



## **THE THIRD WORLD ECOLOGY TRILOGY**

**Postcoloniality, Embodiment and Ecology**

### **ARTICLE COMMENTARY**

**by Rania Lee Khalil**

The following commentary, written at the conclusion of this project, is designed to introduce and reflect upon three published articles which together comprise the written aspect of my doctoral thesis in artistic research at Theatre Academy, University of Arts Helsinki. These three articles fulfill the peer review and publishing guidelines of the research journals they appear within. This commentary is not intended to replace the reading of these three texts.

The artistic practicum of this dissertation, *The Third World Ecology Trilogy* was externally examined on June 6th, 2019 at PUBLICS in Helsinki, Finland, and accepted in full at that time. *The Third World Ecology Trilogy* consists of three performances: *Palestinian Wildlife Series*; *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965*; and *Sinai, a story i tell to my daughter*. Artistic research for these three performances comprise the content of said articles.

These articles are, in order of publication:

1. Khalil, Rania Lee. "Palestinian Wildlife Series: embodiment in images, critical abstraction", *Journal for Artistic Research*, 10 (2016) <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/135120/135121/0/0>
2. Khalil, Rania Lee. "Political Family Photos as Performance: Gamaayat el Mara'a Africaya Asiawaya, The Pan-African Asian Women's Organization, 1960- 1965." *Nayttamo ja tutkimus*, 7, Performance and Oth- erness issue. Finnish Theatre Research Society (2018) <https://journal.fi/teats/issue/view/8694/1637>
3. Khalil, Rania Lee. "Sinai: Tourism, Colonialism, and Sea" *Journal of Embodied Research*, 4(1), 3 (24:40). (2021) <http://doi.org/10.16995/jer.85>

### **Acknowledgements**

I wish to sincerely thank my supervisors Dr. Annette Arlander, Dr. Taru Elving, Dr. Ros Gray and Dr. Anna Thuring for much care, labor, dedication and support throughout this process. Many thanks to my external examiners Dr. Barby Asante and Dr. Mirko Nikolic for so closely reading these texts and such thoughtful responses. Thank you also to chair Dr. Hanna Jarvinen for a rigorous read of my final work.

My gratitude to the staff and professors of Theatre Academy Helsinki and Fine Arts Academy Helsinki as a whole for practical and educational support, with special thanks to Annika Fredriksson, Hanna Westerlund, Hannele Ylonen, Elina Raitasalo, Dr. Tuuli Tahko, Dr. Tuija Kokkonen, Dr. Esa Kirkopelto, Dr. Jan Kaila and visiting professor Dr. Hito Steyerl.

This artistic research would not have been possible without the generous and long term support of the Kone Foundation. My thanks also to the CIMO Foundation for initial project funding.

I am deeply grateful for my friends and community across three different continents. Thank you for your laughter, astonishment and encouragement. Though impossible to name you all, know that you are in my heart, and that I thank you so much for standing with me through the joys and tumult of this process, without you I could not have kept going!

To special viewers and witnesses of this work; Anne T. Greene, Dr Amelia Ortega, Terike Haapoja, Kayhan Irani, Lameece Issaq, Mohammed Allam and Ibrahim el Batout thank you for your time, generosity and for helping me to remember what I was trying to say.

To my mother and elders in Cairo, it will take my the rest of my lifetime to do justice to the thoughts, wisdom and histories you've shared, thank you for these resurrections of our matrilineal histories.

Misha and Angi, thank you for your ongoing love, existence and calm. You two are my constant inspiration for this work. Thank you Anthony and Laili for absolutely everything. I love you.

dedicated to my mother Alia M. Fahim,  
and my daughter Laili Nour Hamboussi

## COMMENTARY INDEX

Forward	<b>Parallel Temporalities</b>	12
Introduction	<b>Artistic Research</b>	20
Section One:	<b>Embodied Image Making as a Method</b>	58
Section Two:	<b>Interrelations of Post Human and Post Colonial Theory in my Artistic Research</b>	82
Section Three:	<b>Stages of Learning and Artistic Research within the Intercyclic Web</b>	105
Section Four:	<b>The Past is Yet to Come: Grieving and ReWilding</b>	117

“Each generation must out of relative obscurity discover its mission, fulfill it, or betray it”, Frantz Fanon wrote in 1961. We are at a critical juncture, a historical moment that sends us into our inheritances to find sources and references for the struggle ahead.

Françoise Vergès  
“Racial Capitalocene”

82

**Forward: *Parallel Temporalities***

In my original proposal to conduct doctoral artistic research within Theatre Academy Helsinki, I refer the reader to Homi Bhaba's notion of the post-colonial time lag (1994, 284). Drawing on Frantz Fanon's critiques of modernity and colonialism, Bhaba posits the white man and his discursive assets - *progress and modernity* - as reliant on the formation of the black man as perpetually *belated*.

The long arc of this doctoral research has involved a process of interrogating and unseating the pains and paradoxes of this "progress" upon the subjects of my research, as well as myself, my family and countries of origin. In this time I have researched interspecies loss, displacement, development, genocide and extinction of plant, animal and marine life within three specific Middle Eastern geographies: Palestine, a nexus of modern day colonialism; Egypt, the birth and residing place of my parents and ancestors (with additional research into Algeria, host to one of the third world's most inspiring anticolonial revolutions - via my grandmother's Algerian comrades); and lastly Sinai, the ancestral lands of indigenous Bedouin peoples within the nation state of Egypt.

I have traveled and conducted my research into these places from Helsinki Finland, Cairo Egypt and later, New York City, with Bhaba's notion of the post-colonial time lag close at hand. This artistic research began in parallel with my embodied witnessing of the many contrasts between them: Helsinki's small population; relative serenity, design sensibilities and architecture appearing respectful to the sea which surrounds it. Cairo; rising nearly treeless and crowded around a polluted Nile river and - for various historical moments - ecstatic and triumphant - with feelings of deep unity, revolution, and their visible, attendant violence.

At the time I was accepted into the Theatre Academy, I was living near to my parents and family in Cairo (I am the only person in my family who did not grow up in Cairo and who does not presently there). On New Years Day, 2011, I signed a lease to a houseboat on the Nile, with the idea to make videos, dance and reflect on the water. Within weeks the 25 January revolution began.

A vegetable seller in Tunisia named Mohamed Bouazizi had recently set himself on fire, following relentless police harassment. Bouazizi's self immolation set the stage for Egypt's protests on "Police Day" (Lageman,

2020), to quickly turn to mass uprising. Soon anti-dictatorial revolutions spread across the region, and then perhaps, across the world.

In the fall of 2011, I was invited to do a six week research residency in Palestine to prepare a commission for the Jerusalem Show. Yet upon entering Palestine, the revolutionary atmosphere of the region was completely and bitterly suppressed, the celebrated city of Jerusalem a quiet, open air prison for its Arabs. Israel as a nation state is a mournful and militarized series of walls and checkpoints, enacting a physical and psychological humiliation over the Palestinian people more brutal than I could have imagined before visiting. I must admit that despite growing up in a politically pro-Palestinian household, it was very difficult to intellectually and emotionally make sense of all that I was witnessing<sup>1</sup>. The artistic research which I conducted in the years which followed allowed me to gain a more in-depth historical background of Palestine largely absent within

---

<sup>1</sup> It is often noted that trips to Palestine make Palestinian activists, which is why activist groups including Eye Witness Palestine and the curators of the Jerusalem show make a point to bring foreigners and artists into the Occupied Territories.

Western education, and personally, the two masters degrees, I'd completed to that point.

In 2013, two years after the Egyptian revolution began and its counterrevolutionary military coup took firm hold, a movement against police violence in the US began. Following the acquittal of police for killing of Black teenager Trayvon Martin in Florida, the Black Lives Matter movement began as a hashtag on social media, and led to mass street protests over the deaths of Martin, Michael Brown in Ferguson Missouri and closer to home, in New York City. The choking of loose cigarette seller Eric Garner at the hands of the Staten Island police (Hutchinson, 2020) would light the streets of New York City into years of mass protest, ultimately spanning the height of the Covid pandemic. The 2010's were thus a decade of nearly nonstop protests in the two cities I lived.

These visits were juxtaposed with quiet visits to Helsinki and Western Europe - I attended artistic research conferences and symposiums in Iceland, Sweden, Ireland, Belgium, Switzerland, and Scotland between the years 2012 and 2015 - where the concept of parallel temporalities became for me very concrete.



In 2016, my partner (also a New York City born Egyptian) and I left Cairo returning to the Lenapehoking lands colonially known as Brooklyn New York, for the birth of our daughter whose birth coincided within days of the desperately unfortunate election of President Donald Trump. I recall Trump's presidency as if living through a series of fires. From one political scandal to another, one environmental insult to another, the mass protests of the Black Lives Matter movement culminating in the world's most deadly pandemic, killing over one million people in the United States; disproportionately among them, Black, Brown and low income people.

In the pages and articles to come, the reader can witness the unfolding of processes and content which responded to the radically different conditions of my embodied and intellectual life through these times. These articles represent artistic and intellectual projects created over the course of a long period of research, which as said, also coincided with the birth and care of my child. These projects respond, and I think also fail to respond, to what I experienced as the various impossibilities to translate these experiences across vastly different contexts.

If I have more heavily relied on materials rather than verbal explanations within these texts, it is because this research has always run the risk of being overly simple to the portion of its audiences for whom it is most intended: peoples of the Third World and those interested in the continuation of its radical histories of resistance. The contradiction that this doctoral thesis has been funded by, shaped within, and ultimately created for an audience of artistic researchers (this discipline mostly existing within Northern and Western Europe, neither in Egypt nor the US) is not so easily accounted for. As we know very well within the arts and academics, the demands of funding not only shape and inform but censor and suppress content. My doctoral research into colonial and postcolonial histories of the Middle East, created within nexuses of Western Europe artistic research institutions has in this way disproportionately suffered from the unhealed and unattended intellectual and emotional racism of the many peoples within them.

At the conclusion of this doctoral work, where we now see European students waking at long last to the genocide of Palestinians in Gaza as their institutions refuse to comment, it is easy to contextualize the many

hardships of this research within the limitations of European academies (and their extensions in the settler colonies of Australia, Canada, Israel, etc), whose existence and benevolent self image relied, at the very least in my personal experience of the years 2012 to 2016, on an indifference to and obscuring of the very postcolonial histories I set out to research. And why wouldn't it? Writing about murdered Honduran environmental activist Berta Caceres, journalist Nina Lakhani (2020) insists on a certain core understanding: under our current system of global capitalism, one person's wealth and leisure relies in the least, on another's poverty and in the most, their death. And yet the sort of 'blaming the victim' that we see for example, by the State of Israel in its continued assaults upon the children of Gaza at the time of this writing, or any cultivated understanding that the conditions of the Middle East are not the creation of its people, but rather its colonizers, remains elusive for so many within white liberal academia.

Indeed, this wide spread confusion first prompted my research to complicate conversations about black and brown human worth to that of plant and animal life, in contexts where plant and animal life seemed more

valued than the non-white humans of my ancestral geographies. As we move more deeply into the twenty first century, it is my wish to center this core understanding - concerning the contingency and codependency of all interspecies life on earth and the disproportionate suffering of so many for so few - in all conversations. Because the very different experiences of places, temporalities and postcolonial time lags (of skin color, of class, passports and abilities to own and lay claim to the land beneath them) also reveal the very different notions of 'progress' with which this artistic research project is concerned.

## Introduction: Artistic Research

### Sheherazadian Orality

When I began my studies of performance as research as a master's student in England in 2009, I was excited to enter a paradigm where one's own creative practice is research subject. For years I'd felt there was a dimension of my art practice that I was unable to explore, centered as I was as on the physical processes of experimental theatre making - the choreography, interactions with dancers and actors, collaborations with set, sound and video designers. I longed to have time to cultivate my intellectual practice. I wanted to explore my creative process on a meta level, as well as the meta narratives of the structures that surround art making itself. Where the work of defining and articulating my work to others was involved, I'd grown accustomed to handing this task over to performance houses, theatre scholars, reviewers. Their ideas on my performances seemed as important as my own, until my immersion into artistic and practice based research.

An example of this concerns an early performance of mine, made two days after the events of 9/11, in 2001 in New York City. While completing my undergraduate

degree, I made a short performance entitled *Flag Piece* <sup>2</sup>.

In this performance I use a small American flag I'd received as a patriotic gesture from a hardware store on September 12th. Moving the flag silently across my face, I mime a shifting journey through hope, assimilation, fear and rage, upon the face of a veiled woman immigrant. At the end of this performance, the small US flag forces its way into my protagonist's mouth-demanding fellatio. Ten years later, a scholar published an essay about this performance, through the lens of a concept she devised: "Sheherazadian Orality"<sup>3</sup>. For me, this performance was and remains about imperialism, and the violence of war upon the lives and psyches of Arab and muslim women. At the time I made this piece, I knew nothing about Sheherazade, One Thousand and One Nights or "orality" - and could never have counted

---

<sup>2</sup> See "Flag Piece" by Dalia Basiouny and Marvin Carlson, [\*Arab Stages\*](#) Martin E. Segal Theatre Center Publications, 2015

<sup>3</sup> Sabry, Somaya Sami. [\*Arab American Women's Writing and Performance: Orientalism, Race and the Idea of the Arabian Nights\*](#). London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd. 2011. For an alternate read of this piece, developed through thoughtful interview with me, see Basiouny, Dalia. "Descent as Dissent" Political and Protest Theatre after 9/11 ed. Jenny Spencer. New York: Routledge Press. 2012 and Carlson, Marvin and Dalia Basiouny. "Current Trends in Arab American Theater" Performance, Exile and America ed. by Sylvia Jestrovic and Yana Meerzon. London: Palgrave Macmillan. 2009.

them upon my list of concerns or inspirations. At that point in time however, performance making was the primary means I had through which to express my thoughts. The journey of my graduate work in practice based research in England, followed by my doctoral artistic research in Finland, has been one of learning to speak to complex questions about, for example, orientalizing my practice - even when it is, as in the case of this scholar - performed by a fellow Egyptian woman.

Artistic research has given me tools not only to set the boundaries of interpretation of my artworks, yet also to generate and engage with different kinds of knowledge; somatic, inherited, and intangible knowledges, produced *in and through* the making of artworks (Borgdorf, 2006). Conducting artistic research has entailed a reclamation of the unique understandings and expertise I possess as an artist and thinker. It has been an exercise in interrogating my gifts, skill sets and perspectives, and learning to support them, against what bell hooks calls the white supremacist capitalist heteropatriarchy<sup>4</sup>, and its anti-earth, anti-poetic, neoliberal world order.

---

<sup>4</sup> bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, 1984 and subsequent publications, 1985- 2021.

This doctoral project is concerned with three primary areas of inquiry. The first has been in response to my questions on race and postcoloniality - related specifically to the Middle East and diasporic Arab peoples like myself, spanning out to BIPOC communities past and present, referred to more broadly as the Third World. The second is an inquiry into ecological justice / ecological crisis through a postcolonial lens. The third investigates my own working methods as an artist; the embodied image making practice I've cultivated through this doctoral project <sup>5</sup>, and through which I respond to the former two. Before I speak specifically on these themes, I would like to take a moment to introduce artistic research as a research paradigm. This is both for readers who may be unfamiliar with the specifics of what distinguishes artistic research as a field from both art education and traditional research. Finnish artistic research is distinct and in some ways more relaxed than its Nordic and

---

<sup>5</sup> The multimedia performances I directed prior to my entry into the Theatre Academy relied on collaborations with video artists, sound designers, prop and costume makers. When I entered my studies, I wanted to understand how I as a dancer experience non-human movement through images, and my doctoral project became a site for me to grow as a maker of my own moving images in my own right, in parallel with my artistic research into embodied image making as a methodology.

continental European counterparts, so I will take a moment to outline here what I learned in my course studies in Helsinki, in the years 2012-2015, with brief attention to that which followed.

In Finland, artistic research is performed by artists alone. Though many theorists and curators write about and contribute to artistic research (Borgdoff, 2006; Elkins, 2009; Slager, 2015) artistic research itself can only be conducted by artists with formal and professional art making practices established prior to the research. Artistic research consists of specific, technical and conceptual inquiries, conducted through processes of art making.

What does it mean to conduct research *in* and *through* art making? It means that art making leads, guides and shapes the research process and its outcomes. In other words, when I am asking research questions, for example,

“How we can re-envision ‘looking’; at animals, land, minerals and ethnic others, in ways which do not demand spectacular action, yet instead connection and empathy?”<sup>6</sup>

I seek to answer this question *through* my artwork, by chronicling and the embodied and textual information I encounter and receive while making - processes which then fold back into my artwork<sup>7</sup>.

Artistic research is also not *any* form of research conducted by an artist. Artists at all levels of making gather images, sounds, theories, histories and chart their own lived experiences as research for their work. Degree granting programs thus distinguish “artistic research” from research performed by artists in general. Key stages of development within an education in artistic research involve material and technical experimentation, archival research, dialogue with supervisors and peers, and engagement with the field through conferences and research trips.

---

<sup>6</sup> as found in my video essay “Sinai: Tourism, Colonialism and Sea” *Journal of Embodied Research*, 2021.

<sup>7</sup> I say more about this in section 4, regarding the Intercyclic Web of Research as a methodology.

Other differences between art making and artistic research is that the later is conducted within an artistic research community, most often linked to an art school, academic institution or nexus of institutions. Artistic research is comprised of studies into specific subject matter, formally declared at the start of one's research. Artistic research is formally recognized through exposure to the public, by way of reflective writing, publications, and creative showings. At the doctoral level, artistic research is evaluated and externally examined through practicum assessment (of artworks), and then texts- in this case, peer reviewed publications, and the production of a final commentary.

Two of the three publications included within this thesis were published within digital structures devoted to the development and exposition of the multimedia aspects of artistic and embodied research<sup>8</sup>. Artistic research does not, ideally, seek to validate itself through the language, lexicons or the methodological research practices of the humanities or sciences - these platforms thus seek to support artist researchers to develop the hybrid

---

<sup>8</sup> Other platforms devoted to publishing multimedia artistic research include the Finnish journal *Ruuku*, the Nordic Journal for Artistic Research *IJS*, and the *Journal of Sonic Studies*.

languages and creative methodologies necessary to this paradigm.

