

# there, not there: (un)disciplining study off the writing tracks/tracts

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**F**or us, “writing off the beaten track” has been propelled by collaborative study of ontoepistemological contributions that break the constraints of western knowledge-making. Black studies and women of color feminisms prompt us to pause long enough to breathe ... to interrogate the ellipsis ... to sit in the space between words or the dangling punctuation. What’s there (or not there) creatively points to ideas, questions, and methods that subvert the primacy of the western colonial imagination. Our collective writing has often come to us by being worked and reworked, fused and refused in an iterative process, this time with fahima ife’s *Maroon Choreography*. From homonyms to a wordplay on tracks/tracts, we discuss a writing praxis that has been contoured by radical study and scholarship “actively straying from” disciplined/disciplining conventions. There is always more to knowing and articulating subjects, contexts, and the pursuit of justice.

*Keywords:* radical study, writing praxis, poetic fragments, breaks/fractures, anachoreography, global ecologies

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**there, not there: (un)disciplining study off the writing tracks/tracts**

the word is free

but we are not

- fahima ife, *Maroon Choreography*

As part contribution to the special issue, we offer wonderings, wanderings, and provocations to illustrate how we study *and* write off the beaten track of disciplinarity in education. Our inquiry is guided by engagements with radical thinkers and ideas as well as aesthetic practices that support us to embolden our writing. On this occasion for sharing creative expressions and experiments in our study, we invoke fahima ife's (2021) *Maroon Choreography*, with "poems, poetic fragments, and lyrical essay ..." which "presuppose a way out (of captivity, indebtedness, ecological ruin) by way of minimalist errantry, by way of refusal" (p. ix). As our writing praxis unfolds, we lay bare notes, readings, questions, pauses, stories, and moments that are called up, poured out, and sometimes linger through us as we unsettle the temporal and spatial borders of the western subject's colonial imagination in our study. We engage ife's black method and practice of anachoreography, or "opening up to, stammering, and moving again inside our quiet, entangled, pneumatic intimacies" (p. xi). We are enlivened by the wayward possibilities.<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps there where the word is free, even if we are not, as ife writes in *we communicate together in a language that does not speak* (p. 63).

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<sup>1</sup>See *Maroon Choreography*: "Anachoreography is the feral spirit of *study, waywardness, tarrying, ritual, practice, rehearsal, shoal, ceremony, series, rematriation, wake, duration, intimacy, pause, and refusal*—given to us in the poesis of black studies, ecological studies, performance studies, affect studies, and indigenous studies. If dance is the city's mother tongue, as Fred Moten says, then what secret lives inside the city, in us, before the city, as us, before the clearing, inside air?" (ife, 2021, p. ix)

See *The Undercommons* "But blackness still has work to do: to discover the re-routing encoded in the work of art: in the anachoreographic reset of a shoulder, in the quiet extremities that animate a range of social chromaticisms and, especially, in the mutations that drive mute, labored, musicked speech as it moves between an incapacity for reasoned or meaningful self-generated utterance that is, on the one hand, supposed and, on the other hand, imposed, and a critical predisposition to steal (away)" (Harney & Moten, 2013, p. 50).

Our communal writing approach suggests being moved and moving ourselves in contemplation of radical ideas that extend beyond our “fleshly limits.” Where authors’ words on a page felt intimate and inciting, almost as if you were sitting beside them. Where our togetherness altered something and is left lingering in our praxis, in our way of knowing. Where we began to follow an (im)material nudge, or spirit, or haunting, or rememory, whose presence was there. Or not there. Not there in the sense of a defined form. It is perhaps our intimacy with air, pausing to breathe, breath that animates generational storying with beloved kin. It is perhaps synergy and entanglement that can spark writing or pause writing just as we begin tracing the tracks/tracts set out for us in documenting the facts of captivity, indebtedness, and ecological ruin. So a question that guides our “minimalist errantry” (ife, 2021, p. ix) is: How do we (continue to) undiscipline study and play with our writing praxis?

