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Postcolonial M/Othering: Poetics of Remembering and Writing as an Invitation to Rememory

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Postcolonial M/Othering: Poetics of Remembering and Writing as an Invitation to Rememory

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Abstract

To open up possibilities in inquiry, the authors write in a manner that extends a lens of postcolonial m/Othering through poetic autoethnography. They draw on the conceptualization of rememory to work with/through memories of their own as mothers for the sake of daughters. Building on poetics of remembering, the authors braid their experiences from Kenya and the Philippines, within remnants of colonialism and its tentacles, inviting the reader on a telling-sharing dialogic-rhythmic-groove that is personal and political and haunting at the same time. The possibilities for transdisciplinary methodologies unfold in the telling-sharing and point to the in-between curiosities of knowing and unknowing. This collaborative and creative (re)remembering is an invitation to rememory, to rework the past-present-future, a chance at world-making.

Keywords

poetics, colonialism, rememory, m/Othering, feminist epistemologies

We write, in this moment, in this manner, with heavy hearts. We formulate these thoughts as racial and viral pandemics ravage the planet and the end of a mutating coronavirus is nowhere in sight. The number of deaths on the global scale is still rising; it is particularly alarming in countries with dwindling resources and exhausted medical systems. Portions of the world's population have received vaccinations, while many more of our kin in Other Countries are left waiting. It is unknown how we will get through and carry on our lives with families and loved ones, some of whom already lost their battle to COVID-19 or are waging a cruel fight against the disease. It is also unknown how current U.S. racial politics and the pervasiveness of racism will shape the depths of racial injustice to come. In these politically shifting times, the heightened vitriol of/through White supremacy as displayed on January 6, 2021 is another example of normalized expressions of violence in what historically has been performed in the name of freedom and patriotism. Not to mention heteropatriarchy. Mass killings of targeted groups and anti-Asian violence included. We are two women of color who write because we must. To bespeak what is in our hearts. To name the haunting in this present moment. To remember as to not forget. We write as educators. We write as daughters. We write as mothers. Most importantly, we write for our daughters.

Borrowing from Cynthia Dillard's (2000, 2008) endarkened feminist epistemology, we shine a light on the power

of (re)remembering to claim ourselves—and our daughters—in the terrains of diaspora. We take the difference that difference makes (Wright, 2003) to do more than just pass on knowledge. We open up possibilities and extend a lens of postcolonial m/Othering such that haunting, the presence of absence (Gordon, 2008), can also point to a kind of world-making that we may or may not see in our lifetime. In this world-making, we draw on Jeong-eun Rhee's (2021) conceptualization of rememory, which is remembering and forgetting at the same time, not necessarily with memories and lessons from our mothers, but instead working with/through memories of our own as mothers for the sake of our daughters. The questions that Rhee is asking about rememory of/with mothers are also questions that we are asking about rememory of m/Othering, for our daughters, for *all* daughters. We write in a format that forefronts postcolonial m/Othering, to allow us to speak with and back to each other, to tease apart un/common grounds on which we stand. First, it is important to note the beginnings of this inspired writing and how it is a part of doing inquiry, always becoming, always in conversation.

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Intertwined : Coming Together

What we share here is a poetic autoethnography, which emerged from a post qualitative inquiry course co-generated by us. This independent study course had attracted a group of students who had previously taken another course on critical methodologies with Korina as the instructor. These courses, as one student had described it, became a space to pivot, pause, and reimagine how we as scholars doing inquiry with/for minoritized and marginalized groups perform and present our research (Carter, forthcoming). The enlivened space through these courses served as an undercommons (Harney & Moten, 2013); it provided a specific learning environment for engaging in an intellectual practice that mostly consisted of students and faculty of color. We not only began to rethink how to do the work that mattered to us, but we also worked to “stretch our brains” and refashion new ways of producing knowledge (McKittrick, 2021) away from the normative approaches to which we had been accustomed. We conceived what we believed to be a non-regulated space where we could trial our ideas and writing, in a manner that Harney and Moten (2013) would describe as “not simply the left-over space that limns real and regulated zones of polite society; rather, it was [is] a wild place that produced[s] its own unregulated wildness” (p. 7). In this non-regulated space, Mariam conceptualized a thought piece—a paper that she had put together in the form of poetic autoethnography—using a methodological approach that at the time was new to her. She was also going against the ritual of presenting and organizing ideas in the traditional sense and felt that, in order to express herself differently as a post-colonial subject, state-less and non-native Other, she needed to work through some form of performative arts-based writing. Her thought piece yielded what is now presented here.