Though outcomes of artistic research almost always include artworks, artworks borne of artistic research may or may not conform to the demands and expectations of art markets. Artistic research as I have learned, is primarily *process*, rather than *product* led. Because of the long arc of these processes, artistic research in process can often demonstrate slippery, “in between” outcomes: texts which are both academic and poetic, performances or exhibitions which are pedagogical and instructive. In some cases, processes *themselves* are the product of artistic research. These might include methodological, technical or educational innovations in art making. This freedom to depart from the demands of art markets (and preparation for them within BFA and MFA programs) took me a while to grasp within quiet, affluent Helsinki, having come up as an artist in New York City where (a constructed) scarcity of resources often defines artists' lives and careers. Having space and financial support with which to ask existential questions through my creative practice; to grapple with often unglamorous technical and intellectual advances; to create art that might “fail” (Lilja, 2004); to read a vast

amount of texts, are among the gifts and cherished learning curves of my doctoral artistic research.

These factors compel me to continue as a proponent of artistic research, in the face of its shortcomings. For me, these shortcomings include the racial homogeneity of the majority of its founders and practitioners, related to its central geographic context in Nordic and continental Northern Europe. In my experience, this homogeneity ensures the protection of individuals, groups and professors within artistic research by isolating non-white researchers, and poses a strong challenge to original knowledge production, where critical studies of race and anticolonial thought are concerned. Being the first and only doctoral student of color in my program for the duration of my coursework, as well as first artistic researcher to use postcolonial theory within Theatre Academy Helsinki and several of the journals I've published within, has as said, left my artistic research subject to critical reception and censure out of step with the abundance of postcolonial and critical race theory and practice elsewhere and on the ground. These experiences are of course not unique to artistic research:

many women of color in the arts and academia <sup>9</sup> come to accept circumstances such as these as inevitable.

Nevertheless when considering such unnerving events as the systematic dismantling of anticolonial revolutions, or the present climate crisis across a range of interspecies and racialized systems, as I do within this thesis, I return to artistic research as a uniquely important tool. Centering nonverbal and embodied forms of research, and research transmission, remains a vital counterpoint to scholarship which relies on distance from one's research subject. The cultivation of a default third

---

<sup>9</sup> see *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women of Color in Academia*, eds. Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs, Yolanda Flores Niemann, Carmen G. González, Angela P. Harris (2012) and "Surviving Art School: An Artist of Colour Tool Kit" by Evan Ifekoya, Raisa Kabir, Raju Rage and Rudy Loewe (2017). See also *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (2012) *Complaint!* (2021) and the wider bibliography of Sarah Ahmed. *We Wanted a Revolution: Black Radical Women, 1965-85 a Sourcebook* collects texts from the wonderful 2017 exhibition of the same name in the Brooklyn Museum, with writing from artists including the 1969 art workers coalition, Women Artists in Revolution (among them Faith Ringgold and her daughter), Linda Goode Bryant (founder of Just Above Midtown Gallery), Senga Nengundi, The Cohambee River Collective and Gloria Anzaldúa to comment upon the exclusion of women of color within the arts. Finally, Audre Lorde's *Sister Outsider*, originally published in 1984, provided an incomparable source of strength and companionship over the long arc of this doctoral research project.

person and disembodied voice can emotionally and affectively fail in spaces and topics where the stakes are this high. It is precisely from within these contradictory roles that artistic research holds a potential to contribute to a uniquely new order, within the arts and within research, as a discipline which can insist upon on the poetic, the facts, the more-than-verbal, and the *felt*, all at once.

#### **Writing within Artistic Research**

In my three published articles, as well as over the course of this commentary, I move between straightforward and poetic forms of writing. This movement between different formations of text - academic, diaristic, personal, manifesto like - is a hallmark of writing within artistic research.

Tension between these forms of writing need not be dichotomous. Swedish dancer and artistic research pioneer Efva Lilja (2007, 2009) for example, has charted a career insisting upon creative and poetic modes in her work as a researcher, professor and administrator in this field. Lucy Cotter's *Reclaiming Artistic Research* (2019) begins with a stretch of poetic writing in which the author outlines her feelings about the academic

writing often required within artistic research. Cotter's is a rebuttal: artistic research is the work of artists, and we should be allowed to express ourselves as artists rather than academic theoreticians. For Cotter, abundant academicization of artistic research threatens its creativity. I completely agree!

In a move within her book whose paradoxes she acknowledges, Cotter's writing then shifts into an academic voice, where she speaks of her understanding of the need to communicate in direct and ordered ways so that her research can be more clearly understood. Writing within artistic research can also be a space through which creative projects are *imagined*, rather than described or interpreted. This was certainly the case with my second article, which I discuss in the section three of this commentary, entitled Stages of Research in "Political Family Photos as Performance".

I am interested in additional forms of writing which can serve as models for artistic research. To me, these most



importantly include the political autobiographical <sup>10</sup> and autoethnographic <sup>11</sup> writing of poets, among them Audre Lorde (2007), June Jordan (2002), Aimé Césaire (1955), Assia Djebar (1996) and James Baldwin (1998), who's prolific works attune with the issues of affect I discuss above. The phenomenological work of Sara Ahmed and Frantz Fanon as well as creative theorists Saidiya Hartman (2022), Fred Moten and Stephano Harvey (2017) also inform trajectories and possibilities for artistic research as a field.

#### **Artistic Research Influences**

As said, this doctoral artistic research project investigates interrelated themes of postcoloniality and ecology through the materiality of my practice in performance and moving image. When I arrived to

---

<sup>10</sup> A group of Swedish based artistic researchers named The Autotheory Group, have expanded upon Lauren Fournier's text, *Feminist Practice in Art, Writing and Criticism* (2020). Fournier describes auto theory as "a reflexive moment, connecting thinking, making art, living and theorizing", while The Autotheory Group (year) describe this form of writing as one in which: "the author uses their bodily experience to develop knowledge, navigating between memoir, poetry, philosophy and criticism, which shows affinities with "theoretical fiction", "life-thinking", and "fiction theory."

<sup>11</sup> see Heewon Chang, *Autoethnography as Method*, 2016

Helsinki to begin my doctoral studies, ecological themes were nascent in my work, subsumed by my postcolonial view point which was then centered on human concerns. Through my studies in Finland, with its long histories of ecologically centered art practices (Kaela, 1996), I found myself within an artistic research environment which ultimately allowed me to connect these formerly disparate inquiries.

#### ***Finnish Artistic Researchers***

My situated studies in Helsinki <sup>12</sup> (2012 - 2015) put me in contact with artistic researchers whose work would come to deeply inform my praxis. They include Leena Valkeapää, Annette Arlander, Tuija Kokonen<sup>13</sup> and later, my collaborations with Terike Haapoja in New York City. I include broader references in the commentary overview section to come.

---

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that I never lived in Helsinki as a resident. I conducted my course work on a part time basis, flying in for courses which took place over 3 to 4 week periods.

<sup>13</sup> Other ecologically focused artist researchers within this setting include Tuula Narvinen, Mari Keski-Korsu, Saara Hannula and Noora Sandgren.

During my first year of doctoral studies, I attended a lecture by Leena Valkeapää at Helsinki's Aalto University. In this talk she spoke of her doctoral project in artistic research, in the process of completion at that time. Valkeapää's research involved an artistic work entitled *Manifestations*, sourced from a series of text messages and emails sent to her from her partner Oulu, a Sami reindeer herder. (Valkeapää, L and O.A., 2017). *Manifestations* combines both text and images from these exchanges, along with recorded narratives. This audio project provided for me a stunning image of the beauty, precarity and severity of indigenous and interspecies life in the Finnish north. Valkeapää's reappropriation of text messages formed a stark poetry of Oulu's landscape. Her poetic, nonlinear and non academic form, established a model of artistic research for me far beyond conventions in the humanities. Joining creative expression and environmental information (through and with the bodies of Oulu, reindeer, snow) remains one of the most resonant examples of artistic research I've experienced to date.

Helsinki based artist researcher Annette Arlander supervised this doctoral project from 2011 to 2016. In addition to her devoted work as a professor and mentor,

Annette is a pioneer of artistic research - and one of the first to receive a doctorate in artistic research in Finland. Like Valkeapää, her practice opened new doors in my conception of what artistic research might entail, as well as the forms it might ultimately take.

When I first met Annette in the Finnish late summer of 2011, she warmly greeted me wearing a flowy yellow skirt and top. Yellow was Annette's color that year, and she wore yellow clothes only, to the close of that year. The next year it was green, then blue. This was part of Annette's work as a performance artist (Reynaud, 2009); she'd created a score related to her interest in Chinese astrology. At that time she was working on a project on Helsinki's Haarakka Island, entitled Year of the Juniper, loosely related to her interest in Chinese astrology (Arlander, 2011). In this durational performance, Annette held "hands" with (branches of) various juniper bushes, sitting or standing quietly alone for lengths of time. She recorded her performance encounters - "conversations with landscapes" she calls them, by setting up a simple camera and tripod by herself (Reynaud, 2009). In addition to bushes (Arlander, 2011), Annette sits on rocks (Arlander, 2014), trees: Pine (Arlander, 2017) and an ancient olive tree (Arlander, 2021).

Annette Arlander's performance practice taught me to insist on artistic research which does not follow a pre-determined model (Arlander, 2014), informing the way I came to describe my own artistic research as "haphazard" in my first article for this dissertation (Khalil, 2016). Annette's curiosity and openness to what performance research can entail, alongside what artistic research can hold, provided a freedom of exploration with which I have often wished to hold this research paradigm accountable to in other settings.

Annette's lo-fi work with video and ephemeral performances in nature, also helped me to refuse the classical disciplinary divides I was encountering within the theatre academy. Annette's mentorship encouraged me to insist upon the centrality of liveness and embodiedness within my moving image practice.

The work of these ecologically focused artist researchers within Helsinki opened what I imagined possible for my research approaches to the natural environment. In this vein, the conceptual performance practice of Tuija Kokkonen also affected me on several registers. Tuija was completing her doctorate in the Theatre Academy as I began mine. Her *A Performance with an Ocean View*

(and a Dog/for a Dog) – II Memo of Time (Kokkonen, 2012) was running in Germany.

It was from Tuija directly that I first heard the term *non human*. Before this, I lacked any conceptual foundation for unseating human beings from an imagined center of importance<sup>14</sup>. *A Performance with an Ocean View (and a Dog/for a Dog) – II Memo of Time*, is an example of Tuija's *Nonhuman performances* and investigations into Chronopolitics (Kokkonen, 2011). Chronopolitics refers to time beyond the human life span. Tuija's artworks combine, in her words (Kokkonen, 2023) live art, environmental and conceptual art. These performances are for wind, sea, dog and humans, the latter of whom who might be present just part of the time.

I have always been impressed with all that Tuija's performances manage to say nonverbally. Her work conceptually ties issues of survival, time, pleasure and

---

<sup>14</sup> It took time for me to contextualize posthuman theory as inseparable from the Western contexts and colonial (humanist) origins from which it arose; these being distinct from indigenous perspectives, cosmologies and art making within which humans always already existed within blurred and complex interrelations of animal, plant and marine worlds.

interspecies connection. They perform an important inversion of practices of human/ nonhuman spectatorship, which informed my own work in *Videos for Dancers* (2014) and *ReWild* (2023). These performances are inherently about a meeting of human and nonhuman forms, rather than a reinforcement of established hierarchies of beings, liveness and moving image.

This early introduction to the nonprimacy of human spectatorship, allowed me to rethink and differently interrogate the racialized, gendered, (semi)human performing body with which I entered my doctoral studies: my own.

Reading about Kokkonen's performances was a boon for me to consider more deeply just who and what are being seen, *as* they are being seen. Tuija's work provided a model within artistic research, which, like that of Leena Valkeapää and Annette Arlander, approached ideas I'd been meditating on from my Butoh teacher Atsushi Takenouchi.

Years before my entry into artistic research, Atsushi, whom I discuss in the section to come, had us perform

for mountains, skies and ancestors. Yet the formal artistic and academic investigations of the nonhuman and posthuman which I first learned of during my studies in Finland also opened for me problems of race, otherness and just who gets to qualify (and thus refuse) the distinction of human in the first place. Because the bodies and lives of human beings most similar to me, from Palestine to Afghanistan and Iraq, and on and on throughout the Middle East, are made discursively and concretely disposable for Western military and fossil fuel interests, needless to say, questions of "human" hold personal significance quite different than those of my white Finnish peers. It is with these questions that my first article of this dissertation begins (Khalil, 2016) and to which I devote significant attention over the course of this commentary.

### ***The Interrelational Ecology Salon***

In 2019, Finnish artist Terike Haapoja and I came together in New York City to form our *Interrelational Ecology Salon*, a space for artists, activists and academics working on environmental issues. Terike is a second generation ecological artist in Finland, whose

work combines issues of animality and labor<sup>15</sup>. Terike and I came together with an intention to create a space for ecologically focused artists to share works in progress, and to create a space for conversations around these topics.

As the pandemic began to unfold in March 2020, we shifted to an online lecture series. That year we hosted a reading group of Françoise Vergès' essay "Racial Capitalocene" (2017) and co-organized lectures with the following speakers: media scholar Nicholas Mirzoeff, who presented a talk entitled "Palestine, whiteness and Jewishness within the frame of climate catastrophe". Attorney and climate activist Elizabeth Yeampierre, director of the Brooklyn based environmental justice organization *Uprose*, gave a talk entitled "What this time is demanding of us", regarding Just Relationships within and beyond environmentalist movements and a Just Transition, away from extraction, overbuilding, fossil fuels and pollution. Following the explosions in Beirut

---

<sup>15</sup> I know Terike more as a friend and colleague than as an artist, so I will not comment on her practice here. Terike and I taught together in the MFA program at Parsons, the New School from 2019 to 2022, and began our salon in 2019, with the majority of its activities taking place over the course of 2020-2021.

that fall, we invited Lebanese environmental scientist Sammy Kaye to speak with us about his community's responses to the blasts, alongside his prior work and research on alternatives to development (as in "developing nations") at the American University of Beirut. New York City based scholar and activist Che Gossett then joined us to present a mesmerizing talk entitled "Abolitionist Enchantment: Black Trans Art and the Afterlife of Slavery". Following the wildfires which took over the West Coast of the US that year, we invited Chicana artist and activist Arlene Correa Valencia who discussed her work with her own undocumented agricultural labor communities in the Napa Valley. Our series concluded in 2021, with a lecture by artist and architect Kyong Park, founder of New York City's *Storefront for Art and Architecture*. Kyong gave a talk on his creative research project "Imagining Eurasia" in South Korea, which reimagines nation-state borders on the shared land mass. The artists and thinkers of this series are colleagues and friends who's work is integral to the formation and conceptual shape of this dissertation. Kaye's work against foreign and industrial development in the Middle East informs my article *Sinai: Tourism, Colonialism and Sea*. Che Gossett's research is a long time inspiration to me, for its creative

and unyielding intersectionality, wedding critical race theory, queer liberation, animal activism, environmental justice and more recently, visual art. I share more about the work of Gossett, Yeampierre and Vergès in relation to this doctoral project in section two of this commentary.

### **The Third World**

The term “Third World” was coined in 1952 by Albert Sauvy, in the pages of the French anticolonial newspaper, *L'Observateur*. While leaders at the fore of their own countries' anti colonial movements did not necessarily use the term to define themselves, preferring the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM, referring to nations allied neither with the USA nor USSR during the Cold War); Group of 77 (G77); the Afro Asian group or simply the continents that formed the majority of the colonized world: Africa, Asia, Central and South America. Leaders including the Indian prime minister Jawarharlal Nehru, Indonesian president Sukarno and Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser defined the terms of its official platform: “political independence, nonviolent international relations and the cultivation of the United Nations as the principle institution for planetary justice”. (Prashad, 2007, 6-11). However, the

reach of the Third World far exceeds the rhetoric of its leaders; their efforts at the UN and historic conferences, including the seminal Bandung, or Afro-Asian Conference of 1955. The Third World was, and continues to be, a mass - perhaps the worlds most massive- political movement against the past, present and futures of imperialism.

To be clear, the Third World - to paraphrase Vijay Prashad - was never only the ideas of Third World leaders and their constituents, but also their opposition within the Third World, to the left and right. Yet the emphasis of my *Third World Ecology Trilogy* and particularly its second artwork, *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960- 1965* lies more in the *ideals* of this movement than its battles and charismatic leaders. I regard the project of the Third World - a coming together of vastly different groups of peoples in a shared, generative, imaginative and thoughtful protest of on the ground experiences of imperialism - as a project unfinished, and in much need of resurrection. This requires not only celebration but critique of its failures and colonial interventions and infiltrations - in the service of improved futures. *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to*

*Conakry, 1960- 1965* offers an intimate portrait of this history from the lives of my feminist great grandmother Nabuwaya Gazara, and my grandmother Aida Hamdi, and those of my grandmother's colleagues, the Algerian revolutionaries Zohra Drif and Djamilla Bouhired. It also includes a look at the families of assassinated, charismatic third world leaders.

#### **Commentary Overview**

The practicum, or artistic aspect of this dissertation, took place through the production of three moving image performances which together comprise *The Third World Ecology Trilogy*, externally examined and accepted in 2019, through a live performance at PUBLICS in Helsinki. These three performances, detailed below are, *Palestinian Wildlife Series*, *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization*, *Cairo to Conakry, 1960- 1965* and *Sinai, a story I tell my daughter*. *The Third World Ecology Trilogy*. This trilogy has been performed internationally for audiences within and beyond artistic research communities, in places including the Aomori Art Museum in Japan, The Martin Segal Theatre in New York City, MATATU, a black performance think tank in Oakland California, Zawya Cinema in Egypt and the 56th Venice Biennale's artistic research pavilion. *The*

*Third World Ecology Trilogy* is a series of three works of moving image designed for live audiences, two of which are performed with live narration. Each of these three artistic works was designed as a separate and distinct artistic research project, with an attendant publication during the course of my doctoral studies.

#### **Research Questions**

This research does not have a singular research question, yet rather sets and subsets of questions which guide it. My original research plan for the Theatre Academy began with these:

How can artistic research practices complicate erased memories and marginalized histories on behalf of the present moment? How we can re-envision 'looking' at animals, land, minerals and ethnic others, in ways which do not demand spectacular action, yet instead connection and empathy? How can embodied film production and participatory spectatorship present more-than-human (and indigenous human) life on different registers? What is the usefulness (to society) of artworks and artistic research which address political, ethnic and environmental violence in embodied, creative and experimental ways?

