures, we mourn—we make gestures, we protest—we make gestures, we fight—we make gestures, we struggle—we make gestures, we make gestures—all the time.

A gesture has the potential to transform into a message or a meaning, it is an invitation to be read or interpreted, an inspiration to initiate dialogue, and an engagement with bodily experiences. Gesture is complex in its functions, meaningful and practical, bodily and political; it can simultaneously express multiple perspectives, which makes it a form of expression that can be creative and pedagogical. Artistic gestures also have the power to facilitate creative engagements that are decisively political. Gestures can be a crucial element of protest, as with the “Hands Up! Don’t Shoot!” protests against police brutality. As Anusha Kedhar writes, “choreography, movement, and gesture are not peripheral but central to the politics of protest.”⁽¹⁾ There are powerful

gestures in every culture with the potential to be translated into a political language through different social struggles.

Gestures for mourning are meant to be creative, pedagogical, and political tools facilitating affective encounters for learning and re-learning, translating and transforming, coding and recoding, acting and reacting through bodily engagements. In addition, engaging public spaces for creative and political reasons has never been easy in most oppressive states in the Global South. Performing in such political spaces often generates possibilities for physical and psychological harm or abuse. Therefore, “Gestures for Mourning” are also intended to become affective and minimal languages to facilitate bodily engagements on sites of dispossession.

- (1) Anusha Kedhar, “Choreography and Gesture Play an Important Role in Protests,” *The New York Times* (15 December 2014); online at: [nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/12/15/what-does-the-style-of-a-protest-say-about-a-movement/choreography-and-gesture-play-an-important-role-in-protests](https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/12/15/what-does-the-style-of-a-protest-say-about-a-movement/choreography-and-gesture-play-an-important-role-in-protests).





↑ Berhanu Ashagrie, Care & Become: mourning gesture cards, 2019

Activity

PROBLEMATIZING GESTURES

The following activities are meant to choreograph a collective engagement for a group formed on the basis of care, despite and because of differences. The intention of this activity is not to perform gestures, but to problematize the process.

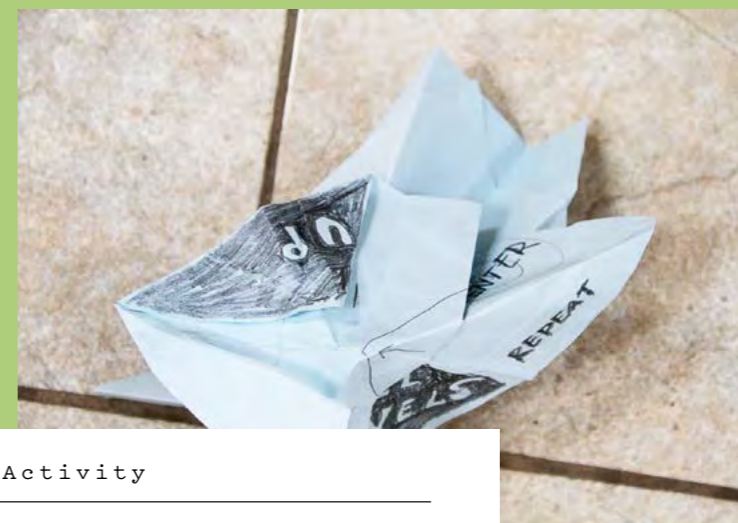
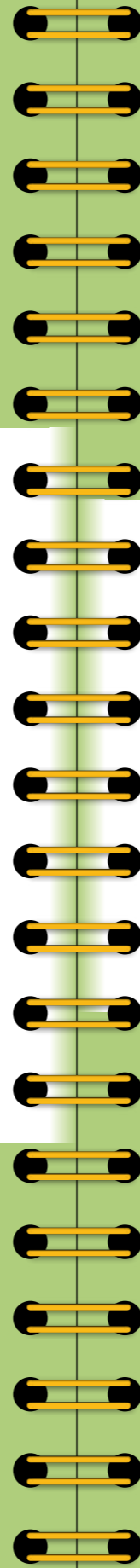
- Each person brings one gesture related to a tradition of care, grief, or mourning.

- Develop cards with an image or a sketch of the gestures with a brief explanation.

- Take one card each, and grasp what you consider the essence of the gesture.

- Form pairs, and start teaching the gesture to each other.

- Perform the gesture, while explaining the action in your own terms.



Activity

TRANSLATING GESTURES

This activity is about creating a space to translate gestures into other forms of visual languages or scores. In order to activate the exercise, collect accessible stationery and art materials.

- Each person works on the same gesture from the previous activity.

- Imagine potential ways to transform the bodily experience into different visual forms and engage in the visualization process.



↑ Berhanu Ashagrie, Care & Become: score for mourning gesture, 2019



Activity

MAPPING SITES

This activity is about creating a space to discuss and navigate sites of dispossession.

- Form two groups. First group: Think of sites of dispossession in the area and the history of violence related to them. Second group: Navigate how to get to those sites from the place where the group is located at the time.
- Each member of the first group names a political site and recalls a story of dispossession in relation to that site.
- Each member of the second group gestures how to navigate to the aforementioned site from the place where the group is located at the moment.

PERFORMING GESTURES

This activity engages with gestures in public space or at sites of dispossession as a decoded form of protest. It is very important to identify the condition of the sites for reasons of safety.

- Bring and discuss the history and contemporary conditions of different political spaces or sites of dispossession.
- Choose a site for the mourning gesture performance to take place. Locate yourself on the site as a group.
- Each individual trains the group with the gesture that they dealt with during the first two parts of this activity.



↑ Berhanu Ashagrie, *Care & Become*: mapping exercise on Mount Entoto, Addis Ababa, 2019

→ Berhanu Ashagrie, *Care & Become*: gesture exercise at Meskel Square (systemic protest), Addis Ababa, 2019

There is room to think of types of witnessing which involve forms of being with the other beyond the symbolic realm. Certainly this type of witnessing does not equate with known forms of intersubjective recognition, but it seems to resemble more experiences of anxiety. Anxiety, in this sense, would also—as trauma—mean certain type of closeness to the “truth of the real,” and not only to alienated forms of “knowledge” (or fantasies).

— Margarita Palacios, *Radical Sociality*



Tool

A SCRIPT FOR MOURNING

A script is generally prepared in different textual formats in an attempt to guide a certain speech, action, play, or performance. A script can be many more things, but, in the case of the traditional theater, it is meant to contain texts that guide spoken words or story flows and directions for action. As a tool, a script is a document with written instructions for a performance to be delivered by performers in a specific setting.

A script can be formulated to tell stories through a specific genre of performance, dealing with different subject matters and storytelling strategies. How do we write a script to tell stories of or about violence and victimization? What does it take to properly engage with the act of narrativization relating to events that exemplify what Frank Wilderson discusses as the “unspeakable grammar of suffering”? (2) How do we interpret histories of violence within multiple societal narratives? How do we understand and engage with the ghosts of violence that haunt contemporary social relationships? Can we presuppose a “we” in this context?

This tool recognizes the problematic position of the witness; it distances itself from the traditional role and function of scripts, instead acting as something to be developed in a reverse scriptwriting format, after a certain performative engagement has taken place on the basis of care. (3) The preparation of the script consists of negotiating openings for the performers and the sites on which the performance is to take place. Therefore, “Script for Mourning” is less about the script and more about the bodily

experiences through which stories of dispossession can be told using the bodies of the performers.

“Script for Mourning” generates creative and critical encounters to translate embodied knowledge and bodily experiences in relation to loss, grief, and mourning. It is also intended to function as a means of generating affective encounters for sharing, caring, and learning, through which bodily experience can be elevated among collectives as an aesthetic, pedagogical, and political act. The process of developing a script for mourning is also meant to generate multiple encounters to extend collective imaginations, through which a certain form of freedom can be experienced beyond any oppressive reality. “Script for Mourning” attempts to facilitate strategies to engage a group in a performative act, with a potential to work on a progressive script for further performative engagement that is sharable and adaptable among different groups and contexts.