In this experimental endeavor, we present connective threads amongst our scholarly inquiries, which meet up with ife’s anachoreography of presupposing a way out of captivity, indebtedness, and ecological ruin by refusing “the choreographed apparatuses of coloniality, its methodologies, its origin stories” (2021, p. ix). Following ife’s invitation, we open ourselves up to creative expressions and inquiries beyond the colonial and plantation imagination, writing in “haltingly staccato undulation” (ife, 2021, p. 87) that is preoccupied with breaking and fracturing the ease with which colonial and plantation logics/capillaries sustain educational studies. It is a staccato that guides the rhythm in our thinking, a staccato that appears in dialogue and blends (in) fragments on the page. It is a staccato that invites the reader to pause, to ponder “where is this going?,” because the fragments may not make sense right in the moment. Instead, the staccato clings to the dangling punctuation ... until the next one ... only to offer a respite in the form of questions, because there is never a clean ending, only undisciplining, unlearning, unsettling. Our vignettes are informed by improvisational lived moments of quietness and stillness, written with the fragments of our delimited grounds. We offer poetic lines, living curiosities, and unanswered questions (McKittrick, 2021) to stammer through a writing praxis that is elevated by pausing, being still, getting stuck, being with air, breathing, and sharing on a continuous loop. As we share and move again inside our “pneumatic intimacies,” (ife, 2021, p. xi) we document connections and practices that oxygenate our ontoepistemological refusals in educational studies.

**mode of study: presupposing a way out**

{ what } { i knew } { was pointless }  
{ there on the river } { of some edge }  
-fahima ife (2021, p. 70)

In a poem titled *thirst is a way of knowing, not knowing*, ife invites us to a moment with the river. Opening up to a longing. A way of knowing. Of being. The same poem denoted by { } guides us throughout. What if *what we know* can become pointless (without meaning, without effectiveness, without particular direction, without confinement) when meeting up with the river, as the poet suggests above? A lesson that might be missed as feet and flesh habituate a beaten track. Our study has been sparked by collectively meeting up with radical ideas and writing practices that unsettle what we know and what we are taught to know. Across our scholarly interests, we rethink educational equity's policies and practices (Cee), trace how refugee resettlement policy facilitates dispossession (Mariam), disrupt disciplined climate change education (Ben), and illuminate critical pedagogical possibilities (Korina). Our interests draw on interdisciplinary scholarship, which inspires our collective study and, slowly, our experiments with (un)disciplinarity.

{ whose name } { i cannot speak } ...  
{ how i became } { an outpouring } { for everyone }  
-fahima ife (2021, p. 70)

For us, wandering beyond the beaten track is prompted by collective engagements that unsettle knowledge, methods, analysis, and ideas shaped by the western canon in the neoliberal academy (Rashid et al., forthcoming). It is also, perhaps, under a global pandemic, active wars, the ever-present threat of state-sanctioned and vigilante violence, climate catastrophe, and forced displacement that we insist on curiosity and yearn for ways of knowing that presuppose a break from captivity, indebtedness, and ecological ruin. Such a historic complexity prompts us to do more than archiving ourselves as categories and objects

that are answerable to the coloniality of time, place, and labor (Carter & Jocson, 2022b; Hartman, 2008; Patel, 2016). Thus, we work toward fractures and disruptions through knowledge-making and collective sharing. Those fractures have come in our study of scholars who break with/from the reproduction of academic writing. For example, Katherine McKittrick (2021) weaves a series of stories that unsettle a deference to coloniality and urges us to venture off the beaten track:

I share *Dear Science* [...] as a study of how we come to know black life through asymmetrically connected knowledge systems. Science is present—it is tied to the curiosities noted above – but it is restless and uncomfortably situated and multifarious rather than definitive and downward-pressing. This is a book about black livingness and ways of knowing. This shift—from studying science to studying ways of knowing—has allowed me to work out where and how black thinkers imagine and practice liberation... (p. 3)

Toward freeing blackness from a captive position, as always already biocentrically abject and dispossessed of the proper tools for thought and civil sociality (Judy, 2020), the stories in *Dear Science* fracture an academic deference to descriptively rehearsing colonial knowledge. The “asymmetrically connected knowledge systems” through which black people come to know ourselves/themselves, as well as expressive black life, are illustrated through her engagements with a radical lineage of black thinkers, multiple black creative texts (including images and music playlists), abundant footnotes, poetic looping of key points, and so much more. Her words and writing approach are aesthetically inviting as they make plain how conventions of knowing have been and can be subverted to tell expansive stories of blackness that exceed (yet are always navigating) captivity. McKittrick’s aesthetic practice has prompted our thinking with music and sound, poetry, and words that elide mere description and binary opposition.