The following commentary and articles have attended to these questions through the making of my evening

length performance, *The Third World Ecology Trilogy*. I'll take a moment here to introduce each project, and the additional questions which attended them. In this conclusion of this commentary, I share some ideas on their outcomes.

*Palestinian Wildlife Series* uses appropriated footage from a nature documentary - shot from a television in Palestine - to reflect on parallel issues of mediation, displacement and extinction among human and non-human beings. The first formal project of my doctoral thesis, *Palestinian Wildlife Series* took on a variety of forms prior to settling into its final version, a slow paced moving image work with very little text in large projection for live audiences. I reflect on the process of creating this work over several years of experimentation, in an article entitled 'Palestinian Wildlife Series: embodiment in images, critical abstraction' (Khalil, 2016) published within *The Journal for Artistic Research*. Preceded by this commentary, this article serves as chapter one of my written doctoral thesis.

Examining *Palestinian Wildlife Series*' lo fi and flickering images in relation to Deleuze's idea of the thin image and Laura U. Marks' writing on intercultural

cinema, this article juxtaposes feminist scholar Rosi Braidotti's critical posthumanism with a distinctly black posthumanism of 1970's and 80's Afrofuturists. It considers Edward Said and Carol B. Bardenstein's writing on the nonhuman in Palestine through their research into disappearing olive trees and tree planting work of Israeli settlers (atop demolished Palestinian villages). The essay asks, How can the posthuman and the postcolonial be addressed simultaneously when the 'reduction' of certain humans to 'animals' is a primary tool of oppression? How to make artwork that is poetic and political without being didactic?

Artists who informed this project include the interdisciplinary film and performance artists Valie Export, Carolee Schneeman and Yoko Ono, as well as the animal videos of filmmaker Chris Marker. Drawing on ideas from Laura U Mark's work on haptic cinema by artists of color, I consider works by the Black Audio Film Collective and Rhea Tajiri as informative to the cultivation of my kinesthetic video methodology. The live performance practices of Adrian Piper and William Pope L., combined with their critiques of race and racialization, have also inspired my practice. In relation to the appropriation of documentary footage in



*Palestinian Wildlife Series*, artists Walid Raad (a former professor of mine) and Haroun Farouki stretch the boundaries of traditional news and documentary practice with their epistemological investigations of the ways in which histories of war are constructed through moving image (see Farouki, 1969 and Raad, 2002).

The second artwork of my doctoral artistic research is *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960- 1965*. This artwork uses my grandmother's photographic archives to recall histories of Third World feminist and Pan African activism. I reflect on early stages of artistic production of this artwork in a text entitled "Political Family Photos as Performance: Gamaayat el Mara'a Africaya Asiawaya, The Pan-African Asian Women's Organization, 1960-1965" published in the Finnish journal, *Nayttamo ja tutkimus*, in English, *Performance and Otherness* (Khalil, 2018). This article serves as chapter two of my written doctoral thesis.

Co-founded by my maternal grandmother in 1960, within the context of early independence movements on the continent, the Pan-African Asian Women's Organization ('Gamaayat el Mara'a Africaya Asiawaya'

in arabic) functioned between Cairo, Egypt and Conakry, Guinea, in the years 1960- 1965. I use aforementioned familial archives in combination with found images and collage, to artistically research this unique political moment of third world feminism, decolonization, African socialism and Pan-African Asian unity. The project investigates intertwined political and personal histories of a group who's existence and legacy has been widely obscured. Fifty years later, the organization's hard-won legislature for the social and educational rights of women in Egypt for example (in addition to the African socialist, anti-imperialist ideologies that surrounded it) have been largely overturned, leaving an important struggle suspended.

This artistic research asks, how can personal narratives be employed to challenge Western-centric histories and dominant discourse regarding Third World cultures? Can narrative on memory maintain its efficacy without sentimentality or "celebration of ethnicity" (Bhaba, 1994, Fusco, 1988)?

For this project I was interested in the role of the arts in the Third World (1950's -1970's) in relation to revolutionary struggle and socialist projects of redistributing wealth. Marxist feminist Egyptian

painters Inji Aflatoun and Gazbia Sirry celebrated peasant women situated in lush agricultural landscapes; they created images of powerful females: women workers, women protesters, women in prison. Having come to prominence before Egypt's 1952 revolution, Aflatoun was imprisoned by Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser between 1959-1963 (Nelson, 1996, 292) for her work in the communist party. Gazbia Sirry was too, though only briefly (Mostafa-Kanafani, 2021). The audio soundtrack of this era in Egypt for me, is defined by iconic musicians Oum Khalsoum and Abdel Halim Hafez. In my performance of the *Pan-African Asian Women's Organization* there is an image of Hafez with Algerian revolutionary Djamilla Bouhired on the same day she met with my grandmother. Alongside singers including Sabah, Asmahan, Fairuz and Farid el Atrash Khalsoum, Hafez' music formed a soundtrack of my youth, by virtue of my own parents' missing of Egypt while abroad, and their nostalgia for the fleeting hopefulness of this time.

Following the unexpected death of my grandfather in Egypt in 1960, my mother failed her exams to medical school. Confused as to what to do next, she auditioned for a newly formed dance troupe. This troupe, founded

by dancers Mahmoud Reda and Farida Fahmy in 1959, would go on to become one of Egypt's most well known dance companies - Fera Reda (the Reda troupe) - creating dances which fused modern dance and ballet with folkloric Egyptian dance forms, in nationalist, state sponsored efforts to revive and celebrate Egyptian traditions for stage and screen. Fahmy discusses the flourishing of her company within this "golden age of Egypt", as the official dance company of Egypt under Nasser (Franken, 2018 and Shay, 2002). Though accepted into the Reda Troupe, my grandmother forbade my mother to join, begging her instead to complete university.

More broadly, the newly liberated countries of Africa, Asia and the Americas relied heavily on music, dance, celebration, nationalist films and festivals (Dalutzai, 2012) as a means through which to shift consciousness toward the revolutionary and decolonial. These festivals, include The Pan African Festival in Algiers in

1969 (Klein, 1969)<sup>16</sup>, The Harlem Cultural Festival of 1969 (Thompson, 2021), and an international multitude of revolutionary film screenings by filmmakers including Senegal's Osmare Sembene, Angola's Sarah Maldoror, Cuba's Tomás Gutiérrez Alea and Egypt's Yousef Chahine<sup>17</sup>.

---

<sup>16</sup> The wonderful description on this event for the film by William Klein reads as follows:  
 "Staged in Algiers, the first Pan-African Cultural Festival was a momentous event, bringing together musicians and dancers from throughout the continent with many first-worlders joining in the jams. It was a moment of great postcolonial jubilation as representatives of national liberation movements converged on an Algeria that had gained its independence just seven years earlier. This energetic doc includes such luminaries of the moment as Amílcar Cabral, a writer who led the struggle in Guinea-Bissau; Miriam Makeba, the great African singer who was then married to Stokely Carmichael; Houari Boumédiène, Algeria's military dictator; Stanislas Adotevi, the Benin philosopher who penned Negritude and Negroligists; and Eldridge Cleaver, who was living in Algiers, overseeing the Black Panther contingent at the festival. Klein's coverage captures the astounding cultural mix, but also the militant resolve that permeated the gathering, making agit-appropriate correlations to the United States and its own colonial misadventure, the Vietnam War." This said the film, commissioned by the Algerian government, was protested by African artists including Osman Sembene for having a white director! (Tolan-Szkilnik, 2021)

<sup>17</sup> One of the most enduring and important revolutionary films of its time was Gillo Pontocorvo's *Battle of Algiers*, referenced throughout this thesis for its depiction of Djamilia Bourhired and Zohra Drif. The form and function of this film - widely distributed and consumed by revolutionary and counterrevolutionary groups was copiously researched by Sohail Daulatzai in his unique study, *Fifty Years of the Battle of Algiers: Past as Prologue* (2021)

Between embodied video and essay film, the third performance *Sinai, a story i tell my daughter* employs most personal and poetic voice of this artistic research, concluding the *Third World Ecology Trilogy*. Beginning with a brief story of an indigenous family removed from their ancestral land, the film departs from the tone and format of the two previous works with a haptic film designed to further draw into question modes of reception and the academic presentation as truth/information giving medium.

This short single channel work, uses underwater footage which I made in Egypt's Sinai peninsula, land and seas which border the occupied territories of Palestine. This video is based on a poem I wrote for my daughter (born in the span of this artistic research project), which meditates on "a parallel dimension of earth in which the tragedies of earth did not happen". The making of this artwork gave way to the exposition of the research which surrounded it, published as a video article within *The Journal of Embodied Research* (Khalil, 2021), entitled "Sinai: Tourism, Colonialism and Sea", the final

chapter of my dissertation as a whole <sup>18</sup>. In this article, I consider my place as an artist, artistic researcher and diasporic Egyptian tourist within webs of postcolonial and indigenous ecologies, and the touristic development occurring at grave cost to them. This article asks:

How can embodied research interrupt touristic and capitalistic frameworks of experiencing land and seascapes to better understand our collective responsibility to the indigenous humans and wildlife whose habitats are claimed by tourism?

This commentary, coupled with these three articles and artworks, comprises the written aspect of my doctoral dissertation. As is standard in artistic research, these texts are examined separately from one's practicum / artworks.

---

<sup>18</sup> As conceived by my university, criteria for a doctoral dissertation can be fulfilled through the publication of three peer reviewed articles in accredited journals. Once complete, these publications are coupled with a reflective commentary on their inception and aftermath, formerly known as a summary'. One important thing to note while reading this commentary: as per Theatre Academy's guidelines, the commentary is *not* to present new references or artistic research (except in the conclusion of the commentary in which doctoral candidates are asked to discuss futures of their artistic research) yet rather, to present through lines between one's texts. This commentary, also as instructed by my university is designed only to introduce these publications and not the artworks these texts discuss.

It should be noted that following the completion of *Palestinian Wildlife Series*, the embodied focus of my artistic research and its attendant movement practices, outlined in section one, temporarily shifted to archival, photographic, collage and still image based research for *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry*. These resume in my third project in Sinai.

### ***Constellations of Artist References***

Contemporary artists whose works provide further context of my own in the present, include the research based practices of Palestinian artists Jumana Emil Abboud, Lawrence Abu Hamdan and Jumana Manna. Personal accounts of revolutionary Middle Eastern histories have also been attended to by filmmaker Miriam Ghani, the daughter of former Afghan president, Mohammed Ashraf Ghami, in her *What We Left Unfinished*, 2019 (Nazif, 2021). Writer Francois Verges wrote about her own families' activist histories in her doctoral thesis (Djamilla Bouhired, who I discuss at length in my performance of *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965*, was her aunt by marriage) published in 1999 by Duke University Press.

In contemporary art more broadly, Palestinian visual artist Larissa Sansour is a pioneer of the Arab futurism, a genre briefly discussed in my first article (Khalil, 2016). I admired the work of Egyptian multimedia video and performance artist Amal Kenawy prior to her premature death of cancer at the age of thirty seven in Cairo in 2012 (Elkamel, 2012, Farhat, 2012). Though her remembrance and artistic legacy was subsumed for me by years of revolution and tumult which followed her death, Kenawy's practice importantly spanned across video, performance, sculpture, installation, painting, and drawing - sensitively and intimately exploring a materiality and immateriality of embodiment, labor, womanhood, sensuality and her unconscious.

In section one of this commentary, I review my practice of embodied image making as the primary methodology I have cultivated over the course of my doctoral research. In section two, I consider thematic links between my articles with a focus on post human and post colonial thought. In section three, I reflect on the aftermath of my second thesis publication, "Political Family Photos as Performance", and its place within my own 'intercyclic web of research'. I conclude this commentary in section four by reflecting on my artistic

research as a whole, my work in the present and to come, with a brief look at concepts of grieving and rewilding.

### Section One: Embodied Image Making as a Method<sup>19</sup>

*I didn't know how to say at first that the moving images I was making were for the stage. I would just bristle when people at theatre academy would call my videos "installations". The thought of viewers walking around my videos, chatting, sitting down and standing up in the middle, or at the beginning! was never a future I could imagine for my work. As I crossed disciplinary boundaries within my dance and theatre conservatory, I did not know at first how to insist that the moving images I was making were for living, breathing audiences in real time. I could not abandon the primary agreement with audiences in theatre and live performance: attention and participation, predetermined time periods, lights going down then up, sitting together in the dark.*

---

<sup>19</sup> In this section I write in a diaristic style, synthesized from notes made during the artistic research of *Palestinian Wildlife Series*, which documented thoughts and processes in my studio during the years 2012-2015. These notes chronicled technical developments in my video practice, alongside my thoughts on the relationship of these material innovations to thematic content.

*I didn't know how to say that for me too, the videos I was making were part of a deeper investigation into live performance itself. Videos with non-human bodies were an extension of my investigations of corporeality and display. Many of my questions about "otherness" and the universal "body" of Western dance were answered in this way.*

*Why didn't I know how to say it? These videos and explorations for me, were also about exclusion. Public exclusions, private exclusions, twin exclusions of public institutions and painful private interactions in the worlds around me. There are exclusions of tribes, exclusions from nature, exclusions from safety, exclusions from rights, exclusions in dance class, all bound within this artistic research. These particular investigations housed exclusions so wide they felt cavernous; exclusions so deep they formed a hole through which I felt I could endlessly fall. So I worked to articulate my thoughts on the bigger picture. Step by step. Through images, movement, different kinds of texts. Each failure to communicate helped to find another path forward. Some failures though, simply reinforced the theme of exclusion.*

*What is the opposite of exclusion? I think of it not as simply inclusion, yet rather attunement. Years later, returning as I have now, to live work with dancers, I understand on a deeper level the importance of having edited the moving images I made with my focus on kinesthetic awareness. Sometimes I have dancers move with, or beside videos of non human movement. I teach them the processes of listening I cultivated here. Sometimes I ask dancers to move in unison with the videos, to follow the image's lead. The experimental video making I conducted, formed an investigation into kinesthetic attunement<sup>20</sup>.*

### **Kinesthetic Attunement**

Attunement: "to bring into accord, harmony, or sympathetic relationship; adjust"

"describes how reactive a person is to another's needs and moods"

"to make someone understand or recognize something"

*Webster's Dictionary*

---

<sup>20</sup> The term *kinesthetic attunement* is one I developed in relation to this project. I later discovered that it also found within dance therapy (Tamplin, 2022).

As an artist, there is only so much one can say in words about the disconnect humans experience from our own planet. What can we say about the hidden life of minerals, used to produce bombs and harmful energy forms which eradicate all of the above? How can we reconnect with the lives of plants, sea creatures, animals, earth and minerals? I worked on this question with the best tools I personally have for connection: those of somatic dance.

I began my studies of somatic dance as a teenager, formalizing my studies as an undergraduate with immersion into contact improvisation, authentic movement and experiential anatomy. Somatic dance was a revelation for me which ran counter to my previous modern dance and ballet training. With its emphasis on movement rather than storylines, emotionality and narrative (Banes, 1987), post modern dance, which includes somatic forms, also felt like an important container for the critiques of traditional dance I held at that time. I locate my most meaningful training as a dancer as an outgrowth of the Judson Church's avant garde movements of the 1960's and early 70's. As an undergraduate student I was fascinated by Yvonne

Rainer's No Manifesto<sup>21</sup> and her choreography of refusals (Banes, 2003). I also adored the transdisciplinary collaborations of Judson dancers with painters, sculptors and experimental musicians. We studied Merce Cunningham and John Cage as predecessors to postmodern dance and I was fascinated by their daring, elegance and zen sophistication. Carolee Schneeman's *Meat Joy* (1964) disgusted yet intrigued me on deep levels and I marvel to this day at all that time period had to offer in terms of its innovation and courage to experiment.

---

<sup>21</sup> see: [https://www.ktufsd.org/cms/lib/NY19000262/Centricity/Domain/116/No Manifesto.pdf](https://www.ktufsd.org/cms/lib/NY19000262/Centricity/Domain/116/No%20Manifesto.pdf).

An interesting side note within this research is my interest in race and the Judson Church, a practically completely white movement unfolding at the same time as the emergence of the African American civil rights movement in the US. On this line, I found an interesting exchange between Coco Fusco and Yvonne Rainer in the late 1980's. Fusco is calling out Rainer for cultural insensitivity at a film festival in France which Fusco was organizing with the Black Audio Film Collective and Rainer, befuddled, struggles to respond to Fusco's charges. See: Coco Fusco's "Fantasies of Oppositionality" appearing in *Screen*, Vol. 29, No. 4, Autumn, 1988; and "Responses to Coco Fusco" by Berenice Renaud and Yvonne Rainer appearing in *Screen*, Vol. 30, No. 3, Summer, 1989.

I studied with Tricia Brown dancers Lani Nahele (formerly Lisa Schmidt) before entering school<sup>22</sup> and Diane Madden during my undergraduate. Yet much more than Brown's choreography and technique, I became taken with release technique in general, and practice Klein technique to this day (originally with Susan Klein in her Manhattan Studio). Release techniques are informed by a variety of dance, yoga and martial arts practices and focus on muscle relaxation, breathing and working with one's structural anatomy, gravity and momentum, to allow the most efficient movement. Well known forms include Alexander Technique, Skinner Technique and Feldenkrais (Olsen and McHose, 2004). For my years as student and several prior, I studied contact improvisation with Felice Wolfzahn, protégée of CI innovators Steve Paxton and Nancy Stark Smith. At that time Contact Improvisation

---

<sup>22</sup> I attended university at Hampshire College from 1998 to 2002, a progressive school formed within a wave of alternative educational models in the US in the 1970's. Hampshire emphasized self initiated learning and transdisciplinary education. As part of the Five Colleges within Northampton and Amherst Massachusetts, I was also able to take courses at Smith College and Mount Holyoke College, where I studied experiential anatomy and contact improvisation. At Hampshire I studied Laban Movement Analysis and Authentic Movement and soon completely abandoned traditional modern and contemporary dance, focusing exclusively in the above forms and my own original choreographies and performances.



and Authentic Movement were my main forms of embodied expression, and I spent many years refining my technique as an improviser.