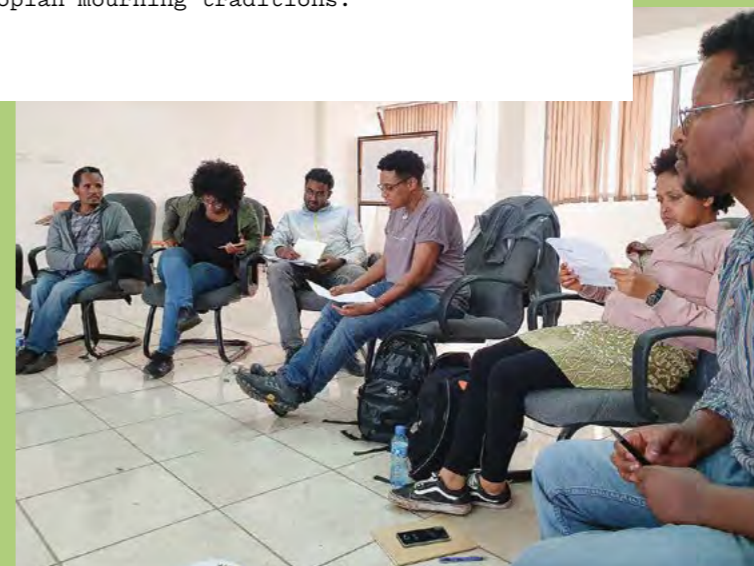
- (2) Frank B. Wilderson, *Red, White & Black: Cinema and the Structure of US Antagonisms* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 1-32.
- (3) Reverse script creation based on a certain form of performative engagement is not a simple summary or synopsis of the performance. See Adam Andrzejewski & Marta Zareba, “Theatrical Scripts,” *Rivista di estetica* 65 (2017): 177-94; doi: 10.4000/estetica.2169.

Activity

LAMENTATION POEM WRITING

The activity contains multiple exercises, and it is crucial to remember the value of discussion and reflection on each participant’s experience after the exercises. The exercise aims at generating layers of meaning for some words that are important for the discussion on specific contexts of dispossession, and extending the power of words to form lamentation poems that can facilitate an expression of loss, indignation, and grief. (4)

- Generate words related to violence, loss, grief, care, mourning, and struggle.
 - Discuss each word, and give layers of meaning that are relevant to the context.
 - Each member of the group takes one or more words and uses them as a guide to formulate a lamentation poem.
 - Collect the poems, and make a collage to form a single poem.
 - Choose a site, and perform the lamentation poem, reading in group.
- (4) Lamentation poems are a style of non-narrative poem expressing deep grief or sorrow over a personal loss. In the Amharic language, they are referred to as “Ye hazen engurguro,” and are counted among the popular expressions of loss and grief in Ethiopian mourning traditions.





Activity

VOCAL EXERCISE

This exercise facilitates an encounter with potential forms of expression that work well if they can be performed in public spaces or on sites of dispossession as an act of protest.

- Each participant develops a certain sound as an articulation of indignation, loss, grief, mourning, and protest.
- Each member trains the group with the specific sound they have come up with.

RITUAL-MAKING

The “Ritual-Making” exercise facilitates another layer of bodily experiences through negotiating with ghosts of violence and loss.(5)

- Discuss different mourning traditions, and select one mourning element from each of the following directions: sounds, words, sayings, gestures, objects, and natural elements.
- Form a mourning ritual by incorporating the different mourning elements stated above.
- Choose a site and perform the mourning ritual.

(5) Most cultures in Africa have mourning traditions involving rituals; in the Ethiopian context, mourning rituals are mainly seen as ways to communicate with the dead, and to honor, celebrate, and sustain the memory of the deceased.



Activity

MOURNING PERFORMANCE

This part of the activity facilitates mourning performances on sites of dispossession, to have a bodily experience with mourning.(6) Please consider the conditions of spaces before engaging in order to avoid unnecessary negotiations with the state.

- Discuss sites of dispossession (historical and contemporary conditions), and select one or more sites for a collective mourning performance.
- Use the previous exercises as a resource to formulate a collective mourning performance.
- Rehearse and collectively engage with the chosen site/s of dispossession through a group mourning performance.

(6) Involve gestures and movements that have different performative qualities. The project *Care & Become* has tried to further develop these performative elements as aesthetic and political acts.

Activity

REVERSE SCRIPTWRITING

This exercise uses reverse scriptwriting mainly based on the mourning performances that took place on the sites of dispossession in the previous exercise. “Reverse Scriptwriting” is an engagement of writing a story of an action or performance that already took place at a specific site. A reverse script does not describe what has happened; instead, it considers what has been experienced and imagined with all the possible factors and influences that the action or the performance embodied.

Before engaging with the main reverse scriptwriting activity, the following simple exercise can be done in pairs as an introduction. The intention of the exercise is to communicate with one’s partner through facial expressions, gestures, and movements, which then allow each individual to develop a story.

- Form pairs and locate them in the space for the exercise.
- Each individual communicates with her/his partner through facial expression.
- Each individual communicates with her/his partner through gestures.
- Each individual communicates with her/his partner through movements.
- Each individual takes time and writes a story using their understanding generated from their partner’s expressions during the exercise.
- Share the story with the group.

As a next step, form three groups; each group engages with writing a reverse script based on the mourning performance that was developed in the previous activity. Three suggestions to activate this exercise:

- What are the historical and contemporary conditions of the performed site of dispossession?
- What major protocols and strategies were used to form the mourning performance and why?
- What stories, bodily experiences, desires, and ideas were generated through performing the site?



ARTWORKS

- Brown, Trisha, artist. 1971. *Accumulation*. Choreography.
- Mawimbi, Alex (Ato Malinda), artist. 2013. *Mourning a Living Man*. Performance.
- Nkanga, Otobong, artist. 2012. *Contained Measures of Kolanut*. Mixed-media performance.
- Norment, Camille, artist. 2016. *Prime*. Haptic sound installation composed for benches and four voices.
- Wei Wei, Ai, artist. 1995–2017. *Study of Perspective*. Series of photographs.
- Wilcox, Noelle Awadallah Hui Niu & Mihret Kebede, artists. 2018. *An Intimate Exile*. Video, poetry, and dance.

STRUGGLES & PROTESTS

- Las Tesis, Las Tesis, *Un violador en tu camino* [The rapist is you], Chile (2019).
- *Hands Up, Don’t Shoot!* Ferguson, USA (2014).
- *Women in Black*, Israel (1988) and internationally.
- *Madres de Plaza de Mayo*, Buenos Aires, Argentina (1977–2006).

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

- Cobbina, Jennifer E. *Hands Up, Don’t Shoot: Why the Protests in Ferguson and Baltimore Matter, and How They Changed America*. New York: New York University Press, 2019.
- Kedhar, Anusha. “Hands Up! Don’t Shoot!”: Gesture, Choreography, and Protest in Ferguson.” *The Feminist Wire* (6 October 2014). Online at: thefeministwire.com/2014/10/protest-in-ferguson.
- Palacios, Margarita. *Radical Sociality: On Disobedience, Violence and Belonging*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- de Sousa Santos, Boaventura. *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide*. Boulder: Paradigm Press, 2016.
- Spatz, Ben. “Notes for Decolonizing Embodiment.” *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* 33, no. 2 (2019): 9–22. Doi: 10.1353/dtc.2019.0001.

CREDITS

Care & Become, by Berhanu Ashagrie Deribew. Mourning performances in public space, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2019. Collaborators: Berhanu Ashagrie, with Brook Teklehaimanot, Helen Zeru, Kassahun Hailu, Mihret Kebede, Martha Haile, Meron Hailu, Robel Temesgen, Tesfaye Bekele, and Zerihun Berhanu. Contributors: Ameneshewa Admassu, Dr. Elizabeth W. Giorgis, Julien Schmid, Lucie Strecker, Dr. Netsanet G. Michael, Dr. Surafel Wondimu, and Tassew Wondimu. Supporters: Agegnehu Adane, Eyob Kitaba, Ashenafi Mestika, Bekele Mekonnen, Desalegn Worku, Henok Melkamzer, Liya Girma, Meseret Hailu, and Emuye Majet. Documentation: Habtamu Gebremeskel. Produced with the support of FWF PEEK: “DisPossession: Post-Participatory Aesthetics and the Pedagogies of Land.”

AFTERWORD

A CRITICAL REFLECTION on the Contemporary Moment of the Global South

Elizabeth W. Giorgis

By reflecting on the multiple links between subjection and authority in the political and social realities of the Global South, *Despite Dispossession: An Activity Book* produces possibilities for new models of aesthetic imagining that can contribute to the shaping of a new humanist subjectivity. While the artists in this project crucially recognized the uncertainties of the futures of the South, their resolute pronouncements suggest myriad ways that these futures might unfold.