{ was the alchemy } { of our existence } ...  
{ how i became } { an outpouring } { for everyone }  
-fahima ife (2021, p. 70)

In addition to ife's (2021) invitation to consider the possibilities of presupposing a way out of indebtedness, we have turned to thought experiments and lessons from scholars such as Denise Ferreira da Silva, Fred Moten, and Stefano Harney. In contemplation of Black Lives Matter, "a movement and call to respond to everyday events of racial violence (the killing of unarmed black persons by police)" (para. 2), Silva (2017) discusses the notion of value as stipulated by philosophers of modern reason, exposing the beaten track of dialectics. That is, the routine practice of resolving to one side or the opposite of an argument or concept. She also illustrates a thought experiment, which claims "a radical praxis of refusal to contain blackness in the dialectical form" (para. 43). At the heart of her experiment and her work in *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (2007) is an effort to expose limits of deploying "blackness as a category of difference" for our emancipatory projects. In doing so, one is loyal to a Hegelian philosophic project that depends on racial knowledge for the determining and adjudicating of the proper minds and social configurations. Yet Silva's analytical groundwork provides an opening for moving beyond indebtedness, or seeking what's owed as a form of justice. She asserts:

For the work of blackness as a category of difference fits the Hegelian movement but has no emancipatory power because it functions as a signifier of violence which, when deployed successfully, justifies the otherwise unacceptable, such as the deaths of black persons due to state violence (in the US and in Europe) and capitalist expropriation (in Africa)." (Silva, 2017, para. 43)

Silva releases the tools of the subject (post-Enlightenment concepts of self-determination, dialectical analysis, philosophic traditions, categories of difference) as a way of presupposing our way out of indebtedness, and activates "blackness's disruptive force," (para. 3) to fracture the imposition of modernity and its meaning-making systems.

Stefano Harney and Fred Moten (2013) make similar moves in proposing a fugitive planning and black study praxis that upends credit and debt as bases for seeking justice. Their counter expressions in study are guided by an "unpayable debt," (p. 150) or the idea that the

continued atrocities, which allow plantocratic logics to thrive, can never be repaid. Unpayable debt prompts us to be engaged in study and justice praxes that allow debt to become a “principle of elaboration,” where owing is lost and “more generative” (p. 150) ways of being in relation to one another are explored outside the credit-debt dichotomy. Silva, Moten, and Harney’s fractures in the colonially imposed notion of indebtedness inform the ways in which our study praxis has explored how to experiment in writing, searching for ways to express ourselves beyond arguments (ife, 2021) as well as beyond financial and moral obligation. A praxis that also lends itself to presupposing a way out of ecological ruin.

[W]hat unregulated qualities of air flourish in our global ecologies?  
What otherwise porous ecosystems emerge, or do we have access to,  
by way of deep listening? (ife, 2021, pp. xi-xii)

In *Maroon Choreography*, ife asks a series of unanswered questions on air and movement. These questions move us to ponder how tracts of land, plots and demarcated geometric forms make ecological relatedness illegible. At the same time, ife gestures towards a method of deep listening that considers air, land, and water. What is still there, identifiable but in demarcation, maybe always will be there (or not there) in time and space, in but beyond binary. ife hints at a more fluid ungraspable relation. Rivers, tidewaters, and wetlands seep and flow through ife’s poetics. In sharp contrast, the steamy in-between ecosystems have been written through white anxieties as dangerous, dark, and haunted. Architect of modern settler landscape, Frederick Law Olmsted, authored a 1856 account *A Journal in the Seaboard Slave States* describing swamps as dangerous spaces “where social order loses its power and the lowest of creatures determine the fates of their masters” (p. 17), places where ordered landscape entangles with the mental and juridical models and distinct form of relation that conquest and extraction depend. In wetlands, paths cannot be traced and tracks dissolve in the thick waters in a ghostly temporality resisting reclamation. Mixtures of watery earth defy western ideas of purity, related distinctions in terraqueous space that are unfit for cultivation but suited instead for fugitive shelter. Fugitive rebellion denaturalizes the

colonizing qualities of whiteness that measure all other forms of life against itself (Scherrer, 2022; Wynter, 2003).