The founder of Authentic Movement, Mary Whitehouse said: “Movement to be experienced, must come from within, not put on like a coat.” (Pallaro, 1999. 27) This sentiment has always resonated deeply within me, and within Authentic Movement, I found a home for the internal relationship I have, and am interested in fostering, with dance.

#### **Authentic Movement/ Movement in Depth**

Authentic Movement is a form developed by dancer Mary Starks Whitehouse in the 1940’s. Whitehouse was the patient of a student of psychologist Carl Jung. Drawing on Jung’s ideas of dreamwork and the subconscious, Whitehouse applied these concepts to her cultivation of the form she named “Movement in Depth”. (Pallaro, 1999. 18) After her death it was renamed Authentic Movement, the term is mostly widely known by, by her student Janet Adler. I prefer Whitehouse’s original name for the form, unencumbered the dizzying load of what the term “authentic” means

and to who, and it is the term that I use in my own teaching.

The score of Movement in Depth is simple: there is a mover and a witness. Movers move with eyes closed, attempting to follow their “inner impulse”. This inner impulse is kinesthetically, rather than intellectually, initiated. *What does my leg feel? What does my back wish? How does my arm itch?* What, in other words, does my body say. Movers might lie in wait for minutes, or hours attempting to honestly answer these questions. And then a flood of different information, as minds shut off and bodies lead.

I have taught and practiced this form for the entirety of my adult life since learning it at the age of 19. For me, Movement in Depth/ Authentic Movement is an *anti-dance* because it runs opposite to that which my Western dance training taught me about the ways in which movement should be optically followed, mimicked and created. Yet attempting to witness oneself and be witnessed in vulnerable states, is hard work, and Movement in Depth/ Authentic Movement involves as much an *unlearning* as it does learning. This also involves an unlearning of what it means to view another

person/ being. It is this state of witnessing that I have applied to the production of my own moving images, as well as the participatory viewing environments I have researched.

Over twenty years, I have worked to cultivate a supportive mode of witnessing. In this mode I focus on the physical movement unfolding before me, without seeking to understand the movement psychologically<sup>23</sup>. I work to encourage and hold space for the mover. I am not judging them aesthetically. I am simply there, in a state which combines states of detachment and unconditional love, so that they can attend to their inner impulses and the unique ways in which emotions move within and through their bodies. This too runs counter to dance in general, in which dancers are trained to please, or push, or restrain, and audiences are trained to consume and judge and be entertained.

My practice of Movement in Depth deeply informs the production of this methodology. Viewing, Listening and my acts of participatory viewing with the images of

---

<sup>23</sup> Readers will find this effort in keeping with practices of postmodern dance more broadly, as in the 1964 “No Manifesto” of postmodern dance pioneer Yvonne Rainer, though perhaps more gentle and emotionally present.

*Palestinian Wildlife Series* and my *Sinai* project. Through this practice, my ability to view plant and animal movement, in the same way I view humans; as functional, skeletal or tubular, took the place of any desire to anthropomorphize them.

Movement in Depth has also changed within me over time. Where my inner movement once produced much personal and psychological reflection, my time in the studio is now dominated by inner images and movements of earth and sea creatures. Unanticipated, I move the spiral unfurling of leaves, waves moving back and toward a shore, or an insect from the performance piece I am making.

### ***Butoh Dance and the Making of Palestinian Wildlife Series***

Somatic movement practices have the power to transport us to empathic and embodied understanding of our research. While making *Palestinian Wildlife Series*, I projected my animal images on the wall and improvisationally danced various animals states. I danced lions and cheetas loosing their habitats, nursing their young, hunting for prey. I owe the cultivation of many aspects of my practice to Butoh dance, which I

began in 2009 with Japanese dancer and choreographer Atsushi Takenouchi.<sup>24</sup>

I think of Butoh as a “punk” form of dance. The “beauty” and self consciousness of Western dance are replaced by rigorous, internally driven explorations of collective feeling, agony and response. In prompts given by Atsushi, I have danced the unfolding of flowers; danced a high paced washing machine; danced a long walk through a burning desert, as me and my people died of mass starvation. Symbolism and metaphor do not operate the same way in Butoh as in Modern dance. Metaphors are less metaphorical: images are danced with the intention of being internally *felt*. In other words, in both modern dance and butoh, one might dance the image (or prompt) of a blazing fire. In modern dance, this fire might symbolize anger, or one’s betrayal from a lover, and we are to understand what we are watching as a metaphor for human centered feeling. Yet in Butoh, and the post modern dance forms which it has inspired

---

<sup>24</sup> In this section I discuss Butoh from my perspective as a practitioner.

Interested readers can see *Hijikata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo*, for more on the practice and origins of Butoh dance. This text includes a chapter on my teacher Atsushi Takenouchi and the development of his form, *Jinen Butoh*, which emphasizes practices with nature (Frleigh and Nakamura, 2006, 129-133). For more on Butoh within artistic research, see Kolliopoulou, 2019.

(and been inspired by), the point is less to poetically interpret fire as a metaphor for human feelings, than for the dancer to quite concretely attempt to experience fire as a sensation and a form, through movement. The dancer dances fire’s shifting flames, it’s burning and warmth, it’s color. And in this way transmits the feelings and sensation of fire itself directly to an audience. This is not to say that there is no narrative within Butoh dance. Yet like the animism present with Japanese culture more generally, non human figures are not less than human elements. Animals, like other human forms within nature which we cannot claim to understand, are not used within my practice as metaphors for my feelings, so much as parallel sites of experiences of displacement and violence.

My chronicles of scenes of carnage and violence in *Palestinian Wildlife Series* are also an extension of my Butoh practice. Focus on the grotesque in Butoh relates to a post apocalyptic Japan, in the aftermath of US atomic bombs upon Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II.

In *Palestinian Wildlife Series*, I share a scene of a group of mother lions and cubs collectively eating the innards of a slain buffalo. Though graphic, it is an image of

care: mothers are feeding their young through this buffalo. In class (circa 2009-2013), my teacher Atsushi Takenouchi spoke about the disconnect we humans experience from the natural world, when our meat is wrapped in plastic in the supermarket. We dance, as it were, to remove the plastic. If I had not studied Butoh, perhaps I would never have included this scene - which is graphic and perhaps difficult to watch. Yet because Butoh equalizes human and non-human worlds, refusing “good” and “bad” quite categorically and particularly where subjects of performance are concerned, I locate this pulling of muscles and tendons, violence and food, within a nexus of dance, movement and butoh.

While editing the appropriated footage of *Palestinian Wildlife Series*, rather than speculate on the feelings or drives of the animal images I worked with, I focused on questions like: What are the lines of a leg? Where is the movement of a wing initiated? How does a buffalo run? What makes the gate of a lion cub?

My videos “Lions Laying Beside Each Other” (Khalil, 2016 “At a loss for words” section) and “Lion Killing a Buffalo” (Khalil, 2016 “Not animals, but animal images section) chronicle spiraling movement. A male lion

walks around his mate in a circle, then circles around himself to find his way to the ground. In *Lion Killing a Buffalo*, a female hunter lion and a buffalo simultaneously attack and flee one another, locked in a circular embrace. I later edited this sequence so that the lion and the buffalo spiral together for a longer time to highlight this movement pattern.

*I remember days, totaling perhaps months or years, in class and in the dance studio, which I spent spiraling up from the floor and spiraling back down into it. Many times in a row, for hours at a time. I worked tirelessly to master ascending and descending spirals initiated through my center. Seeking to make them as honest and seamless as possible. In contact improvisation, and other partnering forms, it is this spiraling motion exactly which makes it possible for bodies - especially smaller bodies like mine - to receive, lift and hold other bodies coming toward them in motion. In Palestinian Wildlife Series, the lion clings to the body of the buffalo- much larger than herself- through the same physics.*

*My studies of experiential anatomy - years of attuning with my skeleton, organs, cellular structures - provided me with tools for kinesthetic attunement with the images*

*of Palestinian Wildlife Series, and moving images I would produce after it. They allowed me to work with moving images in a prolonged state of fascination. In my early days of editing Palestinian Wildlife Series, I watched the structures of these flickering animals, and moved - sometimes in my chair, sometimes on my floor - with the movement of their animal bones. This opened an embodied empathic connection with animals I've never seen in real life - baby cheetas and lions, giraffes and hyenas. Kinesthetic attunement allowed me to think differently about their lives, their food, habitats, child rearing, extinction, then if I had simply been reading about them.*

### **Spectatorship**

My cultivation of embodied image making as a methodology also rests on critiques and histories of ethnographic display in relation to performance. How does producing images in an embodied way, disrupt and interrupt modes of consumptive viewing? Coco Fusco's influential essay "The Other History of Intercultural Performance" (1994) asserts that "Performance Art in the West did not begin with Dadaist "events" (1994, 41), yet rather the world fairs of Europe and American circus freak shows, where kidnapped Native American,

Aboriginal and African human bodies, comprised the west's first glimpses of "The Other"<sup>25</sup>. What then does it mean to view the bodies of others? What happens within humans we view, as with others as they are being seen? Considering the power dynamics of viewing, not only in terms of gender and the *male gaze*, (Mulvey, 1975) yet also racialized and colonial gazes, and then certain gazes reserved for animals, has been central to the consideration of this image making method which centers embodied practices of empathy and attunement.

I do not believe that all forms of spectatorship are detrimental. I remember watching *Cirque du Soleil* as a young person and feeling the rush and power of the potential of the human body soar through me. This is a kind of positive identification and empathic response that passively watching performances can engender, and I have hoped for this experience in my audiences. Yet as I've worked toward the methodology most visible in my recent project *ReWild*, discussed in section four, I've also given a lot of thought to disidentification in relation to images of other bodies. This thought is a through line

---

<sup>25</sup> Fusco goes on to discuss the decapitated heads and severed limbs of Africans like Sarah Haartman, ie. the "Hottentot Venus" and Native Americans still housed within museum collections (1994, 49).

throughout my articles, from my refusal to include images of Palestinian humans common in newsmedia (Khalil, 2016), to my investigations of French postcards from Algeria (Khalil, 2018) to my refusal to create spectacular images of marine life in the Sinai (Khalil, 2021). Fusco argues that world's fairs were a part of a larger colonial project which used spectacle to reinforce a sense of superiority within the peoples of colonizing nations. My artistic research is interested in this, and the ways in which some forms of image consumption can make us care *less* about the subjects we are viewing.

The flickering screens of animal images within *Palestinian Wildlife Series* (created from shooting this footage directly from a television set, in Palestine) interrupt easy visual consumption, reminding viewers of the materiality and constructed nature of the videos they are watching (Khalil, 2016, "Not animals, but animal images" section).

In the cultivation of this methodology, I have asked what it means for human beings to attempt to vulnerably move *with* images of nature - inverting our spectator / consumer relationship to one of collaborator and participant. When beginning this artistic research I

asked for participation at the level of viewing; making space within oneself to view abstract images and collaborate on their meaning, as outlined in the section entitled "Participatory Spectatorship" in my first article (2016). In my third article, I discuss my cultivation of this method as a site to slow down and attune not only with the beauty of marine life, yet also the micro plastics and touristic industries which surround them. At its center, this methodology is driven by a belief that no one can enact environmental justice within spheres which they are not physically attuned with.

### **Embodied Image Making in Sinai**

The artistic research of my third project proceeded from my within body more directly and concretely than the two projects which proceed it. Within Sinai, I am a non bedouin and diasporic Egyptian tourist; female and middle class. I explore the nuances of these identities through my body in "Sinai: Tourism, Colonialism and Sea" (Khalil, 2021), informed by the travel writings of artists of color including June Jordan, James Baldwin

and Jamaica Kincaid <sup>26</sup>, and discussed in section two of this commentary.

As with my previous artistic research, I began without premeditated ideas of what I wanted to film. I entered the water in my bathing suit and snorkel, and turned on my camera, and focused on felt experiences within my body, turning my camera towards certain scenes, or simply bringing it along for the ride, strapped across my forehead. It was through this practice of embodied research that the theme of tourism first emerged, though I did not in fact, intend to discuss it. My original idea for this project was to trouble the concept of “development”, as related to overbuilding and extraction within the third world. I was interested in interrogating the ideas of civilization and nature as they relate to diminishing spaces of open nature and demilitarized zones in Egypt.

After weeks of attunement to my inner experience however, I could not ignore the ways in which tourism as an action was central to my research. As a tourist-

---

<sup>26</sup> see *A Stranger in the Village: Two Centuries of African American Travel Writing*. Edited by Farah J. Griffin and Cheryl J. Fish, 1998.

researcher within these sites I felt both implicated and impacted by the ways in which “nature” and indigenous life were monetized and framed as spectacle. Fresh water and sea life seemed to exist - or call to be preserved - for no other reason than touristic pleasure and consumption, in other words, the commodity values assigned to it. Clean water, birds, sea life and the Bedouin peoples who had lived as one for centuries, were all disappearing. As I conducted my embodied research, I found the forces of this disappearance closer to me than the research I had planned to that point.

My personal place within and outside of tourism in Egypt stood in contrast to my artistic research within the water. Swimming and filming underwater through snorkeling often produced an uplifting feeling that I was deeply connected with and part of the sea around me. This feeling lasted only until I would swim above a scuba diver photographing a dying reef, or towel off and walk a disjointed journey to my room alone, among European tourists to Egypt. It soon became clear that it would be impossible to ignore these embodied experiences in favor of broader theorization and research. The differences between myself and the Egyptian men (invariably, they were men) bringing me

my food, needed also to be attended within my artistic research. I felt fortunate when I encountered the writings by authors of color featured in my third article, which mirrored the complexities of travel which I was experiencing <sup>27</sup>.

Development remains an urgent issue of critique <sup>28</sup>. Yet my embodied research in the Sinai led me to critique even the ‘eco’ tourism I was conducting, in my friend’s uncle’s small beach resort within a continuum of development. The episode I describe in my third article, of German tourists surrounding a small white octopus in the water is an image seared in my mind, like the memory photographs I discuss in the section to come.

---

<sup>27</sup> In her “Report from the Bahamas”, from *Moving Towards Home: Political Essays* (1989) June Jordan writes: ‘Olive’ is the name of the Black woman who cleans my hotel room. On my way to the beach I am wondering what ‘Olive’ would say if I told her why I chose The Sheraton British Colonial; if I told her I wanted to swim, I wanted to sleep. I did not want to be harassed by the middle -aged waiter, or his nephew. I did not want to be raped by anyone (white or Black) at all and I calculated my safety as a Black woman alone would best be assured by a multinational hotel corporation.”

<sup>28</sup> Several interesting critiques of development in relation to environmentalism have been published recently: Matthias Schemelzer, Andrea Vetter and Aaron Vansintjan’s *The Future is Degrowth: A Guide to a World Beyond Capitalism* and Troy Vettese and Drew Pendergrass’ *Half-Earth Socialism* both published by Verso Press in 2022.

Unlike the small straw huts in the Bedouin camp I stay in most of the time I visit Sinai, this trip to my friend’s uncle’s resort highlighted not only the distances, but often uncomfortable similarities between Europeans and myself (English, prior experiences of sitting at long tables with white linens, money to pay for this experience) and then those between groundskeepers and myself (shared culture and histories of colonialism under Europeans). This secondary example of embodied image making - ie. research driven by information collected through one’s body - is a key takeaway from my artistic research. I think of Annette Arlander’s “Year of the Juniper”, and all she learned about her island and sun and wind and Juniper itself, from the quietness and stillness of holding hands with that plant for one year. As I discuss in this third article, embodied research is, beyond anything else, research conducted in and through one’s own body.

A final point of importance within this methodological development is outlined within my first and third articles; my refusal of spectacular images. Images of water itself in my artwork *Sinai, a story I tell my daughter* are more abundant than fish or human images. In my image making for this work, I sought to engender



a larger meditation on all which water holds- the death of coral reefs, the garbage and invasive species- alongside its astonishing former life. Here too I return to ideas of the thin image - images which do not make claims but rather elude to the impossibility of a cohesive historical narrative - above and within the sea.

This work chronicles embodied disappearance. In each of the trips I've made to Sinai in the aftermath of this work, the sea is more rainbowed with oil, the beautiful fish number less and less. There is a long bridge drilled into the fragile floor of the Red Sea, now connecting Sinai to Saudi Arabia, for the cars of this oil rich country

to enter Egypt through.

*I couldn't say then, yet can say now- one of the most important ideas I developed in my artistic research emerged in relation to the paradox of using video as a source of reconnection with nature. This came from watching an interview with video artist Pipilotti Rist <sup>29</sup>. Rist asserts that we are everywhere surrounded by electronics- yet that we can also use this "zzzz" sound of*

---

<sup>29</sup> Pipilotti Rist in conversation, *Southbank Centre*, 2011.

*our videos to "reconcile our organic body with the permanent electronic noise". In my work I have used video machines to reconnect with the natural elements and bodies that electricity has both protected us from - and stood in between.*

## Section Two:

### **Interrelations of Third World Feminist, Post Human and Post Colonial Theory in my Artistic Research for *The Third World Ecology Trilogy***

Prior to this doctoral project, I would have described colonialism as problems between humans: oppressor and oppressed. At the conclusion of this artistic research, I define colonialism as crimes against the earth, affecting vast interspecies relations. Colonial crimes are comprised of networks of actions and discourse which limit, reorganize and destroy complex planetary relationships. While colonial and EuroAmerican in origin, today these crimes are perpetuated across vast national and ethnic lines, through globalism, neoliberalism and a corporate ethos of individual accumulation over collective planetary survival. Colonialism has reaped havoc over human populations across the world just as it has to plant, animal and mineral species.

My initial introduction to concepts of the Anthropocene was largely evacuated of nuance regarding racial and socio-economic differences between human beings, and the varied roles the ancestors of any given community

have played in relation to the most widespread planetary ecocides and genocides <sup>30</sup>. I was not able to engage with theories of the Anthropocene until I encountered their refusal in the works of the black feminist ecologists I discuss below.

