

IN OUR LIFETIME

an anti-imperialist resource

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Introduction

A child in Gaza in December 2023 recites by memory, to a smartphone camera, a poem by Tawfiq Zayyad, revolutionary poet of Palestine (1929-1994):

Here we stay
As if we are twenty impossibilities, in Lydda, Ramla, and the Galilee

Here, on your chests, we remain like a wall
In your throats
Like a piece of glass, like cacti
In your eyes
A whirlwind of fire

Here, on your chests, we remain like a wall
We starve, we strip, we challenge
We sing the poems
And fill the angry streets with demonstrations
And fill the prisons with pride
And make children
A generation of rebels, after generation

As if we are twenty impossibilities, in Lydda, Ramla, and the Galilee
We are here to stay,
Drink the sea if you wish
We guard the shadow of the fig and the olive
And plant ideas, like yeast in dough

In 1948 the Zionist entity was founded with the words 'The old will die and the young will forget.' But the young did not forget, instead their memory grew. It was the fire of historical memory that sparked in the Jabalia camp in Gaza with the intifada of 1987 and spread throughout the whole of historic Palestine, breaking the imperial geography, making Palestine indivisible. Those children and youth in the refugee camps resisted with whatever means they had available, so they threw stones. The stones carried memory, and the memory of the land erupted through the stones. And the youth realised their liberation through the repeated action of liberating themselves. And the stones became kalashnikovs. That generation went on to write philosophies of defiance with their acts. And in Al-Aqsa Flood they went on to take a stand for dignity and life against an impossible present. They broke free. They shaped the earth, shook the world. They made the Palestinian cause the universal cause of the

oppressed everywhere. As Susan Abulhawa says:

Gaza is now all the world.

Gaza is our collective moment of truth, the meaning in our lives. It is the clarity we need and seek.

It is the definitive divide between us and the ruling class that tramples us.

It is us or them. There is no middle place now.

The youth uprisings that began as defiant tremors in the refugee camps in occupied Palestine have now awakened a universalising anti-imperial consciousness in millions across the world. And the footage by Palestinian journalists of Israel's genocide in Gaza recasts the history of capitalism in its truest light, for all to see: a repetition of genocides of racialised, indigenous peoples by the forces of global imperialism. In the imperial core, the reception of this testimony caused millions to take a stand, imagine new modes of political engagement, and mobilize and organise towards ever-broader fronts against genocide and imperialism. In the belly of the beast, Palestine is transforming the texture of everyday life.. In Glasgow Central station a woman holds a sign that says '*Palestine - Soul of Our Souls*'. The struggle of the Palestinian people for liberation gives the world hope and a cause, and the cause of the whole world's oppressed is at stake in Palestine.

'In our lifetime' is a phrase often heard as a refrain in our movements. When I repeated it, I had imagined it meant that Palestine will be liberated in my lifetime. But reading through the texts in this resource, I thought of the phrase in another way. Instead of the teleological focus, which presupposes a final moment of liberation within the uncertain length of my own life, I began to think of what makes a collective lifetime: the things we do, the way we live, the truth and beauty we express and practise towards liberated future and liberated history, the promises we make to others and ourselves. *In our lifetime* means using every aspect of our lifetime for the work of liberation. The concept of martyrdom seems expressed in this realisation. As Kimarley Chevannes, quoted by Lola Olufemi in this resource, says: liberation is 'ongoing struggle. Its finality lies in its activeness.' We must continue to find ways to resist in all the ways we can, to find instrumental temporality to work with others and to organise and escalate, to destroy, sabotage and impede capacity for imperial violence and state violence, destroy the violence of all imperial borders, to remain steadfast and to continue acting.

Anti-colonial resistance involves magical toying, poetics: temporal interventions and contortions that modify history, spiral-time, the speculative

and the imaginary. Acts combining the physic and the psychic, acts of prayer and faith capable of bending the material of the present towards liberation. (The evocation and approaching of dates by the writers in this collection seem to threaten to explode them out of the continuum of a history written by the imperial ‘victors’.)

Anti-colonial revolutionaries have used artistic, technological and speculative methods to realise their liberation. The genius of the anticolonial imaginary involves a materialist magic that saw incarcerated theatre practitioner Zakaria Zubeidi tunnel his way out of an Israeli prison with a spoon in 2021. And in November 2023, shortly before his martyrdom, literature professor and poet Dr Refaat Alareer, wrote to a correspondent about how he would use his marker to resist. A pen writes against the enemy but it can also be hurled against him in defiance:

I’m an academic. Probably the toughest thing I have at home is an Expo marker. But if the Israelis invade, if the paratroopers charge at us, going from door to door, to massacre us, I am going to use that marker to throw it at the Israeli soldiers, even if that is the last thing that I do.

And as Yahya Sinwar, resistance leader, martyred in October 2024, wrote in his memoir *The Thorn and the Carnation*: ‘By God, if I found nothing but dust, I would fight them with it.’ Even in his last moments, with one arm blasted-off, Sinwar used his other arm to hurl a heavy stick at a drone. The footage attests to the drone flinching.

Tareq Baconi writes of the miraculous ‘almost childish tactics’ of the Palestinian resistance:

As Fanon said, resistance to colonialism generates comprehensive creativity. The word that comes to mind when thinking of Gaza and resistance is “innovation.” Basic, almost childish tactics created in Gaza make regimes tremble. Balloons flying over fences leave colonizers shaking in their shelters. Kites lit aflame are met with a nuclear power citing the need for self-defense. Condoms filled with flammable liquids leave settlers frozen in their tracks or cowering on the sides of the road. Smoke from flaming tires make snipers helpless and ineffective. Tunnels dug up in various sizes and lengths undermine a sophisticated machinery of border construction. This is what asymmetric warfare is. This is what Gaza teaches us.

Asymmetric warfare means the childish, the childlike are dialectically empowered against the blunt, brutality of the historical (adult) ‘victor.’ No

amount of technological or imperial might can guarantee colonial brutality's victory over a people who continue to resist with whatever means they have at their disposal. In the words of Jean Genet: 'brutality by its very excess would destroy itself, would come to wipe itself out, to annihilate itself in the long run, when faced with violence.' As Mahmoud Dariwsh, resistance poet, wrote:

Against barbarity, poetry can resist only by confirming its attachment to human fragility like a blade of grass growing on a wall while armies march by.

The word 'intifada' means *shaking-off*, the way a bird shakes off a speck of dust that inhibits its flight, causing a tremor in the air. We should never underestimate the revolutionary power of tremors, however seemingly small or subtle, that will expand, ripple, ring-out into a crescendo of empire's downfall. Sulaïman Majali's text in this resource opposes the illusory magic of empire to the operative magic of poetic speech. And as Darwish said, 'Every word has the power to change the world'.

This resource is especially for young people, to learn from what the Palestinian resistance is teaching us.

For the martyred youth who gave us so much and taught us so much.

This publication is dedicated to the glory of all the martyrs who died on the road to liberation, who teach us the meaning of a collective lifetime. Let them continue to shape the earth, shake our world.

*Hussein Mitha, October 2024
From Glasgow to Gaza, victory to the intifada!*

Lola Olufemi

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU FELT TIME *COME BACK AROUND* AGAIN? WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU FELT HISTORY GRAB YOU BY THE SHOULDERS, SCREAMING “YOU, YOU, *YOU*, YOU ARE STILL ALIVE, YOU CAN ACT!”¹

¹ I thought about how, in order to remain focused on the goal of political transformation, a more flexible understanding of temporality and the “repeated” actions we undertake for the sake of establishing communal environments in which our needs are met, must be established. Theoretically, grassroots political formations must integrate spiral time into their analysis. This can be done without dehistoricising the operation of capitalism, gender, race inside and outside of national borders. If linearity, an understanding of the unidirectional progressive movement of time produces the *feeling* that we labour without reward, then we must reconceptualise that labour not only as a “repetition with a difference,” but as recurrent, a meaningful intervention that modifies and creates alternatives, even if those modifications or alternatives are not immediately obvious to us. If history slows us down, then we must bypass it to maintain the imperative to organise.

TO WHICH GROUPS DO YOU BELONG? WHAT ETHICS AND PRINCIPLES WILL YOU CONCRETIZE?³

³ One of the questions I am asked most frequently on social media, in course lectures, and during question and answer sessions is some variation of “what is to be done?” And, my most fervent response is to join an organization, contribute to that organization and strive to embody and concretize its ethics and principles. (Charisse Burden Stelly, 2022) <https://www.charisseburdenstelly.com/blog/entry-7-on-joining-an-organization>

**NO APOLOGIES TO THE PEOPLE OF LEBANON, NO APOLOGIES
TO THE PEOPLE OF PALESTINE. INSTEAD LIST YOUR
PROMISES⁴, LIST YOUR CONVICTIONS.⁵**

⁴ More than just a declaration of assurance, a promise is a secret bond I offer to you. By secret, I mean not that you disguise it from everyone else but that it is kept, safeguarded, held. The bond is sealed. Depending on its orientation, a promise can be something that expands into a gift or a threat. *I promise you that I will do X or I promise that X will happen to you.* Primarily, a promise requires the enclosure of something. The magnitude promises warrants investigation; a promise is built on desirous ground.

⁵ I didn't know and nobody told me and what
could I do or say, anyway?

Yes, I did know it was the money I earned as a poet that
paid
for the bombs and the planes and the tanks
that they used to massacre your family.
– *Apologies to the People of Lebanon*, June Jordan.

WHAT LINKS 1791 IN SAINT DOMINGUE TO 1936 IN PALESTINE TO 1952 IN KENYA TO 1857 IN INDIA TO 1929 IN NIGERIA TO...⁶

⁶ Always falling into a hole, then saying “ok, this is not your grave, get out of this hole,” getting out of the hole which is not the grave, falling into a hole again, saying “ok, this is also not your grave, get out of this hole,” getting out of that hole, falling into another one; sometimes falling into a hole within a hole, or many holes within holes, getting out of them one after the other, then falling again, saying “this is not your grave, get out of the hole”; sometimes being pushed, saying “you can not push me into this hole, it is not my grave,” and getting out defiantly, then falling into a hole again without any pushing; sometimes falling into a set of holes whose structures are predictable, ideological, and long dug, often falling into this set of structural and impersonal holes; sometimes falling into holes with other people, with other people, saying “this is not our mass grave, get out of this hole,” all together getting out of the hole together, hands and legs and arms and human ladders of each other to get out of the hole that is not the mass grave but that will only be gotten out of together; sometimes the willful-falling into a hole which is not the grave because it is easier than not falling into a hole really, but then once in it, realizing it is not the grave, getting out of the hole eventually; sometimes falling into a hole and languishing there for days, weeks, months, years, because while not the grave very difficult, still, to climb out of and you know after this hole there’s just another and another; sometimes surveying the landscape of holes and wishing for a high quality final hole; sometimes thinking of who has fallen into holes which are not graves but might be better if they were; sometimes too ardently contemplating the final hole while trying to avoid the provisional ones; sometimes dutifully falling and getting out, with perfect fortitude, saying “look at the skill and spirit with which I rise from that which resembles the grave but isn’t!” – *That Which Resembles The Grave But Isn’t*, Anne Boyer

LEBANESE MARXIST MAHDI AMEL PROVIDES US WITH A NEW WAY OF THINKING ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAPITALISM AND COLONIALISM.