In tracts that dissolve colonizing possibility,  
the maroon is animated,  
attending to forms of mixing,  
where fugitives and castaways vanish,  
without a noticeable track,  
what is there but not there strikes fear,  
contesting regulated form.

Tracts that resist reclamation  
are the places of worldmaking,  
of marronage.

In ecological (un)knowability,  
the composition of water and air  
in relation to the flows of sedimented land,  
nothing is ever still,  
always humming and vibrating,

(in)visible currents and waves break from one medium into another.

Breaking from straightjacketed arteries as capital, unknowable relations in between.

Presupposing a way out of ecological ruin.

### fragments, vignettes, and storying tracks/tracts

We turn now to undisciplining study, to show experiments in our writing. Through play, we “write rebelliously”<sup>2</sup> (Lopez, 2022).

In the writing fragments that follow, we offer our living curiosities, unanswered questions, and poetic lines. We draw on notes. We revisit previous writings. We grapple with what can be said or not said. We contemplate what happens when we write and get stuck. We welcome air that pushes us off the beaten track. We allow the dangling lines to cross pollinate (ife, 2021). We show a writing praxis that is humbled by our attempts at undisciplining study. The fragments make explicit our staccato writing rhythm. They offer up connections between us (social and geographic locations, languages, pasts-presents-futures). The staccato animates. Lines meet up, hang, exchange. They go back and forth with one another. The nodes come together to communicate in a language that does not speak. A method in process. A methodological approach in an unfolding present. Coming together in itself, not by itself, not by ourselves. To create potential openings, breaks, and fractures if we allow the coming together, if we allow ourselves to be open, to stay open (ife, 2021). We learn from that which is not spoken while communing (and communicating) together, to accentuate lessons from our experimental writing. The lessons we take with us teach us about fracturing as a way of knowing.

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Brick by brick. We build ideas. We lay down words. Sometimes, we pause long enough to breathe ... to interrogate the ellipsis ... to sit in the space between words, to wonder about the dangling punctuation. We close our eyes and take a deeper breath to see what else might

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<sup>2</sup> In Curriculum Inquiry’s Writing Fellowship and Writers’ Retreat, Licho Lopez Lopez’s workshop on “writing rebelliously” centers play as a “form of rebellion” and shares inspiration about “writing and writing otherwise.” Highlights from the workshop were generously made available on social media (#CIWF22).

come. But nothing comes. What does one do? When the pen refuses to touch paper, or when the cursor stops dancing on the page, what does one do in the moment?

Stuck.

Every writer has been here. It is a familiar place of growth, of learning. Or of struggle. Of coercion. Of collusion with academic productivity.

Though we do not know if we can get away from it as academic writers, we seek something other than productivity in our study. For us, we have looked to each other. We have asked off-the-cuff questions, even devised thinking prompts to get (back) into a flow. Again.

We have turned to poetry, music, and visual art to spark our cognitive synapses in new ways.

We have adjusted the volume and jammed to sonic rhythms. We have enlivened our walks, to add a strut, a beat to each step, to go in directions never been. Unafraid of what various terrains might bring. On concrete. On dirt trails. On grasslands. On the sand.

That moment arrives and we find ourselves open to possibilities.

Unstuck. We explore where the possibilities have taken us.

Brick by brick. The path forms. The tracks come into view. There is something there, not there.

We pause. Again. This time to interrogate what is beneath the tracks that seem to be repeating in pattern. Legacies of colonial logics. Like railroads of manifest destiny.

We are conditioned to do just that. And we are exhausted.

How do we break from everyday tracks, plantation tracts, routines for colonial thinking, to reimagine everyday practice? How do we undo the violence from hierarchy, racialization, and imperialism? How do we live through the violence, and still (re)make the world?

We write. We undiscipline study. We cultivate writing off the beaten path, the everyday tracks and plantation tracts of/in our lives.