On the other hand, my introduction to post human theory (Bradiotti, 2013) at the start of my doctoral work, immediately destabilized all of my other theoretical frameworks. Posthuman theory forced me to confront the human centric paradigms at the heart of my (and most) worldview(s). My perspectives on embodiment then extended to our planetary body, and the many nonhuman bodies upon it whom my focus had previously excluded. Detangling the “humanness” at the core of my own thought to that point, was the prerequisite for my engagement with environmental justice as a core concept in my artistic research. Yet as

---

<sup>30</sup> I am thinking of this form of Anthropocenic discourse in the work of popular environmental philosopher, Timothy Morton. Morton’s 2014 essay collection titled *Dark Ecology: for a Logic of Future Coexistence* refers to his critique of “sunny” forecasts for the environment. Yet Morton’s popular treatise toward coexistence between human and nonhuman beings, overlooks the spaces and languages where darkness and lightness in human skin color exist historically as one of the most violent barriers to coexistence on our planet.

said previously, post human thought within the Northern European artistic research circles I studied in, lacked critical interrogation regarding just who qualifies for the distinction of human being (Wehilye, 2002).

Thus we arrive at the point at which I began my first article for this thesis (2016), which explores these ideas at length. In this section I explore the scholarship and artistic works which encouraged me to collapse the distinctions I once held between postcolonial and posthuman thought <sup>31</sup>. These include the intersectional labors of frontline BIPOC environmental activists; black Marxists; scholars on Palestine, Algeria and finally that of black, anticolonial feminist ecologists.

While important critiques of capitalism underpin much writing on the Anthropocene (Moore, 2015; Vettese and Pendergrass, 2022; Schmelzer et al, 2022) the critiques I have found most salient are those which unite postcolonial, black feminist and ecological insight. Over

---

<sup>31</sup> This area of inquiry is presently exploding, and in no way can the works cited here be considered conclusive. Ed Vulliamy's "Reclaiming Native Identity in California" (*The New York Review of Books*, June 22, 2023) refers to a book whose title sums up much of the thought below. *We Are The Land: A History of Native California* by Damon B. Atkins and William J. Bauer Jr. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2022.

the course of the three articles and artworks produced within this artistic research, I found this convergence in the work of Sylvia Wynter, Jamaica Kincaid, Françoise Vergès, Audre Lorde, Kathryn Yussof and on the ground, in the work and grey literature of the activists of the Climate Justice Alliance<sup>32</sup> with whom I studied concepts of third world feminist labor and environmental justice while in sheltering in place in the United States at the height of the Covid pandemic. My thoughts are also here indebted to the praxis of environmental activist and attorney Elizabeth Yeampierre. The executive director of UPROSE, a local BIPOC women led environmental organization in Sunset Park Brooklyn, Elizabeth was a generous speaker within our *Interrelational Ecology Salon* on May 2, 2020. Her words in our salon <sup>33</sup> and outspoken newsletters (Yeampierre, 2020) refined my understanding of mainstream environmental organizations. As Elizabeth reveals, mainstream environmental organizations uphold the status quo of ongoing environmental devastation through their competitiveness rather than collectiveness around

---

<sup>32</sup> <https://climatejusticealliance.org/>

<sup>33</sup> In this online lecture, Elizabeth also importantly pointed out that scholars and researchers have acted in "extractive" ways towards her organization and environmental justice movements at large.

funding, and their refusal to support - much less follow the lead of - front line and indigenous environmental activists. While indigenous and BIPOC communities the world over bear the lions share of colonial climate catastrophe, they have as we know, contributed the least to it. UPROSE, also a member of the climate justice alliance hold that ancestral traditions possess the most intelligent climate solutions on our planet <sup>34</sup>. Without indigenous and frontline activists, true and lasting ecological change can never occur. These organizations contend that BIPOC led climate justice movements are full of Greta Thunbergs, unseen and inaudible within mainstream media. It is our shared belief that the forging of intercultural, interclass and interracial alliances with which to attend to climate catastrophe has never been more urgent.

---

<sup>34</sup> These solutions include Native ancestral practices of burning within forests to prevent wildfires (See T.J. Demos "The Agency of Fire: Burning Aesthetics" *eflux journal*, issue #98 March 2019) and radical opposition to industrialization, pollution, extraction and fossil fuel consumption found in pipeline protests, land and water protection across the Americas (see Lakhani, 2021). They are holistic solutions for communities which include futures for those formerly involved in extractive industries, as found in literature for Just Transition. ([climatejusticealliance.org/just-transition/](https://climatejusticealliance.org/just-transition/))

In this artistic research, I am indebted to the Marxist scholarship of Angela Davis, Cedric Robinson and Walter Rodney. These scholars perform critiques of capitalism central to both posthuman and postcolonial thought by interrogating Marxism in relation to colonialism and blackness <sup>35</sup>.

In tribute to Cedric Robinson's pioneering work in *Black Marxism* (1983), Fred Moten and Stephano Harney write (2017, 83): "The self-owning, earth-owning group sets itself apart from other groups- particularly, fundamentally, in violent speciation, from groups that do not own (either self or earth)." Robinson explores and expands for his readers the racialization which underlies all systems of capital, capitalism itself having been birthed from colonial and precolonial systems of indigenous land seizure, human and animal enslavement. (Robinson examines the European origins of these systems within medieval England for example: Robinson, 1973, chapter 2). Speciation as we know, is an affair not limited the plant and animal world, but also

---

<sup>35</sup> Of Marxism, Angela Davis writes: "The very concept of humanity will always conceal an internal, clandestine racialization, forever foreclosing possibilities of racial equality. Needless to say, Marxism is firmly anchored in this tradition of the Enlightenment." (2017, 253)

practiced - perhaps the most rigorously and violently - between humans. His concept of racial capital is the unique capital extracted from black and brown peoples through colonialism and slavery, and the economic accumulation which proceed from the slave's inability to own himself.

Angela Davis has been a constant companion to this artistic research across her many speeches and texts, beginning with *Angela Davis: an Autobiography*, originally published in 1973 and edited by the brilliant Toni Morrison. Davis' intersectional praxis spans prison abolition<sup>36</sup> and her work on the ground with organizations including *Critical Resistance*. While conducting my artistic research for *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965*, Davis' *Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine and the Foundations of a Movement* (2017) illuminated the international context within which my grandmother's Pan African and anticolonial

---

<sup>36</sup> Davis has a rich history with prison abolition activism including her contributions to free the Soledad brothers in 1970, and later, herself. As a member of her own defense council, Davis's work culminated in her landmark release by an all white jury. (Davis, 1973). Her work to end incarceration and free political prisoners continues to this day. See *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (2003)

feminist organizing took place. Davis' praxis attends to discusses the "triple jeopardy" <sup>37</sup> women of color face, discussed in her 1983 book, *Women, Race and Class*. Here Davis interrogates histories of racism within the communist party and US feminist movements.

Audre Lorde's "Letter to Ecofeminist Mary Daly" considers the omission of Black women in Daly's ecofeminist text, *Gyn/ Ecology*. Daly's one mention of Black women happens in relation to African practices of female genital mutilation. Lorde in turn demands acknowledgement of Black women as "dark and ancient and divine". Black, female, earth connected divinity predates for Lorde, the "myth of white women" as "legitimate and sole herstory". (Lorde, 2007, 69)

When considering the collapse in my mind between ecological and postcolonial thought, I am also indebted to bell hook's *Belonging: a culture of place*. Here, the celebrated feminist and critical race theorist explores her rural upbringing in the US' deep south. "Growing up, renegade black and white folks who perceived the

---

<sup>37</sup> "Triple Jeopardy" was the name of the newsletter of the US based *Third World Women's Alliance*, a revolutionary socialist organization of women of color active from 1968 - 1980.

backwoods, the natural environment, to be a space away from man made constructions, from dominator culture, were able to create unique habits of thinking and being that were in resistance to the status quo.” (hooks, 2007, 19) *Belonging* chronicles hooks decision to return to her home town in Kentucky and take up a teaching post in Berea College, which she held for over a decade until her death in 2021. Here hooks unravels histories which prevented black people in the U.S. from connecting with the land they lovingly tended even while enslaved. These include red lining<sup>38</sup>, the Jim Crow period, and the great migration.

Among my favorite texts, Walter Rodney’s *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, originally published in 1973, synthesized my understanding of extraction in Africa as shared across plant (plantations), mineral (mines), animal (zoos and conservation parks) and humans (as excavated through kidnapping and enslavement of adults and human children). Reading Rodney, who was assassinated in 1980, Africa becomes a living continent,

---

<sup>38</sup> Redlining is a term which refers to racialized exclusions within real estate in the United States, specifically where Black homeownership and mortgages are concerned. see Candace Jackson’s “What is Redlining?” *New York Times*, August 2021.

yearning for her stolen resources, which include the human life and innovation lost to EuroAmerican mass enslavement and genocide. The institution of slavery irreparably destroyed communities and wholistic earth cosmologies, cementing futures of deficit, compromising generational wisdom and land stewardship. Rodney discusses knowledge from an African perspective: by the age of six for example, Bemba children can name fifty to sixty species of tree plants, though these children “knew little about ornamental flowers”. (Rodney, 2011, 239)

Like Angela Davis and bell hooks, Walter insists on radical scholarship which grows from one’s community. *The Groundings with My Brothers* (1969) chronicles the inspiration he received spending time with comrades in Jamaica (Rodney was Guyanese). This conceptual work helped me to conceptually locate my artistic research for *The Pan African Asian Women’s Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965* as an artwork and learning tool made specifically for my own Arab and Arab diasporic communities - rather than one geared for an international/ Western art audience. Rodney and the aforementioned scholars and activists provided a picture of what a merger of anticolonial activism and

environmental justice (postcolonial and posthuman) could look like for my work. So too, did all that I learned over the course of this artistic research in relation to Palestine.

#### **Scholarship on Palestine**

##### **and the Making of *Palestinian Wildlife Series***

Prior to my immersion in African and African diasporic revolutionary literature, I began this doctoral project with artistic research for my artwork *Palestinian Wildlife Series*, and my article of the same name (Khalil, 2016). Palestine exists today as an active example of settler colonialism and ethnic cleansing. In the words of Angela Davis, Israel shares with the United States “use of legal systems to enact systemic oppression [against indigenous peoples]” (Davis, 2017, 244).

My research on Palestine here is no way comprehensive, in part because the factors which mediate what Westerners see and know about Palestine extend from governments into universities and into the thoughts of professors and students who populate them. To say that my doctoral artistic research has been subject to undo scrutiny and censorship on this topic would be an understatement, yet more than this it has been subject to

the complex factors of invisibility and misunderstanding that are part and parcel of Palestine’s predicament.

To utter the words “settler colonialism” in relation to the occupation of Palestine is to inevitably collide with West’s own image of its worst atrocity: the genocide of European Jews in World War II. The innumerable genocides the West committed beyond this on every other continent remain, like Palestine, subject to invisibility and historical erasure. That Palestinians were in no way responsible for the European holocaust remains of little importance to the West, which insists that the price of newfound ‘safety’ will be paid by Palestine in the form of continual land seizure, ongoing displacement, immobility, cultural erasure and genocide.

*Palestinian Wildlife Series* as an artwork meditates on mediation of information in relation to land and living beings with its flickering images of African animals in the wild, joined like Palestinians in existential battles against loss of life, habitat and ancestral ways of being in relation to their land. Like Palestinians in news Western media, the wider frame of life and struggle for indigenous African animals is denied in nature documentaries. I tend to the problematic conflation of

Palestinians and animals in the first article of this thesis (2016).

My research in the making of this artwork allowed me to better understand the creation of Western ‘democratic’ nation states including the United States, Canada and Australia within non-Western indigenous territories, in relation to the ongoing creation of the nation state of Israel since 1948. Studying the concrete borders and massive walls Israel has erected to preserve the territories it has sought to claim, extended deep into the earth, separating Palestinian tree roots, human and animal families (Khalil, 2016), I am grateful to Edward Said’s *The Question of Palestine* (1992) for clarifying these links. I draw on Said’s ideas at length in my first article (“Book Immersion/ Facts on Palestine” section, 2016). Early drafts of my artwork *Palestinian Wildlife Series* experiment with his text:

“For an uncivilized people, land was either farmed badly (i.e., inefficiently by Western standards) or it was left to rot. From this string of ideas, by which whole native societies who lived on American, African, and Asian territories for centuries were suddenly denied their right to live on that land, came the great dispossessing movements of modern European colonialism, and with them all the schemes for redeeming the land, resettling the natives, civilizing

them, taming their savage customs, turning them into useful beings under European rule. Land in Asia, Africa, and the Americas was there for European exploitation, because Europe understood the value of land in a way impossible for the natives.” (Said, 1992, 75–76)

Carol B. Bardenstein’s essay “‘Trees, Forests, and the Shaping of Palestinian and Israeli Collective Memory” draws on Said’s writing on Israeli tree cultivation; Israeli forests have been planted atop the remains of destroyed Palestinian villages. Said asserts that Israelis cultivate deciduous trees and flowers foreign to the region, in their wish to be remember the gardens they lost in Europe.

Palestinians cling to the olive tree as both poetic metaphor and tangible part of their agricultural heritage and cultural preservation. Olive trees take twenty years to grow and another twenty years to bear fruit, surviving hundreds and in many cases over one thousand years. Israeli settlers uproot thousands of olive trees on a yearly basis <sup>39</sup>, enacting a nonhuman form of cultural erasure.

---

<sup>39</sup> Like Said’s, Bardenstein’s texts featured prominently in my early drafts, voiceovers and performances of *Palestinian Wildlife Series*.



In “The Memoricide of the Nakba<sup>40</sup>” (2006) Ilan Pappé points out that only eleven percent of Israel’s trees are indigenous. Of fig and almond trees in Jewish National Fund parks he writes: “Most Israelis think these are ‘wild’ figs or ‘wild’ almonds... But these fruit trees were planted and nurtured by human hands. Wherever almond and fig trees, olive groves or clusters of cactuses are found, there once stood a Palestinian village: still blossoming afresh each year, these trees are all that remain.” (Pappé, 2006, 228)

Furthering these lines of thought in my artistic research, Jedidiah Purdy’s essay “Environmentalism’s Racist History” (2015) takes up the eugenic projects of the forefathers of the United States. Purdy extends critiques of national parks also taken up by Rob Nixon in *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (2011). Purdy, Nixon, Bardenstein and Pappé locate conservation parks across Israel, Africa and the United States as places emptied of indigenous human beings, in

---

<sup>40</sup> *Nakba* is the Arabic word for catastrophe, used by Palestinians and Arab to describe Palestine’s dispossession by the founding of the State of Israel in 1948.

favor of a colonial curation (and culling of) indigenous plants and animals<sup>41</sup>.

Because of my immersive studies into Palestine, I became interested in Afrofuturism as a space of transcendence against these dismal pasts and present <sup>42</sup>. My article “Palestinian Wildlife Series: embodiment in images and critical abstraction” discusses Alexander Wehilye’s “‘Feenin’: Posthuman Voices in Contemporary Black Popular Music” (2002), a refusal of Donna Haraway’s racially neutral cyborg (1991). In

---

<sup>41</sup> DeLoughrey, Gosson, and Handley’s *Caribbean Literature and the Environment: Between Nature and Culture* (2005) and DeLoughrey and Handley’s *Postcolonial Ecologies: Literatures of the Environment* (2011) aided my understanding of the intersections of colonialism and ecological destruction. Essays by Jenifer Wenzel, Pablo Mukerjee and Dina El Dessouky, deepened my understanding of monoculture and tourism in the islands of the Caribbean, as a wider third world phenomenon, later expanded by my readings by Jamaica Kincaid and Sylvia Wynter in relation to my project in the Sinai.

<sup>42</sup> Near the time of my research, Afrofuturism would soon enjoy a revival in film and music festivals and contemporary art, following its birth in the 1960’s and 70’s in the United States by figures including jazz musician Sun Ra, and in the 1980’s in the work of as well as in the work of science fiction writer Octavia Butler. See the Criterion Collections’ *Afrofuturist collection* (2021). Afrofuturist themes continue to appear in popular music including in the work of Erykah Badu, Missy Elliot, Kool Keith, Janelle Monáe, Solange and many others.

this text, Wehilye crafts an Afrocentric recognition of the cyborg robotic voices and synthesizers in black American electronic music (Khalil, 2016).

Several postcolonial scholars orbit and transcend the frame of Palestine in my artistic research. Aimé Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism* (1955) refuses the Nazi holocaust as exceptional and repositions genocide as would Said and Frantz Fanon to come, as a core trait of European behavior and colonialism the world over. Countries colonized under French, British, Spanish, Portuguese rule, and so on, he argues, each experienced their very own holocaust. (Drawing on Césaire, Kathryn Yusoff makes the same point in relation to the Anthropocene and climate change, in my third article, 2021.)

Toward further connections between the postcolonial and posthuman in Palestine, I owe much to the poet and essayist June Jordan, revived for me by way of trans scholar and activist Che Gosset, whom I first met at a conference in Beirut in 2014<sup>43</sup>. Gosset presented

---

<sup>43</sup> This conference was entitled *Beirut: Bodies in Public* and took place at the American University of Lebanon, October 9th to 11th, 2014.

Jordan's work in relation to their research, centered on questions of blackness, animality and necropolitics. At this time Gossett was interested in "killing, borders and cages" across a variety of species, (Gossett, Filar, 2016) and shared notes on their meeting with with the Palestinian Animal League. Gossett also discussed their experiences of a visit to Lebanon's Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps, the site of the 1982 massacre written extensively about by Jordan throughout the 1980's until her death in 2002.

June Jordan is concerned with Palestine as a subject in ways that mirror her experiences of violence, subjugation and invisibility as a black and bisexual woman in the US. (Jordan, 1985, 2006). Discussing her own activism on Palestine, Angela Davis quotes a poem by Jordan: "I was born a Black woman/ and now / I am become a Palestinian / against the relentless laughter of evil / there is less and less room / where are my loved ones / It is time to make our way home."<sup>44</sup> I return to Jordan in my third project on tourism and colonialism in

---

<sup>44</sup> from "An Interview on the Futures of Black Radicalism" with Davis (2017, 39) in which Davis reads the poem of her dear friend June Jordan, "Moving Towards Home" (Jordan *Living Room*, 1985)

the Sinai, for her nuanced travel writings as a diasporic woman of color.