WHAT HE CALLED “THE COLONIAL MODE OF PRODUCTION” WAS A NEW WAY OF EXPLAINING THE UNIQUE OPERATION OF CAPITALISM BORNE FROM IMPERIALISM AND THE UNIQUE EXPERIENCES OF POSTCOLONIAL NATION STATES BEFORE AFTER FORMAL INDEPENDENCE.

AMEL NOTES⁷:

- 1. THE TOILING CLASSES IN POSTCOLONIAL COLONIES ARE OBJECTIVELY CONNECTED.**
- 2. THE CLASS COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE OF FORMALLY COLONISED NATIONS IS FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT TO THOSE OF THE COLONISER**
- 3. AFTER FORMAL INDEPENDENCE, A NUMBER OF POWER SHIFTS AMONG THE SETTLER COLONIAL, NATIONAL AND PETTY BOURGEOISIE TAKE PLACE. NOTHING IS STRAIGHTFORWARD. IN FORMALLY COLONISED NATIONS, “PRECOLONIAL” FORMS OF IDENTIFICATION SURVIVE AND ARE CONSTANTLY REPRODUCED, COMPLICATING PRE EXISTING IDEAS ABOUT CAPITALISM’S OPERATION**
- 4. ONLY AN ANTI-COLONIAL REVOLT CAN SEVER THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAPITALISM AND COLONIALISM**
- 5. THE QUESTION OF COLONIALISM CHANGES THE TEMPORALITY OF HISTORY AND CAPITALIST DEVELOPMENT**
- 6. THE COLONIAL MODE OF PRODUCTION IN THE THIRD WORLD SUSTAINS THE CAPITALIST MODE OF PRODUCTION IN THE FIRST.**

⁷ Bassem Saad, As Long As You Continue To Resist, n+1, 2024. <https://www.nplusonemag.com/online-only/online-only/as-long-as-you-continue-to-resist/>

DO YOU WISH FOR THERE TO BE BEAUTIFUL SKY?⁸

⁸ In her 1998 lecture, *On Beauty and Being Just*, Elizabeth Scarry poses the following thought experiment,

suppose this population were presented with this question: “In the near future, human beings can arrange things so that there either will or will not be beautiful sky. Do you wish there to be beautiful sky?”

“Do you wish there to be beautiful sky?” is another way of insisting, as Jackie Wang does, on the luminous tree. My work concerns itself with the kinds of action, spurred by the imagination, that will determine the arrangement of things that either *will* or *will not* produce a beautiful sky. It asks that we not underestimate the role of culture and the imagination in the construction of that beautiful sky. I write and research with the aim of producing and reproducing the attachments, desire, and capacity to engage in material resistance. It bears repeating: another way of organising and conceptualising human life on earth is possible.

HOW TO MAKE LOVE MEAN SOMETHING AGAIN? HAZARD YOUR OWN DEFINITION?^{9 10}

⁹ The final frontier of my politics is anchored by theories concerning relation between human beings unmediated by the state, by the nation or by institutions. Similarly, Joy James' (2020) position on revolutionary love, that "my capacity to love is my capacity to fight" animates my political commitment to building a world premised on human flourishing, on free being, devoid of the logics of capital that dictate how we currently think, move, act and relate to one another.

¹⁰ I will hazard a definition of love: to love a person is to struggle for their autonomy as well as for their immersion in care, insofar such abundance is possible in a world choked by capital. – *Abolish The Family*, Sophie Lewis

DEFINE ANTI-COLONIALISM
DEFINE REVOLUTION
DEFINE RESISTANCE

HOW DOES FREEDOM DIFFER FROM LIBERATION?¹¹

¹¹ To follow Kimarley Chevannes, liberation is, “ongoing struggle. Its finality lies in its activeness.” (Chevannes 2022, 76).

WHAT ARE THE FEATURES OF PRESENT? HOW DO THESE FEATURES DIFFER FROM TEN OR TWENTY YEARS AGO? WHAT WAS OBVIOUS THEN THAT HAS ONLY BEEN REALISED NOW? WHAT WILL BECOME OBVIOUS IN FUTURE? HOW DO WE PROCEED WHEN THERE ARE NO ANSWERS?¹²

¹² History moves from one conjuncture to another rather than being an evolutionary flow. And what drives it forward is usually a crisis... Crises are moments of potential change, but the nature of their resolution is not given. (Stuart Hall and Doreen Massey 2010, 57).

**WHAT KINDS OF REVOLTS ARE TAKING PLACE NOW IN EVERY
CORNER OF THE EARTH? HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE REFUSED
TO MOVE FROM THE STREETS, MAKING NEW LIFE THERE?¹³**

¹³ My entire Oeuvre is against the police
If I write a Love poem it's against the police
And if I sing the nakedness of bodies I sing against the police
And if I make this Earth a metaphor I make a metaphor against the police
If I speak wildly in my poems I speak against the police
And if I manage to create a poem it's against the police
I haven't written a single word, a verse, a stanza that isn't against the police
All my prose is against the police
My entire Oeuvre
Including this poem
My whole Oeuvre
Is against the police.
– *AGAINST THE POLICE*, Miguel James

Measures of time used to be packaged between devastations. Events were measured by their proximity; was this *before or after* the floating detention centre, before or after the open-air prison? That's how we dealt with time prior, as the marker of a change between periods of survival. A devastation was any way the fabric of life was warped or shot through with the colour of destruction. Devastations were ripples that tore through the flesh, food for the engine of capital. The face of a Black mother called to speak to the press in the aftermath of her child's murder, as if language could suffice there. Performing your intimacy for government officials, sleeping on the tarmac of an abandoned airport, waiting to be airlifted to safety. A devastation was forming brigades to protect yourself from sexual assault during periods of mass upheaval.

I tried not to keep time in this way.

Rather than give in to this structure, I resisted it by remembering that the clock had curtailed movement for the sake of information. Any substance made could be unmade and so that thing the clock did, the way it made temporality lay flat, could be undone too. The work week was an invention and so I quit my job and went on benefits. I tried to walk in many different directions at once, inventing the way with each step. I practiced believing that nothing had been lost if an hour had passed and I found myself sat in the same chair, with the same expression on my face. Paying close attention to colour, and the changes in the landscape helped. I took my lead from the way that very few objects in the world remain still.

Write your own view from the future, reflect on the horror you thought would last forever but didn't.

Mira Mattar

10 November 2023

I'll do to language what they did to my people
I'll blow it apart & make it run
I'll sear its rough & tender forms to burning
I'll take each singing hollow
inside the As & Os that stretch the words
out daily in elastic pleasure

bread
heat

& make it hungry

I'll make it starve

I'll take the common waters of its lyric

& parch them to arhythmic cries

not even fleeing birds can mimic

I'll bury it

I'll coat it in the dust of its own life

I'll take the pinky wands of its girlhood & douse

& electrify & plunder it to stupefaction

I'll take its own name & push it so deep underground the whole earth rots

& its final form is 10,000, 13,000, 14,000, 20,000 singing martyrs

I'll pull its eyes from sleep & from every daily comfort

from the turn of the key in the lock at the end of the day

from the easy glance at the man you love knowing soon you will eat & sleep

I'll take each quiet dawn

& fill it with torrents of empty words

& white faces

& dollar bills

I'll find every moment of pause at the end of each sentence

& I'll hold its head in the gentle scoop of my forearms

& I'll say, *even though every single person you know on earth has just been murdered before your eyes you have to live on somehow in the same world that killed them*

I'll take every groaning elder fretting at the beads

& the backgammon table

& I'll fill the cells of their senses one by one with the orange blossoms of orgies
of heavens on earth

I will scent every breath with sea salt

& honey

& the best cigarettes you've ever tasted
I will breathe with you while you are forced to dig your mother out from tons
of sheets of concrete until your nails are shorn off your fingertips & your
fingertips are clawed off your fingers & with your own bones you yourself are
digging for the bones of your lover under the house you built with your own
hands over & over & over
 your pointless crawling cockroach insomniac murdering heartless lifeless life
that lives on death
 that breathes death
 that makes death
that sells death
 that mines death
 that calculates death
that ejaculates death
that orgasms death
 that tastes death
 that smells death
 that is death
that thing
 that order you call your own
 that takes each pulse of ocean & makes of it money
 that takes each flicker of moon & makes of it money
 that takes each hounding unmanned gun moored on the watchman's fence
that rotates its nothing head, sees one of us & shoots
I'll take each time you called us animals & fill
 each lion's mouth on earth &
 each cow's separate stomach &
 each fly's million eyes &
 each slug's glowing sex &
 each fox's slowly blinking amber eye at dusk &
fill them with the names of the dead &
fill them with the names of the living &
every word in every language will sing their names
& the places their names grew out of
 & the aching details of their bedroom dressing tables
 & the exact shade of grey the walls turn as night falls
 & every single texture of every smooth & wrinkled brow –
& we animals
& we sunbeams
& we fine pointed bullets
& we surgeons cleansing wounds with corner shop vinegar
& we babies born to no one born
 to nothing

will take our revenge on language

& I will take your only question

& I will fill its twisted spinal cord with a century of litanies so precise that the forced confession bursts to millions of poisonous pieces each with millions of wavering fingers

pointing at a sunless sky

Two poems (from an as yet untitled new series of poems)

New Year's Eve, 2023. No tulips. Ugly colours split the night. They tell me the year has ended. This is day 86. If I see a single one of you mother fuckers smiling I'll fucking kill you I swear. Ego, money, pleasure, planning. That's it. My whole life. Cook an aubergine with cinnamon, garlic & salt. Message S who's snorting old md & blasting Shabjdeed alone. That's all I mean by *my people*. Every cactus marked a house. Green eyes along the highway. SUN, I am free to die of longing. Don't come to our homes, for we are wanderers from a ghost world. I'm in my own world, S goes. No one can reach me anymore. Then: January. SUN, I thought I was afraid. I thought I was writing to ask you SUN burn my fear, burn the heap of it, burn it whole, burn my fear of obligation to people being massacred, people I am a/part of/from. I thought SUN I needed you to burn whole my fear of obligation to space, the cosmos, its zodiacs, its elements, oils & poisons.