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Part of our collective aim is to invite a conversation about naming stories and the entangled messiness in digital storytelling. McKittrick's (2006) discussion of black women's geographies is integral to 'thinking about the production of space as unfinished, a poetics of questioning' (p. xxiii). With this thinking exercise comes many possibilities for critical discussions with space, place, and landscape as a way to **open up analysis of our own geographies, the locations we share, where we are always entangled, where we depart, and where we meet again.**

(Jocson et al., 2022, p. 147)

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Track (noun)

1. *a footprint whether recent or fossil*
2. **a.** *detectable evidence (such as the wake of a ship, a line of footprints, or a wheel rut) that something has passed*
- b.** *a path made by or as if by repeated footfalls; TRAIL*
- c.** *a course laid out especially for racing*
- d.** *the parallel rails of a railroad*

Track (verb)

1. **a.** *to follow the tracks or traces of*
- b.** *to search for by following evidence until found*

2. *a. to follow by vestiges*  
*b. to observe or plot the moving path of*
3. *a. to carry mud (or other material) on the feet and deposit*  
*b. to make tracks upon*

(from Merriam-Webster)

Imperial tracks.

Geographies.

Entanglements.

Migrations.

Movements.

**iron snake ===/=== train tracks ===/=== ghost towns: a vignette**



*Figure 1: Uganda Railways, Theodore Roosevelt*<sup>3</sup>

In rememory, we partly turn to  
folklores gifted to us about railroads and train tracks  
folklores passed from generation to generation  
about prophetic visions of Mekatilili wa Menza  
Samoei Arap Koitalel and Mugo wa Kibiru  
to explore how colonial and imperial tracks  
animate and reproduce different tracks  
that re-emerge, mutate, and take on  
different formations and configurations<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>President Theodore Roosevelt and traveling companions (1909) mount the observation platform in Kenya on the Uganda Railway at the start of a game hunt.

Retrieved from: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Uganda\\_Railways\\_-\\_Theodore\\_Roosevelt.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Uganda_Railways_-_Theodore_Roosevelt.jpg)

<sup>4</sup>The prophecy of the iron snake in Imperial British East Africa emerged from stories, oral histories, and folklore gathered and passed on to different generations. These forms of knowledge can be argued are relational to and are embedded within the black radical tradition. Mekatilili wa Menza, a freedom fighter





Magandang umaga (good morning),  
kain na tayo (let's eat), tayo na (let's go),  
buenas noches (good night), sueños dulces (sweet  
dreams),  
and cierran los ojos (close your eyes) have been part  
of purposeful engagements. By association,  
sueños and ojos have given rise to “me despierto...me  
elevo” (I wake up...I rise) in rhyming occasions with  
books like Maya Christina Gonzalez 's (2014) *Call  
Me Tree / Llámame Arbol*. Gradually, over time, we  
have talked  
more and read more together to underscore the  
relationship between land/islands, languages, and  
cultures  
in the Philippines through a series of books  
that features folk songs musically edited by Felicidad  
Prudente (2019) such as *Ed-Eddoy* (Ifugao),  
*Pakitong-Kitong* (Cebuano),  
and *Kaisa-Isa Niyan* (Maguindanon).  
Each story tells of regional customs and traditions  
in the Philippines. Each story also extends a  
popular book, *Bahay Kubo*, meaning nipa hut,  
which is based on a song of the same name. The song  
version in Filipino/Tagalog has been hummed  
in our household many times...  
Today, my daughter knows the song  
in its entirety and can identify many of the vegetables  
named in the Bahay Kubo lyrics.  
(Jocson, 2021, p. 358)

A lesson of care. Living together.

Using language to see and be in the world.

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**realms: a vignette**

*thirst is a way of knowing, not knowing*

{ what } { i knew } { was pointless }  
{ there on the river } { of some edge }

{ whose name } { i cannot speak }  
{ was the alchemy } { of our existence }

{ inside our body } { a hollowness } { an aloofness }  
{ so devout } { i began to call it } { holy }

{ how i glistened } { for no one } { other than myself }  
{ how i became } { an outpouring } { for everyone }

{ a cool drink of sorrow }

{ laced with gold }

-fahima ife (2021, p. 70)

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Pausing long enough, we/they commune beyond fleshly limits. We/they see one another. A moment of pausing with. In the middle. Before. Respite. A moment that arrives through stillness, through contemplation, through letting go and being mutually dispossessed of knowing and knowledge that contains, that archives debt and ruin.