In reading the thought piece, Korina embraced the performative as an opportunity for inspired writing, to be moved and to enter planes with sights yet unseen. She realized that the constraints embedded in academic writing, even in the construction of a *thought* piece, may have been limiting in the process of engaging postcolonial subjectivities. What occurred for her (albeit, surprising within moments of reading the paper) was a haunting past, present, and future, an ongoing conversation with self and also with Mariam about postcolonial m/Othering. She, too, had similar memories of childhood that had formed the basis of various poems separately etched in notebook pages. Taking pen to paper was an act of recounting self-knowledge, history, ancestry, movement, place, land, and belonging. With permission from Mariam, what follows below stemmed out of an opportunity to extend the original performative writing in the thought piece (poems by Mariam), to demonstrate a parallel conversation that had occurred (poems by Korina), a conversation in-between, and to enable us both to insert ways to speak back to one another as educators, as Others,

as mothers, as daughters. It is an invitation to write ourselves in story, to rewrite our story, and to also invite m/ Others in nourishing ways. We do so as rememory, which in this moment is a chance for world-making to offer to y/our daughters.

Mariam identifies as a Kenyan Nubian and immigrated to the U.S. as an adult. Oral traditions, stories, and riddles passed down to her suggest that, prior to rupture of colonial dis/placement, Nubians (including Mariam’s paternal great grandfather) were uprooted from their homes in Ekuatoria North Africa, a province of Sudan that had been cut off from Egypt during the Mahdist Revolt in 1883 (Mohammed, 2019). The Nubians were later (re) settled in parts of the “East African British Protectorate”—in Kenya and Uganda. Unlike the majority (if not all) of other Kenyan ethnic communities, Nubians are found in “little pockets” of Kenya—colonizers’ geographies within the midst of other ethnic communities. Mariam received her formative education in a small Nubian community, the remnants of a British Imperial project, along the Nairobi-Kisumu Railway line as it nears *Nam Lolwe*.¹ From conversations with Mariam’s relatives, it is believed that her great grandfather was a recruit in the King’s African Rifle (KAR). Nubians in the early 20th century were forced into the KAR and were instrumental in the colonial operations of the Imperial British East African Company and the realization of the protectorate’s colonial projects (Mohammed, 2019). Yet Nubians were considered as aliens by the colonial government and later as state-less, non-natives and non-citizens in post-colonial Kenya. The divide-and-conquer strategy pitted Nubians against Kenyan “natives.” This strategy served the interests of the protectorate, which later worked to Other and disenfranchise the Nubians, and created a discourse of non-nativity.

Within the White-settler colonial logic, “technologies of alienation, separation, conversion of land into property continue to mutate. Black bodies become squatters, become subjects of the Crown, then of the colonial state, and now of the State of Kenya” (la paperson, 2017, p. 2). Haunting Mariam, it was not until after high school that she learned her family was “squatting” on land that had belonged to the colonial government and was later transferred to the Kenyan state. As an educator, scholar, and m/Other in the postcolonial diaspora, Mariam (re)engages with her historical past and that of those who came before her—a sacred space to (re)search, (re)member, and question the colonial legacies shaping desires for freedom (Dillard, 2021).

Korina was born in the Philippines and identifies as Pinay (Filipinx American). She immigrated to the U.S. with her family. It had been a time of economic and political turmoil under a dictatorship that further deepened the ghostly wounds of colonialism. The Philippines survived Spanish rule (1521–1898) only to be followed by U.S. imperialism