**Algeria, Anticolonial and  
Third World Feminist Revolution  
and the Making of *The Pan African Asian Women's  
Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965***

My performance *The Pan-African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965* contains a scene entitled, "The Families of Assassinated Leaders of African Independence Movements". For each of the male African revolutionaries I studied, I found an image of their spouse or daughter(s), often revolutionaries themselves. I presented images of these women as cut outs against white and black backgrounds, shifting successively as still image slides, with brief descriptions of their lives, deaths and families. These women include Pauline Lumumba, Algeria's Izza Bouzekri, Dina Olympia of Togo, Martha Moumie of Cameroon and Josie Fanon - the French and white wife of Frantz Fanon<sup>45</sup>, who committed suicide by throwing herself out of the window of her home in Algiers in 1989, as another

---

<sup>45</sup> see Issac Julian's fascinating docudrama *Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask* (1997) for more on Fanon's interracial marriage, and those of his brothers.

revolution was beginning <sup>46</sup>. Louise Langdon Little appears in this series - as Garveyite activist, comrade and widow of fellow Garveyite Earl Little. Earl was murdered by a white supremacist group, before he could see their son Malcom Little one day grow in Malcom X. Betty Shabazz, Malcom X's widow appears in this scene as well, followed by Akua Njeri (Black Panther and widow of Fred Hampton), Graca Machel, Miriam Sankara, Erica Huggins and Iva Cabral, daughter of Amilcar Cabral.

At this time, Amilcar Cabral's speeches in *Return to the Source*, also facilitated a collapse for me of human and nonhuman postcolonial concerns. Cabral studied agronomy in Portugal, and began his career as a land surveyor, conducting agricultural censuses in Portuguese Guinea. This work endowed Cabral with an intimate knowledge of the lands he would soon navigate in guerrilla war against his countries' Portuguese colonizers.

---

<sup>46</sup> as told by Josie Fanon's friend, the poet and novelist Assia Djebar in *Le Blanc de l'Algérie* (1995).

Cabral was a revolutionary, theorist and poet - the latter rendering his work an interesting model for artistic research! (The same is true of Audre Lorde, James Baldwin and June Jordan). Cabral's revolutionary praxis in land, agriculture, theory and poetry is instructive for wedding practice and theory. Consider the poetry of his revolutionary text: "A people who free themselves from foreign domination will be free culturally only if, without complexes and without underestimating the importance of positive accretions from oppressor and other cultures, they return to the upward paths of their own culture, which is nourished by the living reality of its environment, and which negates both harmful influences and any kind of subjection to foreign culture. Thus, it may be seen that if imperialist domination has the vital need to practice cultural oppression, national liberation is necessarily an act of culture" (Cabral, 1979, 153)

I also learned much from Cabral's writing on the indigenous petite bourgeoisie, from which he came. Cabral positions this educated group as a vital core for mobilization in revolutionary struggle - rather than traitors to the proletariat- as they appear in less nuanced Marxist literature. African Marxists Miriam and Thomas

Sankara put feminist treatises to work in their country <sup>47</sup>, adding concrete depth to the black ecofeminism I was soon to encounter.

### **Black feminist critical ecologists and the making of *Sinai, a story i tell to my daughter***

In my artwork *Sinai, a story i tell to my daughter*, I abandon lecture performance as a medium and turn to essay film. My text for this final piece of the *Third World Ecology Trilogy* is poetic, rather than academic, yet begins with a story about an indigenous woman who went insane when abducted from the forest she called her home and put on a truck, the first time she'd ever been in a moving vehicle (Venkateswar and Hughes, 2011, 29), which I'd read in my research.

In my video article for *The Journal of Embodied Research*, I work with unused video footage from this artwork to construct a broader look at my artistic research in the Sinai.

---

<sup>47</sup> Prior to his assassination in 1987, Thomas Sankara's revolutionary government in Burkina Faso (1983-1987) banned female genital mutilation, forced marriages and polygamy (Hersch, 2014, 39) in addition to broader anti imperial legislation including refusal of aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Here I turn to work of the black feminist critical ecologists who's works inform this final project of my doctorate. In her searing analysis, "Racial Capitalocene", Françoise Vergès examines climate change within Reunion Island's banana monoculture- the French colony she grew up in- that of as well as from the perspective of the US' black and Latinx neighborhoods. The latter disproportionately host the nation's hazardous waste facilities and toxic pollution. She asks: "What methodology is needed to write a history of the environment that includes slavery, colonialism, imperialism and racial capitalism, from the standpoint of those who were made into "cheap" objects of commerce, their bodies as objects renewable through wars, capture, and enslavement, fabricated as disposable people, whose lives do not matter?" (Vergès, 2017, 73).

As a staff garden writer for *The New Yorker* magazine in the 1990's, Jamaica Kincaid detailed exchanges with the unruly flowers in her yard, infusing these meditations with histories of imperial gardens and the transatlantic slave trade. I quote Kincaid's prose at length in my video essay "Sinai: Tourism, Colonialism and Sea" (16:43), the author sharply musing on the ways that

island natives regard tourists within her original home of Antigua.

"That the native does not like the tourist is not hard to explain... every native would like a rest, every native would like a tour. But some natives — most natives in the world — cannot go anywhere... They are too poor to escape the reality of their lives; and they are too poor to live properly in the place where they live, which is the very place you, the tourist, want to go."<sup>48</sup>

I position Kincaid's writing against a video image I created in Sinai: looking out of the window of my straw hut, I film a Bedouin woman walking on the shore, collecting shells to make jewelry for tourists.

In *Sinai: Tourism, Colonialism and Sea*, I also draw on Jamaican anticolonial theorist Sylvia Wynter's work. Wynter considers the peasant farmers' plot as a tool of revolutionary autonomy (17:58). Wynter, like Vergès after her, juxtaposes the sustainability and livelihood of small scale island polyculture against the deadly tropical fruit monocultures of colonial / tourist economies.

Kathryn Yusoff's *A Billion Black Anthropocenes Or None* is much indebted to Wynter's work. I quote Yusoff

---

<sup>48</sup> Kincaid, 1988, 8 quoted in Khalil, 2021, 16:43.

at length in the start of my third article. Yussof locates the start of the anthropocene as coterminous with the start of European colonialism- “The Anthropocene might seem to offer a dystopic future that laments the end of the world, but imperialism and (ongoing) settler colonialism have been ending worlds for as long as they have been in existence.”<sup>49</sup> - bringing ideas from Aimé Césaire’s *Discourse on Colonialism* (1955) full circle.

---

<sup>49</sup> Yussof, 2018, xiii, as quoted in Khalil, 2021, 00:15.

### Section Three

#### Stages of Learning and Artistic Research within the Intercyclic Web

Reviewing these three articles, similarities between my first and third publications exist where my second article departs. My first article “Palestinian Wildlife Series” (2016) and third article “Sinai: Tourism, Colonialism and Sea” (2021) address my artistic research in and through moving image - moving image is also centered within these multimedia publications. My second article, “Political Family Photos as Performance” is interested in still images - my family photographs and archives of my grandmother’s Pan African Asian feminist organizing. The essay I wrote was published within a standard academic format - text in columns on a black and white page, with a few images. It examines texts related to spectatorship and consumption of still images by Nicole Fleetwood (*Troubling Vision: Performance, Visuality and Blackness*, 2011), bell hooks (*Black Looks: Race and Representation*, 1992) and the work of the Arab Image Foundation in a text by Jalal Toufic (*Review of Photographic Memory*, 2004).

Yet the primary distinction between these articles in my mind concerns the stage each publication occupied within my intercylic web of research (Hazel and Rodgers, 2009; Khalil 2016, Khalil 2018). I wrote my first and third articles at the conclusion of long periods of artistic research, when their respective artworks were close to resolution. The artwork for my second article, *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960 - 1965* would come to be shaped by the production - and later, the omissions of - my article itself.

The intercylic web, as discussed within the first two articles of this thesis (Khalil, 2016, [intro](#) and Khalil, 2018, 12) charts the cyclical nature of artistic research, conducted through interconnected experiments and processes of repetition. My own processes have included cycles of reading, writing, and public sharing of both artworks and published texts. In this section, I discuss my second article, "Political Family Photos as Performance: Gamaayat el Mara'a Africaya Asiawaya, The Pan-African Asian Women's Organization, 1960-1965" as an example of this intercylic methodology.

As my second article went to press, I continued my artistic research into this time period and my grandmother's Pan African and Third world context. My grandmother Aida Hamdi was born in 1923 in Alexandria, Egypt and died in Cairo in 1984. She had served in the Egyptian parliament within the ministry of Education under Gamal Abdel Nasser from 1965 until Nasser's untimely death in 1970 (his funeral attended by five million mourners). Mourning as well, my grandmother shifted her work to Saudi Arabia, helping to establish a series of schools for girls in Jeddah in the 1970's <sup>50</sup>.

As I looked for histories of Algeria to contextualize my grandmother's photographs with famed Algerian revolutionary Djamilla Bouhired, I read *Inside the Battle*

---

<sup>50</sup> Egypt's anti-imperialist position and leadership within the Middle East would soon be destroyed following the 1967 war in which Israel and its Western allies claimed decisive victories. These resulted in the Israeli occupation of the Egyptian Sinai, Syria's Golan Heights, and far more of Palestine, including its Holy City of Jerusalem. Only Egypt and Syria would recover their territories through war in 1973. Maintaining these indigenous territories against Israeli settler colonialism was achieved at great costs to both countries - and the region at large - as despotic leadership was encouraged throughout the Middle East to maintain "peace" with the new nation state of Israel, including that of Egypt's pro-US Anwar Sadat who brokered Egypt's "peace" deal with Israel in 1979, a superficial treaty which nevertheless denies the majority of Egyptian passport holders entry into Israel (Aburish, 2004).

*of Algiers: Memoirs of a Woman Freedom Fighter* by Zohra Drif (2017). Drif was an Algerian revolutionary, and core member of the Algerian armed resistance movement (ALN) from 1956-1958. As I read Drif's memoir, I was astonished to find the author beside Bouhired and my grandmother in every one of the images I inherited.

Encountering Drif's memoir and these images of my familial as well as national past, deepened my concerns about the erasure of third world feminist histories, and catalyzed my intention to learn and share these histories more widely. Like the starting point of my research into my own family, Drif's book outlined histories of North African matrilineal anticolonial resistance, and the ways in which aunts, mothers, sisters and grandmothers organized complex underground networks over the course of one hundred and thirty years of French occupation of Algeria.

Drif, Bouhired and their female comrades in the ALN were light skinned, well to do revolutionaries who passed for French (having been educated in their colonial schools), allowing them to slip past French soldiers. Drif's memoir shares this history of Algerian armed liberation from a uniquely embodied female

perspective <sup>51</sup>. These young women would be accompanied by French speaking Algerian elders to French pied Noir cafes, targets of ALN<sup>52</sup> civilian bombing campaigns. These mothers and aunts threw off the pied noir, who viewed these mother daughter pairs completely unsuspiciously.

Drif here also connects with the more than human concerns of this research through her accounts of Algerian Revolutionary Theatre for Farmers, and tales of guerrillas in the mountains. "France wished to do to us what the Americans did to the Red Indians". Drif asserts (2017, 94) addressing shared problems of settler colonialism across Palestine, the Congo, and Algeria, and the protection of land and indigeneity which reappear throughout this artistic research as a whole.

---

<sup>51</sup> Male accounts include Gillo Pontocorvo's 1966 *Battle of Algiers* in which real life revolutionary Saidi Yacef plays himself (while actresses play Drif and Bouhired). Egyptian auteur Youssef Chahine's 1958 film *Jamila the Algerian* chronicles Bouhired's life until her capture and imprisonment by the French. The film released in 1958, during her imprisonment 1957 - 1962.

In *L'An V de la Révolution Algérienne* (1959) Frantz Fanon discusses chadors, in terms of the white male sexual desire to remove them as well as their role in bomb and weapon smuggling.

<sup>52</sup> As stated, the ALN, *Armée de libération nationale* was the armed wing of the nationalist National Liberation Front of Algeria during the Algerian War.



I conducted this research in very difficult years following the defeat of the 2011 Egyptian revolution. The third world anticolonial and feminist histories I studied alongside Algeria's unexpected victory against the French became a boon and inspiration. From this artistic research, I came to understand the unfinished nature of my grandmother's work, and clarified my desire to continue it.

#### **Imaginary Photographs and Collage**

After writing my second article, I leaned into ideas of imaginary photographs explored therein, creating collages which I then used in my performance of *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965*. This project sprung from photographs in my family archive, images of my grandmother and grandfathers lives in Alexandria and Egypt<sup>53</sup>. These images document a pre-revolutionary period in Cairo in the 1950's. The images which catalyzed and inform this work are a series of unmarked pocket sized prints that my mother gave to me, with

---

<sup>53</sup> My grandfather Moustapha Fahim was an architect, and had bought a still image 35 mm camera from Germany with which he copiously documented his nuclear and extended family life.

images of my grandmother, her Guinean and Egyptian colleagues of *The Gamayat el Ma'ra (Pan African Asian Women's Organization)* on a trip to an international women's conference - the location of which is unknown. The women in these images alternatively pose before a school bus in a forest, visit a textile gallery and dance in a circle in the street. I am more struck by all that I don't know. Where are they? What are the names of these women, what is their agenda? What do they wish for this trip?

I began my artistic research for this project photocopying these images within my inexpensive printer copier machine. In addition to full human forms, I focused on and enlarged small details; colorful patterns in my grandmother's handmade dresses (she loved to sew her own clothes) and her shoes, small and elegant.

Abstract, blurry and partial images point to an incompleteness of archives <sup>54</sup> which underlies all three projects within my *Third World Ecology Trilogy*. Like

---

<sup>54</sup> The concept of the 'thin image' helps to situate my own approach to images, and also pushes back against the notion of abundance in nature, biblical in origins. See Sadiqah Qureshi's work on extinction (2016) and Gray and Sheik (2018).

Deleuze's concept of "Thin Image", which I explore in "Palestinian Wildlife Series; embodiment and critical abstraction" (2016), imaginary photographs are designed to fill in the gaps of what historical record and personal archives omit. How could I unite these revolutionary human accounts with my interests in the shared plant and animal life of revolutionary struggle, also foregrounding more- than- human beings? Collaging became a means to envision the alternate histories I wished to construct.

In this work I cut images of these African feminists, arm in arm, on their bus, working together at a table glasses on, atop images of flowers and forests. Lacking factual information, I wished to extend the boundaries between my own imaginary and historical archives. These collages soon replaced my imaginary photographs, as I created sequences of images shown in slide projection, which juxtaposed images of humans, animals and marine life. In certain scenes of the resultant performance, I cut all backgrounds away, and positioned humans, plants and animals images against stark black or white backgrounds. These blank backgrounds served as metaphors for the placelessness of displaced beings, from revolutionaries to nonhuman beings, and the

concepts of deterritorialization I have explored throughout this thesis.

Powerpoint slides here also became a means through which I devised moving image. I created several films over the course of this artistic research by recording rapid changing powerpoint slides, which produced a result similar to stop motion animation. One example appears in my performance of *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965*. Through this method, I created a film of shifting rocks and minerals<sup>55</sup> mined from Union Miniere - a Belgian mining company in the Congo - which Patrice Lumumba had attempted to nationalize prior to his assassination, and from which was quelled the Uranium used by the US's Manhattan Project to make the world's first atomic bomb (Groves, 1983). In this sequence, I also mix images of elephants and Congolese animal life, uniting the nonhuman elements central to postcolonial struggle with infinite black.

---

<sup>55</sup> see my artists website, heading *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965*.

### **Didacticism Within my Stages of Learning in the Intercyclic Web of Artistic Research**

Questions of didacticism are foregrounded in the first two articles of my thesis. *When to be didactic? When is didacticism harmful, or useful, in my practice?* At the time of entering my doctoral studies, I was interested in embodied and nonverbal modes of artistic production and presentation for my performances. Yet I felt these impulses at odds with political content I wished to present clearly and straightforwardly. My first article (2016) chronicles *Palestinian Wildlife Series*' myriad tests and experiments to this end. In this article I expose the journey I undertook with initial inclinations toward a silent "animal-video choreography" (Khalil, 2016). I labored with the artistic making of *Palestinian Wildlife Series* for years - in retrospect far longer than necessary - sharing tens of incarnations of this work over three different continents. Yet it was ultimately through these prolonged experiments that my research questions regarding didacticism were resolved.

First, I came to reframe my silent and embodied practices within a critical paradigm. Over years of exposure through my research to the ways in which colonial societies center the written word in the

production and display of knowledge<sup>56</sup> (Khalil, 2021), I grew stronger in my conviction of the ways in which nonverbal and embodied practices can constitute an important refusal of dominant media and culture.

Secondly, lecture performance came to comprise a means for me to maintain the abstract imagery and poetics of my works in still and moving image as I layered text based research findings upon them. These included information and statistics about Palestine (Khalil, 2016); histories of anticolonial revolution in Africa and the third world and what I was learning about the histories and time period which surrounded my family and grandmother's archive (Khalil, 2018).

My final artistic research in Sinai involved a kind of reversal of this process, refusing lecture as a mode of address. Moving images in this essay support a political poem I wrote, which I recite through voice over. My video article for this project (Khalil, 2021) however discusses and reveals my artistic research findings in great detail, including statistical and theoretical data I

---

<sup>56</sup> Diana Taylor's *The Archive and The Repertoire*, 2003 is an important source for my thinking here.

amassed in the making of this work, my methods and reading. This leads to my third response to questions of didacticism, that of the practice of artistic research itself.

Because formal artistic research entails a great deal of reflective writing and eventually publishing texts, it opened new spaces for me to formulate and didactically reveal my ideas. Knowing that my academic and essay writing can serve as the container for the facts and details of my artistic research has left me with a sense of choice around what my artworks are beholden to reveal. So progressively, over the three projects of the *Third World Ecology Trilogy*, I was able to reclaim the silent and poetic, movement oriented artwork with which I first entered the Theatre Academy. My artistic research led to a reclamation of both embodiedness and poetry (verbal, sensual and visual) as a form of intelligence, leading my own embodied and poetic work to come full circle at the conclusion of this research.

#### Section Four:

#### The Past is Yet to Come: Grief and Re-Wilding

##### Grief and Grieving

As outlined in section three of this commentary, my doctoral project formed an extensive research into themes of interspecies and intercultural loss and disappearance. As I catalyzed national histories of Palestine and North Africa alongside my familial pasts, I joined a multitude of voices<sup>57</sup> rekindling the radical spirits of third world feminism, anti colonial revolutions and land back movements.