As the artists indicate in the introduction, their inspiration “came from recent work on epistemologies of the South: struggling to move away from (while residing in) a dominant form of Eurocentric knowledge production.”¹ They “aimed for an engagement with Indigenous and local knowledges put forth by and among different worlds. [...] looking for concepts responding to distinct realities in the Global South.”² They explored the collective and mutual imaginaries of citizenship and political life. They engaged with new political identities and subject positions that are continually shifting, multiple and transcendent. Though they each examined specific forms of de-centered identification, several crucial factors remained recurring and incessant.

The most significant and expansive narrative that the artists propose is the history of the subject in the Global South, which they articulate as complex and multi-layered—a position that can only be conceived through the historical consideration of race, gender, and class inequalities

both within and beyond the nation state. They interrogate the power of global capital that has particularly drawn distinctions and boundaries for who is included and who is not. Certainly, these limited membership rights are markedly glaring in the Global South and the artists of the Willful Weeds Research Group skillfully and imaginatively explore specific crises in distinctive sites. Significantly so when they critically examine the concept of “dispossession” that emanates from a progressively encroaching transnational economic network and infrastructure. As their activity book states, “[i]n the wake of brutal violence and devastating plunder, we asked ourselves: what are the stories we want to tell and retell within life worlds under the threat of extinction?”³

The different notions of dispossession that the artists bring forth is powerfully portrayed in each contribution. The shifting and ambiguous political economic conditions that the dispossession of land (or other forms of dispossession) initiate is making the meaning and practice of freedom and justice, as well as the exercise of political rights, increasingly ambiguous in our contemporary moment. Because of this, there is an urgent need to create alternative spaces of conversation and debate for all kinds of dispossession.

1 The Willful Weeds Research Group, “Dispossession Matters: An Invitation,” in this volume, 9.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., 10.

In the spirit of this critical deployment of dispossession, I would also like to invoke the context of contemporary Ethiopia, where an ongoing, diverse protest movement is shaking the foundations of the dominant political order. To what effect? The subjects of resistance have become incapable of extending their struggle to a transformative political life. Clearly new ideas about citizenship and belonging are being constructed in Ethiopia, formulated on ethnic-based geographies and identities. Territorial sovereignty has become an open question, and citizenship is being rethought not in relation to the sovereign nation state but according to multiple forms of belonging and identity. And, it is in this regard that present-day contestations around land allocation, claims, and rights significantly manifest. Certainly, the conflict between sovereignty and the compounded forms of citizenship is linked to the hegemony of the global political economy. In this regard, transnational capital's increasing control of our economies and our social lives has intensified systematic exclusions and have contributed to the formation of destabilized political identities.

Perhaps the Ethiopian experience can pose shared challenges to other contemporary contexts of dispossession and to definitions of citizenship rights and their complications in the Global South. For instance, until the end of 2019, Ethiopia had led the world in forced migration, with over 1.4 million people internally displaced (followed by Syria, with 1.2 million displaced people). Though the states of conflict are complex, disputes over borders, land allocations among ethnic groups, and ethnic membership and authenticity, were, among many others, causal factors for the recent escalation of displacements, violence, and dispossession. The systematic confiscation of land, conducted in cruel and inhuman ways, has forced an unprecedented amount of people to

become displaced. Exclusion by dispossession and displacement has consequently eroded equal citizenship rights.

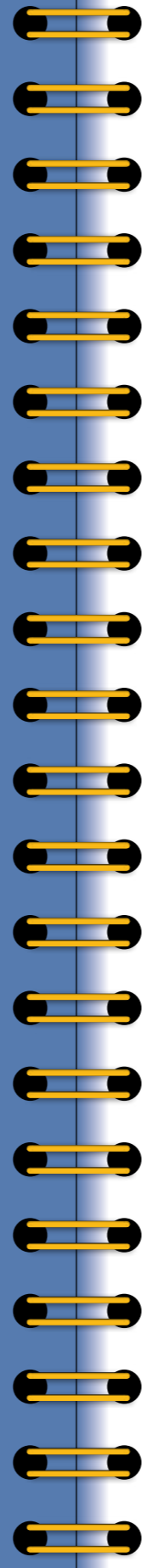
The massive, violent protests of 2015 set in motion the disintegration of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which had been in power since the fall of the military junta in 1991. The question of land rights was a pivotal catalyst that led to the waves of protest. Promising massive change, dissenting members from the same party took control of the state in 2017. Almost three years on, the new protagonists of power still employ the inciteful political vocabularies that helped them assume power in 2017. Yet, these vocabularies have increasingly become powerless as questions surrounding the dispossession of land and its broader legal implications to citizenship rights have not yet found redress, and the economic crisis continues to expand. The state is responding to this predicament with neoliberal economic endeavors that have resulted in perverse consequences for people in their everyday lives. Moreover, political communities are becoming more and more fragmented and are indirectly expediting the dangerous surge of identity politics in lieu of the politics and practices of dispossession.

Unfortunately, the political agents and activists who emerged in the past three years are attempting to confront the forms of injustice caused by land dispossession with little understanding of the coercive logic of neoliberal projects and their requisite brutality; the ongoing confiscation of land under duress—typically in the name of advancing public interest for development—is ultimately undermining human and civil rights. Certainly, belonging is constructed and negotiated through access and denial to what one considers one's land, and thus it is the insecurity of land tenure that has brought tension in civil and political life. The intellectual elite are also embroiled in an ideological chaos that

concentrates on the legitimacy (or lack thereof) of various ethnic-based boundaries, rather than the economic inequalities that are behind the ascent of ethnic-based internal demarcations that emanate from dispossession. Since the nature of neoliberal ideology and its relationship to social, economic, and cultural factors is sidelined, the actual determinants behind the present-day crisis of land claims and rights remains concealed. Instead, an entrenched form of identity politics attempts to address the quandary of inequalities that neoliberal economic policies continue to impose. Multiple sensibilities of nationalism have proliferated and the Ethiopian nation state as a fundamental framework to secure land claims and rights is thrown into doubt.

The politics and geography of global capital, as well as the forms of state repression that accompany capital's intensified expansion, necessitates a form of a mobilized global articulation such as these artists have attempted. They are inviting us to think about the urgency of the time. Indeed, the politics of urban geography, dispossession and displacement, hierarchies of citizenship, belonging and identity, and new undercurrents of inclusion and exclusion, are among the many factors that drive movements and struggles in the Global South. By primarily speaking to such conundrums in the postcolonial state, these artists are encouraging us to create a broader dialogue in which we can bring the collective experiences of the Global South into focus.

APPENDIX
WILLFUL WEED
PROTOCOL



Ultimately, an ethics of entanglement calls on political ecologists to be accountable for our political position by unlearning imperial epistemologies and making knowledge production a means of collective transformation.

— Juanita Sundberg, “Ethics, Entanglement, and Political Ecology”

Tool

PROTOCOL FOR WORKING TOGETHER

This working protocol is suggested by the members of the Willful Weeds Research Group with the intention that each group member contributes and enriches it. The proposed procedures are familiar to the group and are stated here with clarity and structure.

I. RESEARCH MEETINGS

1. FACILITATING RESEARCH MEETINGS

For each research meeting, two persons take on the responsibility to be the main organizers.

- They draft a detailed plan and determine the venues of our working days;
- They ensure continuity with the previous meeting, and make sure that pending matters are addressed;
- They facilitate communication both within the group and with the invited guests;
- They assign tasks for specific engagements before and during the meeting;
- They propose productive ways of stimulating, moderating, and exchanging feedback.

2. EACH MEETING STARTS OFF WITH

- Discussing the week's activity plan (distributed by the main organizers beforehand);
- Discussing the objectives of the activities;
- Determining the goal(s) of the general meeting;
- Distributing to-dos.

3. EACH MEETING ENDS WITH

- Feedback, reflection, and evaluation of the week;
- Discussing and drafting a rough plan for the next meeting;
- Distributing to-dos;
- Making a recorded sound summary recapitulating the main events/explorations (allowing, among others, those who missed the meeting to catch up).

4. BREAKS

When the main organizers plan a meeting, they can consider a half-day break in the middle of the week, which allows us to have moments to look back and forth with regards to the process.

5. MEETING VENUES

We mainly organize our meetings at the Academy. Although this might be convenient, the office atmosphere often brings the group down. To refresh the energy, we organize working sessions at other locations, inside or outside the Academy's compound activities. We do things such as mushroom picking, conversing while walking, telling stories in the woods, etc.

Tool

II. COMMUNICATION

1. EMAIL RESPONSE

So far, the group has been slow to respond to and engage in conversations via email. This tends to affect the sender's energy and slows down the communication process. With regards to basic information-based email questions, we agree to respond within two days.