(1898–1934); the latter persisted with patriarchal relations through an American colonial policy of benevolent assimilation (Constantino, 1970). Such policies included education and English becoming the formal language of instruction. The extraction of both human and material resources left a nation in the hands of external forces. In the meantime, the maintenance of U.S. naval bases kept military investments intact as a strategic gateway to Asia, while enabling the U.S. government to recruit Filipinos to serve and fight its wars. Such colonial history is further compounded by immigration acts, first, to increase cheap labor (mostly men) for plantations in Hawai'i in the early 1900s and subsequently in California and Washington and, decades later, the “brain drain” or the recruitment of professionals including nurses and teachers (many of whom were women).² The Immigration Act of 1964 led to much more movement of individuals forming or reuniting their families or seeking economic opportunities in the U.S. Waves of immigration and movement within states helped to sustain an agricultural economy in places like California that led to the creation of Filipina/o American communities shaped by colonial subjectivities and the racialization of Filipina/os as Brown people in the U.S. (Bohulano Mabalon, 2013). Notwithstanding the recorded arrival of Filipinos in the continental United States as early as 1587. The significance of rememory through oral histories, photographs, personal archives, and “kuwentos” or stories (Jocson, 2008) provides an opening for puzzling together an endarkened history of Filipina/o diaspora. It is a history full of tensions and contradictions. It is a history of empire (Baldoz, 2011), or that which offers an analytic to underscore the importance of indigeneity in/and education (Sintos Coloma, 2013). Indigenous tribes in the Philippines were left to fend for themselves, outnumbered, displaced. How does one explain to a child? How does one gather in memory the many untold stories and human experiences of sacrifice, compromise, erasure, and survival? The space between remembering and forgetting (Rhee, 2021) can point to some possibilities.

Here : There

We are descendants of colonization. And as women of color, we are connected through shared global histories and struggles. Colonial legacies influence (the un/making of) our identities and complicate how we are perceived in different spaces. Because identities are far from static. They do not hold fixed meanings regardless of tendencies to do so. By reorienting our coming together in poetic autoethnography, we honor ourselves and the human experiences that have shaped our paths. We share them in a performative praxis below. Mariam and Korina alternate, left and right, respectively. In staccato. The format supposes a kind of proximity and distance, yet also staying in the middle to enable us to

play with spatial cuts, to write and read in-between and beyond the lines. The poems can stand alone. But as we have asked ourselves to propel this writing, what happens when these spatial cuts and line breaks speak through one another?

Born in Kenya
To “native” Kenyan mother “alien” Nubian father
Nubian kin

Soldiers forced into King’s African Rifle
Fought in world wars
Used
To protect and repel dissidents
In the protectorate

I dream
Of a place
An archipelago
Where turquoise
Waters reign

I dream
Of brisk air
Sea-salt skin
Bare hands
Fishing in the sun

I dream
Of hammocks
Swaying
Coral luggage
Glorious old age

In-Between : Indigeneity

As in-betweeners, we negotiate geographic relationships across divergent cultures and diasporic communities. We often find ourselves in a place of tension to uncover possibilities, to remember and forget. In proclaiming the multiplicities from complex histories, we expose our vulnerabilities, in body and spirit; these are risks we take writing within the academy. As m/Others, we also extend ourselves so our daughters can one day share in our racialized and gendered lives to navigate their future worlds. The (un)disciplined curiosity, thought, and rawness of the in-between offer us opportunities to learn and unlearn across many sites, thereby “coming to know, generously, varying and shifting worlds and ideas” (McKittrick, 2021, p. 5). In coming to know, we question what tools are available to us to navigate the colonial and the postcolonial worlds—the worlds that have created the Us and Them discourse. We

seek to understand the decolonial project that we live within. Rinaldo Walcott (2020) asserts that a “decolonial project attempts to unmoor the silences that condition our contemporary moment by risking identity in favor of a politics of thought” (p. 355). A politics of thought, Walcott argues, allows us to recognize how the tools and machineries of coloniality function “at the level of what it means to know and how knowing places some bodies out of place” (p. 355). So, here we are. Un/masking a sense of place. The decolonial project affords us the opportunity to rethink and refashion how forms of colonialism have reproduced us.

They tell me I am not native
My mother is native Luo
I don't look Luo

I speak fluent Luo
I write Luo

In public buses
I hear
Something about me
I wait til they finish
I smile

I speak Luo
They look and ask
“But you don't look like us
Who are you?”