Notes

On 4 January 2024 I read the line: 'New Year don't come to our homes, for we are wanderers / from a ghost world' from the poem 'New Year' by Nazik al-Mala'ika (translated from Arabic by Rebecca C. Johnson).

On 12 April 2024 I read the Mahmoud Darwish's lines: 'To our land, and it is a prize of war, the freedom to die from longing and burning and our land, in its bloodied night, is a jewel that glimmers for the far upon the far and illuminates what's outside it ... As for us, inside, we suffocate more!' in Ghassan Abu-Sittah's commencement speech as Glasgow University Rector titled 'Tomorrow is a Palestinian Day'.

I saw hands grasp the corded loops of luxury, I heard the shoppers' song. From under concrete slabs hung the half-moons of their nails winking in the nasty whips of Christmas lights on Regent Street. I saw bread. I ate it. Dusked plums yellow innards made me fat conspirator blood dried in my cuticles. Estrange me SUN from this sword on my neck I mistake for a kiss. It's my freedom too but would I die for it? In the bedroom, the university, the journals, the sit-ins, the street, would I die for it? My steak my coffee my sex life my money my money my money my money. It's my freedom too, laughing at me, scraping its claws at my door, double locked & bolted.

Hannah Proctor

PRACTISING HOPE IN TIMES OF DESPAIR

Hope is a practice

What is hope? This might seem like a strange or naive question because the answer might seem obvious.

The first sentence I find when I look up the word ‘hope’ in the dictionary is:

a feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen.

Hope is a feeling.

The prison abolitionist writer and organizer Mariame Kaba suggests a slightly different definition of the word. She claims: ‘Hope is a discipline.’ To say that hope is a discipline suggests that hope is not just a feeling. Hope is not just something sitting inside you. Hope is not just something that exists passively, naturally or neutrally. Hope requires energy and effort to create and sustain. Hope is also a practice. As Kaba continues, ‘we have to practice it every single day.’

Even if it is not always possible to feel hopeful, perhaps it is still possible to act hopefully.

Even if it is not always possible to feel hopeful, perhaps it is still *necessary* to act hopefully.

It’s easy to feel hopeless in the world today. It is difficult to sustain a feeling of political hopefulness about the future while a genocide is being committed by the Israeli military with which the British state is complicit, in the context of climate breakdown, amid on-going immiseration and exploitation under capitalism. But is it possible to act hopefully even while feeling despair?

Perhaps feelings sometimes need to be distinguished from convictions. Perhaps feelings sometimes need to be distinguished from actions. Kristin Ross observes in *Communal Luxury: The Political Imaginary of the Paris Commune* (2015): ‘Actions produce dreams and ideas, and not the reverse.’

Hope is a practice.

Hope is an act of will

The Palestinian poet and scholar Refaat Alareer was killed in an airstrike by the Israeli military on December 6 2023, along with his brother, his brother's son, his sister and her three children. Following his death Refaat Alareer's adaptation of Claude McKay's 1919 poem 'If we must die' circulated widely in multiple languages. The final lines of Alareer's poem 'If I must die' can now be read as a demand made of the living: 'If I must die / let it bring hope / let it be a tale.' And bringing hope will require not only feelings but actions.

The Palestinian academic Atef Alshaer has described maintaining hope in the face of despair as an act of will. Maintaining hope in the face of despair is not an automatic feeling or something that arises easily or spontaneously; it requires conscious effort. Acting hopefully, rather than succumbing to personal feelings of despair, demonstrates a commitment to others:

Yet, while I despair, I also remember my childhood in Gaza, and the children with whom I used to play on the beach of Gaza, many of whom have doubtless already been killed. I look closer and there I refuse to surrender to despair. As an act of will, in honour of my people and my childhood friends in Palestine, I hope for hope.

It is hard to find hope in the midst of such horror but the Palestinian Youth Movement has similarly been clear that it is necessary to guard against despair and make clear that personal feelings should be subordinated to a commitment to others. Refusal and resistance are acts of hope:

The indignities threaten to overwhelm. But for those in solidarity with the Palestinian people, there is no time for despair. We owe it to every martyr to fight, we have obligations, we have made commitments. When everything seems designed to generate resignation, to produce acquiescence, those commitments are life-giving, and can see us through till the end. That end may be abrupt, it might be quiet or hard, but refusal is a sign of our aliveness.

The Israeli assault on Gaza (and more recently Lebanon, Iran, Yemen...) demands an urgent and committed response but being alive to the scale of suffering and injustice can take its own emotional toll. It is overwhelming. Sometimes feeling despair can also be a sign of aliveness, a sign that you're allowing yourself to feel, to really register the severity of what is taking place. On the day before a national march in London in solidarity with Palestine on Saturday October 14 2023 Mira Mattar, a Palestinian/Jordanian poet from London, wrote on social media:

if you're marching tomorrow come for yourself first. the word solidarity has never been meaningful to me personally. nobody wants pity. one reason the palestinian struggle touches so many people is because the blatant, unfathomable injustice of it connects ppl to all the injustices they have suffered, no matter how tiny. to feel it you have to feel your pain. if you're not doing it for yourself & what you love first then next week you'll forget. & palestine has always been a struggle for memory & a struggle against forgetting. that's why we archive everything. that's why we are obsessed w narrative & song. that's why they're turning off the lights in gaza. so no one will see. i couldn't give a fuck abt 'silence is complicity'. it's cruel & a red herring. but i hope you (let yourself) feel this. if you have been hurt by the racist imperial sexist capitalist ecocidal bordered cruelty of this world, which you have because it formed you, then feel it. let it change you. that's all a palestinian flag means to me.

These thoughts, she wrote, were inspired by the black radical thinker Fred Moten 'who has always stood with Palestine', and who has written: 'I don't need your help. I just need you to recognise that this shit is killing you, too, however much more softly, you stupid motherfucker, you know?'

The injunction not to despair can be immobilizingly moralizing in its own way, producing inward looking guilt rather than outward facing forms of resistance. The challenge is to distinguish feelings from actions so that despairing feelings do not lead to apathy and resignation. The challenge is to allow despairing feelings to be part of an opening up to world rather than a closing off from it. The challenge is to channel despairing feelings into wilful acts, acts of refusal, acts of hope.

Hope is a practice. Hope is an act of will against overwhelmingly despairing conditions.

Hope is refusal

In an interview in 2011, the radical Japanese filmmaker Masao Adachi recalled first meeting Palestinian refugees in camps in Lebanon in 1971 and wondering 'how these people could continue fighting, while repeatedly defeated'?

John Berger similarly described encountering what he called 'undefeated despair' among Palestinians during a visit in 2006: 'Despair without fear, without resignation, without a sense of defeat, makes for a stance towards the world here such as I have never seen before.' To be undefeated yet despairing sounds like a contradiction in terms but being alive to on-going injustice and

violence while continuing to resist demands such a stance.

Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish's 'Silence for the Sake of Gaza' in *Journal of an Ordinary Grief* which was first published in Arabic in 1973, ends with the following lines:

The enemy may defeat Gaza. (The stormy sea might overwhelm a small island.)

They might cut down all her trees.

They might break her bones.

They might plant their tanks in the bellies of her women and her children, or they might toss her into the sand, into the sea, into blood.

But:

Gaza will not repeat the lies.

Gaza will not say yes to the conquerors.

And she will continue to erupt.

It is not death, and it is not suicide, it is Gaza's way of announcing that she is worthy of life.

Gaza is worthy of life. Anyone today who believes this should be fighting for it in whatever way possible.

Hope is a practice. Fighting even amid the cut down trees and broken bones is an act of hope.

Hope is resistance

The concept of *sumud* (steadfastness) has a particular significance in the history of the Palestinian liberation movement, as Laleh Khalili observes: 'It is the only strategy of struggle when all other avenues are closed, when organizational infrastructures are destroyed, and when complete annihilation – not only of political institutions, but of every person – is a real possibility.'

Narratives of *sumud* attest to the capacity to endure in horrendous circumstances, not through grandiose acts of heroism but through daily acts of

survival. *Sumud* is a form of resistance, which is quiet and unobtrusive rather than spectacular. *Sumud* is something practiced day in, day out:

It is the inconspicuous act of resistance required to rebuild your house even after it has been destroyed for the fifth time, to once again have children even after your sons were butchered in front of you, to remain in the camp or on the land even after the perimeter of those spaces were invaded by militaries, mortars, and tanks.

As Khalili explains, *sumud* narratives are also narratives of hope:

In the face of privation, oppression, and everyday difficulties of negotiating checkpoints, house demolitions, curfews, closures, and firefights, a tenderly tended belief in a glorious tomorrow flourished and all hardship and sacrifice were seen eventually – one day, however distant – to bear fruit. As [Dag Jørund] Lønning observed: ‘For most of the people you speak to, even the poorest of the poor, even people who have been beaten or jailed and exposed to torture, when you ask them how they see their future, their stories – highly realistic in their description of the contemporary tragic situation both on the internal, regional and international front – generally end with some vision of better days and justice ahead. Behind all this oppression and misery there is a peculiar kind of optimism.’

This peculiar kind of optimism insists on maintaining hope in the face of despair.

In her essay ‘To say and think a life beyond what settler colonialism has made’ Samera Esmeir analyzes how settler colonial discourse transforms Palestinians into ‘barbarian monsters’ so as to make it possible to obliterate them: ‘its effect is genocidal’. She discusses the emergence of the figure of the civilian in liberal discourse, a figure that in the Israeli context became identified with the ‘civilized’ Israeli settler and which came to exclude Palestinians who cannot participate in ‘civilian normalcy’. The figure of the civilian as imagined by this liberal civilian ethos is also anathema to resistance and what she calls the ‘non-despairing hope’ of Palestinians:

The civilian ethos, as a matter of liberal sensibility, requires innocence, political passivity, lack of movement, and fixity. In the eyes of the liberal, civilized West, the civilian must be pacified, passive, and blameless and must reject rebellion. The Palestinians, as refugees, as politically engaged resistant subjects, as subjects who look in the

direction of the land from which they were expelled and aspire to move in its direction, and as persons who wish not to settle in an enclosure, do not pass the test of this ethos. Their just refusal of confinement, steadfast rejection of enclosure, and non-despairing hope to return to the land from which they were expelled violates this liberal ethos.

Hope is not just a feeling but involves acts of refusal and resistance. As the Lebanese Marxist Mahdi Amel declared:

You are not defeated as long as you resist.