2. DEADLINES

Throughout the process there are multiple reasons for us to delay the submission of research material. We want to put more effort into making timely submissions of material, and, at the same time, be more realistic when it comes to determining deadlines.

III. CONTRIBUTION

Within this common project, some members of the group contribute ideas, books, and art projects more actively, while others provide maintenance, logistics, and emotional support or enrich the setting with laughter and playfulness. This can be considered an effect of different personalities, people with different experiences and backgrounds being part of the group. Negotiating and reflecting on differences is crucial in collective work for these not to solidify into asymmetrical relations that destroy the foundation of the group dynamics. Recognizing each member's contribution is important, as is preserving an openness to address tensions, conflicts, and disagreements. In addition, we aim to become a group that is socially sensitive and able to skillfully read and understand each other beyond the verbal. This is a part of the group's process of care and maintenance.

1. COLLECTIVE RESEARCH
& WRITING

FIRMAMENT: The research's "firmament" is the common horizon that the project shares, as it is approached from different perspectives and geopolitical contexts. With concepts such as the abyssal line, good living/*buen vivir*, pluriverse, thinking/feeling, but also white innocence, ghosts, monsters, the fulgor, or ruins, the firmament provides the "knots" that hold together the project's elements. Therefore, it is important that each study identifies its own relation to the firmament and makes the connections clear both to the group members and to the future audience.

TOOLS: To achieve consistency in our collective writing, despite the individual differences and writing styles, we put forth guidelines for individual writings. Each group member is responsible to follow these guidelines as much as possible.

THREE-ING: Whenever there is a writing task that concerns our common project, we want to engage in a so-called "three-ing":

- The first person drafts the text;
- The second person reworks the draft;
- The third person finalizes the text.

Tool

2. INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH
& WRITING

Each member engages in a site-specific study; each member writes individually about this study. We write, share feedback, and then rewrite afterwards. Each member of the group can use the ideas of their writing for the purposes other than our common research project. However, in the case of using extracts from our common project, it is important to refer to us as a research group, FWF as the funder, and the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna as the host.

3. PRESENTATION

When there are presentations of the group members, we agree on considering the following points:

PREPARATION OF PRESENTATIONS: We learned from Eve Tuck that the deeper each of us dives into their research context while addressing the site with all its particularities and complexities, the more these elements can contribute to the overall project. Presentations become richer when they make explicit key questions, aims, concepts, and methods, and, at the same time, allow for vulnerability and address dilemmas, challenges, and impossibilities. The group can then identify the "knots" of connectedness within the collective research and work further on collectively strengthening these "knots."

FOCUSED FEEDBACK: For the critical feedback, we have assigned one group member for each presentation to moderate feedback sessions. This focused feedback may or may not be given on the spot since it may require further additional information or take more time to spell out the feedback.

CRITICISM: Working effectively as a group requires concern for each other. This may not be easy to maintain all the time, but it's important to put effort into doing so. We aim to genuinely and critically reflect upon each other's work. Criticism might highlight

blind spots, contradictions, ethical dilemmas, and conflictive positions; it is necessary for the project to strengthen and flourish. In this sense, criticism is an exercise of generosity and intellectual commitment. However, it is important to keep criticism constructive. To do so, it might be helpful for the person who offers criticism to first check one's own emotional responses before speaking, maybe write down notes, and expand them to avoid projecting one's expectations or anxieties onto others.

ALLOCATING TIME: The time for each presentation can range according to its content. It is productive to think that the time needed for the presentation may possibly vary from person to person, according to the materials and ideas available at a time. Considering the above, it is beneficial to allocate a minimum and maximum amount of time for each presentation, allowing the individual to decide how much time is needed for the presentation within the proposed range of time.

TAKING NOTES: Because each individual case study carries its own specificity in terms of history and language, the person taking notes might feel unfamiliar with the references, including names, terms, or some specific words. It is important to check notes and minutes for misunderstandings.

4. FOCUSED ENGAGEMENT

In our group discussions, we often get carried away, sometimes finding a new path, sometimes getting lost. At such points, we need to come back to the question about finalizing the project. Since each group member is working on their projects and has lots of materials to work on, we need one person with a strong stand to direct and redirect all research activities and materials towards the final outcome. This task is usually performed by the project's leader, who has an overview of each individual site study and simultaneously of the general structure of the project.

Tool

IV. SUPPORT

1. SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER

The ways in which group members relate to each other and to what extent they are willing to support one another has a huge impact on the collective spirit and engagement. Therefore, if the group members need support with regards to their research, they should be able to ask for it either within the group or individually.

2. GROUP SPIRIT

A traditional African saying proposes “I am, because you are—let me add, so that we become.” If everyone genuinely submits to such an understanding and values contributions from members of the group, the collective spirit will elevate in many ways.

3. GROUP EXERCISES

We usually meet for our work in Room #A4239A, sitting around the big table and talking. But there are many other ways to engage with each other during the week-long meetings. Group exercises can be developed from the different tools that each group member has been working on. Each member of the group can propose small exercises, making the material available for the group.

4. MAINTENANCE RELATIONSHIPS

The group often has lunch, but eating together at the canteen in the Academy is not a form of socializing. Getting together outside the research context framework can nourish our energy and relationships beyond the colleagues. Considering that, cooking together or going out for food and drinks should be included in the weekly planning of our meetings.

Activity

WHAT IF?

Some activities for working groups temporarily immobilized by tensions, doubt, and impossibilities:

- Identify the strength of the group.
- Go for a walk.
- Do a free-writing exercise on possible sources of the impasse.
- Prepare a meal together with everybody contributing an ingredient.
- Make a collective playlist of favorite songs in different languages avoiding English.
- Teach each other one dance move.

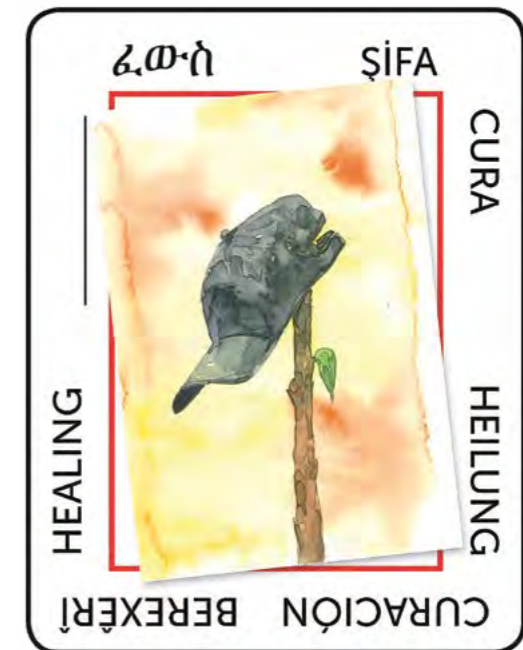
CARDS SECTION

DESPITE DISPOSSESSION

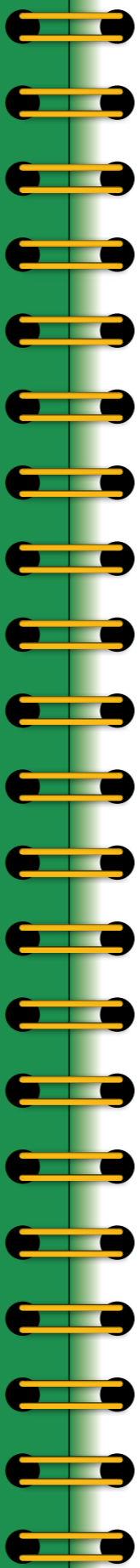
Activity Cards

The Willful Weeds Research Group created three sets of cards intended to initiate storytelling through fictionalization: “The Association Cards for Living in Ruins,” “Character Cards,” and “Condition Cards.” The words and images on the cards reference landscapes, ghosts, ancestral worlds, animals, people, and institutions inspired by the different encounters in our research sites. It is our hope that these