GET OUT!
GET OUT!
GET OUT!
These words
Pierce through peasant hearts
Residents of Hacienda Looc
Generations of ancestral blood
Sore backs maimed legs
Blistered hands discolored skin
Acres of land
Rice banana guava papaya
Sold unlike *Lapu-Lapu*
2,000 stern bodies
Forced to abandon
Those sacred and dear

Today I turn eighteen an identity card I desire
To vote and apply for college

Not native I am told
Proof you must produce

Or else we must vet you
We need to bring in the elders

Elders (I ask?)
My grandfather was an elder

I have his documents
(I say)

To prove that I belong
Here

(I offer) my grandfather's certificate of service
To British colonial Kenya

GET OUT!!
GET OUT!!
GET OUT!!
These words
Bullhorned by men
In suits Ray-Ban
Sunglasses hard hats
Spew blood to the grave
Turn green plantation
Into Green profit
Villas checkered pants
Iron clubs spiked shoes
Displaced 2,000 bodies
Residents of Hacienda Looc

And I add
My mother is Luo
She is native, one of you
I was born here, she was born here (*I switch and speak Luo*)
They look at me and smile
Say I know too much
Know my late grandfather
Tell me
“He was a good man”
“In ‘Nyakwar X’?” (*You are the granddaughter of X?*)
“We will process your documents”

GET OUT!!!
GET OUT!!!
GET OUT!!!
These words
Explode like bombs
Threat of AKs
Bulldozed huts
Still
No is the answer
Machetes and bolos join arms

Sore backs maimed legs
 Blistered hands discolored skin
 Fight to spew blood
 Those sacred and dear

Discourses related to alienness or foreignness (Sharma, 2015) speak to both of our experiences. To illuminate such discourse is to historically contextualize a set of particular experiences. For example, Kenyan Nubians have lived in Kenya for over a century. Yet they are perceived (and treated) as foreigners—aspects that continue to perpetuate material and intersubjective disadvantages for the community (Balaton-Chrimes, 2014). Decades later, promises by the government to offer land titles to the Nubian community in *Kibra*³ and other areas occupied by the community have gone unfulfilled. Nubians continue to face landlessness. Promises by the Kenyan government to provide land titles to the areas that the Nubians have occupied for decades, including *Kibra*, have never materialized. Akin to other deforestation and damage around the world, Mariam is naming how *Kibra*, no longer *Kibra* (forest), becomes dislocated, dispossessed, and displaced in the name of resettlement and redevelopment.

Most recently, Mariam witnessed from afar and in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic the brutal demolition of a Nubian Village in Kibos, a few kilometers from where she grew up. The eviction and displacement of the community and demolition of property were ordered without warning to pave way for the construction of a new capital project—a railway line—a scene that incites memories of the past. The pain of witnessing the dehumanizing legacies of colonialism and the courage to explain the acts to her daughters continues to haunt Mariam. Coloniality and its tentacles—ever greedy and hungry—function to strip the dispossessed again and again whenever land becomes of value to those holding power. How do you explain to your daughter why such a capital project operates as it does, with the flow of development taking precedence over the humanity of a community marginalized from the system for decades?

Characterization of Nubians as ethnic Others, strangers in one's own home, have penetrated citizenship discourse and the politics surrounding constitutionality among the forty-two ethnic tribes in the country. In the current era of postcolonialism, after the r/ejection of the colonial empires—much like in Kenya during the struggle for independence and push for self-rule by the Mau Mau—Sharma points out that

the right to claim rights within and to any given space came, increasingly, to be seen as belonging to “the” natives. After all, we were told, the anticolonial project was often posited as fighting for the rule of the natives *for* the natives. Not surprisingly, then, the battle for over resources and over places

has, thus increasingly become one about the meanings of nativeness. (p. 174)

The issues of nativity or nativeness, belonging or lack of belonging, for the 100,000 Nubians raise important questions on what comprises “home.”

Within colonial logics, arguments have been put forth describing how Nubians occupied “special” places in the British colony since they were treated as superior to the “natives” because of their “martial skills” and “strength” (Balaton-Chrimes, 2016). Within the British Imperial project, Nubians were brought in as a “privileged” caste and tools to help the colonizer's agenda of divide-and-rule and help extinguish dissent. As nativity and land ownership became central to belonging and attachment to ethnicity, indigeneity and autochthony and connectedness to native reserves, the Kenyan Nubians became an “anomalous in the colonial social order” (Balaton-Chrimes, 2016).