Hope is a practice. Act hopefully. Resist.

Houria Bouteldja

Above all, I am a victim. I have lost my humanity. In 1492 and again, in 1830. And my whole life is spent recovering it. Not all time periods are equally cruel to me, but my suffering is infinite. Ever since I have seen white ferociousness beat down upon me, I have known that I would never find myself again. My integrity is lost to me and to humanity forever. I am a bastard child. I only have one conscience, which awakens my memories of 1492.

[...] From this point on, everything would be permissible. Why should we remain cloistered within the borders of the nation state? Why not rewrite history, denationalize it, deracialize it? Your patriotism forces you to identify yourself with your state. You celebrate its victories and lament its defeats. But how are we to make history together when our victories are your defeats? If we invite you to share in Algerian Independence and the victory in Dien Bien Phi with us, would you agree to break your solidarity with warmongering states? We have a more interesting proposition. It was made to you in the past, a long time ago, by the late C.L.R. James, who was already a believer in revolutionary love:

These are my ancestors, these are my people.
They are yours too if you want them.

Fareh Saleh

Balfour Reparations

In September 2023, I started a four-month post-doctoral fellowship at Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities (IASH) at the University of Edinburgh on the topic of Decolonial Embodied Practices at The University. In October 2023, the genocide in Gaza started and I found myself working at a university that publicly embraces the decolonial agenda, while in reality supports the Israeli colonial regime in Palestine in many different ways. For example, with its neutral public statements on the genocide, restrictions on free speech and most importantly investments in companies that profit from the military Israeli occupation. As a response to that I started developing Balfour Reparations (2023-2043) performance lecture.

The performance investigates ways of confronting Edinburgh University's colonial legacy, particularly the role of Arthur James Balfour, the University Chancellor (1891-1930), in the colonization of Palestine and historical denial of Palestinian political rights. I do that through utilizing elements of Speculative Choreography and Afrofuturism that combine history, fiction and fantasy, while engaging with and being inspired by archival material, such as videos, photos, and documents in part retrieved from the Centre for Research Collections at the university. The performance lecture takes place in 2043 to reflect on the fictive apology letter (see figure 1) that the University of Edinburgh will have issued in 2023 to the Palestinian people promising them reparations. The audience become members of the reparations' evaluation committee created on the 20th anniversary of the apology and are invited to participate in the performance. The research and performance are in collaboration with filmmaker Lucas Chih-Peng Kao, dancers Nadia Khattab and Jamal Bajali, and Senior Lecturer Nicola Perugini (Politics and International Relations, University of Edinburgh).



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14 December 2023

Public apology

As a university that formally and publicly embraces the decolonial agenda, The University of Edinburgh feels the obligation to apologise to the Palestinian people for the Balfour declaration of 1917.

The declaration was written by Arthur James Balfour, the University's longest serving chancellor (1891-1930), in which he granted Palestine as a national home for the Jewish people, while denying the indigenous Palestinian people self-determination and freedom in their own homeland.

With this apology the University aims at confronting its colonial legacy and starting a decolonial process of reparations for the Palestinian people through five concrete actions:

First, the University will acknowledge publicly Balfour's colonial legacy in Palestine and his role in the creation of a larger repressive and racialized global order, for example in Ireland and South Africa, stemming from his belief that "men are not born equal". The University will also offer a foundational course to all its students on its colonial legacy.

Second, the University will remove restrictions to free speech on the topic of Israel/Palestine by suspending the controversial IHRA definition of antisemitism, which draws false equivalences between critique of Israel's state policies and antisemitism.

Third, the University will review, publicly disclose, and divest from all investments in companies that directly or indirectly profit from the illegal military occupation and colonisation of Palestine, as well as from research with weapons companies that provide arms to Israel.

Fourth, the University will allocate resources for scholarships to Palestinian students to come and study at The University of Edinburgh and for university students and staff to engage with knowledge exchange projects at Palestinian universities.

Fifth, the University will endorse a one state solution, which would allow for the creation of a new one state in Palestine/Israel for all its citizens, on the political basis of one person one vote, compensation and right of return to the Palestinian refugees.

Amirah M Slimi

The colonization of Palestine was and is still necessitated by capitalist, imperialist and fascist interests and considerations. But the struggle in Palestine is not a reactionary one, it does not seek its own fascism, rather the freedom struggle in Palestine is an anti-capitalist struggle, and as thus it is not a struggle for a nation state, Palestine cannot be a nation state, Israel is, Palestine is the liberation of the world from nation states, from capitalism. Even when capitalism has deceived itself into believing that it won the world decades ago.

The Palestinians in their fight for Palestine resist uprootedness, they fight for a land, a right and a life, and these exceed the nation state.

Maya Uppal

Charm

Object Type:

charmed
silver
relief

Accession Number:

As1966,01.719

Description:

*'unspecified' mythology
warmed against skin
now immobile and nameless
what else is there to do but
develop a mutable sense of self?
defined by text or description
[source?]
shift into different stories
their real origins rubbing away
into pleasurable ephemera re-
decided upon every decade
or two [no rush... just whenever
is convenient for you]*

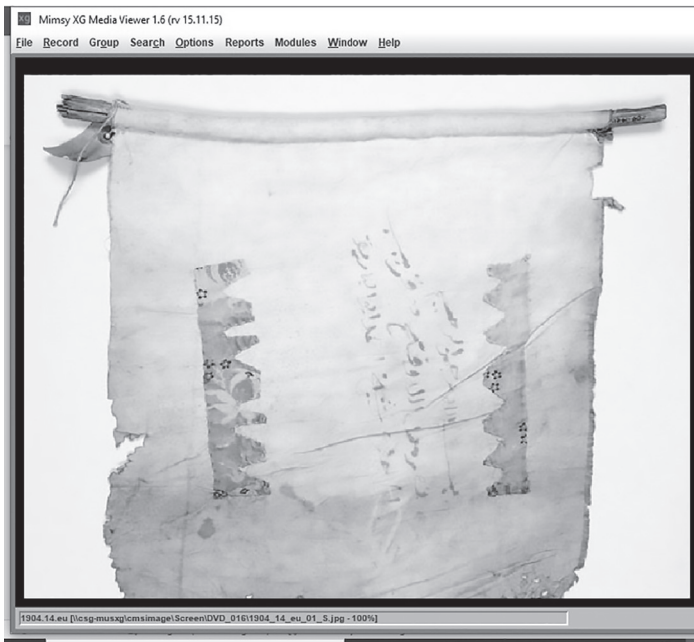
The following is an excerpt from a speech originally written for a fundraiser for the Thales 3 and Palestine Action, in Glasgow, November 2023.

I feel all the borders. In between the pre and post colony, the museum nation spins out across the British empire / mapping it / labelling it / maintaining it. An imperial time machine, it functions. It maintains. As a worker, I practice my small resistances. I wrap myself around the word ‘decolonise’ until it swallows me alive.

But now, I want to tell you about an object in Glasgow Museums’ archives, I found it trawling Mimsy XG. In Glasgow Museums, Mimsy allows us to examine the notes of every previous curator – so long as they have had the time or desire to add to the online records of their collection. It doesn’t contain every object in the archive, of the 9 million items held in council owned buildings around the city, many have fallen into relative obscurity.

Object Limbo.

Museums are symptoms of the empire. They let you know the disease is still ravaging the body. They control the narrative, and we cannot let this continue to happen.



This object was collected in 1904. A white cotton flag, with Arabic inscriptions and appliqué red fabric patches. It was found and taken from a Palestinian tomb and has been collected by the museum under the curatorial distinction of ‘Ancient Civilisations’.

There is no recorded account of whose tomb the flag belonged to, there has been no translation written for its script. There is only the violence of a displaced object, labelled as a gift, to immortalise the life of a now forgotten Palestinian. Beyond this flag, there are 155 objects with their provenance attributed to Palestine within Glasgow Museums records. In comparing their dates of collection, you can map a significant portion of collected objects against moments of the mass displacement of the Palestinian people. Many of these items wind their way into Glasgow Museums around 1950, closely following the Nakba in 1948.

No translation was provided in its object records. I cannot speak to the curators reasoning behind this. I can only tell you my theory – that the history and stories of the collected people have never been the priority of the archive. Rather, the stories we tell in museums, serve to push forward the propaganda of our nation state. They are recorded as such, not because the museums systems have failed, but because they are operating as they were intended to. Collection records may be vague but the vulturism of the institution is evident in the ever-growing belly of the archive – swelling with the pain of the people it refuses to speak for.

But this flag, I see it as a symbol of resistance.

(let it remind you of Palestine as an ancient place)
(let it remind you of the museum as parasitic)

There exists no world in which the archive is an apolitical entity, there is no world in which yourself as a worker, are not also a political tool. And so, we must enact complete resistance.

We must shove at the archive from all sides. We must take from the archive the stories / the languages / the ignorant translations /turn the archive back out into the world. Resist the institutional function of dusty shelves / quarantines / forgetting.

After finding the flag I sought a translation, to regain for it, the dignity it deserves. Translated by the poet Sara Mostafa, it reads:

*In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful
help from Allah and an imminent victory.*

Ghassan Abu-Sittah

Tomorrow is a Palestinian Day

Below is the full transcript of Ghassan Abu-Sittah's address on becoming Glasgow University Rector on 11th April 2024

“Each generation must discover its mission, fulfill it or betray it, in relative opacity.”

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

The students of Glasgow University decided to vote in memory of 52,000 Palestinians killed. In memory of 14,000 children murdered. They voted in solidarity with 17,000 Palestinian children orphaned, 70,000 wounded – of whom 50% are children – and the 4-5,000 children whose limbs have been amputated.

They voted to stand in solidarity with the students and the teachers of 360 schools destroyed and 12 universities completely leveled. They stood in solidarity with the family and the memory of Dima Alhaj, a Glasgow University alumni murdered with her baby and with her whole family.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Lenin predicted that real revolutionary change in Western Europe depended on its close contact with the liberation movements against imperialism and in the slave colonies. Glasgow University students understood what we have to lose when we allow our politics to become inhuman. They also understand that what is important and different about Gaza is that it is the laboratory in which global capital is looking at the management of surplus populations.

They stood next to Gaza and in solidarity with its people because they understood that the weapons that Benjamin Netanyahu uses today are the weapons that Narendra Modi will use tomorrow. The quadcopters and drones fitted with sniper guns – used so deviously and efficiently in Gaza that one night at Al-Ahli hospital we received over 30 wounded civilians shot outside our hospital by these inventions – used today in Gaza will be used tomorrow

in Mumbai, in Nairobi and in Sao Paulo. Eventually, like the facial recognition software developed by the Israelis, they will come to Easterhouse and Springburn.