At the conclusion of this research, I find myself interested in grief and grieving as a means to emotionally attend to the extinction of so many creatures

---

<sup>57</sup> Important texts include Soheil Dalutzai's *Black Star Crescent Moon: The Muslim International and Black Freedom beyond America*, 2012 and his *Fifty Years of the Battle of Algiers: Past as Prologue*, 2016, a unique text on the circulation of the film *The Battle of Algiers* within both revolutionary and counterrevolutionary spaces. The later was invaluable to my artistic research on Algeria, and the former highly informative regarding connections of Black, Muslim and Third World Liberation Movements. Another interesting text on this link includes Alex Lubin's *Geographies of Liberation: The Making of an Afro-Arab Political Imaginary*, 2014. In the introduction of this book Lubin, a white scholar researching these histories, positions himself and his family as anti-Zionist Jews.

and cultures from our earth. I had an experience of the sort of reparative grief I am speaking of when I read the autobiography of US revolutionary and Black Panther Assata Shakur, during the course of my research for my performance *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965*.

In chapter five of *Assata: An Autobiography* (1987) Shakur writes about a visit from her daughter Kakuya while she was still in prison. Shakur gave birth to Kakuya in prison, while serving time for a crime she did not commit. In this passage (81) Shakur recalls how Kakuya, four years old at the time, was angry with her, as Kakuya believed that her mother could leave the prison if she wanted to. Gently, Shakur and her mother Doris, encouraged Kakuya to pull the prison bars to see if she could open them. Kakuya pulled with all of the energy of her small body until she became tired, then cried in her mothers arms. On this day, Shakur decided that she would escape from prison. One year later, with the help of her comrades from the Black Liberation movement, she did.

I wept while reading this passage. Shakur's experience linked within me the matrilineal histories of the Algerian

revolutionaries; mothers and daughters, my own mother, grandmother and daughter. This grief connected with the grief I experienced while conducting my artistic research for my performance of the *Pan African Womens Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960- 1965* who's scene, "Families of Assassinated Leaders of African Independence Movements" I discuss in section three of this commentary. The production of and artistic research for this scene examines streams of murders of revolutionaries, including as they unfolded across generations within the same families.

For example, human rights leader Malcom X was the child of two Garveyist <sup>58</sup> revolutionaries, Louise and Earl Little. One year after witnessing the murder of her husband in their home by a white supremacist group, Louise Little was institutionalized within a mental hospital, leaving Malcom and his siblings to grow up in foster care. Who wept for this family? Following his life in foster care, Malcom X served time in prison (Haley, 1998, 23) where he had a spiritual epiphany, converted to Islam and carried on the anti-racist work of

---

<sup>58</sup> Adherents of Jamaican leader and activist Marcus Garvey. (Ewing, 2014)

his parents. Who wept for Malcom X's life before many so wept for Malcom X in death?

Who weeps for the plant and animal subjects of this research as a whole? What happens when we weep and grieve? What is the relationship of grief with collective action? What movement towards justice does repressed grief withhold?

In a present artistic research project entitled *On the Importance of Grieving*, I meditate on US histories of race through a vast archive of 35 millimeter slides belonging to a single photographer, which I found on the sidewalk for trash day in my Brooklyn neighborhood. This work is paired with another piece entitled *Wildloss Encyclopedia*, in which I consider grief in relation to animal extinction. In this project, I use a set of wildlife encyclopedias published in 1969 (which I also found on the street), to consider the time period between 1969 and the present, a time of dramatic loss of vertebrate life on our planet <sup>59</sup>.

---

<sup>59</sup> See World Wildlife's "Living Planet Report 2020" which reports 68% average decline of birds, amphibians, mammals, fish, and reptiles since 1970. <https://www.worldwildlife.org/publications/living-planet-report-2020> and Elizabeth Kolbert's *The Sixth Extinction*, 2014.

These slide images harken the first presentation I ever gave as a doctoral candidate at the Theatre Academy. Upon invitation to present new work, I shared a wordless presentation of projected images of still images I had copied from an encyclopedia of tropical birds. I remember a dear professor of mine being completely baffled. I did not then have the language to respond to her confusion- neither as to why I was showing these images in a theatre and dance context, nor just why they would be viewed in an artistic research setting at all, without any text to accompany them. At that time, I simply wanted audiences to see and feel what I was seeing and feeling - the beauty and tragedy of their miraculous forms and colors, their nests and their flight, their fragility, wonder and precarity.

In my passage from artist to artistic researcher, this doctoral project has involved a journey of learning to invite others into my way of seeing and feeling on visual, embodied, ecological and political registers. The questions of didacticism, postcoloniality, animality and ecology which constitute this thesis comprise a long response to my professors' initial bewilderment.

At its conclusion, I have found sanctuary and personal healing through the emotional, affective and psychological dimensions of this artistic research. I have found kinship in the personal memoirs of revolutionaries and revolutionary artists, as well as in the eyes, fur and movement of the animal images with whom I danced and living marine life with which I swam. As my artistic research moves beyond my doctoral work into the present, I research grieving as means to connect into the present environmental crisis, and as a path forward to new futures.

***The Pan African Asian Women's Organization: Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965***

I am presently in the process of shifting my second performance of this doctoral project, into a single channel film. A new work by the same name, *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization: Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965* unites my previous artistic research into the social and political lives of the activist African women of my grandmother's generation with the ecological dimensions left unexplored during my doctoral project.

Expanding upon the material experiments with family archives, revolutionaries, animal and plant life discussed

in section four of this commentary, my present artistic research for this film explores the environmental life of the Algerian revolution. Following decades of organizing and guerrilla warfare, the Algerian war of independence (1954-1962) provided a template for indigenous led revolutions in Africa and the world over (Dalutzai, 2017). Algerian revolutionaries freed their country from one hundred and thirty two years of French colonial domination in 1962, yet in 1960, France began a series of nuclear explosions in the Algerian Sahara desert, at the start of what would amount to thirty three years of nuclear tests in their nonwestern colonies <sup>60</sup>. The first bomb ever detonated in the Algerian Sahara was three times stronger than the bombs dropped by the U.S. upon Nagasaki in the Second World War (Mezahi, 2021). These tests produced generations of cancer and health deterioration within indigenous human and animal populations, alongside unparalleled destruction of rare desert life in Algeria. For the interspecies subjects of my artistic research, these events beg the question, when exactly did French occupation of Algeria end? Where

---

<sup>60</sup> French nuclear tests in Algeria (1960-1966) precluded detonations in the Atoll islands of French Polynesia, conducted between 1966 and 1996, affecting 11,000 people. See report by Princeton University and the British research firm Interprt, in the *Moruroa Files*, <https://moruroa-files.org>

the anticolonial work of African revolutionaries foregrounded nationalist human activity - including within my own article, “Political Family Photos as Performance” - my new iteration of this work foregrounds the occupied desert and silenced nomadic populations of this time, who’s lives and deaths were largely ignored, beyond the revolutionary spotlight and anticolonial fervor of nation state formations.

While gathering images for this film, I employ the embodied image making processes I’ve cultivated over the course of this doctoral research, specifically with non-human moving images. These methods combine my research into postcoloniality and ecology with ongoing material research into kinesthetic video production. As I edit, I reflect on the ways in which bomb clouds move. I chronicle what I experience through my body as I watch these images, and cycle them into the work as it takes shape on new visual and narrative levels. I attempt - as I did with the animals and underwater plants of *Palestinian Wildlife Series* and *Sinai, a story i tell to my daughter* - to share moving images as they unfold in real time and slow motion, to preserve for example, the holistic shape of the nuclear clouds as they billow and explode. As with plant and animal images, I am

interested in the histories and imaginaries that shapes themselves contain.

### **Return to the Stage and Re-wilding**

After a long period of conducting my artistic research in isolation, I have now returned to collaborative dance and theatre settings, shifting away from the hybrid academic lecture formats my practice took on while I conducted my doctorate.

Changes toward and away lecture performance in my work were adaptive: there has always been a site specific dimension to my performance practice. Lecture performance is, in its own way, a perfect genre for artistic research (Rainer, 2018 and Kaila, 2014) and academic settings- both in line with and subversive of its lexicons. The nonverbal, political and movement oriented experimental theatre, as well as the silent slides of pace and color which I abandoned upon entering the Theatre Academy, have now expanded to include my own videos and the intellectual inheritance of my doctoral artistic research, the books I’ve read and the material processes I’ve cultivated with moving image.



My present work in theatre is a performance I am directing entitled *Rewild*. Concepts and practices of rewilding our earth (Vetese and Pendergrass, 88) are to me the logical conclusion of ecological grief, and within this work I integrate my artistic research into embodiment, anticolonial revolution, third world feminism and environmental justice. *ReWild* is a site of union of many formal questions and conceptual concerns of this doctoral project.

*ReWild*, which I've called 'participatory dance cinema', draws largely on the embodied image practice I cultivated over the course of this research and broadens my investigations into kinesthetic attunement with animal moving images. This work has been inspired in part by accelerated real estate development and overbuilding in my hometown of New York City. My artistic research produced an imagination within me of an indigenous and pre-industrial New York City. As my families' days now unfold to a soundtrack of sledge and jackhammers, I meditate on the role my work can play in the future of this land, as a citizen and diasporic settler of color (Liberion, 2020, 17). As with my past works, this artistic research asks how anyone can be expected to

'save' that which they are not physically attuned with. I work with my audiences to attend to this disconnect.

*ReWild* signals back to cinema making performance artists whom I began with as models for this artistic research including Carolee Schneeman and Valie Export. A performance without performers, *ReWild* expands the investigations of haptic and tactile viewing with which I began my doctoral project (Khalil, *Videos for Dancers, Theatre Academy*, 2014), occupying a hybrid, in between space of not-art and not-research that artistic research often engenders. *ReWild* is less a "performance" than a series of questions and refusals around normatives within performance; a gentle interruption of twin practices of audience passivity and human/ animal display noted within the work of Finnish ecological artistic researchers Annette Arlander, Leena Valkeapaa and Tuija Kokkonen.

Returning to questions of spectatorship and participation which I explore in section one of this commentary, *ReWild* explores what it means to vulnerably move *with* images as opposed to watching them move for us. With no performers, no story line, no factual information: audiences are tasked to move *with* moving images in

nonhuman environments in their own unique ways. At my premiere performance, one participant noted that it was the first time she'd ever been asked to *meet* an animal or to meet a cactus. Without these years of artistic, embodied and intellectual research, I would not have had the confidence to arrive at this form of performance, even though the seeds of its values, experimentation, aesthetics, movement practices and critiques have been within me all along.

#### **Revisiting My Original Research Questions**

Returning to the questions with which I began this research:

How can artistic research practices complicate erased memories and marginalized histories on behalf of the present moment? How we can re-envision 'looking'; at animals, land, minerals and ethnic others, in ways which do not demand spectacular action, yet instead connection and empathy? How can embodied film production and participatory spectatorship present more-than-human (and indigenous human) life on different registers? What is the usefulness (to society) of artworks and artistic research which address political, ethnic and environmental violence in embodied, creative and experimental ways?

The division of labor that this artistic research has demanded - textual and sensual, creative and intellectual, intuitive and quantitative- has allowed me to conclude that artistic production in itself is a powerful means by which to complicate "erased memories and marginalized histories" as well as through which to attend to my original questions related to didacticism. As outlined in the introduction to this commentary, artistic research and knowledge production works differently than research in the humanities, sitting with audiences on different registers of the embodied, emotional and intuitive. The silent, non didactic works I created within this artistic research, as in *Palestinian Wildlife Series*, speak no less to my anticolonial concerns than my artworks with information driven and text based scripts, as in *The Pan African Asian Women's Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965*. At the conclusion of this artistic research, I am also more firmly convinced of the importance of the various non verbal levels with which art can communicate.

In the undergraduate courses I teach, I discuss with young artists the ways in which time, color, scale and tempo contain information and content - different, yet as important as facts. I remind them about the importance

of experimental art, or any of kind of art really, as an intervention into capitalist and neo-fascist systems which might otherwise prefer that large swaths of the global population would experience an absence of creativity or experiences of the creative, especially its most oppressed laborers.

Though not exclusively, my interest in calming down the nervous systems of my audiences has grown, through my praxis of creating embodied and slow paced moving image. In Marshall McLuhan's classic *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, McLuhan argues that "the 'message' of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs". (McLuhan, 1994, 8). In relation to the postcolonial, ecological content and critiques within my work, I see it as important for us as BIPOC people to reconnect with calm (including non-anxiety producing artworks) as sources of renewing and reenergizing for our struggles, personal and political, past and future <sup>61</sup>.

How we can re-envision 'looking'; at animals, land, minerals and ethnic others, in ways which do not demand spectacular

---

<sup>61</sup> For an extended discussion on the importance of rest for people of color, see Trisha Hersey's wonderful *Rest is Resistance: A Manifesto* (2022).

action, yet instead connection and empathy? How can embodied film production and participatory spectatorship present more-than-human (and indigenous human) life on different registers?

The kinesthetic video making practice which I have developed over the course of this doctorate is an answer to this question. On a frame by frame basis movements of water, trees rustling or a nursing cheeta cub are not spectacular. Yet my haptic video making practice has led me to artistic outcomes which center embodied connection and an empathetic - rather than consuming or voyeuristic - relationship with moving images. I imagine that the relationships of seeing and being which my audiences might cultivate over time with slow moving images of animals, or moving plants, away from notions of ownership or domination, gardens or zoo products, might carve new neural pathways by which to navigate relationships with many Others. Where my artistic research and embodied moving image making practice has led to me viewings *with* rather than *of* images, my hope is that this position might contain critical contribution to postcolonial and anti racist practice and knowledge production.

Where my artworks *Palestine and Sinai* offer nonverbal proposals for slowing down or focusing on sensation as an antidote to media over saturation, my work has also sought to blur normalized distinctions in the ways in which we speak about postcolonial subjects - the random split for example between words like “genocide” and “extinction”. Collapsing arbitrary human and animal distinctions offers ways to remember and to reorder the world beyond colonial thought and Cartesian divides, creating common interspecies languages with which to discuss overhunting (genocide) loss of habitat (displacement) and forced labor (enslavement) towards efforts to liberate all of them at once.

Building on ideas of post humanism I encountered at the start of this research (Khalil, 2016), at its conclusion, I argue that colonization has insisted on human/ animal; emotional/ intellectual; mind/ body separations as a means by which to conduct its most violent colonial businesses, including that of chattel slavery and centuries of forced interspecies labor, with the “humanity” of its agents and masters still intact. How otherwise - if not categorically and ontologically different from everything else- could European colonizers obliterate so much of the world’s plant

species (Khalil 2016 and 2021) animal species (Khalil, 2016 and 2021) indigenous human populations (Khalil, 2016, 2019 and 2021) and minerals (Khalil, 2019) and remain so discursively superior and also so very “human”?

The kinesthetic video (or, haptic cinema) aspect of this artistic research has offered a second means for this reordering by blurring lines between the live and digital, embodied and filmic. This collapse in my work intends to allow peoples without access to nature to have (a proximate) embodied experience within unusual spaces, cities and walls.

With regard to the question

how can personal narratives be employed to challenge Western-centric histories and dominant discourse regarding Third World cultures? Can narrative on memory maintain its efficacy without sentimentality or “celebration of ethnicity” (Bhaba, 1994, Fusco, 1988)?

This doctoral project has concluded that personal narratives are deeply important from an artistic research standpoint, as a means through which artists can

humanize non-dominant histories. At this point, I think that the sentimentality and “celebration of ethnicity” I once worried about are instead deeply important! Celebration, as in the festivals and arts of indigenous peoples and revolutionaries, bring in new ways of experiencing history and everyday life.

#### **Aspects of this Research I Would Like to Expand**

There are three main aspects of this research which I would like to expand upon in the future. The first is scientific data accumulation in relation to audiences of kinesthetic video, the second is research into African Marxism and the third is the intergenerational possibilities for this artistic research.

In the future I would like to collaborate with scientists or psychologists, to examine changes within human nervous systems and physiologies while watching moving images of nature (including my own). I wish to understand this so that I might expand my practice into non art settings including elder care, hospitals, schools and prisons.

I would also like to probe more deeply into economic theory, and conceptions of African socialism and third

world redistribution of wealth, including colonial reparations. What might radical third world economic proposals of the mid twentieth century have to offer today?

Lastly, I am interested in the ways in which the knowledge production of this artistic research might be applied intergenerationally. Producing the bulk of this project as a new mother, in some ways in collaboration with my growing child, made me think more deeply about the importance of transmitting revolutionary histories to youth, in the service of their futures. Where our children are charged with what often seems like the impossible task of navigating planetary ecological crisis, I meditate on various ways in which the content and concerns of this research - postcolonial, embodied and ecological - can be made available and accessible to them.

#### **Ending**

Cycling back to the ideas of artistic research which begin this commentary; having the time, financial support and context with which to conduct in depth intellectual investigations both in the dance studio and in the library, is one which has completely changed my performance

practice. In both the United States and Egypt it is extremely rare for working artists to have such support. The articles which follow, published in 2016, 2018 and 2021 reflect both this support and, more challengingly, my attempts to introduce conversations of race, postcolonial ecologies and indigenous rights within artistic research at a time when these conversations were just beginning to take place in Northern European and Nordic artistic research contexts. My artistic research and the written articles which follow, have allowed me to critically reflect on practices of embodiment and somatic movement once reserved for affluent dance studios and therapeutic settings- allowing me to consider ways in which they might be catalyzed in the service of new and more just futures for interspecies beings and our environment. Developing embodied sensitivities to attune with, care and fight for land and sea, while attending to the interspecies histories of those lost and displaced from it, are for me, the foundations of these futures.

*Rania Lee Khalil,  
Unceded Lenape Territories / Brooklyn NY,  
October - November 2023*

### **A Note on Works Cited**

The following section refers to works cited within this commentary. The three published articles upon which this commentary centers, each contain their own bibliographies, to be referred to therein. The present section is followed by another, entitled “additional reading”, referring to works utilized within the larger construction of this thesis project.

#### ***Commentary: Works Cited***

Ahmed, Sarah:

*On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2012.

*Complaint!* Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2021.