the word is free

Is it a portal to writing, running, walking off the beaten track? Choosing to be at odds with the world<sup>5</sup> as we commune with air? Getting lost in the possibility of another world?

the word is free

but we are not

Feeling stuck in the limits of “locations and languages” (Nagar, 2019, p. 7)? Pause in consideration, in contemplation of word choice, in contemplation of saying the oft unsayable yet thinkable. Sit. Question the use of terms that work for the verifiable, the fixed, the housed, the positioned (Harney & Moten, 2013). That respite ... undisciplines study. Being with each other. Still. Being with sound. Enraptured. Being with words. Tongue tied. Being with sorrow. Lost.

Being with air. Wild. Pointless. Flowing. Reanimates straying. Tapping into those who carry the message, “inequitable systems of knowledge can be, and are, breached by creative human aesthetics” (McKittrick, 2021, p. 153). Heard and read and practiced in various iterations.

the word is free

but we are not

Thirst as a way of knowing. Not quenchable. Thirsting for what provokes and lingers—announcing its possibility. Find yourself meandering to engage with what is difficult to put into words. Stammering as to not repeat the harms. Stammering to unstick. Communing with what is beyond here or there. Live and breathe outside of linear time and formalized space. Let virtuality guide the imagination of our existence (Silva, 2014; Silva, 2016). Searching for a way out by communing with airy movements.

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<sup>5</sup> See Stefano Harney and Fred Moten: "Felicity Street" (On Tom Dent, fahima ife, and New Orleans)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bswqI-SG4DU>

the word is free

Black study confronts knowing. It does not dare to know as Kant (Badley, 2021). Refusing post-Enlightenment words, logics, antics, self-assuredness. It opens up multiple ways of knowing. Revisiting and tending to pulsing words. Singing words that provoke and create anew. Daring to undiscipline freedom as we know it (Walcott, 2021). Welcoming another existence. Stepping into another realm. A persistent reminder:

the word is free

but we are not

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S t a c c a t o .

Fragments. A rhythm in writing.

Breaks/fractures, in thought, in writing.

We rebel. We write rebelliously.

Why not?

## **Breaks/Fractures**

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### **Break**

*to disrupt the order or compactness of*

*to make ineffective as a binding force*

*to stop or bring to an end suddenly*

(from Merriam-Webster)

### **Fracture**

*to damage or destroy as if by rupturing*

*to cause great disorder in*

*to break up*

*to go beyond the limits of (something, such as a rule)*

(from Merriam-Webster)

We look back on our own writing tracks. Digital storytelling. Pláticas. Kuwentos. Relational poetics. Sonic engagements.

We have experimented with writing and are (still) inclined to experiment some more.

What do we notice when looking back at our own writing tracks?

There are traces of methodological openings. To push boundaries here and there. The crevices lead us to deeper curiosities and enter unfamiliar terrains where disciplines collide or diffuse into new(er) inquiries. Altered ways of knowing.

Sometimes, the break is in the conversation before writing touches the page. In between the lines. In between the spaces between lines. In the revisions. The many revisions. The changes upon changes within revisions. Fracturing western episteme and letting the tongue-pen go

wildly. Remembering. Rememory. Because colonization and colonial histories haunt us. So, we remember and prepare for another story.

Writing a poem has become for me, at least in part, an attempt to find out some things and to try to work through some things intellectually, emotionally, and musically... That process is a struggle toward language that tries to struggle toward things; it is movement in preparation. (Fred Moten in an interview with Charles Henry Rowell, 2004, p. 956)

Elsewhere, we have shown how we write between and across poetic lines. What is (not) said lingers on the page, from left to right, lines-becoming-arms stretching out toward one another.

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

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

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(Rashid & Jocson, 2021, p. 406)

At that moment, we asked, why us, why now?

We noted what came to us:

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. (Rashid & Jocson, 2021, p. 406)

Still, questions insisted on untameability as illuminated by another past exchange. To unleash a domesticated practice and surge with “a wild tongue” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 53).