So, in reality, who did these students vote for? My name is Ghassan Solieman Hussain Dahashan Saqer Dahashan Ahmed Mahmoud Abu-Sittah and, with the exception of myself, my father and all of my forefathers were born in Palestine, a land that was given away by one of Glasgow University's previous rectors. Three decades before his forty-six-word declaration announced the British government's support for the settler colonization of Palestine, Arthur Balfour was appointed Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow. "A survey of the world... shows us a vast number of savage communities, apparently at a stage of culture not profoundly different from that which prevailed among pre-historic man," said Balfour during his rectorial address in 1891. Sixteen years later, this antisemite masterminded the Aliens Act of 1905 to prevent Jews escaping from the pogroms of Eastern Europe from coming to safety in the United Kingdom.

In 1920, my grandfather Sheikh Hussain built a school with his own money in the small village where my family lived. There he set the foundations for a relationship that made education central to my family's life. On May 15, 1948, Haganah forces ethnically cleansed that village and drove my family, who had lived on that land for generations, into a refugee camp in Khan Younis that now stands in ruins in the Gaza Strip. The memoirs of the Haganah officer who had invaded my grandfather's house were found by my uncle. In these memoirs, the officer notes with incredulity how the house was full of books and had a certificate for a law degree from the University of Cairo, belonging to my grandfather.

The year after the Nakba, my father graduated from medical school at Cairo University and moved back to Gaza to work in UNRWA in its newly formed clinics. But like many of his generation, he moved to the Gulf to help build the health system in those countries. In 1963, he came to Glasgow to pursue his postgraduate training in pediatrics and fell in love with the city and its people. And so it was that in 1988, I came to study medicine at Glasgow University, and here I discovered what medicine can do, how a career in medicine places you at the coalface of people's lives, and how if you are equipped with the right political, sociological and economic lenses, you can understand how people's lives are being shaped, and many times contorted, by political forces beyond their control.

And it was in Glasgow that I saw for the first time the meaning of international solidarity. Glasgow in that time was rife with groups that were organizing solidarity with El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Palestine. Glasgow City Council was one of the first to twin with cities in the West Bank and Glasgow University set up its first scholarship for the victims of the Sabra and Shatila massacre. It really was during my years in Glasgow that my journey as a war surgeon started, first as a student when I went to the first American war in Iraq in 1991; then with Mike Holmes to South Lebanon in 1993; then with my wife to Gaza during the Second Intifada; then to the wars waged by the Israelis on Gaza in 2009, 2012, 2014 and 2021; to the war in Mosul in Northern Iraq, to Damascus during the Syrian war and to the Yemen war. But it wasn't until the 9th of October that I got to Gaza and saw the genocide unfold.

Everything that I had known about wars compared to nothing that I had seen. It was the difference between a flood and a tsunami. For 43 days, I watched the killing machines tear apart the lives and the bodies of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, half of whom were children. After I came out, the students of Glasgow University reached out for me to run for election as rector. Soon after, one of Balfour's savages won the election.

So what have we learned from the genocide and about genocide over the last 6 months? We've learned that scholasticide, the elimination of whole educational institutions, both infrastructure and human resources, is a critical component of the genocidal erasure of a people. 12 universities completely flattened. 400 schools. 6,000 students killed. 230 school teachers killed. 100 professors and deans and two university presidents killed.

We also learnt, and this is something I found out when I left Gaza, that the genocidal project is like an iceberg of which Israel is only the tip. The rest of the iceberg is made up of an axis of genocide. This axis of genocide is the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, Canada, and France... countries that have supported Israel with arms – and continue to support the genocide with arms – and have maintained political support for the genocidal project so that it would continue. We should not be fooled by the United States' attempts at humanitarianizing the genocide: Killing people while dropping food aid by parachute.

I also discovered that part of the genocidal iceberg are genocide enablers. Little people, men and women, in every facet of life, in every institution. These

genocidal enablers come in three types.

1. The first are those whose racialization and total othering of Palestinians has rendered them unable to feel anything for the 14,000 children who have been killed and for whom Palestinian children remain ungrivable. Had Israel killed 14,000 puppies or kittens they would have been completely destroyed by the barbarity of it.
2. The second group are those whom Hannah Arendt said in 'The Banality of Evil', "had no motives at all, except for extraordinary diligence in looking after his personal advancement."
3. The third are the apathetic. As Arendt said, "Evil thrives on apathy and cannot exist without it."

In April 1915, one year after the First World War began, Rosa Luxemburg wrote about German bourgeois society. "Violated, dishonored, wading in blood... the ravening beast, the witches' sabbath of anarchy, a plague to culture and humanity." Those of us who have seen, smelt, and heard what the weapons of war do to a child's body by design, those of us who have amputated the unsalvageable limbs of wounded children can never have anything but the utmost disdain for all involved in the manufacture, design, and sale of these instruments of brutality. The aim of weapons manufacturing is to destroy life and to ravage nature. In the arms industry, profits rise not only as a result of the resources captured in or through war, but through the process of destruction of all life, both human and environmental. The idea that there would be peace or an unpolluted world while capital grows by war is ludicrous. Neither the arms trade nor the fossil fuel trade, have any place at University.

So, what is our plan, this "savage" and his accomplices?

We will campaign for divestment from arms manufacturing and the fossil fuel industry in this University, both to de-risk the University following the International Court of Justice's ruling that this is plausibly a genocidal war and the current case brought against Germany by Nicaragua for complicity in genocide.

Genocidal blood money made as a profit from these shares during the war will be used to set up a fund to help rebuild Palestinian academic institutions. This

fund will be in the name of Dima Alhaj and in memory of a life cut short by this genocide.

We will form a coalition of student and civil society groups and unions to turn Glasgow University into a campus free from gender-based violence.

We will campaign to find concrete solutions to end student poverty at Glasgow University and to provide affordable housing to all students.

We will campaign for a boycott of all Israeli academic institutions that have progressed from being complicit in apartheid and the denial of education to Palestinians to genocide and the denial of life. We will campaign for a new definition of antisemitism that does not conflate anti-zionism and anti-Israeli genocidal settler colonialism with antisemitism.

We will fight with all othered and racialized communities, including the Jewish community, the Roma community, Muslims, black people, and all racialized groups, against the common enemy of a rising right-wing fascism, now absolved of its antisemitic roots by an Israeli government in exchange for their support for the elimination of the Palestinian people.

Only this week, just this week, we saw how a German government-funded institution censured a Jewish intellectual and philosopher, Nancy Fraser, because of her support of the Palestinian people. Over a year ago, we watched the Labour Party suspend Moshé Machover, a Jewish anti-zionist campaigner, for antisemitism.

On the flight up, I was fortunate enough to be reading ‘We Are Free to Change the World’ by Lyndsey Stonebridge. I quote from this book: “It is when the experience of powerlessness is at its most acute, when history seems at its most bleak, that the determination to think like a human being, creatively, courageously and complicatedly matters the most.” 90 years ago, in his “Solidarity Song,” Bertolt Brecht asked, “Whose tomorrow is tomorrow? And whose world is the world?”

Well, my answer to him, to you, and to the students of Glasgow University: It

is your world to fight for. It is your tomorrow to make. For us, all of us, part of our resistance to the erasure of genocide is to talk about tomorrow in Gaza, to plan for the healing of the wounds of Gaza tomorrow. We will own tomorrow. Tomorrow will be a Palestinian day.

In 1984, when Glasgow University made Winnie Mandela its Rector in the darkest days of P. W. Botha's rule under a brutal apartheid regime, supported by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, no one could have dreamt that in 40 years South African men and women could be standing in front of the International Court of Justice defending the Palestinian people's right to life as free citizens of a free nation.

One of this genocide's aims is to drown us in our own sorrow. On a personal note, I want to hold space so that I and my family can grieve for our loved ones. I dedicate this to the memory of our beloved Abdelminim killed at 74 on the day of his birth. I dedicate it to the memory of my colleague Dr. Midhat Saidam who had stepped out for half an hour to take his sister to their house so that she could be safe with her children and never came back. I dedicate it to my friend and my colleague Dr. Ahmad Makadmeh who was executed by the Israeli army in Shifa Hospital just over 10 days ago with his wife. I dedicate it to the ever-smiling Dr. Haitham Abu-Hani, head of the Emergency Department at Shifa Hospital, who always met me with a smile and a pat on the shoulder. But most of all we dedicate this to our land. In the words of the ever-present Mahmoud Darwish,

“To our land, and it is a prize of war,
the freedom to die from longing and burning
and our land, in its bloodied night,
is a jewel that glimmers for the far upon the far
and illuminates what's outside it ...
As for us, inside,
we suffocate more!”

And so I want to end with hope. In the words of the immortal Bobby Sands,
“Our revenge will be the laughter of our children.”

HASTA LA VICTORIA SIEMPRE!

Ayreen Anastas and Rene Gabri

Notes on Denial from the Anti-Denialist Museum of Palestine:

The Nakba [“al-Nakba” (نكبة) The Catastrophe in Arabic] has referred historically to the imposition of a state of Israel atop Palestine and the process of destruction, forced displacement and ethnic cleansing of more than 750,000 Palestinians from their villages, communities, homes, life-worlds, lands, archives, histories in and around 1948. Today, in the context of the ongoing genocide of Palestinians, in its textbook version taking place in Gaza; it can also be seen in its longer durée as a process of, what some thinkers such as Patrick Wolfe long ago called, structural genocide, which is part and parcel of all settler colonial regimes. More recently, thinkers like the Palestinian lawyer and legal scholar Rabea Eghbariah have attempted to extend not only the temporality of the Nakba but also its possible sense. In a series of legal essays, Eghbariah attempts to also think Nakba as a legal concept, designating a specific process, form of injustice, violence and subjugation inflicted on Palestinians not only with the superimposition of a state of Israel atop Palestine, but also in that imposition the development of a process; of systematic, institutionalized, rationalized racialized management of domination and ongoing dispossession, colonization.

For our assembly, we want to extend this opening up of the scale and magnitude of Nakba in order to perceive the enormity of what we are confronted with in the current resistance to genocide in Palestine.