I go home
 Thinking
 Asking
 But why?
 What if I wasn't a granddaughter of X?
 What if I did not have grandfather's certificate of service?
 What about the Nubian youths not “privileged”?

I am to possess the paper
 That has come handy in saving
 The X-clan from alienness or foreignness

Sister, brother
 What of us

Brown, abandoned
 Husks by the ocean

Inside, lifelines
 Of a people

Autochthonous forms of representation, according to Sharma (2015), “empty out from the colonial meaning of colonialism the enormous violence that has been done by colonizers” (p. 176). In other words, autochthony reduces the meaning of colonialism and fails to recognize the violence on colonized peoples who today still fight for their recognition in a place they call home. But where is home? What is home? Who determines who belongs and who doesn't? Sharma adds,

there is an ironic historical continuity of autochthonous ideas and practices of belonging and the underlying logics of the colonial (and, in some places, postcolonial) state. Indeed, the

meaning of native was one that was used to *distinguish* the colonized from the colonizer so that the natives could be represented as less human and, therefore, as legitimately colonized. Being native, then, was a signifier of being colonized and the ultimate signifier of abjectness. (p. 174)

It is in this place of tension, of abjectness, wherein lies an un/common ground of dislocation, dispossession, and displacement that threads our colonial histories toward a decolonial project, to unmoor the silences, to speak the unknown. Mariam offers a palpable remembering and forgetting (Rhee, 2021) that also resonates strongly with Korina. The palpability of in-betweenness generates a politics of thought to help identify tools and machineries of coloniality (Walcott, 2020), to echo generations of dissent, to mark continued questions about home becoming neither here nor there.

Why Us? : Why Now?

There is something in rememory. That something may not be readily visible, but it is felt. As Rhee (2021) notes, rememory is in space and time, a place we have known even through the lens of Others. The haunting is an ever-present reminder seeping through the cultural memories of living in and out of colonial and postcolonial worlds, across various spaces and times. The disruption in our lives—along with dislocation and disconnection from place, from home—simply cannot be explained away. They are a result of colonization and colonial histories that continue to haunt us. Everyday. Whether we like it or not, it is present.

My mother tongue
What is my mother tongue?
Kinubi? Luo? Kiswahili?
Which one is mine?

The hair down my back used to shine
Dance in the easterly breeze
But now it hides twisted in a bun

Rememory, both as a verb and noun, is the act of remembering and forgetting (Rhee, 2021). Rememory is fluid with the past, present, and future. We have chosen (to) rememory so as to loosen the grip of static identities in doing inquiry. The remembering and the forgetting allow a different kind of thinking and enacting research, perhaps more bold and open to different possibilities. Perhaps these possibilities are what we desire for y/our daughters. Leigh Patel (2016) reminds us of the relational aspects of research and our responsibility to note our “ontological entry-points

and impacts as researchers” in what we do. These particular entry-points, as we have illustrated in this poetic autoethnography, is key to any inquiry. Drawing on the scholarship of Native Hawaiian Julie Kaomea and Māori Linda Tuhiwai Smith to expand notions of decolonizing research, Patel (2016) writes,

in keeping with a view that knowledge and ways of knowing are intricately tied and co-influential, there is not a static set of experiences, preferred personhoods, or social locations befitting educational research. Rather, we must be able to ask and articulate an answer to “Why me?” that is attentive to connections beyond academic qualifications and institutional affiliations. Our responsibilities should lie in how we frame, approach, and attend to the constantly fluctuating dynamics being researched and how the research is exacting impacts. (p. 59)

Relatedly, research as connected to place offers a way to consider how geographic relationships shape our frames and approaches within a particular space and time. Patel affirms that attending to context is “one of the strongest ways that educational researchers can interrupt coloniality . . . with its thirst for universal truths, value(ing) placelessness” to justify not only the seizure of land and forced movement of people, but also the erasure of knowledge.