Arlander, Annette. Blog. Last accessed 05 May 2023.  
[http://aa-katajankansa.blogspot.com/  
2011\\_08\\_21\\_archive.html](http://aa-katajankansa.blogspot.com/2011_08_21_archive.html)

Arlander, Annette, Bruce Barton, Melanie Dryer Lude and Ben Spatz eds. *Performance as Research:*

*Knowledge, Methods, Impact*. London: Routledge, 2018.

Baldwin, James. *Collected Essays of James Baldwin*, edited by Toni Morrison. New York: The Library of America, 1998.

Banes, Sally. *Terpsichore in Sneakers: Post-Modern Dance*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1987.

Banes, Sally. *Reinventing Dance in the 1960s: Everything Was Possible*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003.

Bardenstein, Carol B. "Trees, Forests, and the Shaping of Palestinian and Israeli Collective Memory", in Mieke Bal, Jonathan Crewe, and Leo Spitzer (eds), *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present* Hanover, NH: University Press of New England. pp. 148–70

Bhaba, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. New York and London: Routledge, 2000.

Borgdoff, Henk. *The Debate on Research in the Arts*. Bergen: Bergen National Academy of the Arts, 2006.

Braidotti, Rosi. *The Posthuman*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013.

Cabral, Amílcar. *Return to the Source: Selected Speeches of Amílcar Cabral*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972.

Cesaire, Aimé. *Discourse on Colonialism*. (originally published 1950) New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000, 36.

Christopher, N., Tamplin, J. "The Use of Kinesthetic Empathy with Adults Living with Treatment Resistant Depression: A Survey Study" *Am J Dance Therapy Journal* 44, pp 115–142 (2022). Last accessed 23 May 2023 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10465-022-09371-4>

Cotter, Lucy. *Reclaiming Artistic Research*. Berlin: Hatje Cantz, 2019. pp. 9-23

Daulatzai, Sohail: *Black Star, Crescent Moon: The Muslim International and Black Freedom beyond America*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012.

*Fifty Years of the Battle of Algiers: Past as Prologue.*  
Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016.

Davis, Angela Y:  
*Angela Davis an Autobiography.* ed. Toni Morrison.  
New York: International Publishers, 1988.

“Angela Davis: An Interview on the Futures of Black  
Radicalism” *Verso Blog*, 23 June 2020. Last accessed 6  
July 2023

*Are Prisons Obsolete?* New York: Seven Stories Press,  
2003.

*Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine  
and the Foundations of a Movement.* Chicago:  
Haymarket Books, 2016.

*Women, Race and Class.* New York: Vintage Books,  
1980.

DeLoughrey, Elizabeth, and George B. Handley,  
editors. *Postcolonial Ecologies: Literatures of the  
Environment.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Drif, Zohra. *Inside the Battle of Algiers: Memoir of a  
Woman Freedom Fighter*, translated by Andrew Farrand.  
Charlottesville: Just World Books, 2017.

Dombois, Florian. “On Our Way to Venice Obligations,  
A Speech”. *The Journal for Artistic Research.*  
Reflections (Section 2. Who- How - For Whom). May  
26th, 2022. Last accessed 27 March 2023. [https://  
www.jar-online.net/en/our-way-venice-obligations-  
speech?language=en](https://www.jar-online.net/en/our-way-venice-obligations-speech?language=en)

Dombois, Bauer, Mareis and Michael Schwab, editors.  
*Intellectual Birdhouse: Artistic Practice as Research.*  
London: Koenig Books. 2019.

Elkamel, Sara. “In warm memory of Amal Kenawy”  
*Ahram online.* August 24, 2012 Last accessed 7 July,  
2023 <https://english.ahram.org.eg/News/51150.aspx>

Eisen, Erica. “The Work of Art in the Age of Xerox  
Reproduction”, *The New Inquiry*, August 16, 2018.  
Ekkehard, Jost. *Free Jazz.* New York: Hachette Books,  
1994



Elkins, James. *Artists with PhDs: On the new Doctoral Degree in Studio Art*. Washington DC: New Academia Publishing, 2009.

Ewing, Adam. *The Age of Garvey: How a Jamaican Activist Created a Mass Movement and Changed Global Black Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. (originally published 1961) New York: Grove Press, 2004.

Farhat, Maymanah. "Amal Kenawy (1974-2012)" *Jadaliyya*. Sep 3, 2012. Last accessed 17 September, 2023 <https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/27003/Amal-Kenawy-1974-2012>

Farouki, Haroun. *Nicht lösches Feuer - Inextinguishable Fire* (short film), 1969.

Fraleigh, Sondra and Tamah Nakamura. *Hijiakata Tatsumi and Ohno Kazuo*. London and New York: Routledge, 2017.

Fusco, Coco. *English is Broken Here*. New York: The New Press, 1995.

"The Couple in a Cage", artist website. Accessed April 14, 2021 <https://www.cocofusco.com/the-couple-in-the-cage>

Gossett, Che. "Blackness, Animality and the Unsovereign" *Verso Blog*. 08 September, 2015. accessed Feb 12, 2021. <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2228-che-gossett-blackness-animality-and-the-unsovereign>

"A guide to indigenous land acknowledgment", Native Governance Center web page. accessed April 11, 2021. <https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/>

Gray, Ros and Sheikh, Sheila, guest editors. "The Wretched Earth: Botanical Conflicts and Artistic Interventions" *Third Text*. Volume 32, Numbers 151-152: March-May 2018, pp. 163-175  
Grotowski, Jerzy. *Towards a Poor Theatre*. (Originally published in 1970) New York: Routledge, 2002.

Guattari, Felix. *The Three Ecologies*. trans. Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton. New York: Bloomsbury, 2014.

Gunia, Amy. "164 Environmental Activists Were Killed While Protecting Their Homes Last Year, Watchdog Says". *Time*. July 30, 2019 . Last accessed 14 April 2021 <https://time.com/5638438/global-witness-environmental-activists-murdered>

Franken, Marjorie. "Daughter of Egypt: Farima Fahmy and the Reda Troupe". *Dance Research Journal*. 35 (1): pp. 111–114.

Hannula, Suoranta and Vaden. *Artistic Research Methodologies: Narrative, Power and the Public*. New York: Peter Lang, 2014.

Hartman, Sayidia. "The Hold of Slavery". *The New York Review*. October 24, 2022. Last accessed 27 March 2023. <https://www.nybooks.com/online/2022/10/24/the-hold-of-slavery-hartman/>

Hersey, Tricia. *Rest is Resistance: A Manifesto*. New York: Little, Brown Spark, 2022.

Hutchinson, Bill. "From Eric Garner to George Floyd, 12 black lives lost in police encounters that stoked mass protests". *ABC News*. 6 June 2020. Last accessed 12 September, 2023 <https://abcnews.go.com/US/eric-garner-george-floyd-12-black-lives-lost/story?id=70999321>

James, C.L.R. *A History of Pan-African Revolt*. (original publication 1939) Chicago: PM Press, 2012.

Jordan, June. *Some of Us Did Not Die: New and Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2002.

Kaela, Aira. "Tree Mountain - A Living Time Capsule-11,000 Trees, 11,000 People, 400 Years, 1992-96, (420 x 270 x 28 meters) Ylojarvi, Finland". *Agnes Denes artist website*. Last accessed 26 May 2023 <http://www.agnesdenesstudio.com/works4.html>

Kenawy, Amal. *artist website*. <http://www.amal-kenawy.com> Last accessed 17 September 2023.

Khalil, Rania. "Palestinian Wildlife Series: embodiment in images, critical abstraction" *Journal for Artistic Research*,

10 (2016) Last accessed 20 October 2023.  
<https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/135120/135121/0/0>

Khalil, Rania Lee:

“Political Family Photos as Performance: Gamaayat el Mara’a Africaya Asiawaya, The Pan-African Asian Women’s Organization, 1960- 1965.” *Nayttamo ja tutkimus*, 7, Performance and Otherness issue. Finnish Theatre Research Society, 2018. Last accessed 20 October 2023 [www.teats.fi/julkaisut/Esitys](http://www.teats.fi/julkaisut/Esitys)

*The Pan African Asian Women’s Organization, Cairo to Conakry, 1960-1965*. Live performance with slide projection. PUBLICS, Helsinki, Finland. June 7, 2019

“Sinai: Tourism, Colonialism and Sea” *Journal of Embodied Research*. 4(1), 3 (24:40). Last accessed 20 October 2023 <http://doi.org/10.16995/jer.85>

Kincaid, Jamaica. *My Garden Book*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001.

Klein, William *director*. Film: *The Pan-African Festival of Algiers*, 1969. New York City: Kino Films. Last

accessed 17 September 2023. (Link to film description: <https://kinoforward.net/film/the-pan-african-festival-in-algiers/>)

Kokkonen, Tuija:

“A Performance with an Ocean View (and a Dog/for a Dog) - II Memo of Time”, *Journal for Artistic Research*, 0 (2011) Last accessed 18 April 2021 <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/7736/7856/100/100>

artists website: home page. Last accessed 10 June 2023 <https://tuijakokkonen.fi>

Kolbert, Elizabeth. *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*. New York: Picador, 2014.

Kolliopoulou, Eleni. “The notion of the Butoh-body: defining paradoxical terms in artistic research.” *Intersections* (Postgraduate Journal - Arts , Humanities , Social Sciences). 2019 ; Vol. 1, No. 1. pp. 31-36.

Lageman, Thessa. “Remembering Mohamed Bouazizi: The man who sparked the Arab Spring” *Al Jazeera*. 17 December, 2020. Last accessed 10 October, 2023 <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2020/12/17/>

remembering-mohamed-bouazizi-his-death-triggered-the-arab

Lakhani, Nina. *Who Killed Berta Caceres?* London and New York: Verso, 2020.

Lilja, Efva. “Throw the Stones Really Hard at Your Target or Rest in Peace: On the Artist’s Struggle to Gain Access to Research in Her Art”. *Efva Lilja Artist Website*. Research section. Last accessed 14 April 2021. [http://www.efvalilja.se/pdf/Throw\\_The\\_Stones\\_eng.pdf](http://www.efvalilja.se/pdf/Throw_The_Stones_eng.pdf)

“Among the Restless and Uneasy” Close Encounters, University College of Dance 18-22 April 2007 *Efva Lilja Artist Website*. Research section. Last accessed 30 March 2023 <http://www.efvalilja.se/pdf/AmongTheRestless.pdf>

Liboiron, Max. *Pollution is Colonialism*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2021

Lorde, Audre *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Berkeley: Crossing Press, 2007

Lubin, Alex. *Geographies of Liberation: The Making of an Afro Arab Political Imaginary*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

Marks, Laura U. *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment and the Senses*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000.

McKittrick, Katherine, ed. Sylvia Wynter: *On Being Human as Praxis*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2015.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 1994.

Mezahi, Maher. “France-Algeria relations: The lingering fallout from nuclear tests in the Sahara”. *BBC News*. 27 April, 2021. Last accessed 3 April 2023. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-56799670>

Mostafa-Kanafani, Fatten. “Gazbia Sirry- When Modern Arab Form Meets Politics”. *Post: notes on art in a global context*, 30 June, 2021. Last accessed 10

October, 2023. <https://post.moma.org/gazbia-sirry-when-modern-arab-form-meets-politics/>

Nazif, Perwana. "Mariam Ghani on Afghanistan's unfinished histories" *Artforum*. 22 September, 2021. Accessed 10.10.23 <https://www.artforum.com/columns/mariam-ghani-on-afghanistans-unfinished-histories-250649/>

Nelson, Cynthia. *Doria Shafik, Egyptian feminist: a woman apart*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1996

Nuwer, Rachel. "Environmental Activists Have Higher Death Rates Than Some Soldiers". *Scientific American*. Last accessed 14cApril 2021 <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/environmental-activists-have-higher-death-rates-than-some-soldiers/>

Olsen, Andrea and Caryn McHose. *Bodystories*. Lebanon: University Press of New England, 2004

Pallaro, Patrizia. *Authentic Movement: Essays by Mary Starks Whitehouse, Janet Adler and Joan Chodorow*. London, England: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1999

Pappe, Ilan. *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*. London: Oneworld Publications, 2006.

Prashad, Vijay. *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*. New York and London: The New Press, 2007.

Pültau, D. "Alle macht aan de universiteiten. Over The Conflict of Faculties. Perspectives on Artistic Research and Academia van Henk Borgdorff". *Witte Raaf*. 9 September- 15 October 2012

Quereshi, Sadia. "The Idea of Extinction". *Remembrance Day for Lost Species* blog. September 5, 2016. Last accessed 4 April 2023. <https://www.lostspeciesday.org/?p=23>

Raad, Walid. *Hostage: The Bachar Tapes*. Video, 2002. Accessed 10.10.23 <https://www.theatlasgroup1989.org/bachartapes>

Ranier, Lucia. *On the Threshold of Knowing: Lectures and Performances in Art and Academia*. PhD dissertation: University of Hamburg, 2017.

Rist, Pipilotti. "Pipilotti Rist in conversation"  
*Southbank Centre*. October 18, 2011. *YouTube*. Last  
 accessed 23 May 2023. [https://www.youtube.com/  
 watch?v=uKR-QhjOz-o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKR-QhjOz-o)

Robinson, Cedric. *Black Marxism: The Making of the  
 Black Radical Tradition*. London: Zed Press, 1983.

Rodney, Walter. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*.  
 Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 2011.

Said, Edward. *The Question of Palestine*. New York:  
 Vintage Books, 1992.

Shakur, Assata. *Assata: An Autobiography*. London:  
 Zed Books, 1987

Shay, Anthony. *Choreographic politics: state folk dance  
 companies, representation, and power*. Middletown:  
 Wesleyan University Press, 2002.

Schemlzer, Matthias, Vetter, Andrea and Aaron  
 Vansintjan. *The Future is Degrowth: A Guide to a World*

*Beyond Capitalism*. London and New York: Verso  
 Books, 2022.

Tolan-Szkilnik, Paraska. "Collecting Bosoms: Sex, Race  
 and Masculinity at the Pan-African Festival of Algiers,  
 1969" *Arab Studies Journal*. Washington,  
 D.C. Vol. 29, Iss. 2, (Fall 2021) pp. 96-117.

Tuck, Eve and Wayne Yang. "Decolonizing is not a  
 Metaphor". *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education &  
 Society* Vol. 1, No. 1 (2012) 1-40

Vaneycken, Annelies. "Collectiveness as a Form of  
 Autotheory". *PARSE*, Issue 12, Autumn 2020. Last  
 accessed 12 April 2021 [https://parsejournal.com/article/  
 collectiveness-as-a-form-of-autotheory/](https://parsejournal.com/article/collectiveness-as-a-form-of-autotheory/)

Venkateswar, Sita and Emma Hughes. *The Politics of  
 Indigeneity: Dialogues and Reflections on Indigenous  
 Activism*. London and New York: Zed Books, 2011.

Verges, Françoise:  
 "Racial Capitalocene", in *Futures of Black Radicalism*  
 ed. Gaye Theresa Johnson and Alex Lubin (London and  
 New York: Verso, 2017. pp. 72-82.

*Monsters and Revolutionaries: Colonial Family Romance and Métissage* Durham and Chapel Hill: Duke University Press, 1999.

Vetoos, Troy and Drew Pendergrass. *Half Earth Socialism*. London and New York: Verso Books, 2022.

Weheliye, Alexander G. 2002. “‘Feenin’: Posthuman Voices in Contemporary Black Popular Music”, *Social Text*, 71 (20.2) pp. 21–47

Yeampierre, Elizabeth. “A word to Our Mutha on Earth Day: What if? #500not50”. UPROSE website. Last accessed 23 April 2020. <https://mye-mail.constantcontact.com/-500not50-Years-of-Earth-Day.html?soid=1102736301429&aid=cGb8LF3VqnA>

Yussof, Kathryn. *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019

#### **Additional reading**

Ahmed, Leila. "Western Ethnocentrism and Perceptions of the Harem." *Feminist Studies* 8, no. 3 (1982) pp. 521-34.

Alcoff, Linda Martin: “Critical Theory’s Colonial Unconscious” *Berlin Journal of Critical Theory* Vol. 2, No. 2, April 2018. pp. 151-166.

Bishop, Claire, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. New York: Verso, 2012

Boisseron, Benedicte. *Afro-Dog: Blackness and the Animal Question*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018.

Butler, Judith. “Performativity”, *In Terms of Performance*. Last accessed 27 April, 2021. <http://intermsofperformance.site/keywords/performativity/judith-butler>

Du Bois, W.E.B, *The Souls of Black Folks*. (originally published 1903) New York: Dover Publications, 1994.

Dunbar- Ortiz, Roxanne. *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2015.

Estes, Nick. "Bill Gates is the biggest private owner of farmland in the United States. Why?" *The Guardian*. April 5, 2021. Last accessed 14 April 2021. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/apr/05/bill-gates-climate-crisis-farmland>

Kelly, Robin D.G. *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2002.

Menakem, Resmaa. *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*. Las Vegas: Central Recovery Press, 2017.

Osuna, Steven. "Class Suicide: The Black Radical Turn, Radical Scholarship and the Neoliberal Turn". in *Futures of Black Radicalism*, ed. Gaye Theresa Johnson and Alex Lubin (London and New York: Verso, 2017,) pp. 21-38.

Ra, Sun. *This Planet is Doomed: the science fiction poetry of Sun Ra*. New York: Kicks Books, 2011.

Sabry, Mohannad. *Sinai : Egypt's Linchpin, Gaza's Lifeline, Israel's Nightmare*. Cairo and New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2015

Said, Edward:  
*Out of Place*. New York: Vintage Books, 1999.

*Orientalism*. (originally published 1978) New York: Vintage Books, 1994.

Schupak, Amanda. "Disturbing Report Shows How Many Environmental Activists are Killed Each Week". *Huffington Post* July 29, 2019 Last accessed 21 March 2021. [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/report-environment-activists-killed\\_n\\_5cb5f7dfe4b098b9a2db040f](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/report-environment-activists-killed_n_5cb5f7dfe4b098b9a2db040f)  
Smith, Linda Tuhiwai, *Decolonizing Methodologies*. London and New York: Zed Books, 2012.

Spatz, Ben. "Embodied Research: A Methodology" *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies*. Vol. 13, No. 2 2017.



Watts, Jonathan. "Environmental activist murders double in 15 years". *The Guardian*. August 5, 2019 accessed April 14, 2021 <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/aug/05/environmental-activist-murders-double>