With friends, we have been attempting to think Nakba as the commencement of a process to eliminate, unsee, forget, deny, destroy Palestinian life and colonize Palestine, with the earliest forms of zionism, in 1917 with the Balfour declaration and in 1948 thru to today. These acts of denial accompanied by brutal forms of violence not only instituted a complex.....system of presiding over, torturing, incarcerating Palestinians but also, instituted a planetary process which would insure that the murder of millions of Jewish people, Roma, Communists and others considered degenerate or unworthy of inclusion in the Aryan race, would not be linked to the imperial, colonial, racial, supremacist crimes of the past. By delinking the Holocaust from the longer line and precedents of imperial, colonial, racial mass violence, including Germany’s own historic role in the genocide perpetrated against Armenians in the First World War as well as the genocide of the Ovaherero and Nama peoples a decade before; the imperial and colonial powers, made sure that this calamity and mass crime against humanity would be exceptionalized in such a way as to

deny and maintain their own genocidal-denialist states.

We want to propose to think Nakba as also the name of a process which falsifies the colonial, racial, supremacist and anti-communist origins of fascism, Nazism, in order to make sure that those regimes built on colonial, racial, patriarchal, capitalist, supremacist brutality can continue to extract, expropriate, expel, govern, rule over earth. Thus, Palestinians, whose dispossession and relegation to oblivion has been at the heart of constructing this post Second World War legal and cultural architecture, do not merely represent a case of hypocrisy, historical irony or emblematic of the continuation of colonial, racial rule by new/old means: they certainly evoke all of those. But much more critically, in the light of our analysis, Palestine is also the lynchpin, the rule which holds together the entire matrix and ordering of this world which we see today coming to an end, unraveling before our eyes. Palestine reveals the colonial racial underbelly of the enlightened liberal law and order, with its allowances of free speech and free thought. It is where all that which was patched up after the Second World War to keep the colonial crime wave going comes crashing into its always immanent colonial, fascist alter-ego, its plan B.

Today, Palestine must be sacrificed and this ongoing genocide must be denied, normalized, falsified, excused, because the entire legal and cultural structures erected after the Second World War rested on eliminating it and its people, of pretending they did not and do not exist. And in some ways worse, if they insist to exist, then it shall be in order to perpetually do the time, pay for German and European crimes.

If truth has any connection to reality. Than this regime and order of fabrications, deceptions, lies, denials cannot hold for ever, especially in the face of a resistance, like that of Palestinians, that has never given up on 'return' as the only possible horizon of future. Palestinian resistance, par excellence, has not only been an anti-colonial one, but in the face of systematic denial, crucially an anti-denialist one.

If genocidal violence, that is, historically recognized processes which have attempted to eliminate and destroy entire peoples, is premised on denying the existence of a peoples as peoples, the Nakba is not only the name of this genocidal process and its instituted forms of denial, including the recognition of a state of Israel on top of Palestine in 1948, directed against Palestinians, but also names the construction of a world after the Holocaust, which insures that all the occluded histories of such grave, mass acts of racialized, colonial crimes, brutalities will also be denied. And if this order, which was erected after the Second World War speaks or has spoken in the language of 'never again' we realize today that it has always been with the caveat that those who govern that

post-war world, that is the ongoing beneficiaries of racial, colonial, imperial brutality and theft, will be the arbiters and determiners of how, when and to whom that principle and its associated laws apply.

As some friends in the Anti-Denialist Coalition say, genocidal violence is preceded with acts of denial, it is fueled by denial (as we see today throughout all the states and institutions supporting this genocide) and its future is secured by instituting that denial in the form of life, of law, of culture the perpetrators produce, enjoin, compell their ‘citizen-beneficiaries’ to reproduce. Without an active struggle against the forces of oblivion, the future we look at today, dictated by the terms of order of those who remain inheritors and beneficiaries of genocidal supremacist violence, is and will remain denialist.

One of the central questions confronting the movements who struggle against the unfolding genocide in Palestine and fight against all forms of colonial, racial capitalist violence today is how and whether we can imagine our way out, a way to stop the rationalization and systemic blindness to racial colonial violence without wrestling our way out of the straight-jacket of the denialist cultural forms, institutions, legal frameworks these perpetrator-inheritor states have produced. If forms of denial have been sewn up in the institutional forms, in the forms of life, in the cultural and educational forms of late-genocidal states, then how to think a politics of exiting those states of denial? Can we imagine freedom, justice, liberation outside the terms of those genocidal-denialist states? We see the struggle for freedom and justice not only in Palestine but also across the planet as inextricably linked to such questions.

If Nakba names the catastrophic violence directed against Palestinians as a process of justifying and unseeing the structural genocide of the settler colonization of Palestine; then in its planetary reverberations it also names the process of a world order erected after the Second World War which would continue to justify and unsee that racial, colonial violence throughout the planet, both historically and into a future. Nakba, then, as a planetary process of institutionalizing a genocidal-denialist world order, absolving, securing and guaranteeing a future for states founded on genocidal violence and institutionalized denial. The profiteers of this world ordering are entities who have amassed and concentrated tremendous amounts of wealth and power through racial, colonial, supremacist, in the last instance, fascist forms of violence. The concentrations of wealth bestowed to such historic processes require that even the acknowledgment of such crimes remains untethered from any consequence or meaningful process of reparation of what we know to be irreparable. In this way, the insistence of the Palestinian struggle on return threatens the politics of irreversibility which the colonial imperial genocidal powers hoped to institute after the Second World War.

If Eghbariah's attempt to construct a legal framework for including the Nakba into international law is one possibility of integrating and salvaging the Palestinian experience as a remedy for a clearly racist and imperially, colonially mandated international legal framework. Our proposal to think the Nakba as a planetary process, takes up that dimension of the Palestinian struggle which has resisted incorporating or integrating Palestine into the existing order of things or state of affairs. Rather, it sees our struggle at this juncture as a call to radically part from that post Second World War order and its foundation on forms of violence its architects wished to deny and continue to perpetrate. It is a call to question all the forms of politics and culture that were instituted as remedies, forms of memorializing or even responding to the camps and the atrocities of Fascism and Nazism. That architecture of denial and ongoing violence was constructed on the backs of Palestinians and processes of unseeing the crimes of the Nazis as integrally part of longer histories of colonial, racial, capitalist and supremacist violence. The struggle against all the cultures and institutions of denial today, is a call to invent cultural and political discourses, practices which not only remake a sense of this near history, opening up the deeper wounds that were meant to be buried and relegated to oblivion; it is also a call to divest, delink, depart from, decompose, disintegrate, destitute and abolish the legal and cultural fundamentals of a world which has never stopped extending its theaters of theft, of land grabs, of erasure of communities and life forms, of genocidal violence and its denialist forms of futuring. For those of us who have been racialized, dehumanized, colonized, that world "order" has never meant anything but the destruction of our worlds.

Sulaiman Majali

[Outside] 0 1 2 3 4 5

All centres are imagined

⁰ I am writing a book, in it is a play, or it is a play, or film, whether it is this or that or whatever form it takes, though it haunts me, is a false urgency and anyway a limited way to think form. There is a scriptwriter in the book, he meets with a writer, slips in another kind of collapse, reader and writer, writing and reading, it's about a writer who goes to a cafe to meet with a scriptwriter who is writing a play about the nth crusade, it's based on the book the writer is writing about the war on dreaming and the partitioning of time, the book is about a cafe that gets burnt down when Contra and Spectra take revenge after Contra tells Spectra about a book about a man who loses his horse at a checkpoint and to get justice he burns it down "anyway" he says "I have this strange suspicion I'm the writer".

¹ *in the language of islamic philosophy things are contingent in themselves and necessary through other. This stands in stark contrast to god the necessary existent, who is simply necessary and is the ground of all contingent existential necessity. Footnote 124 The Essence of Reality. A defence of philosophical sufism. Ayn Al-Qudat (2002, 1120, 2023)*

² In one outside, time is measured using atomic clocks, which use the oscillations of atoms to keep time. They are not used to measure really brief events. These measurements are based on the oscillations of atoms, the atom itself is not oscillating. By radiating the atom at the same frequency as the atom's hyperfine transition frequency, oscillation is measured. These transitions result from interactions between the nucleus and electron. Spin, orbit and angular momentum, result in electromagnetic interaction in the atom and this movement between an excited state and a ground state

³ *Expansion doesn't occur 'away from the middle' or 'out at the edges'. It occurs between every point. It is not possible to choose 2 points in the universe between which the space is not increasing*

⁴ *"Possibilities', to the extent that they are distinct, are the manifestation of God in the loci that are the 'entities' of the possible, according to the predisposition that is appropriate for these possibles". In order to avoid any confusion regarding the question of 'essences' and 'predispositions' let us bear in mind that the positivity that language attributes to them should not deceive us; properly speaking, 'essences' and 'predispositions' are limits, since what constitutes such-and-such an 'exiting being'; as distinct from others and which makes of it a singular occurrence, is a lack of being. Its identity is thus defined in the same way that the shadow that surrounds a lighted surface defines its form and its reach; it is its singular share of nothingness. God is and nothing is with him. Ibn 'Arabi, The voyage of no return, (2000, 2018, 1996)*

⁵ Each time I go outside I film or otherwise image the large 0 on the wall of the ground floor of my building. yung_calibri story replies says *the opposite of a garden is a plantation* (14th August 2024 at 17:29:40) I reply *gardening the archive is at odds with empire is at odds with the archive* (6th November 2021 at 17:35:18) thinking and speaking flesh, studio as study, methodologies of collapse

We turn and turn 1

It dawned on me that I write each morning 2

Abundant nothing 3

I imagine I stop writing and go outside, it's feet, footage
and the walk again 4

The less we talk the more we see 5

Talking and speaking are cousins 6

I'm sat on a bench

I can feel it if I listen

[The heat of the noon sun]

¹ Spin is weird because it tracks an intrinsic angular momentum in the object. A spin wavefunction actually does spin, in the sense that isophase surfaces in spacetime spiral around the object along the time axis. But it doesn't spin in the colloquial sense that you can grab part of it that is engaged in circular motion. Spin as a statement of the fundamental angular momentum of the particle which has to be conserved, the angular momentum of outgoing states after collisions. Revolution upon revolution.