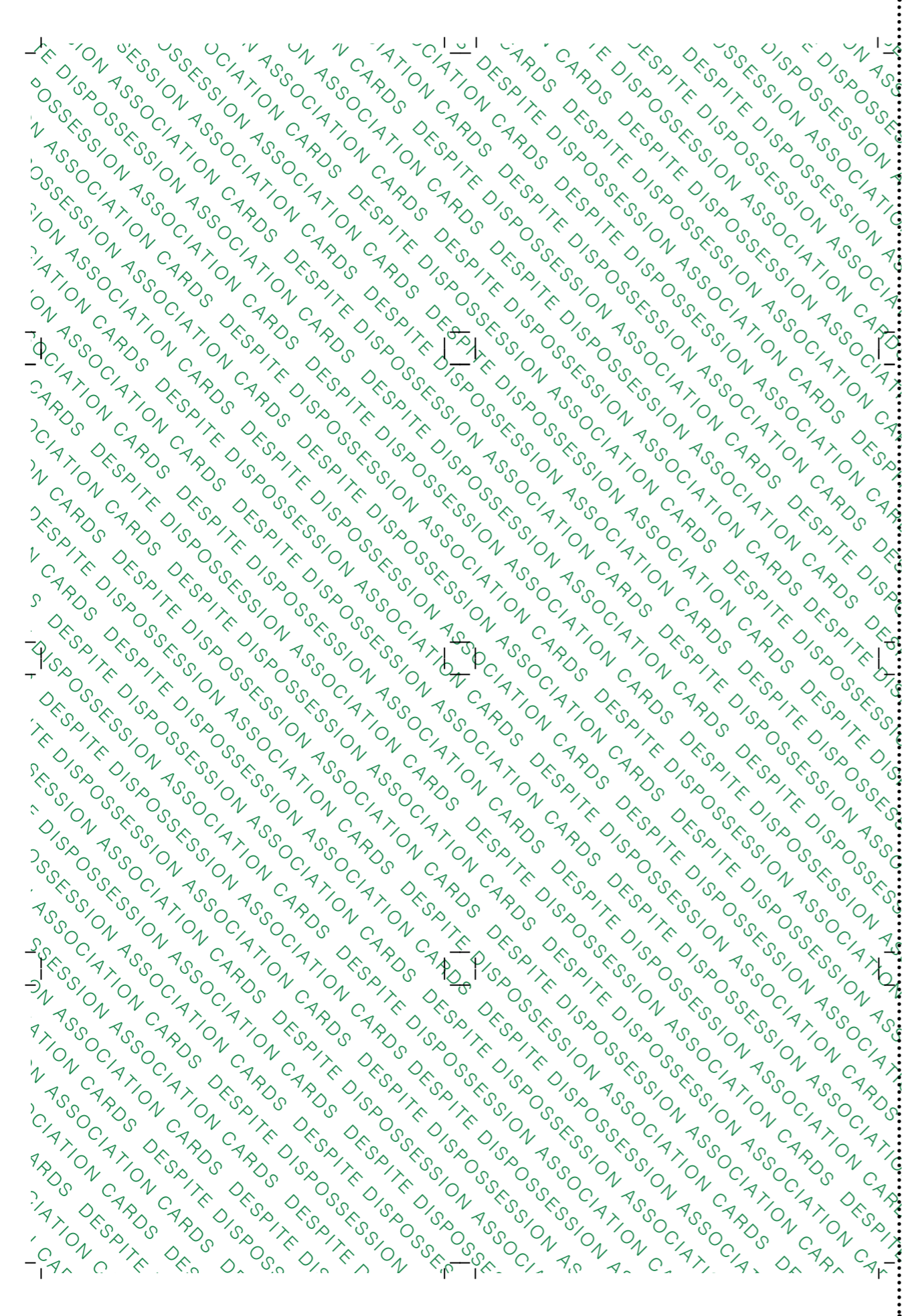
cards expand the capacity to listen and respond to sites of dispossession and spark imagination of different, more desirable worlds. To make use of these cards, we propose a series of activities.¹ We invite you, dear reader, to become a player—take our cards and make them your own, use them to speculate, initiate conversations, stimulate and anticipate different narratives, descriptions, and stories.



¹ See İpek Hamzaoğlu's Activities in this volume on pp. 108, 109, 111, 115, 118; also Berhanu Ashagrie's Activities on pp. 182–84 in this volume.







σσοήηδ YAKINLIK

AFINIDADE ANZIEHUNG

AFFINITY

AFINIDAD TESİB

አበው ATA

ANTEPASSADO VORFAHREN

ANCESTOR

ANCESTRO BINEMAL

ራሳን ማስተዳደር ÖZERKLİK

AUTONOMIA UNABHÄNGIGKEIT

AUTONOMY

AUTONOMÍA XUDMÜXTARİ

ረጋታ SAKİN

CALMA RUHE

CALM

CALMA ARAM

ጉብዝና CESARET

COURAGE _____

CORAGEM _____

MUT _____

VALENTÍA DILÈRI

ስንጥቅ ÇATLAK

CRACK _____

FENDA _____

RISS _____

DERZ _____

GRIETA _____

ድላጎን ARZU

DESIRE _____

DESEJO _____

VERLANGEN _____

DESEO DAXWAS

ጸያፌ NEFRET

DISGUST _____

REPUGNÂNCIA _____

EKEL _____

BİZ _____

DISGUSTO _____

ትኩሳት ATEŞ

FEVER FEBRE

TA FIEBRE

FIEBER

የወደፊት GELECEK

FUTURANTE ZUKÜNFTIGKEIT

FUTURITY

FUTURO DAHATU

ኅመቅ DEDİKODU

GOSSIP BISBILHOTICE

GALGOT CHISME

KLATSCH

ረዕዮ ŞİFA

HEALING CURA

BEREXËRI CURACIÓN

HEILUNG

HC TOHUM

SEED

SEMENTE

SAMEN

TOV SEMILLA

σπνζλñ RUH

SPIRITS

ESPÍRITO

GEIST

RIH ESPÍRITU

ታሪክ ÖYKÜ

STORY

HISTÓRIA

GESCHICHTE

ÇİROK HISTORIA

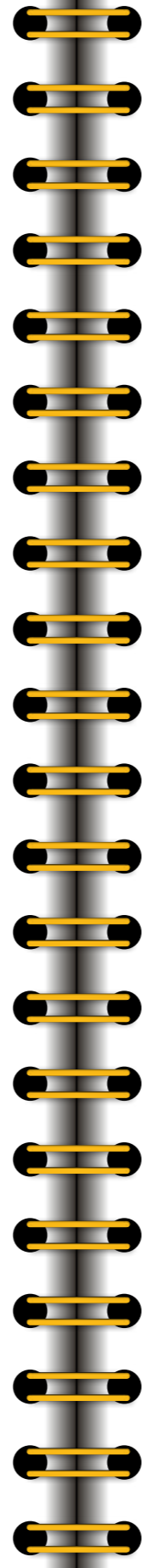
እንግዳ GARİP

STRANGE

ESTRANHO

MERKWÜRDIG

SEYR EXTRAÑO





ARTIFICIAL
INTELLEGENCE

DESERT

POLITICIAN

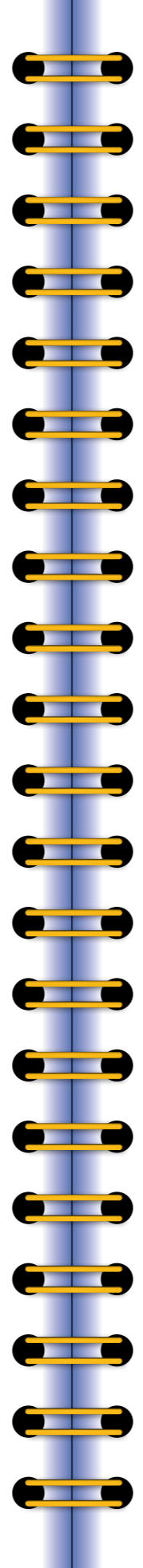
THE ONLY
SURVIVOR

HEALER

WEED

MOON

VIRUS



TYRANT

TIME
TRAVELER

GHOST

ALIEN

AVENGER

MONSTER

ARCHIVIST

NURSE



ZOMBIE
APOCALYPSE

PEOPLE CANNOT
GET PREGNANT
ANYMORE

ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE
TAKES INITIATIVE
FOR PLANET'S
SUSTAINABILITY

ALL WATER
IS TOXIC

THE WHOLE CITY
IS A PRISON

THERE ARE
NO BORDERS

NUCLEAR
CATASTROPHE

AIR TRANSMITTED
VIRUS OUTBREAK

DESPITE DISPOSSESSION
An Activity Book

CO-EDITORS

Anette Baldauf, Berhanu Ashagrie
Deribew, Sílvia das Fadas, Naomi
Rincón Gallardo, İpek Hamzaoglu,
Janine Jembere, and Rojda Tuğrul
(Willful Weeds Research Group)

CONSULTING & MANAGING
EDITORS

Anna-Sophie Springer
& Etienne Turpin

DESIGN

Wolfgang Hückel & Katharina Tauer
with K. Verlag

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS

Ginny Rose Davies,
Megan Ricca

PRINTING & BINDING

Tallinna Raamatutrükikoja OÜ,
Tallinn, Estonia

© 2021, the co-editors, each author,
artist, designer, and the publisher

Cover Image: © Naomi Rincón Gallardo,
Opossum Resilience.
Photo by Claudia Lopez Terroso, 2019

PUBLISHED BY

K. Verlag
(Anna-Sophie Springer)
Herzbergstr. 40-43
10365 Berlin, Germany
info@k-verlag.org
k-verlag.org

K.