Speaker1: What is an untameable tongue? Something that has been captured or attempted to be captured but finds itself beyond capture? When we release our tongues from being tamed, what are we (or our tongues) attempting to do? What are we escaping from? Freeing ourselves from? Becoming? Unbecoming? Perhaps we find each other beyond the colonial, neoliberal expressions of the university. We find each other in writing, in becoming, in readings, in questions. Perhaps untameability signals the nonlinear, signals a space of coming togetherness without formal determinacy as also echoed by Stefano Harney and Fred Moten. Even if only briefly, in moments where we connect beyond what is set out for us. Untameability presses against the institution and its scientific, economic, racial exploits. It holds sense-making in contention, welcoming the refusal.

Speaker2: What else can happen when we release our imagination from complicity and form? What else might be said when we untame our tongues? (Carter & Jocson, 2022a, p. 236)

The questions persisted, only to be embraced in our current practice.

What creates or shapes a beaten track? What is left by the wayside or simply discarded in making space for the track to be beaten?

What are other forms of pressure in the weathered terrain? What frictions and tensions erode the tracks? What of fire, wind and ice?

What of tracks and space where one cannot follow? The unknowable.

We wander/wonder ... and go where the air flows.

Tracks as in sky as in constellations. Tracks without light.

Tracks with sound as in music as in trees rustling in the night.

Tracks as in paths as in roads, far far away.

Tracks as in water as in wakes as in swamps as in wetlands.

Tracks as in sand as in the bottomless sea.

Multiple tracks ... ttrraacckkkss that form fractals and traces that remain (or don't remain).

How do we desire new ones? Or disrupt the patterns to set off (more) new ones? To create breaks and unleash the potential of connections.

What breaks and fractures will it require to think and write off the beaten track? What forms will conversations take? What will untameable tongues bring about when we think beyond tracks, old tracks, colonial tracks, plantation tracts?

For us as educators, the implications are many. We want to break free from tracking in schools, the carceral tracks that do nothing but undermine creative and playful expression.

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... we have been inspired to enter conversations about schooling inequities where we come together to explore the geographies already contoured by our journeys, what these geographies indicate about K-20 education, and the ways we have contemplated the **possibilities and limits of our ongoing work in this seemingly concrete, yet unfinished**, educational system. Furthermore, it is this opportunity to consider where we are, or what McKittrick (2006) and Glissant (1997) suggest as **our ‘place,’ in a relational poetics of questioning**. (Jocson et al., 2022, p. 147)

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Our writing praxis makes plausible questions and connections. Returning to stories from our youth, communicating together in a language that does not speak. Revisiting what has been said or not said. Reminiscing to unravel ghostlines and hauntings, joys and pleasures.

Unsettling requires constant un/doing. (Un)tracking our minds. The word *track*—*tract*—is layered with history. We cannot help but think of track/tract in relation to the colonial logics of/in transportation. Intercontinental. Roads. Railways. Indentured labor. Servitude. The Oregon Trail. The Gold Rush. Immigration. Zoning. Redlining. Covenants. Highways. Noise. Excavation. Commemoration.

What more is there on the page<sup>6</sup>? What else resonates?

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<sup>6</sup> **Living Curiosities, (Un)Answered Questions**

Today. A daily routine. A ride on the bus, metro, subway, tube, train.

Track as in (race)track. Old money. Plantation money.

Track and Field. Competition. Domination. Racialization.

Track as in music tracks. Industry. Entertainment.

Production. Copyright. Old money. New money.

Track as in ability tracking. Schools. Factories. Prisons.

Reproduction. Segregation. Desegregation. Corporatization.

Track as in tracking footprints. Indigeneity. Lineage. Generations.

Track as in fracking. Pipelines. Resources. Dispossession. Desecration.

Track as in tract in relation to plantation logics.

Tractors. Traction. Extraction. Land. Water. Wetlands.

Landmarks. Parklands. Attraction(s). Present day amusement.

There are many others.

At this juncture, what is expanded when we break tracks?

Or when we think relationally about tracts?

What happens when a detonation of ideas seizes the moment?

Where are the lines of flights? To pick up speed away from tracks of western modernity.

What happens when there isn't a lot of friction to keep steady?

What happens when there is too much friction? Velocity. Viscosity.

What new(er) lines of flight and inquiries are created? Waveforms. Wavelengths.

What happens in schools? What does this look like inside schools?

In everyday life? To shape how we think and study and write.

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