² nothing your majesty

³ poverty haunts life grows hardy in its soil taunts death because i will kiss the forehead of the earth she gave birth to me and when she kisses my forehead she gives birth to me again and i remember i have nothing when i can't kiss her forehead anymore i will kiss time and when she kisses me back i will remember i have nothing and what can one do with all this abundant nothing but love

⁴ We are riding in the night

⁵ All of the clocks in my place are set to 1 minute and 3 seconds past 12 since February 2021, to think about noon

⁶ Autumn and Spring are eulogies to each other

The cells at the floor of the eye are tracking the position of the earth relative to the sun, with it I feel briefly reassured, discourse is not language, breathing, speech assumes the form of the breath the first and the last, form, formed and forming

*Scheherazade visits me once at dawn long drawn¹
breath, speech and the night, we survive together
I don't breathe well without you*

2

*the partitioning of time is also the severing of
the land from the mind from the body*

3

¹ "bipolar affective disorder", empire, sleep & time in the land-mind-body matrix, notes, 2020 to present (as it moves from excited energy state back to ground energy state and so on)

² You are my ease/ my renewal/ You are my life and soul/ Without you/ I don't breathe well (Iraqi, around the years 1260-1280)

³ Spectra leans over, "promise you won't forget me when you wake up?", "I promise" Contra smiles. I don't know how to write that in words, that vast expanse, that night sky. Antigone, now evenly lit, shuffles some paper at the desk and places the pen down, she stares at the lens, "in war you have to change your mind" she says, "because the partitioning of time is also the severing of the land from the mind from the body". Antigone's voice becomes like stars, astral, substrate, multiple. Every time, every time we are here, every time we do this, we are all gone, it's like we forget we're dreamworkers, somehow, as if briefly fractured characters speaking to each other, whilst also the speech of the dreamer. Spectra slips forward screening inhale, falling into Antigone's voice still in address to the room. She hears the distance instantly. "And because the screen is the retina of the land's eye and is therefore part of the structure of the brain, and, because whatever appears interfaced through the screen emerges as mind, and because the screen is the body, changing one's mind is not isolated from changing the body and the land". The light softs in through the window somewhere behind us. "You are in a war on dreaming". Antigone's voice becomes like wind. I have no idea how much time has passed, though I know we move through it. Spectra slips now too, encompassed in flames, we are all on the outside. We arrive in the corner of Aquarius's dream, Contra sits reviewing the writing on a piece of paper, double sided, forensic. Her eye twitches slightly, nothing noticeable just a sudden flash, like blazing dawn, you know, the kind of twitch that happens in the pervading absence of sleep; the kind of tremor only possible in a war on dreaming. My heart is drenched in blood!
My heart is drenched in blood!, Sulaiman Majali (2026)

It's 6th October 1506.

Today we liberated the 400 or so from Córdoba prison.

I just began dictation we are speaking and writing at the same time.

Imagine for a moment that it is spring. On the desk, there is a surgeon speaking with the cover of a book, an image of an iceberg. The surgeon's words speaking with the image, imagined. The rest of the iceberg exists elsewhere. We are sat audienced. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

¹ An Imagined conversation between a book on my desk and Dr. Ghassan Abu Sittah through the screen in March 2024. On April 11 2024, Abu-Sittah is installed as Glasgow University Rector with 80% of the vote. Before his instalment, some time in March, he delivers a talk, I am watching a clip of a stream on someone's stories, in it he says: the rest of the iceberg exists elsewhere, fragmented sentence that returns to itself. He says this as I stare at the cover of a book, *Hyperobjects; Philosophy Ecology after the End of the World*, (Timothy Morton, 2013), a stock image iceberg, we can see both above and below surface at the same time.

² *images are not what the subject sees images like subjects emerge from a field of possibilities that is not static or singular but a dynamic and contingent multiplicity*

³ *dream, vision, ecstatic speech/utterance/outpouring/overflowing/eruption ((madness)) [...] represent a means and [...] linguistic form within language to bring about, bring together, undergo the tangible-abstract. the image [...] is not an isolated part in a sentence [...] images are people, places, 'subjects', events and actions, in/ visible realities, charged with dreams and hallucination. constant changeability in the in/infinite contains a continuous demolition of forms [...] form, like image is not manufactured or borrowed, it is not a covering or a wrap or receptacle: it is a [...] manner and process of thought [...] a relationship between. // the image is not what writes but rather meaning. Notes from Adonis, Introduction to Arab poetics. (1985, 1990, 2003)*

⁴ *no aristotelian separation of body and mind, the heart is the centre of intellect not the fiction of an inherently separate mind as distinct from body (land). hemisphere (brain) hemisphere (earth). notes*

⁵ *moment, late 14th century instant, brief portion of time, (12th century), minute, importance, weight value, (Latin), momentum, motion, movement, change*

⁶ *out of my mind your majesty*

⁷ *THE GHOST OF SPRING/ On 30 March 2019, Alaa is released. He has been in prison for five years/ 3.26pm./ I am the poison, I am the remedy/ I am the medicine, I am the cause. I'm the ghost of spring past. YOU HAVE NOT YET BEEN DEFEATED*

[shouting]

time

Empire is massively distributed across space and time

The image is not what a subject sees

*poets repeatedly bury this earth
no one else is willing to perform burial rites
it is poets who repeatedly bury this earth*

1

The tweet goes like this: this is what colonialism has always looked like and there simply was no footage

2 3 4 5
No
Walking

¹ written on the death of a friend (7th November 2021)

² *The origin of the term "footage" comes from early 35 mm silent film, which is traditionally measured in feet and frames; the fact that film was measured by length in cutting rooms, and that there are 16 frames (4-perf film format) in a foot of 35 mm film which roughly represented 1 second of screen time (frame rate) in some early silent films, made footage a natural unit of measure for film. The term then became used figuratively to describe moving image material of any kind.*

³ Barad says concepts are specific material arrangements, there is no separability between object and apparatus, we could say they are entangled with one another, that there is an intra-action between object and apparatus that we could call a phenomenon, worlds are made up of phenomena, not independently existing things. Measurements (and all intra-actions) contribute to the ongoing materialisation {of worlds} and has to do with what comes to matter, what exists. notes

⁴ In the European tradition, poiesis is the process of emergence of something that did not previously exist. *Poiesis* is etymologically derived from the Greek *to make* related to the word *poetry*, which shares the same root. The word is also used as a suffix, as in the biological term *hematopoiesis* (the formation of blood cells). voice note and typing to Aquarius, *إِسْتَشْعَرَ* he realised *شِعْر* poetry, *شاعر* is a poet, *شَعْرٌ* feeling, *شعور* emotion, *إشعار* notice, the failures that punctuate long studies of language empire dispossesses us of. What are the implications of a notion of poetics that is not a creation from nothing but a revealing of what already is. *The writing of poetry is a reading of the world [...] A form of speech that goes against [...] speech.* Adonis, Introduction to Arab Poetics, Poetics and Thought.

⁵ Ar-Razi spoke of hyperobjects in the tenth century

The literal is buried in the poetics of the literal	1
<i>The image is not what writes but rather meaning</i>	2
<i>The image is not what writes but rather meaning</i>	3
<i>The image is an active agent in it's imagination</i>	4

The short latency between thought and speech and the accelerated distribution of thinking and the propagation of speech

The theopoetics of crows teaching early humans to bury the dead is wrapped up in speech over time

¹ *The 'gravestone' also functions as a cosmic marker. It is used [...] to map out where the sun arrives at various points in the day (the sun comes here at 3pm), alluding to methodologies of space telling and time telling, but also lunar and solar compositional methodologies engaged by the artist. [...] Facing the tombstone on the other side, is a mirror marking the moment in time where the sun is in the midst between zenith and sunset. Joud Al-Tamimi on false dawn, there where you can move under and together, second iteration as 20210704_video.mp4, a trajectory of a thinking practice, disintegrated poetry, an assembly of 'things' that constitute an impossible film. A prior iteration inhabited the site of the 1938 Empire exhibition in Glasgow's Bellahouston Park.*

² *[speech] corvid grieving behaviour '[...]a way for them to learn about and avoid danger and I think that's you know probably going to be the crux the seed of these behaviours in most animals including ourselves if you're a social species and you are capable of the kind of rapid complex learning that crows and other you know primates and [...] humans are capable of it makes sense if you see a dead member of your species you would be like uh oh, what's going on, how do I make sure this doesn't happen to me, and I really think that that's kind of the foundation of this behaviour, from there, I think it can in compliment to that, I think you can include a lot of other motivations too [...] That makes sense. Listening to an ecologist speak on corvid thanatology.*

³ *extreme convergence in extreme divergence* Al-Jurjani, *The Mysteries of Affective Speech* (1902, 1405)

⁴ Horse

[under duress]

*I would tell you tomorrow night if I were still alive
and the king wished to preserve me*

2

*we are riding in the night
glory glory
glory glory*

*listening to the battlefield/ the field speaks/ reality
articulates itself*

0 separability between object and apparatus

[as if in the room with the writer imagined]

3 4 5

Once the earth was flat then it became a sphere

¹ *I would like, as a storyteller, to add a few short remarks to the current debate.*
John Berger, Thu 25 Oct 2001, Seven Levels of Despair, November 2001

² disabling apparatus

³ a dynamic field of possibilities. *meaning does not belong to humans but is an ongoing performance of reality in its intelligibility, intelligibility is not an inherent human characteristic but a feature of reality in its becoming. Intelligibility is not an inherent characteristic of humans but a feature of {reality} in its differential becoming. [reality] articulates itself differently. That is, discursive practices are ongoing agential intra-actions of the world through which determinacy is enacted within the phenomena produced. Thinking Karen Barad after the end of the world. A synthesis of Barad's arguments on the material-discursive.* November 2023.

⁴ Nasrallah's speech over time (speech; speaking, speech, address) bodied over time and space

⁵ *the battlefield of the dream is the earth (My heart is drenched in blood!
My heart is drenched in blood!)*

Wednesday 16th October 2002

1
2
3
4
5

I am changed, transformed

¹ Wednesday 16th October 2002, The Iraq War Resolution is signed into law by George W. Bush. Waxing gibbous moon. #1 song US charts, Dilemma, Nelly. #1 song UK charts, The Long And Winding Road / Suspicious Minds, Will Young & Gareth Gates.

² Wednesday 16th October 2002, *at eight-thirty in the evening, the writer, diarist, and art historian, Renaud Camus founded a new political party. The occasion took place at the Parisian home of Flatters, as well as Camus and his host it was attended by the painter Jean-Paul Marcheschi and philosopher Alain Finkielkraut, the television producer Sophie Barrouyer and the young Belgian judge Luc Monin. In an official "Exposé des motifs" of the party Camus explained that he established it because before the June 2002 legislative elections none of the existing groupings were persuasive. Encouraged by support from the readers of his recent work of political philosophy, Du sen, he promised that the party would expand his thinking into a more direct political commitment.*

³ Camus declares in *The Spectator* magazine in 2016 that a key to understanding the "Great Replacement" can be found in his 2002 book *Du Sens*.

⁴ 2042 is the year according to the U.S. Census Bureau, 2008, when whites are in some equation, projected to be minority, used in White Replacement Theory. Builds on Renaud Camus developed white nationalist theory in two books published in 2010 and 2011. As the latter depicts a population replacement said to occur in a short time lapse of one or two generations, the "migrant crisis" was particularly conducive to the spread of Camus's ideas while the acceleration of attacks in turn accelerated the construction of immigrants as an existential threat.