ISBN 978-3-947858-16-3

Freely available at the institutional
repository of the Academy of Fine
Arts Vienna as well as in the OAPEN
Library online via doi.org/10.21937
/9783947858163.

This publication is the result of the
research project “DisPossession:
Post-Participatory Aesthetics and
the Pedagogy of Land” at the
Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. It was
made possible through funding by
the Austrian Science Fund (FWF),
project no. AR471, and co-funded
by Fundação para a Ciência e a
Tecnologia (FCT), Portugal.

FWF

Der Wissenschaftsfonds.



]a[academy of fine arts vienna

FCT Fundação
para a Ciência
e a Tecnologia



K. Verlag and the editors thank all
copyright owners for granting per-
mission to use their material. While
every effort has been made to obtain
all necessary permissions and to
give proper credits, please contact
info@k-verlag.org in the event of
an oversight.

• Adnan, Etel. *Arab Apocalypse*. Sausalito: The Post-Apollo Press, 1989.

— *There: In the Light and the Darkness of the Self and of the Other*. Sausalito: The Post-Apollo Press, 1997.

• Ahmed, Sara. *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.

• Akinci, Zeynep S. & Pelin Tan. "Waterdams as Disposition: Ecology, Security, Colonization." In *Climates: Architecture and the Planetary Imaginary*. Edited by J. Graham. New York: Columbia Books on Architecture and the City, 2016. 142–49.

• Alfred, Taiiaka G. *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.

• Al-Maria, Sophia. *Virgin with a Memory: The Exhibition Tie-in*. Manchester: Cornerhouse, 2014.

• Altamirano-Jiménez, Isabel. "The State Is Not a Savior: Indigenous Law, Gender and the Neoliberal State in Oaxaca." In *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism*. Edited by J. Green. Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 2017. 215–33.

• Andrzejewski, Adam & Marta Zareba. "Theatrical Scripts." *Rivista di estetica*, no. 65 (2017): 177–94. Doi: 10.4000/estetica.2169.

• Anzaldúa, Gloria E. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2012.

• Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1985.

• Báez-Jorge, Felix. "La vagina dentada en la mitología de Mesoamérica." *Revista de Antropología Experimental*, no. 10 (2010): 25–33.

• Barad, Karen. *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.

— "Nature's Queer Performativity." *Kvinder, Kan & Forskning*, no. 1–2 (2012): 25–53. Doi: 10.7146/kkf.v01i1-2.28067.

— "Diffracting Diffraction: Cutting Together-Apart." *Parallax* 20, no. 3 (2014): 168–87. Doi: 10.1080/13534645.2014.927623.

• Baldauf, Anette, Stefan Gruber, Moira Hille, Anette Krauss, Vladimir Miller, Mara Verlič, Hong-Kai Wang, and Julia Wieger (eds.). *Spaces of Commoning: Artistic Research and the Utopia of the Everyday*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016.

• Bauer, Petra & Dan Kidner. *Working Together: Notes on British Film Collectives in the 1970s*. Southend-on-Sea: Focal Point Gallery, 2013.

• Bauman, Zygmunt. *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000.

• Belcourt, Billy-Ray. "A Poltergeist Manifesto." *Feral Feminisms, Feral Theory*, no. 6 (2016): 22–32.

• Benjamin, Walter. "Excavation and Memory." In *Selected*

Writings, vol. 2 (1931–1934). Edited by M.W. Jennings, H. Eiland, and G. Smith. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1932.

• Berthon, Rémi, Yilmaz Erdal, Mashkour S. Mashkour, and Gülriz Kozbe. "Buried with Turtles: The Symbolic Role of the Euphrates Soft-Shell Turtle (*Rafetus Euphraticus*) in Mesopotamia." *Antiquity* 90, no. 349 (2016): 111–25. Doi: 10.15184/aqy.2015.196.

• Bhandar, Brenna & Davina Bhandar. "Cultures of Disposition: Rights, Status and Identities." *darkmatter in the ruins of imperial culture*, no. 14. "Reflections on Disposition: Critical Feminism" (2016): 1–16. Online at: darkmatter101.org/site/2016/05/16/cultures-of-disposition.

• Black, Hannah. "Witch-hunt." *TANK Magazine* 8, no. 11 (2017). Online at: tankmagazine.com /issue-70/features/hannah-black.

• Boal, Augusto. *Games for Actors and Non-Actors*. London and New York: Routledge, 1992.

• Bonney, Sean. *Letters Against the Firmament*. London: Enitharmon Press, 2015.

— *Our Death*. Oakland: Commune Editions, 2019.

• Börjel, Ida. *Maximum Ca' Canny the Sabotage Manuals*. Oakland: AK Press, 2016.

• Bresson, Robert. *Notes on Cinematography*. New York: Urizen Books, 1977.

• Buffavand, Lucie. "The Land Does Not Like Them: Contesting Disposition in Cosmological Terms in Mela, South-West Ethiopia." *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 10, no. 3 (2016): 476–93. Doi: 0.1080/17531055.2016.1266194.

• Butler, Judith. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2006.

— *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2009.

• Butler, Judith & Athena Athanasiou. *Disposition: The Performative in the Political*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013.

• Butler, Octavia E. *Parable of the Sower*. New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2000.

• Cajete, Gregory. *Look to the Mountain: An Ecology of Indigenous Education*. Skyland: Kivaki Press, 1994.

• Careri, Francesco. *Walkscapes: Walking as an Aesthetic Practice/El andar como práctica estética*. Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gili, 2002.

• Chung, Jiwon & Mariana Leal Ferreira. *Give Wings to Your Imagination and Change the World: Acting for Indigenous Rights*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Human Rights Center, 2013. Online at: 1.um.edu/humanrts/edumat /hreduseries/TB7/Chapter%203 %20P15-P28.pdf.

• Cohen, Jeffrey J. *Monster Theory*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

• das Fadas, Sílvia. *Auguries for a Non-Hierarchical Framing and Flourishing*: a volume in the series "Die Frau mit 50 Füßen." Edited by Cristina Gómez Barrio & Wolfgang Mayer. Stuttgart: Akademie der Bildenden Künste, 2019.

• de Sousa Santos, Boaventura. *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2014.

• Debuysere, Stoffel. *Figures of Dissent: Cinema of Politics / Politics of Cinema*. Ghent: Mer. Paper Kunststhal, 2016.

• Debuysere, Stoffel & Elias Grootaers. *Of Sea and Soil: The Cinema of Tsuchimoto Noriaki and Ogawa Shinsuke*. Ghent: Sabzian, Courtisane and Cinematek, 2019.

• Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2014.

• Escobar, Arturo. "Thinking-Feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies." *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 11, no. 1 (2016): 11–32. Doi: 10.11156/aibr.110102e.

• Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. Small Axe 12, no. 2 (2008): 1–14. Online at: muse.jhu.edu /article/241115.

• Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1961/63.

• Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. New York: Autonomedia, 2004.

— *Witches, Witch-Hunting and Women*. Oakland: PM Press, 2018.

• Foreman, Dave (ed.). *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*. Chico: Abzjug Press, 1985.

• Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London and New York: Continuum, 1970.

— "The Importance of the Act of Reading." *Journal of Education* 165, no. 1 (1983): 5–11.

• Galindo, María & Mujeres Creando. "Political, Feminist Constitution of the State: The Impossible Country We Build as Women." *Hemispheric Institute E-misérica Decolonial Gesture* 11, no. 1 (2014). Online at: archive.hemisphericinstitute .org/hemi/en/emiserica-111 -decolonial-gesture/galindo.

• Gaztambide-Fernández, Ruben. "Decolonization and the Pedagogy of Solidarity: Decolonization." *Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 41–67.