Rememory in doing inquiry is central to our work, to bespeak the unknown or the not-yet, to ask questions we haven’t yet asked and perhaps will never get to answer. The affective dimension of haunting brings us closer together as postcolonial beings, as m/Others, as researchers who insist on unsettling linear narratives of complex human experiences within western logics of migration and global diasporic movements. What has been illuminated for us through this poetic autoethnography is our ability to cultivate connections by accentuating the textures and relationships, even the contradictions, within and across common-disparate lives. For us, it has been an opportunity to share stories, to distill “kuwentos” (Jocson, 2008) through cultural memories of dislocation, dispossession, and displacement.

Many parents are writing to their children. Some in the form of love letters. Some in the form of novels or picture books. Contemporary examples include Barack Obama’s (2010) *Of Thee I Sing: Love Letter to My Daughters*. This picture book is a rememory through which questions posed to Malia and Sasha Obama become entry-points to brief portraits of notable historical-cultural figures. The likes of Billie Holiday, Sitting Bull, Georgia O’Keefe, Maya Lin, César Chávez, and Abraham Lincoln. The rememory attempts to make connections between the past, present, and future, in the spirit of hope and change, the very language in Obama’s initial presidential campaign and across his two-term tenure as president. Similarly, Ta-Nehisi Coates’ (2015) *Between the World and Me* is a letter from a

father to a son. The approach is a rememory. The writing centers on what it is like to live as a Black son/man in a racially unjust society. The writing fuses remembering and forgetting (Rhee, 2021); it marks the haunting that is there (Gordon, 2008) and also the ability of time to unravel a future-present-past toward possibility.

Writing for our daughters, the telling-sharing of our stories, is where our curiosities live and become unknowable. As McKittrick (2021) prods us about livingness, “Telling, sharing, listening to, and hearing stories are relational and interdisciplinary acts that are animated by all sorts of people, places, narrative devices, theoretical queries, plots” (p. 6). The process, as we have witnessed and tried to demonstrate here, is spurred by invention and wonder. That is, as McKittrick says, the story gives no answers. Only openings. One of those openings points to what m/Othering has taught us, and how m/Othering shapes our poetics of remembering. The felt rhythms embedded in this writing, braiding spaces in-between, are enlivened by our desires to attend to our shared colonial histories, hearing and unhearing, knowing and unknowing all at once. If the story has no answers, and instead prompts, then our telling-sharing becomes a story-text, one that is alive and remains open to possibilities, to curiosities, to wonders beyond description. McKittrick states, “the story does not simply describe, it demands representation outside itself. Indeed, the story cannot tell itself without our willingness to imagine what it cannot tell” (p. 7). In realizing the invitation that comes from reading McKittrick’s *Dear Science and Other Stories* of/relating to Black life, we are not only inviting ourselves to renew the histories we have come to know or not know within ourselves, reworking the past-present-future through poetic inquiry, but also inviting m/Others to enter in-between spaces of curiosities as they take part in our telling-sharing. We are not performing an act of disclosure but rather we are engaging in a collaborative and creative process wherein “we enact and engender struggle” (p. 7), perhaps even as a practice of solidarity. For y/our daughters, this collaborative and creative process of telling-sharing becomes a living testimony to what is possible in the world we live in—a world full of many unknowns, a world that is relational built on/through/within forms of kinship. We agree that “if the function of the story is to invite the reader-viewer-interlocutor-listener to feel, respond, and be moved, it also establishes powerful alignments (provisional or not) that are put to work with and for loved ones” (McKittrick, 2021, p. 8). That kind of work is what we desire. That is the texture we hope unfolds in this writing through which we (can) craft new songs and rhythms, of curiosities, of wonder. We (can) live and learn with one another. We (can) do this work with/through transdisciplinary methodology.

Evocation : Invitation

Poetics uncovers expressive relatedness to/with the other and serves as an opening to inquiry (Glissant, 1997). Such relatedness is important to sustain invention and wonder. Performative arts-based inquiry in the form of poetic autoethnography is used by qualitative researchers to “remember, contextualize and relay contemporary, near-past, remote past and historic moments and, characters and events” (Williams-Witherspoon, 2017, p. 1). Finley (2008) asserts that arts-based inquiry lends itself to radical, ethical, and revolutionary research methodologies which allow scholars to engage in “futuristic, socially responsible” inquiry needed to address social inequalities (p. 71). As a qualitative research methodology, “poetry as/in research” (Faulkner, 2009) has been adopted by scholars in different academic disciplines to illuminate researchers’ human experiences as well as those of research participants’. Performance and autoethnographic poetry (Davis, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Diversi & Moreira, 2018; Furman, 2003; Madison, 1999), poetic inquiry (Prendergast, 2009), and investigative poetry (Hartnett, 2003), among other forms of arts-based inquiry, push us to share our work in ways that otherwise becomes buried in traditional research.