⁵ *"It is not enough to love - that is one of the verbs of magical nature, like heavy rain or the blaze of lightning, which take you out of yourself to the orbit of the other so that you may contemplate yourself, by yourself. It is not enough to love; you must know how you love. Do you know? You cannot reply[.]"* Darwish, *love, like meaning*, Sinan Antoon, *in the presence of absence*, 4th November 2011

The n^{th} crusade

The time of the reader versus time of the book

In 1888 Scheherazade op 35 is written, it's summer, It premieres in autumn 6 years after the battle at tel el kebir. I remember it vividly, one night it all comes flooding back, like all images returning at once to themselves and us together again

1

2

3

4

¹ (in the house of names, 2023, edit notes, 2021-2023) 'scheherazade' is the vehicle and the vehicle through which she arrives. We move into autumn of the film, the fall of stage 3 sleep architecture, through into the painting of William Gladstones dawn attack of September 1882, the storming of Tel el Kebir, to secure waters for empire, a prelude amongst preludes to british "protectorate"/colonisation. (prior to this at the end of the disappeared flag night scene, a screening of a film invokes "black September", the Jordanian civil war. as we move into chasing the ghost of Arthur Balfour, leaves the inevitable dead scattered across his grave. through into the sunrise hospital scene where Shelleys last line of a poem about autumn "O Wind, if winter comes, can spring be far behind?" marks the coming of winter.

² 6th October 2023, Julia sends a message on device 2, the same day I go to the cafe from the book about a cafe to write more on the chapter titled Entropy. The nth crusade is described as the utmost and unspecified I suppose as a way to think empire as hyperobject. Social Entropy. Entropy measurement as average uncertainty. Someone smashes their cup. I delete an entire chapter irreversibly.

³ There is no geometrical relation of absolute exteriority between a "causal apparatus" and a "body effected," or an idealistic collapse of the two, but rather an ongoing topological dynamics of enfolding whereby the spacetime matter manifold is enfolded into itself..Crucially, matter plays an agentive role in its iterative materialization..This is an important reason, but not the only reason, that the space of agency is much larger than that postulated in many other critical social theories..Another crucial factor is that the agential realist notion of causality does not take sides in the traditional debates between determinism and free will but rather poses an altogether different way of thinking about temporality, spatiality, and possibility. Intra-actions always entail..exclusions, and exclusions foreclose the possibility of determinism, providing the condition of an open future..intra-actions iteratively reconfigure what is possible and what is impossible-possibilities do not sit still..constraining but not determining..Possibilities aren't narrowed in their realisation; new possibilities open up as others that might have been possible are now excluded: possibilities are reconfigured and reconfiguring.

⁴ somewhere now deleted I write the writing happens elsewhere this is reading

(object monologues. 1)

*i dreamt i was a stone at tel el-kebir
painted with sweat in the folds of a farmers flesh
cotton dust then a seat for a priest
and a screen for a worshipper
then under a british boot
shiny imperial sole
i see the sun*

Empire's magic of illusion versus the operative magic of poetic speech

7 8 9

¹ Speech and matter are not separate but mutually constitutive, forming a complex, meshed relationship. Dynamic participants in the continuous becoming of [reality]. Barad emphasises that language does not merely describe (describe; (literally, to write + down) pre-existing things but plays a part in the differential becoming.

² Chapter "Ta-Ha", Quran 20:1 to 20:32

³ *"Saleh stepped inside the fire and recorded his burning hand waving at you [...] they are already victorious, you [...] the leaders fooled you [...] your life coaches fooled you [...] regimes are trading you [...] move and learn the stories [...] Moses and Aaron, the people of the orchard [...]"*, mohamadbrkt_ speaks through the screen, Monday 14th October 2024

⁴ *thinking of zakaria zubeidi's spoon, refaat alareer's marker, yahya sinwar's stick.* story (stories)

⁵ *"and i also think it comes from this kind of thinking that, even if it doesn't see itself in that way, erm, is a wholesale defence of this premise of purity and, funnily enough, in its reckoning with dispossession, it ... renders dispossession invisible - denies it altogether, and it kind of reifies this erm complex... the basis of which erm, the basis of which is this relationship between speech and fear."* Archival voice note, studio, re-staged for film and transcribed, from conversation on the alienation of those dispossessed of their language

⁶ another kind of poetics of the contradictory, (from *contra dicere* 'speak against') clowning in the court of the king. notes

⁷ *The device is a [redacted] is a [redacted] is a [redacted] is a [redacted] is a [redacted] // empire's walls between the street and the stream, the dream and the real, the screen and the eye, the digital and the neural.* Studio (June 2021), thinking Moses, the stick and the snake, speech and matter

⁸ *The transformative that moves our understanding of being and the systems that constrain that understanding. Ontoepistemological notes*

⁹ *a war of/in/for/over/under imagination which is a war of (and in) images, an imagined war, and thus it is in every sense a war on dreaming. My heart is drenched in blood! My heart is drenched in blood! (2026)*

1

Once the earth was a sphere then it became a hyperobject

2

3

4

the end of the world

*we the desert
our body the glacier*

¹ opera (n.) *opera*, literally *a work, labor, composition*, from Latin *opera work, effort*. Opera emerges from a Greek occupied Syria lament vehicles and vehicled all at once. must make sure i pick up on the conversation i began with virgo about speech and breath in relation to hyperobjects massively distributed across space and time, we have been working on an opera together for 3 years

² 30th April 2022, Sinwar, Speech, "*It will change the shape of the Earth*"

³ 30th April 1492 Spain gives Christopher Columbus his commission of exploration, named admiral of the ocean sea, viceroy and governor of any territory he discovers.

⁴ *Contra tells X there is no world to forgive*

20th October 2024 5.36am

I view a story and link to a 10m47s YouTube video with 0 views as of now filmed somewhere in America a bench foregrounds a tree we make eye contact once touch screen

I'm writing about your video [...] I just make brief mention of it [...] the smallest things can change history

And i'll write the length of your silence

1

[enters 3 step turn clockwise sits facing right edge frame]

The date today is 19th October 2024

[speech]

speech

[32 seconds of silence]

The smallest things can change history. That's all. The smallest things. It matters what you do. I guess that's it.

[exit]

¹ the silence that precedes the smallest things

*peripherally we can hear the sea
perhaps the sea can hear us too*

1 2

[Apparitions at noon]

*great floods
how deep is my breath*

3 4 5

¹ Transcription and translation are processes a cell uses to make all proteins the body needs to function from information stored in the sequence of bases in DNA. When a gene is to be expressed, the base sequence of DNA is copied or transcribed into mRNA (messenger RNA)

² *it's true what h said earlier about sculpture and writing we bumped into each other when I was sat at the bench thinking about the sun in my eyes its like ofc sculpture is more expansive than just stone lol but in the poetics of the literal there is something worth listening to i learnt to carve stone when i was younger when you work with stone you listen to it you are not an actor like performing anyway is not about acting when you work with stone there is the form you want to form that you want to write to imagine then there is what the stone wants to form that it wants to write or what it's written so it's the kind of writing that is reading speaking together. listening in on a conversation between us on the bench in the sun between walking footnotes and writing this note / sleeptalking*

³ *Mathematics as poetics of remembering*

⁴ (a mourning practice)

⁵ *listening*

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall;
All the king's horses and all the king's men
Couldn't put Humpty together again

1

Undergo

2

Overcome

3

out of time your majesty

4

*I think against the notion of an evolutionary procession
of history language time and the image*

¹ Humpty Dumpty is used as an allegory for evading the king's men by Surge's mad neighbour in the book. Later I speak with Jay through the screen again, we are talking about walking, through walls, moving under the apparatus. Surge studies the king's men and their method of disappearing people in their sleep.

² *Entities that are massively distributed in time exert downward causal pressure on shorter-lived entities*, *Temporal Undulation*, Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects* (2013)

³ the past is never left behind never finished once and for all and the future is not what will come to be in an unfolding of the present moment. Thinking Barad with the n^{th} crusade, notes, December 2023

⁴ Morton discusses how the perception of time changes when dealing with hyperobjects, such as colonialism, global warming, which stretches and warps our understanding of temporality, giving time a historical dimension rather than being static in some form.

*a strange peace descended upon me
fantastic images surged in on me
and dawned upon me*

When we write reality shifts immensely

There is a future future

Time has a history

¹ *It's these moments of slipperiness between the site of reading and the site of writing, I've forgotten what I was gonna say but anyway, X frowns, struggling to open the bottle. "why would they want to infiltrate dreams so bad?" Contra snatches the bottle, opens it and gives it to X. "to preclude us from organising across time". It's late I just wanted to voice note and mention this bit I wrote last night, I don't know, it's just what you said yesterday about the writer also being a vehicle, about tunnelling under language and so on, that and no sleep only dreams left me thinking about the implications of this, the writer also then as character. Maybe that's why I cried when I wrote Spectra's death, as if I was reading it. (From *The Passage, My heart is drenched in blood! My heart is drenched in blood!*, 2026)*

² (Mahmoud Darwish, *The Butterfly's Burden*, Fady Joudah (2007, 2008, 2010, 2016), *Don't Apologise for What You've Done*, 2003) *A telepathy of minds, or a telepathy of destinies/ Neither you are you/ nor home is home/ ABU TAMMAM/ And now, I am not I/ and the house is not my house/ FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA*

³ Abu Tammam (Habib Ibn Aws) lived in the ninth century and was an early master of Islamic Arabic poetry and letters. He studied philosophy and his poetry is known for innovative language and complex metaphors. Abu Tammam used his poems to *think*, once he was asked: *"Why don't you write verses that can be understood?"* He answered: *"Why can't you understand what the verses say?"*

⁴ Chapter 83: My yearning to return home. *The Essence of Reality*. Ayn Al-Qudat. (2020, 1120, 2023) *My eyes were filled with tears and death was knocking at my door; troubled by the fervour of my love and in the depths of despair, I exclaimed, "how long will this empty madness last? What good can there be in remembering the beloved when the lover is trapped in the prison of separation?" As the desire in my wretched self grew stronger, I was given a way back to my original home. Now the pen remains but the writer is gone.*

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'Tomorrow is a Palestinian Day' by Ghassan Abu-Sittah, address given at University of Glasgow on on 11 April 2024. Transcript published on mondoweiss.net

'In Our Lifetime, an anti-imperialist resource' is designed to be used by educators, activist groups and youth groups. It can be freely copied, shared and distributed. It is available to download from www.arika.org.uk as a pdf.

Write to – hussmitha@gmail.com about anything this resource sparked or to discuss how to use this material in workshops.

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