• Gibson-Graham, J.K. *A Post-capitalist Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

• Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

• Gordon, Avery F. *Keeping Good Time: Reflections on Knowledge, Power and People*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004.

— *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

— *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.

• Grande, Sandy. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014.

• Guzmán López, Federico. "Rostros del despojo en Zacatecas." *Observatorio del Desarrollo* 2, no. 6 (2013): 49–53.

• Debuysere, Stoffel & Elias Grootaers. *Of Sea and Soil: The Cinema of Tsuchimoto Noriaki and Ogawa Shinsuke*. Ghent: Sabzian, Courtisane and Cinematek, 2019.

• Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2014.

• Escobar, Arturo. "Thinking-Feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies." *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 11, no. 1 (2016): 11–32. Doi: 10.11156/aibr.110102e.

• Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. Small Axe 12, no. 2 (2008): 1–14. Online at: muse.jhu.edu /article/241115.

• Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1961/63.

• Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. New York: Autonomedia, 2004.

— *Witches, Witch-Hunting and Women*. Oakland: PM Press, 2018.

• Foreman, Dave (ed.). *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*. Chico: Abzjug Press, 1985.

• Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London and New York: Continuum, 1970.

— "The Importance of the Act of Reading." *Journal of Education* 165, no. 1 (1983): 5–11.

• Galindo, María & Mujeres Creando. "Political, Feminist Constitution of the State: The Impossible Country We Build as Women." *Hemispheric Institute E-misérica Decolonial Gesture* 11, no. 1 (2014). Online at: archive.hemisphericinstitute .org/hemi/en/emiserica-111 -decolonial-gesture/galindo.

• Gaztambide-Fernández, Ruben. "Decolonization and the Pedagogy of Solidarity: Decolonization." *Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 41–67.

• Gibson-Graham, J.K. *A Post-capitalist Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

• Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

• Gordon, Avery F. *Keeping Good Time: Reflections on Knowledge, Power and People*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004.

— *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

— *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.

• Grande, Sandy. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014.

• Guzmán López, Federico. "Rostros del despojo en Zacatecas." *Observatorio del Desarrollo* 2, no. 6 (2013): 49–53.

• Debuysere, Stoffel & Elias Grootaers. *Of Sea and Soil: The Cinema of Tsuchimoto Noriaki and Ogawa Shinsuke*. Ghent: Sabzian, Courtisane and Cinematek, 2019.

• Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2014.

• Escobar, Arturo. "Thinking-Feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies." *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 11, no. 1 (2016): 11–32. Doi: 10.11156/aibr.110102e.

• Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. Small Axe 12, no. 2 (2008): 1–14. Online at: muse.jhu.edu /article/241115.

• Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1961/63.

• Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. New York: Autonomedia, 2004.

— *Witches, Witch-Hunting and Women*. Oakland: PM Press, 2018.

• Foreman, Dave (ed.). *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*. Chico: Abzjug Press, 1985.

• Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London and New York: Continuum, 1970.

— "The Importance of the Act of Reading." *Journal of Education* 165, no. 1 (1983): 5–11.

• Galindo, María & Mujeres Creando. "Political, Feminist Constitution of the State: The Impossible Country We Build as Women." *Hemispheric Institute E-misérica Decolonial Gesture* 11, no. 1 (2014). Online at: archive.hemisphericinstitute .org/hemi/en/emiserica-111 -decolonial-gesture/galindo.

• Gaztambide-Fernández, Ruben. "Decolonization and the Pedagogy of Solidarity: Decolonization." *Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 41–67.

• Gibson-Graham, J.K. *A Post-capitalist Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

• Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

• Gordon, Avery F. *Keeping Good Time: Reflections on Knowledge, Power and People*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004.

— *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

— *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.

• Grande, Sandy. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014.

• Guzmán López, Federico. "Rostros del despojo en Zacatecas." *Observatorio del Desarrollo* 2, no. 6 (2013): 49–53.

• Debuysere, Stoffel & Elias Grootaers. *Of Sea and Soil: The Cinema of Tsuchimoto Noriaki and Ogawa Shinsuke*. Ghent: Sabzian, Courtisane and Cinematek, 2019.

• Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2014.

• Escobar, Arturo. "Thinking-Feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies." *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 11, no. 1 (2016): 11–32. Doi: 10.11156/aibr.110102e.

• Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. Small Axe 12, no. 2 (2008): 1–14. Online at: muse.jhu.edu /article/241115.

• Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1961/63.

• Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. New York: Autonomedia, 2004.

— *Witches, Witch-Hunting and Women*. Oakland: PM Press, 2018.

• Foreman, Dave (ed.). *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*. Chico: Abzjug Press, 1985.

• Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London and New York: Continuum, 1970.

— "The Importance of the Act of Reading." *Journal of Education* 165, no. 1 (1983): 5–11.

• Galindo, María & Mujeres Creando. "Political, Feminist Constitution of the State: The Impossible Country We Build as Women." *Hemispheric Institute E-misérica Decolonial Gesture* 11, no. 1 (2014). Online at: archive.hemisphericinstitute .org/hemi/en/emiserica-111 -decolonial-gesture/galindo.

• Gaztambide-Fernández, Ruben. "Decolonization and the Pedagogy of Solidarity: Decolonization." *Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 41–67.

• Gibson-Graham, J.K. *A Post-capitalist Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

• Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

• Gordon, Avery F. *Keeping Good Time: Reflections on Knowledge, Power and People*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004.

— *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

— *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.

• Grande, Sandy. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014.

• Guzmán López, Federico. "Rostros del despojo en Zacatecas." *Observatorio del Desarrollo* 2, no. 6 (2013): 49–53.

• Debuysere, Stoffel & Elias Grootaers. *Of Sea and Soil: The Cinema of Tsuchimoto Noriaki and Ogawa Shinsuke*. Ghent: Sabzian, Courtisane and Cinematek, 2019.

• Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2014.

• Escobar, Arturo. "Thinking-Feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies." *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 11, no. 1 (2016): 11–32. Doi: 10.11156/aibr.110102e.

• Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. Small Axe 12, no. 2 (2008): 1–14. Online at: muse.jhu.edu /article/241115.

• Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1961/63.

• Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. New York: Autonomedia, 2004.

— *Witches, Witch-Hunting and Women*. Oakland: PM Press, 2018.

• Foreman, Dave (ed.). *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*. Chico: Abzjug Press, 1985.

• Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London and New York: Continuum, 1970.

— "The Importance of the Act of Reading." *Journal of Education* 165, no. 1 (1983): 5–11.

• Galindo, María & Mujeres Creando. "Political, Feminist Constitution of the State: The Impossible Country We Build as Women." *Hemispheric Institute E-misérica Decolonial Gesture* 11, no. 1 (2014). Online at: archive.hemisphericinstitute .org/hemi/en/emiserica-111 -decolonial-gesture/galindo.

• Gaztambide-Fernández, Ruben. "Decolonization and the Pedagogy of Solidarity: Decolonization." *Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 41–67.

• Gibson-Graham, J.K. *A Post-capitalist Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

• Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

• Gordon, Avery F. *Keeping Good Time: Reflections on Knowledge, Power and People*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004.

— *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

— *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.

• Grande, Sandy. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014.

• Guzmán López, Federico. "Rostros del despojo en Zacatecas." *Observatorio del Desarrollo* 2, no. 6 (2013): 49–53.

• Debuysere, Stoffel & Elias Grootaers. *Of Sea and Soil: The Cinema of Tsuchimoto Noriaki and Ogawa Shinsuke*. Ghent: Sabzian, Courtisane and Cinematek, 2019.

• Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2014.

• Escobar, Arturo. "Thinking-Feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies." *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 11, no. 1 (2016): 11–32. Doi: 10.11156/aibr.110102e.

• Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. Small Axe 12, no. 2 (2008): 1–14. Online at: muse.jhu.edu /article/241115.

• Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1961/63.

• Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. New York: Autonomedia, 2004.

— *Witches, Witch-Hunting and Women*. Oakland: PM Press, 2018.

• Foreman, Dave (ed.). *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*. Chico: Abzjug Press, 1985.

• Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London and New York: Continuum, 1970.

— "The Importance of the Act of Reading." *Journal of Education* 165, no. 1 (1983): 5–11.

• Galindo, María & Mujeres Creando. "Political, Feminist Constitution of the State: The Impossible Country We Build as Women." *Hemispheric Institute E-misérica Decolonial Gesture* 11, no. 1 (2014). Online at: archive.hemisphericinstitute .org/hemi/en/emiserica-111 -decolonial-gesture/galindo.