While doing inquiry has afforded scholars the opportunity to center ways of being (Madison, 1999), there are certain aspects of human experiences that cannot be captured, articulated, or otherwise known (Hanauer, 2003). In using poetic autoethnography, we recognize that as humans whose research and human experiences intersect, we are constantly, in Madison’s (1999) words, “thinking, speaking, and writing in the language of performance, or trying to” (p. 107). Poetic autoethnography, therefore, allows us to participate in the doing and undoing of research—where we attempt to unsettle the entanglements that we grapple with as women scholars, educators, immigrants, and people of color. Similarly, poetic autoethnography as a methodological approach to inquiry affords us the space and place to utilize both theory and method through one another. Madison (2008) insists that as a methodological and pedagogical research paradigm performance (auto)ethnography can help demonstrate how “power, politics and poetics” are interconnected (p. 392). We take this point, then, as permission to engage in poetics of remembering. We thread our human experiences as colonial subjects navigating the remnants of coloniality and everyday relations of power through poetic autoethnography. Along with that, as Faulkner (2018) notes, poetry has served as a unique research tool that on one hand can be fun and on another political and lyrical.

Poetry has enabled us to come together, to unravel the haunting that binds our rememory at the very least. Poems we have written elsewhere in another space and time have provided an un/common ground for understanding what intertwines human experiences. Our paths have crossed,

and it was worthwhile to seek a deeper understanding. This poetic inquiry has served as one example of a particular dialogic approach to telling-sharing. So, what has rememory, or remembering and forgetting (Rhee, 2021), evoked for us? And what has it evoked for you—the reader? We believe that poetic inquiry has been pedagogical in many ways. It has been an invitation to think, to connect, to (re)member (Dillard, 2000, 2008). It has been an invitation to create a space for nourishing ourselves while also cultivating opportunities for learning how to engage (in) stories or storying that can open up possibilities for doing inquiry (McKittrick, 2022). It has been an invitation for teaching differently about ways of doing inquiry, for producing knowledge differently and un/making different knowledges. It has been an invitation for writing. In our case, we have been attentive to various aspects of colonialism and imperialism to echo the centrality of place and context in research. Poetic autoethnography has been fruitful, we think, to further guide and widen the openings of inquiry through rememory. We desire to know so much more and because of it extend notions of Other and processes of Othering as part of our colonial histories to a standpoint of m/Othering. The desire is shaped by our collective responsibilities. Along with joy and creativity, poetry also demands intensity in language and rhythm that may not appear in traditional academic writing. To treat performative writing as relational, evocative, and consequential (Madison, 2005) is to enliven what/how we do inquiry. To create more openings in a collective process of telling-sharing, a poetics of remembering.

And so we write in this moment. We write because we must. We write to claim ourselves in pursuing a rewritable narrative, to sing a different song, and to lean on m/Othering for a chance at world-making. We write to call on y/our daughters. Perhaps the dialogue we have entered and the story we have threaded here in a form of poetic autoethnography is also someone else's rememory, for m/Others—near or far—to rememory in another space and time.

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Notes

1. *Nam Lolwe* is the indigenous name of Lake Victoria—named by early colonialist John Speke in “honor” of Queen Victoria.
2. The recruitment of teachers to the U.S. teaching force is ongoing as part of twenty-first century neoliberal approaches to education.
3. *Kibra* means forest in the Nubi language. Kibra was once an expansive forested area surrounded by the cool flowing waters of the Nairobi River and the Ngong Hills. The area is now popularly known as Kibera Slums, the world's infamous slum/informal settlement in East and Central Africa, where over 500 Western NGOs come to “save” the “poor” Africans within 2.5 square kilometers of land.

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