• Gaztambide-Fernández, Ruben. "Decolonization and the Pedagogy of Solidarity: Decolonization." *Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 41–67.

• Gibson-Graham, J.K. *A Post-capitalist Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

• Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

• Gordon, Avery F. *Keeping Good Time: Reflections on Knowledge, Power and People*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004.

— *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

— *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.

• Grande, Sandy. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014.

• Guzmán López, Federico. "Rostros del despojo en Zacatecas." *Observatorio del Desarrollo* 2, no. 6 (2013): 49–53.

• Debuysere, Stoffel & Elias Grootaers. *Of Sea and Soil: The Cinema of Tsuchimoto Noriaki and Ogawa Shinsuke*. Ghent: Sabzian, Courtisane and Cinematek, 2019.

• Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2014.

• Escobar, Arturo. "Thinking-Feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies." *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 11, no. 1 (2016): 11–32. Doi: 10.11156/aibr.110102e.

• Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. Small Axe 12, no. 2 (2008): 1–14. Online at: muse.jhu.edu /article/241115.

• Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1961/63.

• Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. New York: Autonomedia, 2004.

— *Witches, Witch-Hunting and Women*. Oakland: PM Press, 2018.

• Foreman, Dave (ed.). *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*. Chico: Abzjug Press, 1985.

• Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London and New York: Continuum, 1970.

— "The Importance of the Act of Reading." *Journal of Education* 165, no. 1 (1983): 5–11.

• Galindo, María & Mujeres Creando. "Political, Feminist Constitution of the State: The Impossible Country We Build as Women." *Hemispheric Institute E-misérica Decolonial Gesture* 11, no. 1 (2014). Online at: archive.hemisphericinstitute .org/hemi/en/emiserica-111 -decolonial-gesture/galindo.

• Gaztambide-Fernández, Ruben. "Decolonization and the Pedagogy of Solidarity: Decolonization." *Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 41–67.

• Gibson-Graham, J.K. *A Post-capitalist Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

• Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

• Gordon, Avery F. *Keeping Good Time: Reflections on Knowledge, Power and People*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004.

— *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

— *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.

• Grande, Sandy. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014.

• Guzmán López, Federico. "Rostros del despojo en Zacatecas." *Observatorio del Desarrollo* 2, no. 6 (2013): 49–53.

• Debuysere, Stoffel & Elias Grootaers. *Of Sea and Soil: The Cinema of Tsuchimoto Noriaki and Ogawa Shinsuke*. Ghent: Sabzian, Courtisane and Cinematek, 2019.

• Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2014.

• Escobar, Arturo. "Thinking-Feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies." *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 11, no. 1 (2016): 11–32. Doi: 10.11156/aibr.110102e.

• Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. Small Axe 12, no. 2 (2008): 1–14. Online at: muse.jhu.edu /article/241115.

• Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1961/63.

• Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. New York: Autonomedia, 2004.

— *Witches, Witch-Hunting and Women*. Oakland: PM Press, 2018.

• Foreman, Dave (ed.). *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*. Chico: Abzjug Press, 1985.

• Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London and New York: Continuum, 1970.

— "The Importance of the Act of Reading." *Journal of Education* 165, no. 1 (1983): 5–11.

• Galindo, María & Mujeres Creando. "Political, Feminist Constitution of the State: The Impossible Country We Build as Women." *Hemispheric Institute E-misérica Decolonial Gesture* 11, no. 1 (2014). Online at: archive.hemisphericinstitute .org/hemi/en/emiserica-111 -decolonial-gesture/galindo.

• Gaztambide-Fernández, Ruben. "Decolonization and the Pedagogy of Solidarity: Decolonization." *Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 41–67.

• Gibson-Graham, J.K. *A Post-capitalist Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

• Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

• Gordon, Avery F. *Keeping Good Time: Reflections on Knowledge, Power and People*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004.

— *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

— *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.

• Grande, Sandy. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014.

• Guzmán López, Federico. "Rostros del despojo en Zacatecas." *Observatorio del Desarrollo* 2, no. 6 (2013): 49–53.

• Debuysere, Stoffel & Elias Grootaers. *Of Sea and Soil: The Cinema of Tsuchimoto Noriaki and Ogawa Shinsuke*. Ghent: Sabzian, Courtisane and Cinematek, 2019.

• Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2014.

• Escobar, Arturo. "Thinking-Feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies." *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 11, no. 1 (2016): 11–32. Doi: 10.11156/aibr.110102e.

• Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. Small Axe 12, no. 2 (2008): 1–14. Online at: muse.jhu.edu /article/241115.

• Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1961/63.

• Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. New York: Autonomedia, 2004.

— *Witches, Witch-Hunting and Women*. Oakland: PM Press, 2018.

• Foreman, Dave (ed.). *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*. Chico: Abzjug Press, 1985.

• Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London and New York: Continuum, 1970.

— "The Importance of the Act of Reading." *Journal of Education* 165, no. 1 (1983): 5–11.

• Galindo, María & Mujeres Creando. "Political, Feminist Constitution of the State: The Impossible Country We Build as Women." *Hemispheric Institute E-misérica Decolonial Gesture* 11, no. 1 (2014). Online at: archive.hemisphericinstitute .org/hemi/en/emiserica-111 -decolonial-gesture/galindo.

• Gaztambide-Fernández, Ruben. "Decolonization and the Pedagogy of Solidarity: Decolonization." *Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 41–67.

• Gibson-Graham, J.K. *A Post-capitalist Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

• Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

• Gordon, Avery F. *Keeping Good Time: Reflections on Knowledge, Power and People*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004.

— *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

— *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.

• Grande, Sandy. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014.

• Guzmán López, Federico. "Rostros del despojo en Zacatecas." *Observatorio del Desarrollo* 2, no. 6 (2013): 49–53.

• Debuysere, Stoffel & Elias Grootaers. *Of Sea and Soil: The Cinema of Tsuchimoto Noriaki and Ogawa Shinsuke*. Ghent: Sabzian, Courtisane and Cinematek, 2019.

• Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2014.

• Escobar, Arturo. "Thinking-Feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies." *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 11, no. 1 (2016): 11–32. Doi: 10.11156/aibr.110102e.

• Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. Small Axe 12, no. 2 (2008): 1–14. Online at: muse.jhu.edu /article/241115.

• Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press, 1961/63.

• Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation*. New York: Autonomedia, 2004.

— *Witches, Witch-Hunting and Women*. Oakland: PM Press, 2018.

• Foreman, Dave (ed.). *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*. Chico: Abzjug Press, 1985.

• Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London and New York: Continuum, 1970.

— "The Importance of the Act of Reading." *Journal of Education* 165, no. 1 (1983): 5–11.

• Galindo, María & Mujeres Creando. "Political, Feminist Constitution of the State: The Impossible Country We Build as Women." *Hemispheric Institute E-misérica Decolonial Gesture* 11, no. 1 (2014). Online at: archive.hemisphericinstitute .org/hemi/en/emiserica-111 -decolonial-gesture/galindo.

• Gaztambide-Fernández, Ruben. "Decolonization and the Pedagogy of Solidarity: Decolonization." *Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 41–67.

• Gibson-Graham, J.K. *A Post-capitalist Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

• Gómez-Barris, Macarena. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

• Gordon, Avery F. *Keeping Good Time: Reflections on Knowledge, Power and People*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2004.

— *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

— *The Hawthorn Archive: Letters from the Utopian Margins*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2018.

• Grande, Sandy. *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014.

• Guzmán López, Federico. "Rostros del despojo en Zacatecas." *Observatorio del Desarrollo* 2, no. 6 (2013): 49–53.

As transnational extractivism, neo-fascist politics, and economies of abandonment and disposability expand around the world, can we facilitate situated practices of storytelling and worldmaking that enliven futures propelled by the forces of indignation, desire, and relationality? *Despite Dispossession: An Activity Book* extends an invitation to restore and reinvent bonds of reciprocity with the land, humans, and non-humans, while envisioning transformative and shared horizons.

This collaborative endeavor takes as its point of departure the contested realities and public struggles of the dispossessed. Bringing together seven site-sensitive engagements, the contributors develop their artistic works, as well as speculative tools and activities, to conjure worlds to come in the ruins of dispossession. The result is a combination of subtle theoretical reflection, pluriversal modes of inquiry, and unruly epistemic intervention. Drawing its inspiration from decolonizing methodologies, Black aesthetics, and epistemologies of the South, the project gathers these influences for a novel experiment that demonstrates how arts-based researchers confront dispossession through itinerant practices of resistance.

